Before discussing different methodologies to social mobilisation and community development it is necessary to interrogate approaches and achievements of community development, to look critically at its limitations and accomplishments. We need to think and reflect on what the significant global economic, ideological, political and social processes are of which we must take account in thinking about the place of community development, to connect the global with the local.

There has been a remarkable recent growth in interest in the concepts of community development at local, national and international levels. It is perhaps not unreasonable to ask whether concepts, which appear to derive support from such a wide range of actors, mean everything, or nothing; or, to put it more bluntly, whether they are not talking about very different things on the one hand and doing something very different on the ground on the other. This "ideological confusion" permeates the use of many important concepts. However, many of us do not pay serious attention to it. We, instead, feel comfortable with following what seems to be success or what is dictated from above.

Different community development projects and programmes have quite distinct implications for community development. At the heart of anti-poverty work is often a stated concern for community development and the participation of the poor. This concern with community participation might be thought of as admirable but more cynically it might also be regarded as merely another means by which cuts in essential services or personal and organisational aggrandisement are hidden behind a rhetoric of voluntarism and community involvement: self-help can mean the route for democratic participation in decision-making, but it can also mean social services on the cheap or cashing benefits in the name of the poor. There is more focus on sustainability of external support programmes rather than on sustainable local organisations and institutions.

Meanwhile, each government is attempting to seize the moral high ground, presenting itself as pro-poor and community, claiming the language of empowerment as part of its ideological heritage. The attraction of communitarians thus appears to lie in its ability to satisfy a wide range of political agendas. When moral, political and development agendas of right, left and centre appear to be merging, when all kinds of political parties and community development agencies and programmes can speak of their commitment to empowerment, freedom and self-help, it may seem somewhat trite but nevertheless urgent to observe that our global and national context is characterised by ideological confusion!

There has been a continuing debate about the real meaning of community empowerment and its place within strategies to combat poverty. The Council of Europe's Charleroi declaration argues that the main thrust of the fight against poverty should be directed at the community life of the poorest sections of the population rather than at the reinforcement of social aid arrangements which alleviate the effects of poverty but do not tackle the causes of precariousness. Not until poor people truly participate in our economic, legal and education systems on a perpetual and sustainable basis will poverty have ceased to exist and to argue that the recognition of the right to participate in decision-making is a necessary precondition for basic human rights. Many developing and developed countries (including the US) continue to support anti-poverty work based on similar community development principles. Yet we have to recognise that all these do not take into consideration the long-term viability and continuity of these approaches. No one seems ready to answer that we form community organisation, we build its capacity, we deliver specific packages and micro-credit, but for how long would the outsiders stay with the community to keep it going?

The Charleroi declaration could as easily have emerged from within the arena of international development and particularly from those NGOs, which have, in their praxis done much to challenge the alleged efficacy of the "trickle-down" theory of development. However, in this global arena, too, one can find quite contradictory understandings of the meaning of community and community development reflecting very different political and economic agendas. Alongside NGO aid agencies, the more formal supranational agencies of the UN also demonstrate an apparently increasing interest in strategies to promote community participation as a means of enhancing the development process.

The Brundtland Commission (WCED, 1987) argues that one of the main prerequisites of sustainable development is "securing effective citizen's participation" and the Human Development Report (UNDP, 1993) comments that, in the face of current challenges for development, "people's participation is becoming the central issue of our time." Even the World Bank, better known for its fiscal conservatism than for its social and political risk-taking, has argued that community participation can be a means for ensuring that Third World development projects reach the poorest in the most efficient and cost-effective way (although, reverting more to character, it expects the poorest to share the costs of development as well as its benefits! There is no denying the fact that participation is a prerequisite by through whom? How? And for how long?

Community development organisations and practitioners can thus, with some justification, be sceptical of this almost revivalist "community" rhetoric. We need to explore and expose the real agendas of the many organisations and individuals, which now claim "community" for their own. To what extent, for example, are they concerned with social justice, with respecting the dignity and humanity of all, with their right to participate in decisions, which affect them, with mutuality, or equality? Or are they in reality, for example, advocating community development as a means of "helping people to adapt their way of life to the changes they have had imposed on them" by wider economic and political forces little concerned with their needs and desires? A clear, and highly ideological, task for those of us who are committed to community development, in our public, professional and private lives, is to argue for a view of community development which is not hijacked by those supporting very different agendas.

In global terms, the above-mentioned ideological confusion has to be located in what, over the past twelve years, some have chosen to describe as the death of communism and the global triumph of capitalism. Following the collapse of the East European political regimes, right-wing ideologues have enjoyed a period of political triumphalism, claiming both that socialism was dead and that the inherent superiority of capitalist forms of economic organisation had been demonstrated for all time. In some quarters we were even told that history, as we knew it, in terms of competition between different perspectives and ideologies, had come to an end. As the dust has settled round the events of the late 1980s, it has become clear, to paraphrase Mark Twain, that rumours of the death of collective solutions to social and economic problems have been exaggerated.

A second parameter is the globalisation of economic power. This of course is not a new phenomenon, indeed Boyer and Drache argued in 1996 that "the internationalisation of economic activity has not changed dramatically from the time when Great Britain was the leading global power." However, it is apparent that the consequences of economic decisions are felt more quickly than ever by increasing numbers of those who do not take the decisions, and indeed who may be thousands of miles from where the decisions are taken. To paraphrase another commentator, one person supplying capital from thousands of miles away may decide to dismiss thousands supplying labour from a mile away. Change is happening more rapidly than ever: that is a post-modernist truism. However, the costs and benefits of social and economic change are unevenly distributed and the globalisation of economic power represents not a more equal sharing of that power but an increasingly unequal concentration of power, particularly in the hands of those, such as the fixers of financial markets, who have no democratic mandate.

The end of the Cold War took the pressure off global and national vested interests to make any serious pretence towards socio-economic development to promote the well-being of the masses in the developing countries. We do not argue for a return to the Cold War but for the development of systems of political and economic organisation where social needs are no longer subordinated to the ability to pay, and which are neither driven by competition between world powers nor by the self-interest and greed of the market. Whatever the Russian people may have thought about the political project of communism, it is clear that their present disenchantment stems from a grounded appraisal of the economically and socially divisive consequences of market solutions.

The failure of free markets to deliver significant benefits to other than a minority of the populations which they cover is indeed a global issue, that it is precisely free market approaches to development that have been at the root of increasing poverty and social exclusion in both the developing and developed world and that the associated strategies of structural adjustment, (so vigorously pursued by the World Bank and its associated agencies), have been exacerbating the problem of unmet needs within the poorest countries. Again, structural adjustment and liberalisation have wreaked havoc in so many communities; that women in particular have often survived only through resorting to petty vending, migration or prostitution (or all three, as in Africa, Southeast Asia and Central America); and that, as Oxfam (1995) reports, that secure employment has been undermined.

And where structural adjustment, driven through by the West, has been supported by local military repression, political citizenship itself has been under threat. However, we go on to show that across the world, local community and political opposition is growing to structural adjustment policies with their consequences of increased, and unequally shared, hunger and poverty. The "trickle-down" theory of economic development, described memorably by Galbraith as if you feed enough oats to the horses, some will pass down to the road for the sparrows, is now also widely discredited and not only in the eyes of the sparrows. Friedman claimed in 1962 that capitalism lessened the extent of inequality; the reality is that, as the UNDP showed in 1992, the gap between rich and poor throughout the world had doubled in the previous thirty years.

A fourth major global trend is the growth of inter-communal conflict, based on differing combinations of race, national boundaries, culture or religion. A rough count shows that thirty-seven civil wars and five cross-border conflicts are being fought. Hundreds of thousands of the poor are killed; millions are made refugees. So much for the "new world order." History teaches us how economic despair feeds into ideological fascism and, whilst we are not witnessing a full-scale revival of fascism in Western Europe, we are seeing there some of the same interplay between deteriorating economic conditions and political, ideological and social responses. Take Africa for instance, where a long history of unmet social and economic needs and the related competition for extremely scarce resources have been associated with violence, used in turn to accentuate racial and inter-tribal divisions.

It's appropriate to comment in passing on the relationship between more local identity politics and community development work. The growth of social movements based on the identity of race, gender, age or disability, alongside single issue campaigns, was one of the most remarkable political developments during the 1980s. It represented, for some, an important channel for political action and a way out of ideological confusion. For a while, many spoke of the political opportunities presented by Rainbow Coalitions. However, identity politics is not of itself necessarily the basis for progressive forms of action. Community workers need to interrogate the claims of such groups to establish the extent to which they support the key values of respect for the humanity and dignity of all. This does not deny the need for community development which takes gender, age, race or some other social division as its focus for organisation and there are examples of positive practice in many areas such as disability which show how community development focussed on identity can retain a non-divisive and internationalist perspective. But the key question to ask is the extent to which this work has a broader value base and a practice, which supports the struggles of other oppressed groups.

The final parameter is that of increasingly rapid global communication: the world is getting smaller. This has its own contradictions: on the one hand, a single broker in Singapore can bring a major bank to its knees overnight on the basis of a few phone calls; on the other, large-scale disasters can be responded to from all parts of the world in a matter of hours. The global communication can help us confront and use global economic power. It is an instance also of how we as community development workers can make connections between our personal and professional lives. This relates to the growth of tourism, now one of the most significant economic sectors in every country. Community development has had an impact in countries as disparate as Cuba and the Philippines in terms of thinking about the local social and economic consequences of inappropriate tourism. We have an opportunity to build links between "sending" and "receiving" countries, to demonstrate the need for and act on policies sensitive to the needs of the disadvantaged in "host" countries rather than the narrow economic interests of global tourist businesses.

This sketchy analysis may seem overwhelming in its consequences for action but the scope of the challenge for us is no greater than that faced by billions of people struggling against poverty, exclusion, ill-health and oppression, with whom we seek common cause. In our work, we can remember the Indian proverb, which reminds us that an elephant can only be eaten one mouthful at a time! An appraisal of the tasks which community development has to face throughout the world can only be effective if it is based on an accurate analysis of the ideological, political and economic context within which it is operating. "Think Global, Act Local," is a slogan which reminds us both that the processes which are manifested at a local level and which are often the site of local community campaigns-the replacement of housing by more shopping or commercial facilities, the dumping of polluted waste, the loss of employment opportunities-are themselves usually the consequences of decisions taken far from the local arena; and that such campaigns have to be informed by an understanding of the broader context within which those decisions are taken. None of this is an argument against local action informed by community development principles but is an argument for local action and broader alliances informed by that global understanding.

Community development, thus, is a method of working with people. That statement is itself a commonplace but the term "method" is not used here in the sense of professional practice, although that has a place in what we do." Method" in a political way, a way of working which essentially starts with the needs and aspirations of groups of disadvantaged people in poor localities and which struggles, first of all, to articulate and organise politically around those needs and aspirations, placing them at the front rather than the end of political debate. This is, and always will be, a challenge to existing forms of political organisation, which emphasise centralised forms of government, whether through the command structures of state socialism, liberal democratic forms or indeed the military autocracies, which are increasingly common. It is also a challenge to a so-called "post-modern" world where the values of social justice, solidarity, citizenship and classlessness are increasingly threatened as a result of economic restructuring and the dismantling of public welfare, by fragmentation, insecurity and competition in the name of individual freedom (for which read "freedom for the few") and self-sufficiency (that is, "managing on next-to-nothing"). What community development strives for is to give ordinary people a voice for expressing and acting on their extraordinary needs and desires in opposition to the vested interests of global economic and political power, to counter the increasing commodification of both human beings and human welfare. Throughout the world, oppressed people have found a voice in part through the work of community development activists, often in situations of great danger. The power of that voice will perhaps always lie most strongly in the ideas that it expresses.

Years of experience have bred in poor a healthy scepticism of the claims made by development projects to bring lasting benefits to them. There are alternatives to expensive self-defeating projects, these require minimal involvement from outsiders. That the people are the most competent managers of the resources that sustain them is a heresy against development, against outside experts. Yet these outside experts have become too often the precursors of structural adjustment and social and economic division. In the context of growing confusion about what community and community development really stand for, we have to be very clear about our own position both in our words and in our deeds. The Chipko movement in India tells that "there is a story in the villages about a fox that comes wearing a tiger's coat to terrify the people. When the real tiger comes, it wears a fox's coat. We should beware of those who come saying they love the people." The challenge for community development is to reclaim our language and our politics from the foxes and the tigers of the world.

Empowerment and Rural Development.

Community empowerment through participation may be broadly divided into that which is carried out under the auspices of the state and that which remains relatively free from government control. As we have seen, there has been a clear increase in state commitment to the idea of promoting participation as one way of making the process of guided development more efficient. This has become particularly noticeable within the last decade but even before then, participation ideals were encouraged through initiatives such as the community development, *animation rurale* and were instigated in British and French colonies respectively both before and after independence to assist rural reconstruction and empowerment. The idea became popular amongst governments as a convenient, politically neutral strategy for mobilising the rural population. Community development workers and *animateurs* would 'awaken' the peasantry from its supposed apathy and indifference towards progress. As this concept was transferred from Africa to the Indian subcontinent as well as to other parts of Asia and Latin America throughout the 1950s and 1960s, the theory was that governments and rural populations would unquestioningly pool resources, united in the common purpose of promoting overall economic growth.

Yet the history of these tow movements illustrates the fairly narrow limits within which the state is prepared to define and accept the notion of community or popular participation. Despite their democratic overtones community development, and particularly *animation rurale* with its strong tradition of central direction under French administration, soon became vehicles for implementing pre-established official programmes, which allowed participants little real say in decision-making. The strong pressures from central government transformed the village — level worker from a coordinator into a salesman for line—ministry programmes. The very concept of a unified community was questionable as social divisions became apparent and the consequent unequal distribution of benefits increased conflict and friction in the countryside. India's community development programme did not give the people a collective voice but, on the contrary, encouraged the process of atomization and discouraged the formation of people's organisations'.[1] Similarly, in post-revolutionary

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[1] Gaikwad, V. R. (1981) 'Community Development in India" in R. Dore and Z. Mars, pp 331

Mexico the government's community development initiatives are perceived as a means of imposing the values of village-level workers on others and as an attempt to `buy off discontent with concessions which do not tackle the underlying causes of backwardness and poverty'.[2]

In socialist states also, true participatory ideals appear to be relatively short—lived and rapidly give way to mechanisms which are designed to impose controls on the rural population rather than allow involvement in decision—making. Following the Arusha Declaration of 1967 Tanzania took significant steps to institute participatory procedures for development, which included state control of the major means of production, collectivization into *ujamaa* villages and administrative decentralization. However, after 1972 it appears that these original ideals were scrapped, and, according to Mushi 'the participatory functions of the people's organizations at the grass-root level aware given peripheral attention.'[3] Participation and `political awareness' became equated, in the eyes of the Tanzanian State, with acquiescence to official policy directives. In pragmatic terms the result was a high rate of project failure attributed in large part to the increasingly authoritarian management structure which allowed little time `to the peasants and local leaders to do feasibility studies or to evaluate their own successes or failures and draw appropriate lessons' (Mushi, 1981, 99. 239. 239--40). A similar pattern may be observed with regard to the Ethiopian peasant associations, considered below as a case study.

Rural co-operatives were also considered to be an ideal channel for promoting popular participation. Based on the western concept, the establishment of official co-operatives proceeded rapidly throughout the 1950s and 1960s alongside the community development movement. They were seen as a politically neutral form of mass organization, which would allow members to exercise control over production and the distribution of benefits. However, the notion of political neutrality was shown to be illusory as co-operatives were used by the state to promote top—down procedures and policies and extend control over rural areas. These organizations have also, on the whole, tended to be undemocratic internally, dominated by wealthier producers able to control both decision-making and access to subsidized government inputs such as credit and technical assistance.[4] Even within the pioneering Comilla community development project in Bangladesh, new co-operatives created specifically to assist poor farmers were soon `dominated by the rich farmer—money—lender—trader class' while the pressing problems of problems of poorer producers were ignored.[5] Thus, institutions ostensibly created to increase participation by and flow of benefits to the poor may end up by marginalizing them even further as relative poverty levels increase. A second major and increasingly important category of community development is that undertaken independently of the state through non-government organization (NGOs). This approach to increasing people's participation in development for real empowerment is discussed in greater detail in this guide.

At various stages in the design of rural development strategy governments have sought to include the notion of popular participation. Yet because of the increasingly dominant role of the state in directing change and the need to combine this with political mobilization for the purpose of national integration, there must be limits to the extent to which authentic participation can be permitted. As has been shown in the case study of the Brazilian fisherwomen, authentic participation signifies allowing, freedom of decision making and control over internal activities to those taking part in the development process. Governments with a firm commitment to pursuing certain macro-economic and social goals cannot, therefore, allow the kind of popular involvement in policy-making, which might challenge the legitimacy of these overall objectives. The practice of participation in this context will thus necessarily be either of the *laissez-faire* instrumentalist kind or of the more consciously manipulative type.

In a sense, therefore, state directed participation is a contradiction in terms. This is because the nature of popular involvement becomes so limited as to virtually defy use of the terms 'participation'. In effect the concept becomes purely instrumental, useful government for making the pursuit of pre-established goals more efficient. Thus, many so-called 'participatory' programmes do not go beyond taking advantage of local cheap labour for construction of public works or, for example, involve token consultations with village chiefs in order to gain the acquiescence of the population. Other programmes are more consciously dictatorial and make little attempt to conceal their true objectives. The cases of the Ethiopian and the Tanzanian *ujamaa* policy really leave little room for doubting what most if not all governments understand by participation. It is useful only as long as it serves to

[2] Cosio, A. (1981) 'Community Development in Mexico' in R. Dore and Z. Coulson, A. (Eds) pp 337-432.
[3] Mushi, S. S. (1981) "Community Development in Tanzania" in R. Dore and Z, Mars (Eds), p. 238.
[4] UNRISD: (1975)*Rural Cooperatives as Agents for Change,* Geneva.
[5] Haque, W, Niranjan, M., Rahman, A and Wignaraja, P. (1977) 'Toward a Theory of Rural Development' *Development Dialogue*, page-93.

help achieve national economic and political objectives but it is not valued as an end in itself. In other works, 'participation seems to mean getting people to do what outsiders think is good for them'. [6]

Development planning is still overwhelmingly characterized by what has come to known as the 'blueprint approach', which allows no effective popular participation. The responsibility for taking the initiative in determining what form development should take rests firmly in the hands of central planners. Local people are consulted only in so far as such contacts allow the preconceived strategy to be finely tuned and made more efficient on the ground, along the instrumentalist lines already discussed. The rural population is the subordinate partner in this arrangement, occasionally allowed to voice an opinion but who must not protest too vehemently.

Despite widespread use of the language of participation in many development plans it has been argued that 'the rural poor do not as yet have any direct part to play in rural development projects'.[7] Yet the dilemma experienced by policy-makers in attempting to reconcile participation with the need for centralized planning is a very real one which has been recognized by the world Bank: 'The manner in which early participation is to be achieved and balanced with the need for overall guidance and control from the center, is a problem which can only be resolved within each country'.[8]

Although the ideal of authentic participation is probably not possible under state direction, nevertheless there are ways in which the degree of popular involvement in the planning and implementation of rural development could be increase. One suggestion concerns the adoption of a 'process' approach to planning, in contrast to the 'blueprint' style, which has been predominant until now. The process approach rejects the assumption that projects are simply vehicles for the application of predetermined government solutions to developmental problems, but is base instead on a process of continuous dialogue between planners and beneficiaries in the search for the most appropriate strategy.[9] This style also implies what Chambers calls' reversals in learning ' in which outsiders learn from farmers and the rural poor. A variety of techniques are put forward, ranging from sitting, asking and listening to joint research and development as tools, which could 'encourage and enable those being trained or educated to learn from the many below and not just from the few above'.[10]

Yet these exhortations remain somewhat idealistic. It is almost unheard of for the rural poor to be effectively consulted by government planners. Furthermore, once established most rural development schemes are characterized by authoritarian, hierarchical management structures, which allow little or no beneficiary participation or information feedback. Hall found this to be the case on official irrigation projects in North-East Brazil where farmers are obliged to follow management directives unquestioningly.[11] An exception to this rule is the National Irrigation Administration in the Philippines, which since 1976 has developed a participatory style that has resulted in the creation of strong irrigator's associations.[12] Another example is the PIDER programme in Mexico, which, according to Cernea, recognized the need for farmer participation particularly at the initial planning stage and through, out the project as a basic prerequisite for long-term success. This principle is also being extended to social forestry schemes where beneficiary participation in social analysis is seen as essential for obtaining grass-roots support.[13]

Another suggestion for improving the level of popular participation in government programmes is to decentralize certain powers and functions in order to increase local control. This refers not just to transferring command over some aspects of policy and resource allocation, but also to changes in the ways in which bureaucracies operate to permit more local autonomy. These 'reversals in management'[14] could, however, be difficult to implement if the government has little control over rural areas or if powerful line ministries exist which strongly oppose such challenges to their authority. The state could make resources available to local organizations thorough revenue sharing or block arrangements in order that they might undertake their own development activities. Yet the

[6] Heyer, J., Roberts, P. and Williams, G. (Eds) (1981) Rural Development In Tropical Africa, London, Macmillan. p.5
[7] Oakley, P and Marsden, D. (1984), Approaches to Participation in Rural Development, Geneva, International Labour Office. p.65
[8] Wrold Bank 1975, p.37
[9] Gow, D.G. and VanSant, J. (1983) 'Beyond the Rhetoric of Rural Development Participation: How can it be Done?' *World Development*, 11,427-46.
[10] Chambers, R. (1983) *Rural Development: Putting the Last First*, London, Longman, page 209
[11] Hall, A. (1978) *Drought and Irrigation in North East Brasil*, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press.
[12] Bagadion, B. and Koeten, F. (1985)' Developing Irrigation Organizations: A Learning Process Aproach to a Participatory Program in M. Cernea (Ed); Chambers, 1983).
[13] Cernea, M. (1981) Land Tenure Systems and Social Implications of Forestry Development Programs, Washington, World Bank.
[14] Chambers, R. (1983) Rural Development: Putting the Last First, London, Longman

monopolistic power of local elites may easily subvert such participatory moves unless the state takes firmer action to redirect resources to the neediest groups.

These suggestions assume that only the state has the power to initiate moves in the direction of greater popular participation. However, poor farmers may themselves take stapes to increase their own control over events and thus circumvent the government's frequently manipulatory policies, whether these labeled participatory or otherwise. Barnett, for example, has described how farmers on the Gezira scheme in the Sudan divert irrigation water from cotton fields, against official instructions, to assist their own food crops.[15] In his in his study of government irrigation projects in the semi-arid North-Eastern interior of Brazil, Hall noted several tactics employed by hard-pressed small farmers to avoid the rigid controls imposed upon them by management, which included the illicit marketing of a substantial proportion of total production. Official reactions to such peasant resistance tend not to be inn the direction of greater understanding and dialogue, but the imposition of further controls and restrictions. Official strategy, whether promoted by individual governments or by multilateral agencies such as the World Bank, tend to assume that the rural population is totally incapable of initiating a process of rural development.

Yet experience has clearly shown that, given the right conditions and incentives, the rural masses do indeed the right conditions and incentives, the rural masses do indeed have the enterprise necessary to plan and execute a range of development activities in furtherance of their own interest. Here, of course, lies the crux of the matter. These interests are frequently at odds with those of the state so that such independent initiative is generally frowned upon or even suppressed. Coulson has described the case of the Ruvuma Development Association in Tanzania, one of the original models for the later fofficial *ujamaa* policy, yet which became so successful that it was banned as a threat to government authority.[16] The farmers of Jamaane in Senegal took the initiative of forming a peasant association and hired an agronomist to advise them, but they clashed with the irrigation development authority, which had other plans for their future.[17]

Given the limitations on the possibility of achieving any degree of authentic participation under state tutelage, perhaps the only channel for pursuing this objective lies outside of direct government influence via non-government organizations. Many NGOs have a firm commitment to challenging the socio-economic structures, which underlie poverty and exploitation. NGO-backed projects range in size from individual community schemes with a handful of participants, to middle-range activities such a s the Brazilian fisherwomen's project and even regional organizations embracing thousands such as the Bhoomi Sena (Land Army) Movement of Maharashtra State, India.[18] Whereas schemes supported by voluntary agencies are generally considered to be marginal to the mainstream of rural development, in practice their impact is far greater. The ratio of government to non-government assistance, for example, is only about 6:1. [19]

This type of rural development is far more likely than state guided initiatives to lead to a process of authentic participation. Perhaps the main reason for this is that, whereas official policies tend to be predicated on the assumption that peasant are incapable of defining their own development path, non-government projects start from the opposite premise that only the beneficiaries themselves know what is the most appropriate course of action. The contrast in approach is also reflected in the choice of working methods. The top-down management techniques of the 'blueprint' approach are firmly eschewed in favours of dialogue, mutual consultation at all stages, self-reliance, collective action to solve group problems, democratic decision-making and local control over project activities. If they are well enough organized such bodies or movements may become powerful pressure groups, a source of countervailing power, which can challenge government authority when this is felt to be against the best interest of the people. This philosophy contrast s so strongly with official techniques that has gone so far as to label it 'counter development'.[20]

It would be over simplistic, however, to suggest that, on the basis of the above analysis, all state-directed rural development should automatically be rejected as manipulative and all unofficial interventions welcomed as the

[15] Barnett, T. (1981) "Evaluating the Gezire Scheme: Black Box or Pandor's Box?' in J. Heyer *et al* (Eds) pp. 306-24.
[16] Coulson, A. (1981) "Agriculture Policies in Mainland Tanzania, 1946-76' in J. Heyer *et al*. (Eds) pp. 52-89.
[17] Adams, A. (1981) 'the Senegal River Valley in J. Heyer et al . (Eds) pp. 325-53.
[18] de Silva, G.V.S., Mehta, N., Rahman, MM. And Wignoraja, P. (1982) 'Bhoomi Sena: A Land Army in India' in A. Bhaduri and M. Rahman (Eds) PP. 151-69
[19] Lissner, J. (1977) *The Politics of Altruism*, Geneva, Lutheran World Federation.
[20] Galjart, B. (1981a) 'Counterdevelopment' community Development Journal, 18, 88-96

only genuinely participatory vehicle for promoting the welfare of the rural poor. It must be borne in mind that NGO supported schemes often have their own drawbacks. A frequently heard criticism is that such projects tend to be small and geographically dispersed, and are difficult to multiply on a national scale. Indeed, this feature is virtually a precondition for authentic participation. Once projects grow in size beyond a certain point the problems of bureaucratisation and growing official links with government increase the danger that they could lose many of their original 'participatory' features such as dialogue and democratic decision-making.[21]

Other criticism relate to the methodology used to establish and promote small-scale development projects. Many voluntary organizations' use 'conscientisation' techniques, which assume that the poor have an incomplete or imperfect perception of their own reality and that their 'awareness' must be heightened as the basis for group action.[22] Yet this is in many ways a patronizing view, which, as Berger has pointer out in no uncertain terms, presupposes that 'lower class people do not understand their own situation, that they are in need of enlighten-selected higher-class individuals'.[23] This perpetuates what Berger calls a 'hierarchical view of consciousness' in which outsiders are deemed to be the best judges of poor people's perceptions.

Conversely, of course, outsiders can easily fall into the trap of assuming a much greater degree of spontaneous solidarity than is actually the case, simply by projecting their own politicised values on to the poor and underestimating potential sources of village conflict. Whatever the assumptions, there is always the danger that community animator or facilitators will, consciously or otherwise, adopt a manipulating role and decrease the villagers own freedom of choice in a non-participatory direction. It must also be said that no matter how well-meaning the external funding agency, the mere fact of financial dependence on outsiders makes the notion of true community autonomy somewhat spurious. While the imposition of certain funding criteria and procedural requirements may be justified on the grounds of increased administrative efficiency or in terms of a responsibility to the donating public, these do often place limitations on the scope of projects activities and serve to emphasize what is fundamentally a power relationship between the givers and the receivers.

On balance, then, is difficult to avoid the conclusion that the participatory mode of rural development is far more difficult to achieve through official channels than via non-government means. Yet it has to be recognized that, with all their apparent advantages, the impact of voluntary organizations will be limited comparatively speaking due to lack of clear phasing out strategy and understanding of how can they make their programmes part and parcel of the communities for sustainability and real empowerment. It is doubtful, in fact, whether most rural communities would even desire to assume complete responsibility for promoting development. In order to reach greater numbers of rural poor there is therefore a strong case to be made for increasing state participation in rural development. But reaching to greater number, too, is not the answer. The need is to reach them, work with them and in the end leave them organized within the local institutions having structures and systems for running their representative organisations.

At the same time, however, this should be designed so as to allow for much greater beneficiary involvement in preliminary decision-making as well as project execution than has been the case to date. The means exist for combining government resource allocation with local initiatives and community control over the development process. What is needed is a political commitment to adopt these methods on a wide enough scale to transform the rhetoric of participation into concrete action. All this may never be possible without developing meso-level representative institutions as mentioned in chapter 2 (2.3). However, before going to describe the meso-level institutions and their need, it is necessary to assess the progress made by the community development initiatives and see if they have worked at all, if they are sustainable, if they can be replicated and if there are flaws that can be corrected.

[21] Galjart, B. (1981b) 'Participatory Development Projects, Sociologia Ruralis, 21, 142-59
[22] Freire, P. (1972) Pedagogy of the Oppresed, Harmondsworth, Penguin; Oakley and Marsden, 1984.
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FIFTY YEARS OF RURAL DEVELOPMENT IN PAKISTAN.[24]

Rural Development in Pakistan is a unique case. There is hardly any other country in the world that has engaged in rural development on a similar scale than Pakistan had in the past. Four of the most famous rural development projects that are quoted time and again in the international literature on rural development, i.e. the Camilla Project, the Daudzai Pilot Project, the Orangi Pilot Project and the Aga Khan Rural Support Programme, were or still are all in Pakistan.

Despite valid ideas and sound concepts framing the rural development approaches and a long history of dedicated efforts for rural development, Pakistan so far has not been successful in alleviating rural poverty. While rural poverty in South Asia is on the decrease it is increasing in Pakistan. Almost all overall indicators on social welfare, particularly in the rural areas - while improving - are doing so on a far slower pace in Pakistan than every-where else in South Asia.

The Government of Pakistan is a signatory to the Dhaka Declaration of the SAARC Heads of State and Government, which called for the eradication of poverty by the Year 2002. The same summit also adopted the course of action recommended by *Meeting The Challenge,* the report of the Independent South Asian Commission on Poverty Alleviation, which conceives the mobilisation of the poor as the centrepiece of poverty alleviation. At the national level the Federal Government has recently accepted the recommendations of the Task Force on Poverty Eradication to establish district support organisations and a national micro credit facility in support of a large initiative for poverty alleviation. There is increasing willingness to collaborate on the part of the Government and one set of non-governmental entities called the Rural Support Programmes, or RSPs now enjoys genuine Government backing. The Federal Government has also established a Poverty Alleviation Fund in 1997, supported by a long-term loan of $100 million from the World Bank.

Pakistan today is looking back on a vast experience of failures in rural development. These are the highlights of the projects mentioned above. The desired and required large-scale impact of rural development, though, did not materialise yet and earlier achievements in rural development have vanished. What are the reasons for this apparent discrepancy between high level conceptual thinking and high ranking individual projects and the overall general failures in the various attempts for rural development? A look back into history may - at least to some extent - provide answers to that question.

1   Early Rural Development Experiences

Rural development in Pakistan has a long history; some elements of rural development can even be traced back to the colonial period, i.e. before partition. Noteworthy are early efforts of the Christian Missions, which established rural reconstruction centres that trained multi-purpose village extension workers. The Christian Missions also set up educational, health and social welfare institutions in rural areas as part of their missionary work.

The famous Indian poet Rabindranath Tagore supported grass-root village organisations through the services of a rural reconstruction institute. Also Mahatma Gandhi advocated and developed new rural institutions to provide services to the villagers for local development. He advocated self-reliance, the exclusive use of local resources, and self-help for village development without external assistance.

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[24] Sources of historical information contained in this section were compiled from:

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Another early experience - and frequently quoted later-on - resulted from the initiative of the then Deputy Commissioner of Punjab, Mr. F.L. Brayne, who tested his concept of rural development in the Gurgaon district during 1920-28. A District Board under the chairmanship of the Deputy Commissioner was the implementing agency which co-ordinated and integrated the activities of all line departments for rural development at the district level. Village guides were recruited to serve as multi-purpose extension workers for all line departments to approach village development problems in a holistic manner. Each guide was in charge of a cluster of villages, and his work was supervised by a tehsil level officer and the District Director. A School of Rural Economy provided training facilities to village guides and school teachers on rural development activities in each cluster of villages. A School of Domestic Economy provided training facilities to village girls. Local participatory organisations were established such as the village co-operative societies, better living societies, cattle breeding societies, women organisations, health centres, etc. All programmes were implemented with the active involvement of the local leaders.

By the end of the Second World War and the creation of Pakistan thereafter, develop-ment theorist and practitioners had already a rooting of thought on rural development which emerged from such experiences. In the early days basically four ideas framed the direction of thought on rural development policies in Pakistan:

* the concept of rural reconstruction, i.e. the holistic approach of total village development; this concept went together with the broader development philosophy of developing rural areas, which in the early 50th was not commonplace because at that time the term „development" was more commonly associated with the industrial sector;
* the concept of Government initiated/guided integrated rural development that would bring together all sectoral line departments at the local level to approach the various development problems simultaneously;
* the concept of involving the communities and the civil society at large in rural development efforts in the form of localised participatory organisations; and,
* the concept of self-help and community co-operation, i.e. the notion of self-reliance at the local level.

2   Rural Development 1952 to 1980

Until the early 80th four major Government RD programmes, all heavily supported by international development aid, were implemented namely:

* the Village Agricultural and Industrial Development Programme (V-AID, 1952-61),
* the Rural Works Programme (RWP, 1963-72),
* the People´s Works Programme (PWP, 1972-80) and parallel later integrated to it
* the Integrated Rural Development Programme (IRDP, 1972-1980).

In all of these programmes the target groups were - at least programmatically – identified as the rural poor, i.e. the small and subsistence landholders, tenant farmers, land-less labourers, artisans, small businessmen, and the vulnerable groups: the women and youths. The programmes also were designed as multi-sectoral and included agricultural development, rural industry and the establishment and improvement of physical and social infrastructure like schools, health centres, water supply and welfare services.

2.1 The Village Agricultural and Industrial Development Programme (V-AID)

The first national attempt to RD was started in 1952 with the large scale programme V-AID which then was under implementation for nine years until 1961. Adequate funds were committed to the programme from foreign aid and local sources.

V-AID operations were carried out in 79 development areas scattered all over Pakistan to cover 20% of all villages of the country. The V-AID administration at the national level provided policy guidance and advisory assistance to the provinces responsible for project implementation. At the provincial level, Directors V-AID and at the district level the Deputy Commissioners were responsible for the organisation and implementation. At both levels, advisory committees - composed of all heads of the

line departments - were established to co-ordinate the operations of the various line departments. At the district level these advisory committees included the chairmen of the Village Councils of Elders.

The V-AID concept emphasised on local responsibility and community self-help, and the whole programme was based upon village level organisation. A Village Council of Elders was organised that took over village level responsibilities. Youths Clubs were established, co-operatives provided credit, production and marketing facilities to the farmers, and social centres were created to provide services and skills to women.

The V-AID programme was designed as the extension agency of all line departments at the village level. One Development Officer (DO) was responsible for a development area covering 150 to 200 villages. He was assisted by 2 supervisors, 30 male Village Extension Workers (VEW), 5 female VEWs, and the technicians from the line departments at the tehsil level. A VEW was in charge of about 5 to 7 villages in a development area.

Despite the programme organisation down to tehsil level and the involvement of Local Councils of Elders, programme planning and implementation of projects were generally imposed from above. In addition, local level co-ordination in the implementation of V-AID projects was seriously hampered by an extreme lack of line-agency co-ordination. Furthermore, the temporary (project bound) nature of the V-AID organisation could not provide adequate incentives to most of the staff on deputation to the programme by their mother departments. Hence, the programme suffered from low staff motivation.

Overall, the V-AID had some success in the initial period, but the progress slowed down subsequently. While the big farmers gained some benefits, the impact on raising the income of the rural poor was marginal. Some farm labourers gained temporal employment on the works projects. Some development areas certainly provided improved opportunities, facilities and services to the rural population. But such development areas did not improve the general conditions of the rural poor. With the upcoming of the Basic Democracy programmes in 1959 the V-AID gradually lost its role and the programme was terminated in 1961.

The fact remains that the V-AID was the first comprehensive multi-sectoral rural development programme designed to improve the living conditions of the rural poor. It certainly created some notion of self-help in many of the development areas. It brought rural people together in local organisations and at least attempted community participation. Despite its overall failure, the implementation of that programme has sown the seeds for the idea of participation at the local levels in a situation within the rural areas largely characterised by semi-feudal social structures and authoritarian rule.

2.2 The Rural Works Programme (RWP)

After termination of the V-AID programme a new programme, the Rural Works Project (RWP, 1963-72) was designed to utilise the rural underemployment (surplus manpower) in building and improving rural infra-structure. The programme was conceptually based on the then internationally re-known Comilla Project in East Pakistan. It was closely tied up with the Basic Democracies institutions that were meant to find local remedies for local problems. As such it was an effort to evoke people's participation and by that to impart a higher momentum into local development in the rural sector. The RWP included a wide variety of works projects subject to some sectoral priorities to satisfy certain local needs of each district.

The Planning and Development Division of the Ministry of Finance provided broad policy guidance and supervision to the provinces at the national level. The Director of Projects in the Basic Democracies and Local Government Department was in charge at the provincial level. At the district level the Deputy Commissioner acted as Project Director and chairman of the District Council which gave that position a fairly high level of discretionary powers. The Tehsil Council processed the schemes and co-ordinated and supervised their implementation. The Union Councils assigned the task of completion to the project committees at the village level. Training and orientation courses were offered to both the officials and local leaders in newly established training institutions. The formation of project

committees on the basis of nomination/ consensus apparently was meant to involve the local population in both the project planning and implementation of the works projects.

As with the V-AID programme RWP operations were expanded rapidly, with institutional development and technical means not keeping pace. Adverse political conditions drastically reduced the scope of works during the 1969-72 period and Union Councils were also authorised to raise funds for the works projects in order to fill the gap in public funding. Administrative and financial powers were decentralised to some degree enabling both the Divisional and District Councils to sanction schemes up to some specified limits. Numerous good projects were completed through efficient project committees making full use of local resources at comparatively low cost in several districts.

The local council system of the Basic Democracies provided local support to the programme close to the grass-roots. However, insufficient attention was paid to up-grade the administrative and technical competence of the councils. Institutional capacities of the local councils for planning and development functions were not build up. The local council were more or less a support structure to raise voluntary contributions in the form of land, labour and materials for the aided self-help projects.

But most of the projects suffered from bad planning, irregular and inadequate supplies of essential materials and technicians, an unorganised system of project selection, poor workmanship, misappropriation of funds, etc. Most adversely, though, some powerful groups diverted the projects to their advantage. The vested interests were served through a variety of means, such as the choice of projects and technology but predominantly through the introduction of a contractor system. The contractor system not only changed the original nature of the programme but opened all doors for inviting large scale corruption into the programme. The selected projects finally turned out to be of little interest to the target groups.

The RWP, as a supporting programme, certainly made some contributions to village development. Through its road programme it opened markets to remote villages and created some, though temporal, employment for a part of the idle manpower in the countryside. As with the V-AID also the RWP only had little positive effect on the rural poor.

2.3 People´s Works Programme (PWP, 1972-1980) and Integrated Rural Development Programme (IRDP, 1972-1980)

2.3.1 Peoples Works Programme: With the establishment of the elected PPP Government under Ali Bhutto in 1972 the Peoples´s Work Programme (PWP, 1972-80) replaced the RWP. The projects under the PWP strategy covered schemes on road construction, school buildings, small irrigation dams, drinking water facilities, dispensaries, industrial homes for women, tree planting, brick-making, adult education centres, cottage industries, etc. The facilities were expected to arrest the mass exodus of the rural poor to the towns. The concept of the PWP was essentially designed to mobilise local people for productive projects of local significance at comparatively low capital cost and providing employment to surplus labour near the villages. The programme clearly emphasised on those local projects which could be completed in relatively short period and where the local population could fully participate.

The PWP was established as a national programme and as support to the newly launched Integrated Rural Development Programme (IRDP) which also was started in 1972 at a national scale. As it was intended from the beginning to conceptually and practically integrate the two programmes, but administrative competition and political turmoil delayed the integration. It was only under the military Government that the two programmes became institutionally integrated under the Local Government and Rural Development Division (LG&RDD). The financial allocations of Local Government, IRDP and PWP from both the provincial and federal government were pooled together and sub-allocated to the district council. The district council placed those funds at the disposal of the IRDP markaz council for the implementation of projects. This involved a shift of emphasis from centralised to decentralised planning.

However, the whole administrative machinery at the district level was really not geared to reinforce the PWP operations. Because of that there was an almost complete lack of understanding of the PWP philosophy at the field level. No government department seemed to sacrifice its autonomy for the sake of development work in rural areas. As a consequence, line agency co-ordination - particularly at the local level - was completely lacking. No linkages were developed between the PWP and Physical Planning and Housing Department, Central Works Department and other related departments with the result that there were tube-wells without electricity, schools without teachers and dispensaries without staff and medicines.

PWP as well as IRDP were deliberately launched to encourage people's participation in the development activities at the local level. After the abolition of Basic Democracies, the rural people were again detached from their means of participation. The peoples' elected local government institutions, which were meant to be pivotal to the participatory implementation of the PWP did not exist anymore and the project committees and district bodies were based on nominations by the political elite. Thus, the PWP activities were governed mainly by administrative orders and political interests of groups like landlords, legislators, contractors traders and civil servants. The Deputy Commissioners as chairmen of the district councils now played the dominant role in the district administration and many of them caused several distortions in the programme. The politically more influential persons were granted funds for projects of their choice and location which they used with little regard for the needs of the rural poor. As a result PWP lost its initial conceptual track. Corruption and misuse of public funds became common features and huge funds were wasted under fake schemes.

The PWP administration faced some serious problems such as disruption of continuity of policies at various levels, lack of logistical support to the staff, and the sense of insecurity felt by many of the staff and the consequent frustration owing to the absence of a career plan for them. There was no effective training for the officials in the PWP philosophy with the result that the high officials and field workers hardly had the necessary orientation. Also hardly any efforts were made for the training of local people as the projects were given to outside contractors, despite the fact that local management committees could have done the same work at much less cost and with more participation of labour from the local communities.

The PWP had a few cases of significant achievements scattered all over the country, but these cases were the exception. There is evidence that the overall actual impact of the programme was far below the aspirations and the intended target groups benefited least.

2.3.2 Integrated Rural Development Programme (1972-1980): The IRDP was formally launched as a national programme in July, 1972. The Federal Government directed the provinces to develop their own programmes to achieve the basic objectives suiting regional conditions. The IRDP was originally planned to gradually develop into a larger scale programme for which the conceptual guidance was to be developed by the Daudzai Pilot Project (near Peshawar). The Daudzai Pilot Project was implemented under the leadership of Shoaib Sultan Khan (the then Director of the Pakistan Academy for Rural Development, PARD) and supported by German Technical Assistance.

In the beginning the programme was under the Federal Minister for Food, Agriculture and Rural Development supported by Rural Development Council of officials from provincial Governments, elected members, progressive farmers and representatives of the private sector. Because this committee failed to deliver, it was replaced by the National Council for Local Government and Rural Development in 1976 with the Prime Minister as chairman; but also this body did not pursue its functions. Thus, from its inception the IRDP like the PWP lacked high level organisational and administrative support.

In the provinces a Rural Development Board was set up to provide necessary direction and support to the IRDP. The Chief Minister was its chairman and Ministers of the relevant line departments were members. In NWFP the Director General Rural Development was responsible for both the IRDP and PWP. No regional, divisional or district level IRDP offices were established but only a Project

Manager and a co-operative officer with some supporting staff were posted at the markaz level. All staff under the IRDP programme was on deputation from the mother department.

The Integrated Rural Development Programme (IRDP) was centred around the markaz concept as a unit of rural development administration to implement the program-me. The markaz was designed to develop ultimately into a viable institution for basic planning and development at the local level in order to ensure continuous accountability at both the village and markaz levels.

The development objectives of the IRDP were targeting on food self-sufficiency, on improving the socio-economic position of the majority of small and medium farmers, and on enhancing the quality of life of the rural poor in order to reduce the gap between the urban and rural areas. It underlined the need for an integrated and coordinated co-operation between the farmers, line departments, private sector and local bodies and was therefore designed as a multi-sectoral approach right from its beginning.

Every markaz was expected to promote the establishment of an effective delivery system of public services and farm inputs in a package and to ensure that they were made available to the small farmers. The primary role of IRDP, therefore, was to act as a facilitator to secure integration and co-ordination among line departments and establish linkages between the departments and the communities.

Apart from its facilitating and co-ordinating function the IRDP concept envisaged a promoting role in organising local participation. The programme was to involve local leaders and rural groups through the formation of village co-operatives and markaz co-operative federations in major activities like credit and input distribution and gave the members a voice in project management decision making. Adult literacy centres, community centres and industrial homes were meant to further provide opportunities for participation to the target groups. High priority was given to technical training and up-gradation of skills of rural cadres, using them as para-professionals to teach technical skills to other members of the co-operatives in the villages.

So far the IRDP programme appeared quite adequately designed and many of IRDP projects world-wide are still following an approach similar to the IRDP concept initiated in NWFP. However, the very same processes and shortcomings that already under-mined the previous programmes also affected the IRDP.

In the first instance and under heavy political pressure the initial concept of a slow and appropriately guided development process was soon abandoned and the IRDP was to cover a maximum area in the shortest possible time. As a result of this the provinces competed with each other in rapidly opening-up project areas. Thus, markaz selections were made arbitrarily and were often the outcome of political and bureaucratic pressures. The number of markaz rose from 65 in 1973 to 137 in 1978 and further up to 487 in 1980. Buildings, though, were constructed for only 64 markaz complexes of which 33 were in NWFP. Most of the IRDP centres lacked basic requirements of buildings, staff accommodation, equipment, farm machinery, transportation etc. and were under-staffed.

There was clear evidence that in many cases the IRDP staff acted as if they were still members of their mother line departments, which slackened co-operation and gave rise to jealousies between departments. Moreover, while many of the line departments posted their representatives at the markaz some of the major line departments did not - with the result that the desired multi-sectoral and integrated approach did not become effective.

Also the performance of the local organisations, despite some initial success, was not very promising. It was found that the office bearers who dominated the operations of co-operative societies, happened to be local businessmen, retired officials and medium class farmers. These groups were appropriating whatever little benefits the IRDP delivered. This was reinforced by the absence of elected local government bodies. Though politically IRDP was a prime concern for both the federal and provincial Governments the necessary bodies for local government were missing to provide political commitment to the programme at the local level.

The shortage of funds and financial uncertainties imposed another significant constraint on the IRDP. There was the failure to release allocated funds to the IRDP and its field offices in time. The allocations for RD were also not adequately publicised and the accounts were not properly maintained. This resulted in pilferage, wastage of funds and promoted corruption to a large extent.

Altogether also the impact of the IRDP programme was marginal for the rural poor. Medium class farmers with some education and influence dominated the markaz activities and were obtaining major benefits.

3   Summary Assessment of Rural Development 1952 to 1980

None of the programmes had the desired impact and despite all of them the pace of development in the rural areas was hardly affected by these programmes - with the majority of the rural poor benefiting least. Worse even, though vast experience of earlier efforts could have provided valuable insights into what worked and what failed, hardly any „lessons learned" were taken up from these experiences, at least not with-in the Government structures and the administration. In general, it appears that each new approach did start afresh and most of the programmes started from the same false prepositions and repeated the same mistakes of their predecessors.

Also none of the programmes was systematically monitored and hence also no systematic official evaluations were ever carried out. However, a few impact studies were done during the course of the programmes and a non-official Expert Group in 1975 evaluated the PWP. Also the donors evaluated that fraction of the German assisted IRDP programme. Whatever study there was made, they all concluded that in each programme the major beneficiaries were by and large the well-to-do farmers and that the programmes were strengthening the existing power structure in the countryside. Little was achieved in terms of increased farm production, income and welfare for the rural poor. There are many factors that contributed to that failure, the most important are:

- The federal Government lacked the necessary political will and power to implement the policy objectives of each programme at the village level - i.e. the betterment for the rural poor. Therefore, the organisational and administrative support for each programme from the national to the provincial level and within the provinces themselves was weak.

- Programme co-ordination for the multi-sectoral programmes V-AID and IRDP failed almost completely as both were expanded rapidly with little regard to the co-ordination requirements and the appropriate supply of technical, material and organisational inputs for each programme. The supply lines of the various line departments involved in each programme were inadequate, inefficient and irresponsible. The capacity for programme co-ordination was weak and fragile at different levels in all programmes at all times. The IRDP also did not succeed in achieving the desired degree of co-ordinating line departments at the local level. The single most common weakness of each programme was poor implementation capacity at the field level due to a strictly adhered departmental autonomy and mutual seclusion of the departments from each other with no powers on the part of the programme offices to do anything in this respect.

- Local participation being a core element in all the programmes with a growing importance in the later programmes PWP and IRDP failed to a large extent. Both the RWP and PWP in particular were operated more as a political than socio-economic programmes, hence both of them generally applied a top-down approach imposing a centralised pattern of decision-making for local level operations. Only in the period of the Basic Democracies some local political commitment through the elected Union Councils was generated and some participatory involvement emerged at the local level. That, however affected only the RWP whereas all other programmes were implemented in the absence of elected local bodies with no functional substitute that could have promoted local participation by other means. In all the programmes the prospective beneficiaries were never directly involved in both the project planning and implementation stages. Local participation in the aided self-help projects decreased over each subsequent programme. Only under the IRDP a bottom-up approach of decentralised decision-making from the local level was attempted to some extent. However, without democratic controls even these attempts were soon undermined by the rural elites taking over the lead in participatory bodies. With the reconstitution of the elected Union Councils in 1979 a

more genuine step for local participation was attempted, rather late, though, as both programmes, the PWP and IRDP, were terminated only 10 months later.

With the establishment of military rule in 1977 no large scale and country-wide RD programmes with a programme bound organisational set-up were started and also the ongoing programmes PWP and IRDP were phased out subsequently.

Nation-wide development programmes, though, continued. However, they were mostly implemented without comprehensive conceptual coverage and - at national scale - such programmes were basically channelled through the District and Union Council system of local Government re-established in 1979, or directly through disbursements to the political representatives, i.e. Senators, Ministers, Members of the National Assembly (MNAs) and Members of the Provincial Assembly (MPAs). The implementation of RD in the form of area covering, multi-sectoral project with clear cut concepts and mostly with international technical and financial assistance, was left to the provinces.

4.1 National Rural Development under the Military Government 1977 to 1988

■ Between 1977-1985, under the rule of General Zia-ul-Haq development efforts in rural areas at national scale were channelled through local councils of the newly strengthened Local Government system (non-party election of Union and District Councils were held in 1979, 1983 and 1987). Such efforts were funded from local resources, i.e. without donor support, and were implemented by the elected bodies of the Local Government system in a case by case manner of individual small scale projects, mainly in infrastructure.

■ With the Five Points Program 1985-1988 under the Prime Minister Mohammad Khan Junejo still under martial law, direct funding of small scale projects education, rural roads, drinking water, health and sanitation in rural areas was introduced by providing substantial budgets to the political representatives (Senators, Federal and Provincial Ministers, MPAs and MNAs). An annual allocation of Rs. 5 mill was made for direct funding of development works through Senators, Ministers and MNAs, and a budget of annually Rs. 2.5 mill to MPAs. With this move, project-bound funding was basically used to reinforce the power base for politicians with hardly any accountability or public involvement. The actual use of these budgets for project implementation was basically left to the discretion of the politicians who could approach line departments directly or even involve whoever they wanted, including private contractors, commonly members of their own family. Quite a substantial share of such allocations was, however, still channelled through the bodies of the Local Government system, which, being elected bodies, contributed to reinforce legitimacy of the politicians and increased their public backing in their constituencies.

4.2 National Rural Development under Civil Governments 1988 to 1999

■ With the first civil Government under Prime Minister Benazir Bhutto of the People´s Party (PPP) from 1988-1990 the system of budget allocations to politicians was basically maintained but a so-called People's Programme was added to it, again exclusively funded from Government resources. This programme of mainly small scale infrastructure projects was started to be implemented under the supervision of the Federal Government by District Committees that included some elected representatives but they were basically run by nominated People's Party representatives. The District Committees could commission the implementation to any Government department or any private agent. Another fairly large scale Community Uplift Programme was started in 1989 and basically implemented along the same lines. In 1991 the system of elected Local Government bodies - sought of having been part of the military government structure - were completely dissolved and replaced by District Councils of nominated representatives of line departments and local politicians under the Chairmanship of the Deputy Commissioner.

■ With the second civil government under Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif of the Muslim League (ML) from 1990-1993, the People`s Programme was replaced by a programme Tameer-e-Watan which basically continued the elements of the previous system under a new name and with different politically

determined beneficiaries. The programme was again funded from Government resources and implemented under supervision of the Federal Government by the Local Government system (now based on nomination), as well as by the MNAs and MPAs. Surprisingly the Community Uplift Programme started by Benazir Bhutto was continued.

■ The third civil Government again under Prime Minister Benazir Bhutto (PPP, from 1993-1996) revitalised the People's Programme; also the Community Uplift Programme was continued. Again sponsors and beneficiaries changed but the basically political structure of the programme was maintained.

All of these programmes were highly politicised and hardly established with sound rules of accountability and public control. All the programmes were focused on infrastructure schemes in a somewhat erratic manner and none of the programmes had an institutional setting for conceptual or planning works. Most of the MPs had mainly utilised these funds either for re-strengthening their existing vote banks or for acquiring new political principalities.

At the same time there had been a considerable degree of distraction for all the implementation agencies from their routine functions. The line agencies, in one way or the other, had to bow to the will of the politicians. Hence, these departments also became politicised. With every change of Government the departmental staff structures were also disturbed and bulk staff postings and transfers down to the lowest tier became a regular feature whenever the Government changed.

With the easily accessible development funds provided by MPs the routine development works of the line agencies came in direct competition with MP funded schemes. As these routine works had to follow established Government procedures whereas MP funded schemes were given free-hand the routine works practically came to a stand-still. During that period (from 1985 to 1996) most of the line agencies for infra-structure have largely assumed the role of work-contractors. Quite interestingly none of the executing line agency had ever carried out any impact assessment of these development works.

Worse even, rural development projects, supported by international donors, were struggling back to wall to convince village organisations to establish savings for their own projects when it was so easy for the villagers to "buy out" such project support from their respective MPAs or MNAs without or very little contribution on their own. Many of the short-comings in the attempts to establish participatory development at the local level can directly be attributed to this politicised system of development funding. It only worked occasionally that the management of ongoing rural development projects could successfully convince the local politicians to share their funds also in the interest of the projects.

While all of these programmes - by nature of the composition in their small-scale projects - were theoretically multi-sectoral, each of the individual projects at the local level were implemented as a single unit and the programmes in total were more or less a sequence of piecemeal operations of sectoral nature. With that the interests of the line departments for autonomy and seclusion from each other were properly served and - apart from shortfalls within the departments - the problems of inter-departmental co-ordination that had affected the previous programmes did not emerge.

■ The fourth civil Government again under Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif (ML, since January 1997) apparently is on the way of changing the national political programmes for development in the rural areas. As a first step - and forced to do so by the emerging fundamental financial crisis - the development budget allocation to politicians, dating back to the Junejo period of military government, was abandoned. No new programme was set up. Instead there are plans to revitalise the system of local government by announcing new elections for the reconstitution of representative Union and District Councils to be held in April 1998.

Again mainly due to the financial crisis, the new Government is putting high emphasis on participatory organisations at the local level. Less so for the sake of promoting the development concept underlying participatory approaches, but mainly to transfer some of the development responsibilities and budgets away from the Government to the villages. In particular, local fund raising through savings by the local people and the transfer of maintenance and operating costs of physical establishments to the villages is the major aim of the new policy. With this approach - though by a different motivation - some of the core concepts of rural development, i.e. self-reliance, self-help, localised responsibilities and participation in

general, are now moving to the centre of conceptualising the future rural development policy at the national level.

As a side effect of this new thinking the work of Non-Government Organisation (NGOs) is now much more appreciated by the Government, and partly also in the administration. NGOs had always advocated and worked for participation and self-reliance at the local level. A Government that is increasingly unable to finance rural development works, as it was used to in the past, is now blessing their work. This might be one of the reasons that despite numerous corruption reports and clear evidence of mismanagement, the government tried its best to cover up the matters related to big organisations like SRSC.

5.   Two Major Approaches To Rural Development

5.1   Background
With the termination of the two large-scale national programmes, PWP and IRDP, in 1980 and the subsequent vacuum left, the provinces were left on their own to initiate and implement new projects. However, in terms of the main-stream conceptual developments for rural development, the NWFP always had and still has somehow a lead function in Pakistan:

- The Pakistan Academy for Rural Development (PARD), founded in 1957 and operational since 1959, was established as an institute to guide the implementation of the national V-AID and later on the IRDP. PARD is situated in Peshawar, NWFP.
- The Daudzai Pilot Project that started in 1972 as brainchild of the famous Comilla Project of East Pakistan (now Bangladesh), took over a leading function for both the national PWP and the IRDP programmes that were in operation from 1972 to 1980. PARD again became involved as conceptual guide. Daudzai is a location near Peshawar in NWFP.
- The Aga Khan Rural Support Programme (AKRSP) that started in 1982 under the conceptual guidance of Shoaib Sultan (the former Director of PARD and mentor of the Daudzai Project), and the intellectual support of Dr. Akhter Hameed Khan (the former Director of the Comilla Project), is nowadays the mother-project for the mainstream conceptual developments in rural development of Pakistan, particularly concerning its presently two basic features: local participation and involvement of NGOs.
- The Sarhad Rural Support Corporation (SRSC), one of the leading RSPs for participatory rural development project implementation. It has now been named as Sarhad rural Support Programme (SRSP).
- Some of the rural development projects that have been started in Pakistan in the nineties and that was considered successful until massive corruption and mismanagement was unearthed before its closing was at one point advocated for replication elsewhere in Pakistan, i.e. the Mansehra Village Support Project (MVSP) and the Barani Area Development Project (BADP) under the Special Development Unit (SDU, with implementation support by SRSP).

- The Integrated Rural Development Project Mardan (IRDP Mardan) under the LGE&RD had - since 1993 - developed a unique approach to participatory development. Though that approach lacked widespread public recognition (a result of the low profile public relations of the project team), the ideas and approaches generated and applied in Mardan have led to the conceptual development of the unique model presented in this book.

5.2   Multi-sector RD Project Design and Participation
In Pakistan the conceptual remainders of IRDP projects, the debate in the international aid scene on poverty-focused rural development in general, and the concepts of multi-sectoral project design and popular participation in particular, had lead to a situation that almost all internationally funded projects in rural areas since the early 80ies were based on a multi-sectoral project design and the involvement of the local communities in project implementation. However, the actual field application of such intentions was hampered in many ways by a number of factors many of which had their roots in the historical developments.

5.2.1 Political Programmes: That was already the case in the implementation of the politically inspired programmes run through the Ministers, MNAs and MPAs that were started with the Junejo Five Points Programme and continued as Peoples Programme and Tameer-e-Watan thereafter. These programmes were meant to be "participatory" by the involvement of the machinery of Local Government, i.e. the elected representative local bodies during the period of military rule and through the same bodies, now established by nominations or as purely local administrative bodies of the LGE&RDD, under the civil Governments thereafter. Though these programmes were propagated as "participatory" there was no established concept on how participation was to be pursued. These programmes, as described above, were basically intended to re-enforce the public image of the ruling Governments and their political primaries. Participation, thus, usually ended once the communities had delivered their share in free labour in the implementation of such projects.

Moreover, in many development programmes in the name of poverty alleviation and community participation, the development schemes have been done for the political elite as well as high ranking officials from the government departments without any involvement of the community at all. As the newspaper reports indicate (The Frontier Post investigative report January 9-12, 2001 for instance), SRSC delivered PI schemes to politicians as well as officials from SDU under the cover of fake community organisations.

5.2.2 Planning Procedures: Another factor that has had and still has a strong negative impact in genuine local participation must be seen in the planning procedures adopted for Government run projects. Pakistan has had and still has a fairly rigidly designed standard procedure for project planning and implementation, the end-product of which is a PC-1, or project implementation document. This document requires detailed physical and financial prescriptions for project implementation and is seen by the Government machinery as a "Holy Book" that has to be followed down to the last digit. Because many of the donor-funded projects were and are on a loan base, the PC-1 had regularly to include cost-benefit analyses to economically justify investments in view of loan repayments. The latter was reinforced by also donor requirements for aid justification. Such cost-benefit analyses can meaningfully be accomplished only on the basis of pre-determined physical outputs or any other pre-determined tangible project benefit in economic terms. As a result of that, projects were to be implemented in an executive manner, i.e. predetermined targets had to be achieved at any rate. The participatory element in such PC-1s most commonly was also designed in view of the physical targets of the project, i.e. communities were supposed to contribute voluntary labour and cash in the establishment, and to take over operation and maintenance costs after completion of a project.

Project planners and implementers were always convinced that what they "are bringing to the people", i.e. rural roads, water-supply, schools etc. are "goods things" by definition. They perceived that - because of their "goods things" and good intentions - the communities would be enthusiastic to participate. For the intended participation of local communities - regularly not very familiar with Government requirements and driven by substantially different desires than what was prescribed in the PC-1s - that approach had somehow quite adverse affects.

In the beginning of such projects and often with heavy spoon-feeding by the project (also necessary to compete with the parallel political programmes) community participation actually took place. However, it faded as soon as the communities became aware that they were being treated as a means for project implementation and not as subjects of development. Regularly, community groups that were established on the basis of accomplishing a prescribed target of the project and not on the basis of their own interest did not sustain. Examples for such rural development projects are the early projects established under the PE&D/SDU, i.e. the Gadoon Project and under the LGE&RDD the IRDP Mardan up to 1992.

Up to the present day that sort of "community participation" still is solidly rooted in the minds of many project planners and can still be found in current PC-1s. Still many projects, primarily sector projects in rural infrastructure, health, education, sanitation and the like are planned and implemented under such vision of "participation." Examples here are the Community Infrastructure Project (CIP) under LGE&RDD and the on-going projects under the PHED. Unfortunately, many of the NGOs that worked with the government or who followed target-oriented approaches are calling the same

practices as community participation. In most cases, only two or three community members identify a PI scheme and the NGO field staff prepares a resolution with thumb impressions and signatures of 20-25 community members to show that it is a genuine need of the whole community. In many cases such schemes have not even been implemented and the allocated funds have been taken from the community to show them as micro-credit recovery of the defaulters. It helps the NGO show its high recovery rate and the community members gets off the hook without paying the default amount of the micro-credit.

5.2.3 Target Group Selection: Another major issue that defeated genuine participatory strategies resulted from the target group selection procedure which - for the sake of fulfilling international aid policies to reach the rural poor - were imposed by many donors (prominently ADB and IFAD) on strict poverty criteria. Not only that the application of such criteria involved high survey efforts, time losses and all sorts of data manipulation. Worse even, the standard application of such criteria defeated their original intention.

While rural poverty affects the whole of an area it does not affect all people living in a village to the same extent. The idea of 75 per cent coverage by the poverty alleviation organisation in a Union council doesn't make sense in that regard. However, despite socio-economic differentiation within the villages, the village as such is still the community with its internal social structures, norms and values guiding the day-to-day life of the community. When adopting statistically defined poverty criteria to identify the "poor target groups" it regularly happens that such socially defined village structures are artificially by-passed. One of the results of such procedures as preparation of "portfolio of opportunities" is that their application may create (and in many cases actually has created) social disturbance and conflict within the villages. Groups artificially built in by-passing traditional village structures are usually short-lived and can hardly be kept for any other purpose than the one that had brought them into existence – micro-credit or a scheme. Another result is that such focused target group selection counteracts the identification and implementation of such projects which have a bearing on all community members or which are of relevance in a broader perspective exceeding the immediate target group interest.

5.2.4 Sectoral Projects: Apart from the projects directly designed as multi-sectoral rural development there were and are many other, sectoral projects in the rural areas in which participation is promoted through other smaller NGOs. Primarily in these sectoral projects there are basic shortfalls in the way how participation is pursued. Unfortunately these features are characteristic for sectoral projects up to the present day:

- Almost each individual sectoral project promotes its own village forum; most of them are single-purpose organisations. For example, there are water user associations for on-farm water management, project committees for drinking water supply and LGE&RD schemes, school and health boards and committees, and village development committees in forestry.

- Quite often different agencies/projects involved in the same sector or in the same area are offering different terms of partnership to the participatory groups; remarkably, this phenomenon can also be observed in the same village. This happens, most of the time, even with bigger programmes as well. In Mardan area, the organisations formed by Pak-German IRDP, are being taken over by NRSP at a time when IRSP is already working with them. The community members are given different kinds of registers and told that they are from now on registered with NRSP as it can offer them credit and other packages whereas others can none.

These observations imply that in most of the sectoral projects, participation is still basically seen as a tool for implementing sectoral objectives or achieving the target set by the donors for the respective NGOs. It was and still is a quite normal feature that - as soon as one of the "participatory" projects was completed - the respective organisation disappeared. The thousands and thousands of organisations reported by the RSPs actually do not exist on the ground, except a few "model" organisations to which the donors and other visitors are taken on frequent basis. The problem here is that neither the government, nor the donors has any mechanism to practically verify the existence of thousands of organisations – which in most cases happen to be fake as proved by some natives in the MVSP-SRSC area – and execution of hundreds of the development schemes one by one.

Unfortunately the diversity in the approaches to community participation within the sectoral programmes (prominently in the departments for Irrigation, Agriculture, PHED, Education, Forestry) must also - to a certain extent - be attributed to the donors. Each donor supported sectoral project is regularly designed as an individual entity without taking much note of participatory approaches adopted in other sectors or even in other projects operating in the same area. This is supported in that each individual donor has its own rules and concepts on how to pursue participatory strategies.

Such approaches that were (and still are) driven by donor requirements had easy chances to be adopted in the respective line departments. This is primarily so because of a lacking overall policy on participatory rural development, leaving the line departments and NGOs on their own to pursue whatever suits them and their donors in promoting local participation. Also PE&D so far has failed to design a policy that could be taken as a binding concept on how participation is to be promoted - for the line departments as well as for project negotiations with the donors and its implementation with the NGO. Strong monitoring systems need to be in place to avoid malpractices in the guise of genuine community participation.

In summary one can say that despite good intentions for community participation most of it failed because all the features that characterised Government structures in the past, and that had delivered their share to earlier failures, were continued unabated. In particular, there is little or no recognition that from the point o view of the villagers their development problems cannot be compartmentalised according to the structure of the Government line departments. Many other projects like MVSP failed because the corrupt in the NGOs were fully backed up by the management and BoD in the NGO and their corrupt partners in the government. Despite inquiry after inquiry, despite all the fact lying bare to the public eyes, despite numerous witnesses and sold evidence still on the ground, no action has been taken either by the government nor by the donors.

The recognition of what the villagers need is based on the fact that the problem structure within the village population is the root cause for the whole definition of multi-sectoral approaches. If the definition of development requirements is left to the village people and not to project-planners, the multi-sectoral approach will be constituted automatically according to the needs and requirements of the people. Thus, in organising and empowering communities through an effective promotion of genuine local level participatory organisation many small sectoral projects are becoming "integrated" by the nature of local requirements. This way of thinking implies that participation and multi-sector approaches are not just two different aspects in rural development project design but that genuine participation and community empowerment is the most effective way to comprehensively approach the multi-facetted development problems at the local level.

6. Rural Development Strategies and the NGOs

The situation on what happened to the multi-sectoral approach to rural development and the unsatisfactory developments in promoting local participation was critically observed in the donor community. Towards the end of the 80s a level of frustration was reached that called for some radical changes. The path of change that was actually taken had its rooting in the relationships established in the mid 80s between some international NGOs and the infant NGO movement that had already started in Pakistan in the late 70s.

The NGO movement in Pakistan was originally an indigenous development based on private initiatives. Already in the early 80s quite a number of small community based or community oriented NGOs emerged, many of them welfare oriented providing social services to the rural poor, others particularly focusing on women, and again others approaching developmental and/or environmental issues. With these initiatives a multitude of different approaches and strategies developed at the local level, all of them, though, had a strong element of genuine community participation. Therefore, - while some of the private sector donors were already active in the field of smaller NGOs - the idea of seeking NGO relationships attracted also donors dealings with Government channelled development aid. It was soon commonplace within the donor community that one of the most attractive means to overcome ongoing frustrations with Government run projects would be in the formal

involvement of NGOs in the operation of larger scale area development projects. Since then the initially more or less unguided development in the NGO sector became more structured through the promotion of Support NGOs by international donors and some active members in the bureaucracy.

There were also two other factors - though negative on their own - which had worked in favour of establishing genuine participatory approaches at the local level:

- First of all a new generation had emerged in the villages that had been brought up in a period of continued political disturbance during which large scale development programmes were implemented through the Government line departments. That generation had experienced numerous failures of such development programmes which were implemented the least to their benefit but the most to serve the interest of the political elites. There is now a realistic assessment among the poor people of what they can expect from Government, and what they must attain on their own.

- For the government, the practical implications of the financial crisis, emerging in the mid 80s and prevailing during the 90ss, has evoked policy reviews on the design and implementation of rural development projects. The Government was inevitably driven to mobilise development resources that could contribute to relax financial stress on the budget. As a result, some of the provincial governments, like that of NWFP, identified the NGOs, who had access to the people in the villages, as a potential partner to mobilise such resources from within the village population itself.

While over the recent years quite a number of NGOs that were supporting a genuine participatory approach to rural development have emerged, most of them - in one way or the other - owe their basic concept to the Aga Khan Rural Support Programme (AKRSP). Two of the major Support NGOs, SRSP and NRSP, are directly attributing their existence factually, conceptually and in their leading personnel to the AKRSP. Finally, there was one Government run project, the IRDP Mardan under the LGE&RDD, that has developed its own and – compared to the AKRSP/SRSC NGO approaches – very unique approach to genuine participation and community empowerment through institution building. Though applied yet only on a fairly small scale, the specific features of that approach are deserving a closer analysis.

7.   Comparative analysis of the two main approaches

In Pakistan rural development projects already started in 1952 and - under different project titles and partly differing approaches - were implemented at a national scale until the early eighties. Despite a long history of dedicated efforts for rural development and sound concepts framing the rural development approaches, though, Pakistan today is looking back on a vast experience of failures in rural development.

Until the early 80ies four major Government rural development programmes were implemented at a national scale, namely: the Village Agricultural and Industrial Development Programme (V-AID, 1952-61); the Rural Works Programme (RWP, 1963-72); the People's Works Programme (PWP, 1972-80) and parallel later integrated to it; and the Integrated Rural Development Programme (IRDP, 1972-1980).

In all of these programmes the target groups were identified as the rural poor. The programmes also were designed as multi-sectoral with strong elements of participatory involvement of the target groups. None of the programmes had the desired impact and despite all of them, the pace of development in the rural areas was hardly affected by these programmes - with the majority of the rural poor benefiting least. There are many factors that contributed to that failure, the most important are:

- The most common weakness of each programme was poor implementation capacity at the field level due to a strictly adhered departmental autonomy and mutual seclusion of the departments from each other with no powers on the part of the respective programme offices to do anything in this respect. Hence, real multi-sectoral programme implementation hardly ever materialised.

- Local participation was a core element in all the programmes with a growing conceptual importance in the later programmes (PWP and IRDP). However, the underlying philosophy for local participation, i.e. to create the notion of self-reliance and self-help at the local level, also largely failed. More or less all of the programmes were operated as political rather than socio-economic programmes. Hence, generally a top-

down approach imposing a centralised pattern of decision-making for local level operations was applied. Although the IRDP attempted a bottom-up approach of decentralised decision-making it soon also failed and the rural elites were taking over the lead in the IRDP participatory bodies.

With the establishment of military rule in 1977 no large scale and country-wide rural development programmes with a programme bound organisational set-up were started and also the ongoing programmes PWP and IRDP were phased out. Nation-wide development programmes, though, were continued under both the military and the civil Governments with funding from regular budget sources.

- Under the military rule (1977-1988) development efforts in rural areas at national scale were channelled through the elected local councils of the newly strengthened Local Government system. Some infant but genuine local participation emerged during that period. With the Five Points Program 1985-1988, however, funding of small scale projects in education, rural roads, drinking water, health and sanitation in rural areas was introduced by providing substantial budgets directly to the political representatives. This again undermined localised responsibilities of the elected councils.
- Under the civil governments from 1988-1997 the system of budget allocations to politicians was basically maintained and some new political programmes were added. These programmes of mainly small scale infrastructure projects were implemented by District Committees that were basically run by nominated representatives of the respective ruling party.

None of these programmes had an institutional setting for conceptual or planning works. While all of these programmes were theoretically multi-sectoral and involved management structures for line agency co-ordination at the local level, each of the individual projects at the local level were implemented as a single unit and the programmes in total were more or less a sequence of piecemeal operations of a sectoral nature.

These programmes were also meant to be "participatory" by the involvement of the machinery of Local Government, i.e. the elected representative local bodies during the period of military rule and through the same bodies, now established by nominations or as purely local administrative bodies of the LGE&RDD, under the civil Governments thereafter. However, there was no concept on how participation was to be pursued. In all the programmes the prospective beneficiaries were not involved in project planning and participation usually ended once the communities had delivered their share in free labour in the implementation of small scale schemes under such programmes.

Also the element of community participation has a long rooting in the history of rural development in Pakistan and is closely related to the multi-sectoral approach. Subsequently the way how local/community participation has been, and in many cases still is, practised in Government run projects is also affected by the traditions that have been build up in this historical process. Because Government services are organised along sectoral lines, project planners always thought that a combined/coordinated provision of the different Government services could adequately address village development needs. Thus, community organisation were always built along the specific requirements of the individual line departments involved in project implementation in the rural areas, i.e. one village organisation for a water scheme, another organisation for a sanitation scheme, still another one for an irrigation channel etc.

Little or no recognition was made that from the point of view of the villagers their development problems cannot be compartmentalised according to the division of tasks in the Government line departments. Subsequently participatory village organisations that are build on task specific purposes regularly did and do not meet the needs of the villagers. It was a quite normal feature that - as soon as one of the "participatory" projects was completed - the respective local organisations disappeared.

7.1 The NGOs and the Change in the Rural Development Paradigm

It was only with the establishment of the NGOs in the late 70s that a new way of thinking emerged on how rural development and community participation can more effectively be promoted. In short the new way of thinking entailed that it is not the multi-sectoral project organisation but the establishment and effective empowerment of multi-purpose local level organisations that can promote an integrated pursuit of the rural development objectives. While in the beginning actual field operations of the NGOs in the rural areas were marginal, the spread of these ideas and the involvement of NGOs in actual larger

scale project implementation rapidly gained momentum since the mid 80s supported by two parallel but factually reinforcing developments in Pakistan.

- Like today's frustration with the mismanagement in the development NGOs, the situation on what happened to the multi-sectoral approach to rural development and the unsatisfactory developments in promoting local participation was critically observed in the donor community in the eighties. Towards the end of the 80s a level of frustration was reached that called for some radical changes. It was soon commonplace within the donor community that one of the most attractive means to overcome ongoing frustrations with Government run projects would be in the formal involvement of NGOs in the operation of larger scale area development projects. Since then the initially more or less unguided development in the NGO sector became more structured through the promotion of Support NGOs by international donors.
- For some provincial governments, like the Government of NWFP, the practical implications of the financial crisis, emerging in the mid 80s and prevailing during the 90s, has evoked policy reviews on the design and implementation of rural development projects. The Government was inevitably driven to mobilise development resources that could contribute to relax budgetary stress. As a result of this the GoNWFP identified the NGOs, who had access to the people in the villages, as a potential partner to mobilise such resources from within the village population itself.

7.2 Current Approaches to Rural Development

Many NGOs and other projects developed their own operational concepts. Today there is quite a diversity in the way how such general principles are pursued in different projects. Despite a fair diversity in the details of the operational approaches of the various NGOs and concepts applied in different projects, all the approaches are still basically following the prescriptions originating from the AKRSP. This implies that (1) the development process has to be based on village level organisations from which higher level institution building is to be promoted, that (2) group capital for development purposes is generated from within village based organisations, that (3) effective communication systems are to be created within the villages and between village organisations and the private and public service system, and finally, that (4) the village organisations are enabled to effectively and sustainably manage their natural resources.

Within the diversity of different operational approaches there are, however, only two concepts that represent two different poles in between which the conceptual diversity for participatory rural development is located. These two approaches are:

- the concept applied by the Rural Support Programmes (RSPs) that are involved in the implementation of many rural development project (SRSP, NRSP, PRSP, BRSP) and
- the concept applied in the only German supported rural development project, the IRDP Mardan, that phased out in December 2000.

(a) The Rural Support Programmes (RSPs): RSPs owe their existence factually, conceptually and in their leading personnel to the AKRSP and still are related to the AKRSP. In the initial period of the work of RSPs there was some sort of "blueprint" enthusiasm on the large scale replication of the AKRSP concept. However, changing circumstances and growing knowledge on how this approach works under different conditions have lead to considerable adjustments of the RSPs approach.

Programmatically, RSP operations start from the preposition that all development efforts should encourage peoples initiative. The RSPs claimed to be strictly acting as catalysts for community based development initiatives from their own resources and to facilitate access to resources outside the community. However, the experience shows many flaws in the way these programmes have been practiced. The initial conceptual package i.e. **social organisation** through project employed Social Organisers to initiate collective action of village groups, promotion of **Productive Investments** (PIs) and **generation of capital** through regular and collective savings; and human resource development at the village level

has been extended and redefined over the past years. The RSPs policy - while maintaining the core concept - focuses more on: the **development of** multi-purpose **VOs**; mobilisation of **local resources**; establishment of **linkages** between VOs and development agencies; more prominent roles for village activists, and greater **use of credit** as an instrument for village development.

As in the AKRSP also RSPs promote the group building process in conjunction with the implementation of a Productive Investment (PI). Very similar to the AKRSP, community participation in designing and implementing a PI project plays a vital role in the consolidation of the village level organisations. Basically, a PI is a 'one time' grant, now given only by, Sarhad Rural Support Programme (SRSP) to the VO which undertakes a priority project for the community as a whole. However, the identification as to what a group wants to do is now much more left to a community/group-internal process of definition than it used to be in the past. Moreover, the nature of PI investment is not confined to an 'asset-based', i.e. physical infrastructure project but could also be more 'activity-based'.

Theoretically, this sounds very practical and encouraging. However, time has exposed faulty implementation of these theories. PI in the first place remained "productive." Secondly, in most cases the funds allocated for PIs have once more been transferred to the bank accounts of SRSP to make up for the default credit of the same communities. Thirdly, in most cases, the funds allocated and withdrawn for PIs never actually got utilised and end up in the pockets of corrupt officials and their accomplices in the community. The matters actually get worse when the RSPs follow a target oriented approach of forming certain number of organisation, disbursing certain amount of credit in a specific time and also to do specific number of PIs within an already set time frame. These pressures forces the staff to not only go for fake community organisations, consisting of just a few collaborators, but also for the fake PI schemes and other wrong practices. Mansehra Village Support Programme is the prime example of this kind of practices, which otherwise are pervasive in all the programme areas of SRSP. (For details see, Frontier Post, investigative report, January 9-12, 2001)

Also the way how groups are to be organised was shifted away from the direct approach through project-paid professional Social Organisers to the indirect approach of promoting Village Activists. This methodology also didn't prove worthwhile due to lack of capacity of the community activists. Nor have we seen an area from where RSPs have phased out and left the process of mobilisation to the community activists.

As reported by a GTZ consultant, Dr. Knut M. Fischer, in 1998, "SRSC [now SRSP] has also reviewed its previous optimism concerning the promotion of higher level organisational structures based on village organisations. SRSC experiences have shown that processes of higher level institution building take much longer than the normal duration of a project and are facing serious limitations from structural conditions in the Government and private service systems and the donors. To overcome such potential shortfalls for the sustainability of the participatory approach the SRSC, therefore, adopted the concept that it is better to make the lower level organisations really viable before promoting higher level organisations. Therefore, SRSC provides back-up services (post project support units) to the village organisations through its own setting after a project has been terminated. That service will be based on a communication system between Village Activists, the SRSC support-unit and all other external agencies." Saying is easy than done. Keeping all the facts in mind, one comes to the conclusion that formation and consolidation of supra-village level institution is impossible for RSPs without a coherent approach and strategy. How would they do so without external funding, if RSPs could not make the village based organisation viable in more than a decade time, with more than Rupees 60 million a year administrative expenses.

According to NRSP report 1993 (page-4) the RSPs have been mostly created with public funds for working in rural development as NGOs. They are working in the area of rural development with a central office and a Board of Directors. The BoD members are generally as much alien and unaccountable to the communities in which these programmes work as the management and mid-level professionals. The operations are launched in scattered rural areas, not necessarily contiguous to the Head offices in the large urban centres. The RSPs are working as agents for delivery of government services in various government programmes and are receiving funds from donors for independent projects as well. In some cases, like SRSC's work in Mansehra region, even when the members of

community organisations are less than twenty thousand after half a decade in a population of more than a million the district is declared to be covered (Statistical briefs-Mansehra Region: SRSC, 1997; 12). Like other RSPs, SRSC's presentation of itself as distinct from the government in the rural populations allowed it to start from a positive image, but the latest revelations about fake community development schemes, fake organisations and other malpractices in the same "fully covered" district shows that things refuse to remain mismanaged and secret for far too long. Criticism of the government agencies gave RSP's the opportunity to don the attire of a friend of the people, which on their behalf intercedes with the government, but its burnt offices in Karak, public protest on roads in Charsadda and continued investigations in Mansehra region are tantamount to the fact that public has lost trust in the operations of RSPs and there is a need to introduce an alternative and reliable model for rural development.

The need for RSPs as intermediary bodies is justified on behalf of the people that they need social guidance. Since the government's weak delivery of services will always require such support, the RSPs are also agents, which will be required over long-term and with an ever increasing expansion to other regions. These objectives only differ from the political parties in that the RSPs do not have to be accountable either to the community, government or to the donors. Poor implementation of MVSP, the subsequent complaints of the community and pathetic response from the government and donors is a sign of this advantage to RSPs. Moreover, the sway that an RSP can have on governmental decision-making can transcend changes in political administration and therefore laugh iii the face of the process of natural selection that helps bring in the best in political systems.

The government agencies are formal organisations that are created to provide specific e services to the society. Due to the needs to cater for transparency and equity their selection procedures are stiff and give precedence to providing equal opportunity to citizens for employment more than any other objectives. The process of these agencies also gets defined to the last details which the civil servants have to follow to allow for accountable and rule based decision making. This is a tough prescription. The NGOs on the other hand can avoid stiff selection criteria and rule bound decision making arid respond to the situations in flexible manner. Their decision-making levels are nearer to the beneficiaries and therefore can respond to the situations in a better manner.

The large structures and the agenda of reaching every village require more mechanisms for linkages with central offices. For instance, its monitoring and evaluation mechanism is so weak that it kept on reporting hundreds of the community development schemes as complete, which do not even exist on the ground. If the claims of covering districts and provinces have to be seriously considered to mean providing services to a predominant proportion of population then the establishment will need to grow. Even in the present state, the RSPs have lost the advantages of smaller NGOs, and can never be as cost effective and sustainable as a representative NGO could be. Their centralized decision making of providing services effects the flexibility for provision of services. The decentralisation is as good a decentralisation as in the government organisations with the district and tehsil offices, but through exercise of control over the Regional Programme Managers hired and fired from the Head Offices. There can never be totally de-linked regional offices and structures as in that case they would become totally unaccountable entities, which would be better off calling themselves independent NGOs rather than regional offices of a RSP.

We need to seriously look into the approach of forming thousands of community organisations without building their capacity to form identifiable representative entities. The village organisations are given an incentive in the form of micro-credit or micro-infrastructure project according to their identified need. The depth of the impact requires further discussion. However, it is evident that this approach will never empower the target communities. Although it helps to supplement the state's efforts in delivery of services, but for how long? Even efforts of forming organisations have met rough waters as in case of Agriculture Development Component of Swabi SCARP.[25] The immediate incentives for formation of water users associations were lacking while associations of farmers were to be created for managing irrigation watercourses. It was only after introduction of micro-credit into the process that the aim of forming the organisations could be pursued with some encouraging results. The management of

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[25] Salinity Control and Reclamation Project: against the requirement for forming 11 R8 water users associations during the original project duration of 1994-1998, only 304 could be made till June 1998 (Source Official records of Chief Agriculture, PE&DD).

BHUs[26] and schools do not have enough mobilisation incentive for the communities to work as foci of organisation in perpetuity. Rational human individuals would on average find pursuit of personal gains and community service at different indifference curves. However, this would be subject to the assumption that the latter is not coupled with a good salary.[27]

It is argued that the thousands of community organisations created through RSPs can he linked up to formal decision making institutions of the state.[28] They can be linked up to provincial government departments if they work in a centralised arrangement. [29] Linkages can be developed with local government agencies if decentralisation is preferred. In certain scenarios in which a puritanical mobilisation is favoured they are argued to form their own federating bodies with lower echelons providing representation to higher echelons.[30] Hence it seemingly can fit to the taste of every shade of opinion.

The arrangement seems to be the dream of a salesman but can be a nightmare for a policy maker for obvious reasons. In the first case, developing the linkages of all the micro-level organisations to the government departments and other actors at the macr0-level is impossible. Secondly, the linkages as such do not resolve the problem unless the federating bodies of the lower and higher level community institutions have a developed structure and sectoral systems to work together as a representative NGO. Therefore, even when satisfying cosmetic achievement can be demonstrated in the form of numerous community organisations and the line agencies personnel attending their meetings, the issue of empowerment or at least responsiveness in service delivery cannot he answered. In its linkages with the local governments the situation does not become very comprehensible.

Although reservations have been expressed by some analysts to the formation of federating units of village organisations, but we have to keep in mind that there is a difference in just federating them and in forming multi-level institutions with proper systems and structures to act an a single representative NGO. The meso-level institutions to be developed under the IRSP model given in the second chapter of this book would not be unrepresentative of the communities, whose name they would bear. The procedures set forth for this purpose, as explained in chapter 3, would make the upper level umbrella bodies purely representative of the community-based organisations and the resulting representative NGO would be under the compulsion to remain sensitive to the interests of every group and individual down below for them. A formal secret ballot election and removal mechanism would ensure this aspect of the unique rural development model promoted by IRSP.

(b) The IRDP Mardan approach: Since its commencement in 1984 the IRDP Mardan underwent a number of conceptual changes. The project started with an approach closely related to the IRDP concept of the earlier days, was then re-conceptualised to incorporate elements of the AKRSP approach, and - since 1993 - operates under what is called The New Approach.

The new approach started with deliberately acknowledging traditional cultural values and norms as well as Islamic values, prevalent social structures (khel, cham), traditional institutions (village Jarga, Loya Jarga), and traditional communication fora (e.g. Hujra). This concept was developed on an initial survey that found elements in the traditional social structure fitting very well to the modern development concepts of participation and self-help. The identification and implementation of any scheme was perceived feasible and sustainable only if it is embedded into such existing structures. The approach of promoting traditional social structures to engage in a "modern" (i.e. development oriented) activity was seen to enhance the potential of traditional social structures over and above their traditional functions.

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[26] BHUs: Basic Health Units are service delivery facilities for basic health services. The ongoing Social Action Programme Project-Il envisages involvement of beneficiaries in management of BHUs and Elementary Schools.

[27] Dinosaur for the shepherd, unpublished paper by Musharraf Rasool Cyan

[28] NRSP (1993): First Annual Report. National Rural Support Programme. Islamabad.

[29] Ahmad. S. (2000): 'Rural Development Programmes: Setting the Focus Right', The daily News International. Monday February 7, 2000.

[30] Novib (1998): Sarhad Rural Support Corporation, NWFP. End of Phase Evaluation. SRSC. Peshawar.

The dedicated reference of the project approach to cultural values and social norms within the target groups was not only meant to facilitate genuine participation of the people in problem analysis, planning, institution building and the implementation of development activities. In addition, the underlying development concept anticipated that in the medium term all development oriented village activities could and would be initiated and managed through the traditional social system. By using an existing traditional supra-village institution, a solid basis was found upon which meso-level institution building was pursued. The basic objective of such institution building processes was to empower people to successfully act towards the political and administrative environment according to their own requirements.

The institution building process initiated by the project entailed four tiers starting with (1) Village Organisations, from which (2) Umbrella Organisations are build, that (3) build up registered NGOs, to finally reach (4) the establishment of a Regional Council for Development (RCD). The RCD is meant to be the supreme rural development body at the district level or Divisional. The function of the RCD is to establish linkages with national/international donor agencies, line departments, institutional development banks, administration, government, elected political representatives, district council, etc. to co-ordinate planning and developmental efforts at the regional level and to undertake efforts for the acquisition of development schemes/funds from or through above mentioned linkage agencies. After phasing out of IRDP, these VOs, RDOs and RCD have become a local, representative NGO that have taken over the role of IRDP in name of Integrated Regional Support Programme-Mardan. It is going through a consolidation phase and this model would be ready for replication in the near future.

The second major pillar of the IRDP Mardan concept was the creation of group capital in the form of Village Development Funds (VDF). Initially the VDFs received their basic cash funding from project sources (as grants) that are attributed to the accomplishment of schemes and in a specific proportion to the self-help component in scheme implementation. The organisations could utilise the group capital for a multitude of purposes which are, though, mainly to be directed towards investments from which the group can generate income to make the VDF sustainable and to further enhance the capital stock.

7.3 Core Conceptual and Institutional Issues for Rural Development

7.3.1 Conceptual Issues

Given the magnitude of rural poverty in Pakistan and the need to appropriately address these problems there is also a need to identify a direction for a future more unified approach for rural development strategies. The RSP and the IRDP Mardan approaches offer perspectives along which lines such a unified strategy for participatory rural development can be developed. In order to identify a suitable path along which such conceptual development can be designed, the core elements of the two approaches were compared against the developmentally core issues:

- whether project impacts are **sustainable**, i.e. have a lasting effect on economic and social development in the poorer sections of the rural society without continued support by a project, (Sustainability has two aspects, (1) the viability of the village level organisations that are meant to promote village development, and (2) overall sustainability, i.e. the long-term functional effectiveness of the higher level institutions that are meant to continue the liaison and linkage function to the external service system and the donors.)
- whether project approaches are **replicable**, i.e. are designed and implemented in a way that allows for large scale application in order to achieve a tangible impact in relation to the magnitude of rural poverty.

The comparative analysis of the IRDP Mardan and RSP approaches against these two core issues has shown:

Sustainability of the IRDP Mardan approach: As concerns the viability of village level organisations the IRDP Mardan approach took advantage of the stability in the traditional cultural and social norm control system. In linking development functions – like the generation of group capital (in

the form of Village Development Funds) – to such traditional structures there was a high likelihood of such groups to sustain without continued external support. And we are witnessing their sustainability. They exist in an organised form even after phasing out of IRDP.

Under the IRDP Mardan approach overall sustainability, i.e. the continuation of relationships to the external service system and the donors, was thought to be taken care of by the promotion of higher level participatory organisations. Such higher level organisations (Umbrella Bodies, local NGOs and the Regional Council for Development), were supposed to accomplish such tasks that – during the project period – were pursued by the project organisation itself, i.e. acquisition of funds and services to keep the larger scale development operations of the VOs going. In this respect the analysis has shown that such expectations vested into the higher level organisations are not unrealistic as perceived by some analysts.

Given (1) the magnitude of services and funds required and (2) the stability of administrative rulings in the government system and (3) the procedures for fund acquisition from the donors, it was considered fairly unlikely that such higher level organisations to act effectively to the extent anticipated by the IRDP Mardan approach. Continued functioning of these organisations after phasing out of IRDP and their linkages with the government line agencies, donors, other NGOs and financial sustainability has proved all these assumptions wrong. These organisations are functioning with fairly low levels of fund and service not only for the benefit of the VOs but also working for further consolidating a unique rural development model that could be replicated elsewhere in Pakistan. Pak-German IRDP couldn't pay full attention to developing management capacity of these organisation, which were at best representative bodies. They, however, now are working on consolidation of both governing and management structures and system to develop a model of local representative NGO that would be able to take and implement projects like RSPs in a cost effective manner.

Sustainability of the RSP approach: In the RSP approach village level organisations are build on economic reasoning without any additionally stabilising forces from normative structures within the community. Most of the time organisations are formed with the incentives of PIs and micro-credit. Hence groups stability and sustainability is heavily dependent upon external factors, i.e. the economic success in the activities that brought the group into existence. As economic success is vulnerable against various forces outside the control of the group and given the overall fragile economic situation, the sustainability of such groups is under continuous stress and – compared to the VOs in Mardan - are less likely to sustain on their own.

In terms of overall sustainability the SRSC approach acknowledges that structural conditions in the external service and funding system and professional limitations in participatory organisations may limit the effectiveness of higher level participatory organisations. Hence, higher level participatory organisations to take over such linkage functions are not seen as a necessary condition for overall sustainability. Instead, as mentioned earlier, the SRSC approach offers the establishment of a post-project support unit – partly staffed by professionals from the SRSC or any other suitable organisation – that provides the VOs with continued linkages to the private and Government service system and takes over fund acquisition services from local and international sources. Such an approach, though, falls quite short of the somewhat quite idealistic "sustainability philosophy" found in much of the current policy statements on rural development. However, it proves the fact that the VOs alone can hardly achieve anything by their own means. Unless they are tied to the meso-level institutions, external support units can not live with them for ever to come. Nor could we consider it sustainability in real terms.

Replicability of the IRDP Mardan approach: At one point it was thought that replicability of the IRDP Mardan approach had some self-imposed limitations. For instance, it was believed that project concept the present approach could directly only be replicated if socio-cultural features in any new area were grossly similar to the specific features upon which the Mardan team has build up its approach and has generated its experiences. The socio-cultural conditions in Pakistan and final years of the project, however, show that the same approach can be carried out almost anywhere not only in Pakistan but elsewhere in other developing countries because each of these communities have some kind of religious, cultural or traditional bonds that can be exploited for gluing the communities together like the

communities in IRDP case. This approach would not work if the communities are considered homogeneous and VOs are tried to be formed around external inputs alone.

Secondly, although the IRDP Mardan used some specific entry points for village mobilisation (intact clan-structures, social effectiveness of Jarga, broadly observed adherence to Pukthoonwali etc.) might be affected by (1) the existence of modern institutions that have partly taken over functions of the traditional system, and (2) a severely conflicting semi-feudal class-structure which, in many cases, is superimposed by ethnic diversity, etc, but the real test of replicating IRDP model is not limited to the entry points used by it. The aspect that need replication and can be effectively replicated is the formation of meso-level organisations above the micro-level village organisations. IRDP came up with the supra-village level institutions in an unplanned manner in terms of the management capacity. With just a little alternation and consolidation, this model would be consummated for replication elsewhere. It was wrong to assume that formation of VOs on the lines of IRDP could only be possible in the tribal areas (FATA and PATA) where traditional institutions are still covering almost all of the normal regulatory social and legal functions. The real essence of IRDP's approach is not in its use of traditional institutions but the development of higher level of grassroots institutions. Almost all the VOs and RDOs in the IRDP area are more based on the modern institutional system of democracy and representation, than on clan based affiliations.

Under these conditions it is fairly evident that the replication of the Mardan approach can certainly be treated in terms of an area related expansion. The socio-cultural criteria used by IRDP can be applied with varying degrees to any area where replication of this model is intended. This means that with slight variation in the approach and methodology such a replication could take place in any population and at any locality.

At some point during the project implementation, the project staff and external evaluators were lost in the fantasy of socio-cultural aspects of tying the VOs together. However, the last two years and the post project time reveal that although socio-cultural factors were exploited to the maximum under the "New Approach" of the project. Nevertheless, formation of the next level of village institutions played more vital role in sustainability of the VOs than socio-cultural bonds. Major implementation elements of any community development programme depend on situational knowledge, social sensibility and a high capability to adjust to the socio-cultural environment on the part of the initial (project sponsored) change agents, i.e. project staff. Replication of IRDP approach would not be one hundred per cent of what IRDP was doing until the last day of its operation. However all credit goes to IRDP for providing a solid ground for further developing a unique rural development model.

Replicability of the RSP approach: Because of its focus on "common interest" in local organisation the RSP concept has a fairly structured and transferable mode of operation. Its basic elements and many of its operational features have been compiled in training materials, leaflets and posters. The technical features of the field operations can easily be adopted by the field staff through such textbooks, structured training and within a limited period of field practising. With the changed village level approach of acting through "activists" (para-professionals) multiplication capacities of the approach have also increased. Thus, this approach is likely to address a large number of the communities and a large number of community groups within a comparatively short period. The question, however, is: What is the objective of replication? Has it worked in the previous instance? Is it effective and productive? Has it been sustainable in the first instance? If it is not, there is no use to replicate it easily or otherwise. Experience shows that so far RSP has not phased out from any region or programme area and they do not have any exit strategy at all. Even if it does, it is highly unlikely to leave behind a structured local institutions to replace RSPs.

Without seeing any signs of any RSP withdrawing from any of its programme region after successful implementation so far, replication of RSPs approach to all the districts in Pakistan will require a mammoth of resources and sustenance in perpetuity even if with passage of time and success the aim of eradication of absolute poverty is succeeded by addressing relative poverty in public policy. Hence, it would be tantamount to creating an additional quasi-government agency. The provision of resources for a satiating application to cover every nook and corner of the country will generate the need for resource creation by squeezing other activities. Even if resources are provided to RSPs, additional resources will be required for the initiatives which directly effect poverty and which the RSPs can

support. Even if we leave out the sustainability and effectiveness aspect of the RSPs approach, unfortunately poverty reduction targeting can not be oblivious to costs: it can not be safely argued that the marginal benefits in a spreading of RSP operations to cover the whole breadth of rural areas would outwit the marginal costs.[31] Moreover, if there is an ever increasing urge for geographic expanse with thinning out of operations the requirement of funds would always keep rising. When the performance is referred to as covering a number of districts and forming countless organisations it does not amount to an actual empowerment or poverty alleviation in these areas and therefore the logic for move into new vistas. Mostly NGOs would only move into new areas if the job in the existing ones had been accomplished to some extent.

With these summarised comparison on the aspects of sustainability and replicability between the IRDP Mardan and the RSP approaches, the path for a potentially more unified and more effective design of a future participatory rural development model is already pre-determined on pragmatic grounds. What is required is a combination of the advantages of both and a review of the disadvantages. This appears possible if both are adjusting their current concepts accordingly.

a. For the IRDP Mardan approach this implies that the modes of operation to identify entry points for mobilisation under partially differing cultural and social settings are specified in a way that allows for a more generalised application of the operational approach. It further implies that the way how elements in a traditional value and norm system in a specific situation can be linked to development functions. The application of a more generalised approach is key to formation of VOs at the micro level. At the meso-level the focus on building management capacity of the high level institutions should be properly planned and under taken from the very inception of these organisations.

b. Such management capacity building of the meso-level institutions developed through IRDP approach would help overcome previous limitations for service and fund acquisition.

c. The RSP approach has shortcomings in the sustainability of its village level organisations. Here the more sensitive and locally adjusted approach of the IRDP Mardan – with some revisions as under (a) – could be taken as a useful learning experience to also improve the work of the RSP. However, without forming and consolidating meso-level institutions, viability and sustainability of the VOs at the micro-level will remain always at the mercy of programme and external inputs continuation.

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[31] Sen, A. (1995); 'The Political Economy of Targeting' in De Walle. D. & Need. K.; Public Spending and the Poor: Theory and Evidence, World Bank, John Hopkins University Press Baltimore. Page-22