



Thesis
By
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MASENO
UNIVERSITY

**LOCAL ORGANIZATIONS FOR
SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT: THE
POLITICAL ENVIRONMENT OF
COMMUNITY-BASED ORGANIZATIONS IN
WESTERN KENYA**

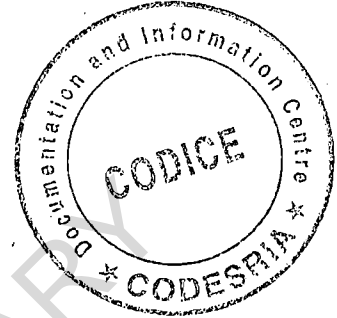
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**LOCAL ORGANIZATIONS FOR SUSTAINABLE
DEVELOPMENT: THE POLITICAL ENVIRONMENT OF
COMMUNITY-BASED ORGANIZATIONS IN WESTERN
KENYA**



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B.A, M.A (Political Science), Nairobi.

**A THESIS SUBMITTED IN FULFILMENT OF THE
REQUIREMENTS FOR THE AWARD OF THE DEGREE OF
DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY IN POLITICAL SCIENCE,
MASENO UNIVERSITY,
2003**

DECLARATION

THE CANDIDATE:


I hereby declare that this thesis is my original work and has not been presented to any University for the award of any degree.

Signature 
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20th July, 2003
Date

UNIVERSITY SUPERVISORS:

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DEDICATION

To the late Justine Wesonga, my wife for seven years, who demanded that I complete this study and earn a doctorate like my good friends who were by her hospital bed, only for her candle to go out on 25th January 2002 before seeing her wish come to a reality. May the Lord rest her soul in eternal peace, AMEN.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The fruitful completion of this work benefited from the efforts of many people. Though all of them cannot be mentioned here, some are unavoidable. In the first place, I wish to thank my supervisors, namely, Professors Patrick O. Alila and P. Godfrey Okoth, for their patience as they guided me in the course of preparing this thesis. I am particularly indebted to Prof. Alila for initiating me into the study of local organizations in the development process, through which I conceived the ideas behind this study. Their constructive criticism and advice have substantially helped to shape the thesis into its present form.

Secondly, some organizations helped with generous financial assistance. In this connection, I wish to thank the Council for the Development of Social Science Research in Africa (CODESRIA) for the 1997 Small Grants for Thesis writing award that enabled me to start this study. In 1999, the German Academic Exchange Service (DAAD) provided the bulk of the resources that saw the completion of the study. I am forever grateful to these two organizations.

Thirdly, I wish to thank my Research Assistants for their dedication to work and the diligent interviewing. I also extend my appreciation to the informants who sacrificed their busy schedules that are characteristic of rural economies to be interviewed. The co-operation of the staff of the Department of Social Services in the survey area made my work easier, for which I am very grateful.

Fourth, I am grateful to my family members for their encouragement to take on, and complete, this study. The late Justine Wesonga always challenged me to finish the “academic journey”. Her demise in the middle of this study almost shattered my dreams had it not been for the timely helping hand of Nelly Wesonga. The latter accompanied me to the remainder of the fieldwork and comforted me throughout the writing period. My little daughter Winfred Ajiambo always wondered why Daddy was glued to the study desk for several months, which encouraged completing this thesis to show her what it was all about. I am forever indebted to all of them.

Finally, I am grateful to Ms. Joan Ndar of Library Department at Maseno University for the speedy and accurate typing of this thesis. All interpretations and shortcomings, however, remain solely mine.

ABSTRACT

The experience with the quest to realize sustainable development, especially at the local level, has left a disappointing legacy for the majority of African countries. The adoption of development from below paradigm in the 1980s, which presented the 'bottom-up' approach to the realization of sustainable development as an alternative to the previous 'top-down' approach, has since generated a lot of interest in the role of local organizations among development scholars and researchers. Throughout the 1990s, local organizations were viewed as the panacea for the problem of realizing sustainable development at the local level. Nevertheless, there is a dearth of empirical evidence on what local organizations can actually achieve in this regard. Questions have been raised as to what type of local organization can make a contribution to sustainable development and in which social, economic and political contexts? This study identifies community-based organizations (CBOs) as one type of the local organizations and assesses their contribution to sustainable development in the context of their political environment in Western Kenya.

'Development from below' paradigm provides the analytical framework for the study. It posits that for sustainable development to be realized, people ought to be enabled to take control of their lives and secure better livelihoods, with the ownership and control of indigenous productive assets as the basic element in this regard. It is argued that this occurs through people's participation in the activities for securing their livelihoods; a process that enables them to build their capacity to initiate durable development activities in response to their peculiar social, economic and political environments. The study is, therefore, premised on the assumption that members' popular participation in the activities of CBOs is a prerequisite for the realization of sustainable development at the local level; and that popular participation is a function of the internal leadership and management structures as well as the external political environment in which CBOs operate.

Both quantitative and qualitative techniques were used to collect primary data in a survey of these organizations in four districts of Western Kenya. A self-administered questionnaire was used to interview 350 members of 80 CBOs. The samples of the members and organizations were drawn using a variety of sampling techniques at various

stages of the survey. These included purposive sampling, stratified sampling, systematic sampling and simple random sampling. Informal and focused group discussions were also held with key informants, including selected members of these organizations and government administrators to obtain qualitative data. Secondary data from published books and articles as well as unpublished reports from government departments supplemented these primary data.

The findings of the study show that though CBOs have been instrumental in facilitating local people's access to resources for improving their livelihoods, they are largely dependent on external assistance to fund their activities. This dependency has been attributed to the politics of patronage that is prevalent in Western Kenya. In order to align themselves to the local patrons that facilitate these organizations' access to external sources of funds and other resources, the tendency has been for most CBOs to elect or select persons into leadership who can forge or have working relationships with the said patrons. By virtue of the positions that they occupy in the local patron-client networks and the assistance that they draw for their organizations, such leaders have subsequently dominated the leadership and management processes in most CBOs; leaving members to play the functional roles of contributing and sharing resources and services. The resultant functional participation has adversely affected local level capacity building for sustainable development. Indeed, most of the projects of these organizations do not have the capacity to replicate their activities or increase their contribution to rural livelihoods without external assistance. The study, therefore, submits that CBOs are unlikely to make significant contributions to sustainable development in the context of the politics of patronage that is prevalent in Western Kenya. This implies that the neo-liberal assumptions for realizing sustainable development may not be well founded in the context of the political environment that obtains in the region.

Since patronage is a major contributor to the dependence of CBOs, which has impeded these organizations from initiating self-sustaining development activities, it is recommended that the on-going democratization process be enhanced through civic education, especially in the rural areas. In addition, external assistance to CBOs should be geared towards building the capacity to mobilize local resources. One way of doing this is to give aid in the form of group guaranteed revolving credit schemes and not handouts.

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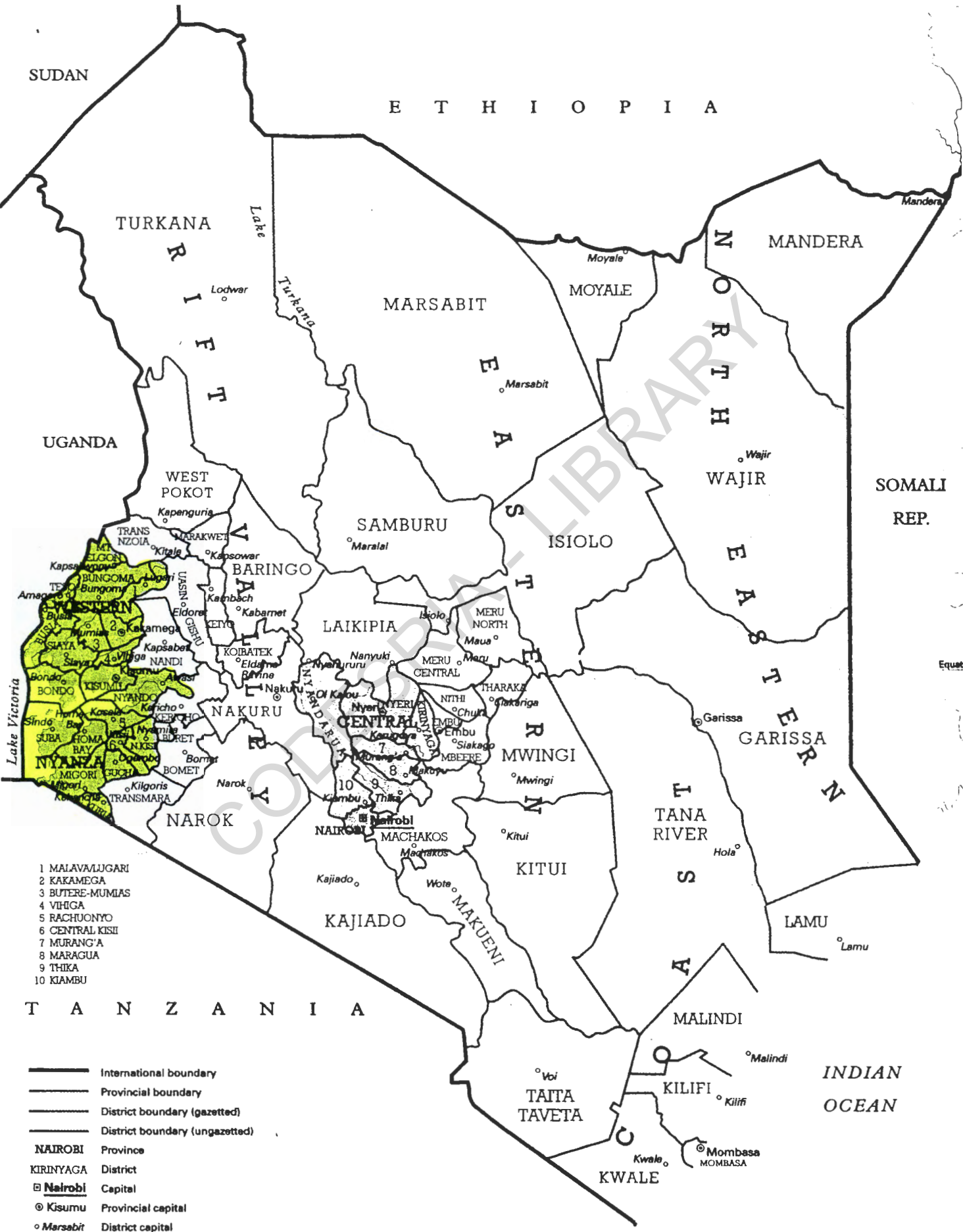
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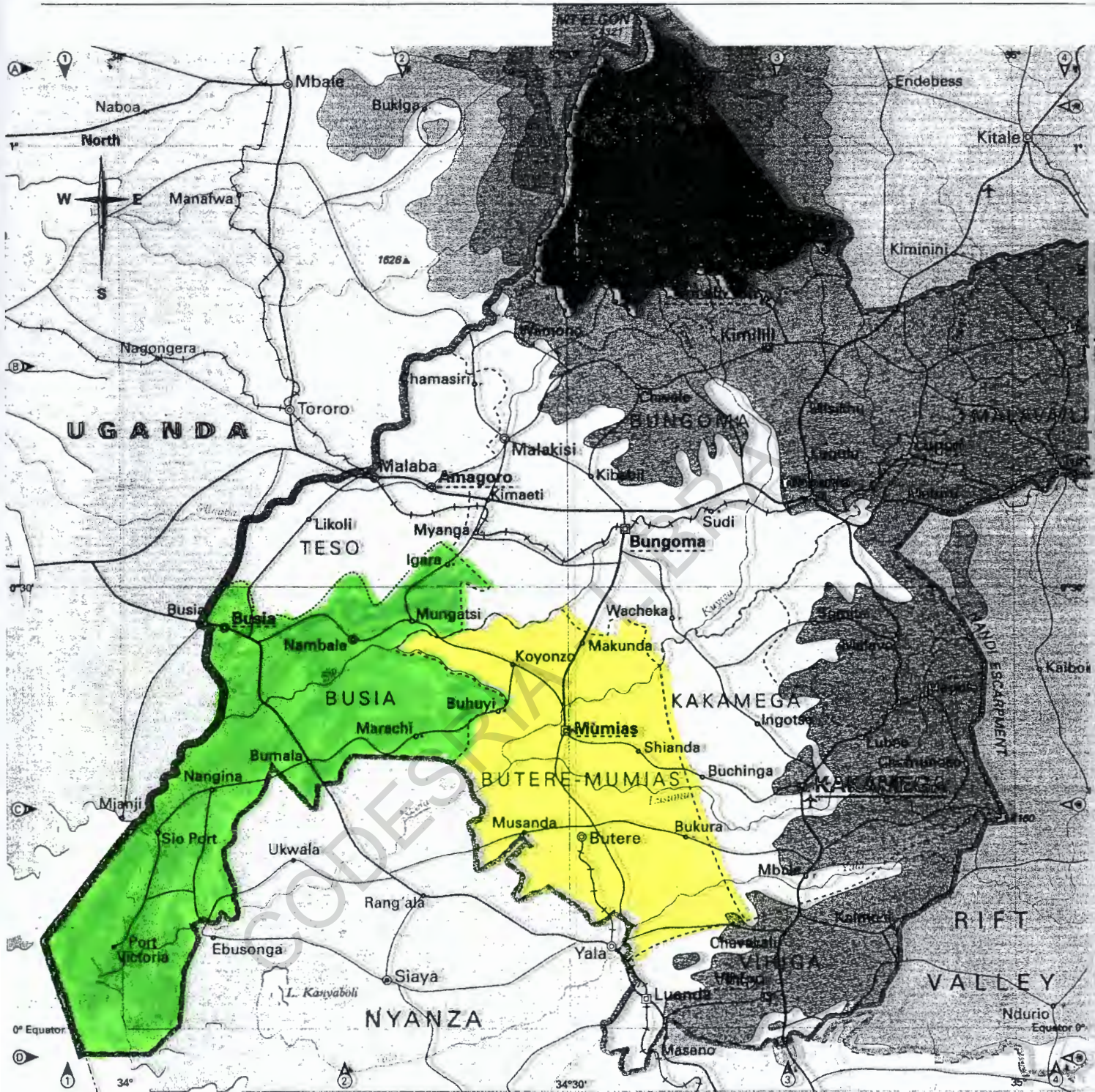
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MAP 1: KENYA: administrative regions



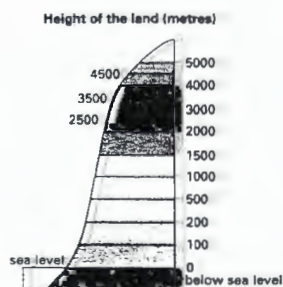
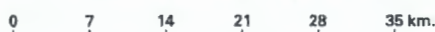
MAP 2: WESTERN PROVINCE



MAP SYMBOLS

- International boundary
- Provincial boundary
- District boundary (gazetted)
- District boundary (ungazetted)
- Provincial capital **KAKAMEGA**
- District capital **Busia**
- Main peak heights in metres 1836
- See index
- Principal roads
- Other roads
- Railways
- International; other airport
- River

MAP SCALE 1 : 700 000



WESTERN PROVINCE

Area
8 264 square km.

Population

1969 census - 1 328 298
 1979 census - 1 832 663
 1989 census - 2 544 329
 1999 census - 3 358 776
 Intercensal growth rate - 2.5%
 Population density - 406 persons per square km

Provincial capital

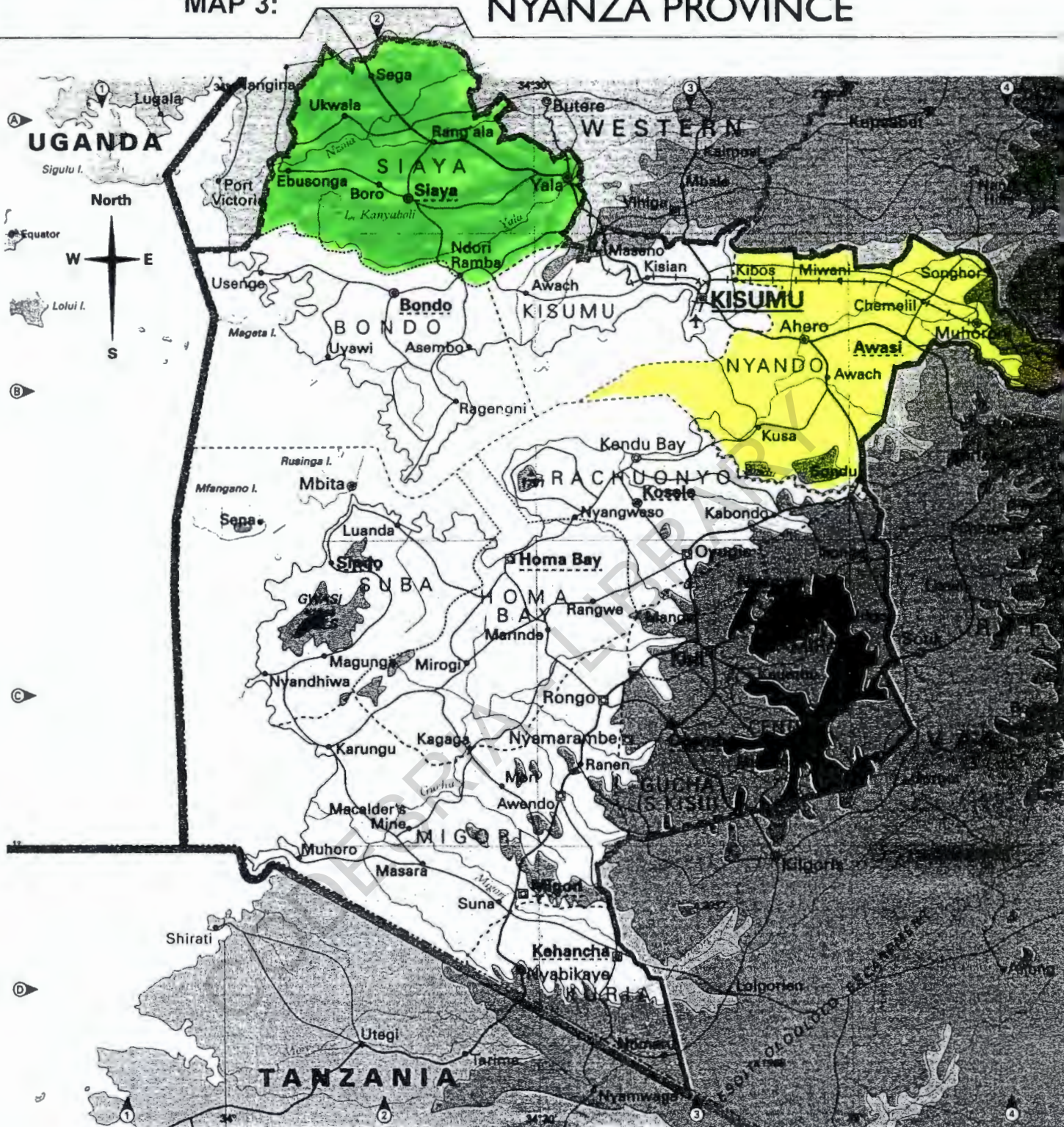
Kakamega (population 74 115)

Other major towns

Vihiga (109 508), Mumias (105 466)
 Bungoma (73 048), Kimilili (71 461)
 Webuye (70 137), Luanda (66 289), Busia (44 211)

MAP 3:

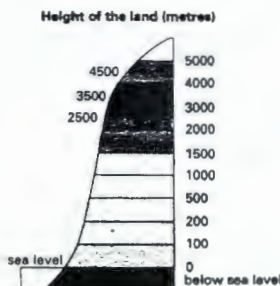
NYANZA PROVINCE



MAP SYMBOLS

- International boundary
- Provincial boundary
- District boundary (gazetted)
- District boundary (ungazetted)
- Provincial capital
- District capital
- Main peak heights in metres
- See index
- Principal roads
- Other roads
- Railways
- International; other airport
- River

MAP SCALE 1 : 1 000 000



NYANZA PROVINCE

Area
12 547 square km.

Population
1969 census - 2 122 045
1979 census - 2 643 956
1989 census - 3 507 162
1999 census - 4 392 196
Intercensal growth rate - 2.3%
Population density - 350 persons per square km

Provincial capital
Kisumu (population 322 734)

Other major towns
Kehancha (151 465), Nyamira (100 082)
Migori (95 446), Awendo (90 153)
Rongo (79 817), Nyamarambe (66 582)
Oyugis (65 894), Kisii (65 235), Homa Bay (56 300)
Siaya (41 148), Muhoroni (31 145), Ahero (30 000)

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

1.1 BACKGROUND TO THE STUDY

The experience with the various efforts to realize development, especially at the local grassroots level, has left a disappointing legacy for the majority of African countries. Most countries are worse off than they were at independence. In some countries, the development problem has reached crisis proportions, subjecting the vast rural and urban populations to unprecedented social and economic decline. Many countries have lost the ability to feed their populations and provide social and economic services in order to improve people's living conditions. Real incomes have declined, health prospects are poorer and the infrastructure is breaking down. The problem has been compounded by the prevalence of natural calamities like floods and droughts as well as wars and conflicts in some countries. The effect of all these is that Africa's development record has continued to slacken over the past four decades (Bibangambah, 1985; World Bank, 1989; Chabal, 1992; Jazairy *et. al*, 1992; Gooneratne and Mbilinyi, 1992; Gsanger, 1994; Kumssa, 1995; Taylor, 1996; Ake, 1996; Lumumba-Kasongo, 2002).

The emerging "development crisis" has prompted the continuing search for appropriate approaches to, and strategies for, solving the development problem. This has seen the revision of approaches to development from time to time as evidenced by the shift from macro to the micro levels of analyzing the development process in the 1980s. The said shift involved the change of focus from nation-wide macro economic models in agriculture and industry using per capita income index to rural farm level analysis using the household standard of living index (Alila, 1988a). This change has since contributed

to the recognition of non-economic factors, like people's participation, as playing a significant role in the development process. Above all, it has facilitated proper understanding of the socio-economic structure of the African society in relation to the development process.

This understanding has, in turn, contributed to the emerging consensus that African countries have not realized sustainable development due to the alien strategies and structures that were imposed on them as "prescriptions" for the development problem by the West. Such "prescriptions" disregarded the contribution of local people to the development process and, therefore, tended to discourage their participation in the process (Hyden 1986; Gooneratne and Mbilinyi, 1992; Holmen and Jirstrom, 1994; Mehmet, 1995). The basis of these "prescriptions" was the assumption that Third World countries as a whole could develop by introducing the same "rationality" and type of organizational form that had brought development to the West. Yet the social, economic and political structures as well as the organizational capacities in these countries were largely different from those in the West (Holmen and Jirstrom 1994; Mehmet, 1995).

The subsequent "search" for local or indigenous solutions to the development problem resulted into a major shift in the development paradigm in the early 1980s. The new paradigm presented the "bottom-up" approach as an alternative to the then widely accepted "top-down" transfer of technology and resources approach. The new paradigm emphasized the concepts of participation in development decision-making by the people; building the capacity of individuals and institutions in the development process; and the sustainability of development activities. The central argument of this paradigm was that the participation of people in the development process was crucial for the sustainability of

development efforts, for it would enable them to build their capacity to undertake durable development activities in response to their unique social, economic and political circumstances (Salmen, 1992; Holmen and Jirstrom, 1994; Blunt and Warren, 1996). Local organizations were identified as the means through which people at the grassroots level could participate in the development process. Such organizations would act as fora for development decision-making; disseminators of new ideas and information; mobilizers of local resources for development activities; and also intermediaries between the people, the state and other development agencies (Esman and Uphoff, 1988; Salmen, 1992).

This thinking has since generated a lot of interest in local organizations among scholars and development practitioners. The realization that sustainable development fundamentally originates from “below” and that it has to be based on the principle of self-help has seen these organizations considered as significant agents of socio-economic change (Jirstrom, 1994). In addition, the declining role of the state in the development process in the 1990s, relative to the immediate post-colonial period, has further accentuated the call for local organizations to fill the resultant development space following the rolling back of the state (Bratton, 1989; Salmen, 1992; Gooneratne and Mbilinyi, 1992; Nugent 1993). The upshot is that throughout the 1990s local organizations were viewed as the panacea for the problem of realizing sustainable development at the local grassroots level. It has been argued in this regard that these organizations provide a solution to the questions of how best to organize people - particularly the poor - for development activities; a question which the state and Western development promoters had failed to answer adequately during the previous decades (Holmen and Jirstrom, 1994:8).

Nevertheless, there is a dearth of empirical evidence on what local organizations can actually achieve in terms of realizing sustainable development at the grassroots level. This has partly contributed to the on-going debate among scholars on the potential of these organizations in this regard. Some scholars are increasingly arguing that local organizations are yet to prove their effectiveness in contributing towards poverty alleviation and the eradication of underdevelopment. That their potential is often overestimated using the few success stories that are repeated again and again, the best example in this regard being the Grameen Bank in Bangladesh (Schmale, 1993:2, 12).

Furthermore, other scholars have argued that there are many types of local organizations in developing countries: some are “public”, such as small town or urban council, while others are “private”. Even among “private” local organizations such as non-governmental organizations and co-operative societies, some are indigenous while others are created from outside, with or without financial assistance (Holmen and Jirstrom, 1994:8). Hence, careful attention needs to be paid to the question of what type of local organization can effectively make a contribution to sustainable development and in which social, economic and political context? This study addresses this question.

1.2 STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

The current growing enthusiasm about the perceived and potential contribution of local organizations to sustainable development at the grassroots level needs to be supported by empirical evidence. This study identifies community-based organizations (CBOs) as one type of local organizations and seeks to empirically assess their actual

contribution to sustainable development in the light of the political environment in Western Kenya.

The proliferation of CBOs in rural Kenya since the initiation of the *harambee* movement at independence has given rise to a debate on their achievements in the development process. Whereas some scholars have credited these organizations for constructing the rural infrastructure and accessing socio-economic services to the poor (Holmquist, 1984; Thomas, 1985; Chitere, 1994; Oyugi, 1995), others have argued that CBOs have mainly been successful as instruments of political control (Ngethe, 1979; Anyang' Nyong'o, 1981; Ngau, 1987; Ngethe and Kanyinga, 1994; Haugerud, 1995). The later group of scholars has further argued that the "capture" of the *harambee* movement by the state has seriously curtailed popular participation in the activities of CBOs, which has adversely affected the contribution of these organizations to sustainable development. In the circumstances, the actual contribution of CBOs to sustainable development is not clearly understood.

It has been argued that for local organizations to make a significant contribution to sustainable development, they have to remain autonomous and broadly participatory as they expand their influence at the local level (Rahmato, 1991: 4). This implies that these organizations ought to be self-managed and allow for popular participation in their activities (Cernea, 1987; Jazairy et. al, 1992; Gooneratne and Mbilinyi, 1992; Holmen and Jirstrom, 1994). Thus, the organizations have to be formed by the members themselves on voluntary basis and decision-making should be based on consensus or mutual understanding (Rahmato, 1991: 5). Local organizations of this nature have been referred to as "people's organizations" (Jazairy at. Al, 1992; Gooneratne and Mbilinyi, 1992) since

they are formed and managed by the people themselves in accordance with their interests and needs. In the context of this assumption, questions have been raised as to whether CBOs in Kenya can actually be classified as “people’s organizations” in which members have a greater responsibility in their formation and management. This question is particularly pertinent given that popular participation, which is at the core of sustainable development, is said to be higher in “people’s organizations” than in other forms of organizations (Ibid.).

Moreover, the notion of popular participation in the development process is increasingly assuming a pragmatic and programmatic overtones. It is being argued that for popular initiatives to constitute essential elements in sustainable development, it is not just enough for those affected by social decisions to have a say in their formulation. More significantly, they should be involved in the identification, planning and implementation of individual development projects (Rahmato, 1991; Mathias and Wolfe, 1994). Yet the nature and level of participation in CBOs’ activities, especially development projects, in Kenya is not well appreciated. A basic question to raise is whether popular participation in these organizations’ development projects entails members’ engagement in all stages of a project cycle, i.e. identification, formulation or planning and implementation. In addition, it is not well understood how such participation, if at all, has enhanced the capacity of local people to develop self-supporting mechanisms for solving their development problems in the context of their social, economic and political environments.

With regard to the environment of these organizations, it has been argued that unlike modern bureaucratic organizations, local organizations within communities cannot establish authorities, regulate behavior, hire and fire without great regard for the external

environment (Holmquist, 1970: 223; Esman and Uphoff, 1988). Indeed, numerous self-help organizations in Africa often fail partly because they are victims of a hostile social/political environment (Rahmato, 1991:18). This raises the question of the effect of the political environment on CBOs in Kenya.

As already alluded to, CBOs in Kenya have been closely linked to the state and have become a major factor that shapes the relations between the political elite and/or the state on the one hand, and the local society on the other hand (Barkan, 1978; 1984). Subsequently, the state and the political elite have sought to enhance their power at the local level by assuming greater control over the development projects of these organizations. This they have done by establishing patron-client networks through which they have patronized CBOs at the local level (Oyugi, 1973; Ngau, 1987; Kanyinga, 1995b). However, it is not clearly understood how this politics of patronage has effected popular participation in CBOs and their subsequent contribution to sustainable development. In any case, it has been argued that a peasant-state partnership in which both parties are on equal footing is difficult to sustain. The partnership is likely to be dominated by the stronger of the two, which then manipulates the other for its own purposes (Rahmato, 1991: 19). Whether patronage has resulted into this form of partnership between the state/political elite and CBOs in Western Kenya is a research imperative.

The issues raised can be summed up in the form of two broad questions for investigation. First, to what extent have CBOs contributed to sustainable development in Western Kenya? Second, What has been the effect of the political environment on these organizations' activities that may have been directed towards realizing sustainable development?

1.3 OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

The broad objective of this study is to assess the contribution of community-based organizations to local level sustainable development in the light of the political environment that obtains in Western Kenya. This can be broken down into the following specific objectives that will guide the study, namely to:

1. establish people's motivation in formation of these organizations;
2. ascertain the level of members' participation in leadership and management of the development projects of these organizations;
3. assess the effect of the political environment on the activities of these organizations; and
4. assess the contribution of community-based organizations to durable improved livelihoods both at the household and community levels.

1.4 LITERATURE REVIEW

1.4.1 *Harambee* self-help Initiatives and Development in Kenya

Harambee self-help activities in Kenya are at the center of the activities of community-based organizations. Therefore, a review of the phenomenon of self-help is a useful starting point for a discourse on these organizations. Self-help initiatives in the development process in Africa have been traced to collective group action for mutual assistance in traditional society. In response to situations of scarcity, insecurity and risk, people undertook collective activities on voluntary basis to ease each other's burden. The simplest form of such mutual assistance was interfamilial and neighborly help in tending the crop of someone that has fallen ill or who has a shortage of labour; bringing back

strayed cattle; helping family, kin and villagers to ease the burden of death by meeting the expenses of a funeral; chasing away marauding wildlife; among others. Over the centuries, these various types of mutual assistance have gone through innovations and adaptations and have consequently been formalized into self-help groups (Bouman, 1995: 118; Kanyinga, 1993; Adagala *et.al*, 1989).

In Kenya, self-help initiatives survived the colonial onslaught and gained official recognition in the development process at independence when they were embraced into the *harambee* movement. *Harambee* (Kiswahili for "let us pull together" to accomplish the task) became, and has remained, Kenya's official rallying call for collective voluntary action in the development process. Local communities have mobilized themselves and their resources in the spirit of *harambee* to build schools, health centers, churches, water sources, cattle dips, village polytechnics, roads and bridges, etc (Thomas, 1985; Kanyinga, 1994; 1995a; Barkan, 1994).

However, there have been considerable variations in the interpretation of the place of *harambee* movement in the development process. Whereas some studies have dismissed *harambee* as a mere political control mechanism and also criticized it for being overtly corrupt at the national level to make significant contributions to development (Ngethe, 1979; Anyang' Nyong'o, 1981; Ngau, 1987; Thomas, 1991; Haugerud, 1995), others have credited it for spearheading the development process, especially the development of infrastructure in rural areas (Leonard, 1973; Mbithi, 1974; Mbithi and Rasmusson, 1977; Holmquist, 1984; Alila, 1988b; Thomas, 1985; Barkan and Holmquist, 1989). In the circumstances, the contribution of *harambee* to development in Kenya is not well understood. This calls for a critical analysis of the role of the movement in the

development process. The present study attempts to make a contribution to this broad question by analyzing the actual contribution of one of the component parts of *harambee* (CBOs) to sustainable development in Western Kenya.

Harambee self-help initiatives in Kenya are broadly organized at two levels, which we classify in this study as "formal" and "informal". At the "formal" level, self-help activities are undertaken in an organizational context. Projects are identified, conceptualized, implemented and evaluated within Community-Based Organizations. Though these organizations occasionally seek additional resources for implementing the projects outside the membership by, for example, organizing *harambee* fundraisers or soliciting for donor funds (Chitere, 1994), the project remains an organization's initiative and property. But at the "informal" level *harambee* is organized within a public or communal context, where people only participate in the event of mobilizing resources for communal or public projects like schools, roads, churches, etc. The initiative for such projects does not emanate from an organization, but the local leaders like chiefs, priests, councilors or Members of Parliament. Thus, the local leaders identify and initiate a project and then mobilize people to participate in fundraising for the project. To a large extent, the *harambee* is essentially a public fundraising function and people's actual participation ends with that function (Mbithi, 1974; Ngethe, 1979; Chitere, 1991).

Going by this classification in the organization of *harambee* self-help activities in Kenya, most of the available literature addresses the "informal" type. Only a few studies address the "formal" perspectives of *harambee* in the development process (Mutiso, 1974; Pala et.al, 1978; Wipper, 1984; 1995; Riria-Ouko, 1985; Wanyande, 1987; Adagala et.al, 1989; Ondiege, 1992; Chitere, 1994a; 1994b; Alila and Wanyama, 1995; Kanyinga, 1994;

1995a; Matanga, 2000; Wanyama, 2001). At any rate some of these studies only discuss community-based organizations in passing. A case in point is Matanga's (2000) study of non-governmental organizations in Western Province in which he uses a sample of eight women's groups that are selected purposively on the basis of "accessibility" and "age" to act as control tools for studying NGOs. Moreover, the fact that he classifies women's groups as "self-help non-governmental organizations" for purposes of "expanding" the already ambiguous definition of NGOs conceals the identity of women's groups as CBOs and their actual contribution to sustainable development is not well appreciated. At any rate, there are few, if any, in-depth analyses of the nature, capacity and contribution of these organizations to sustainable development at the local grassroots level in Kenya despite the fact that local organizations are increasingly being cited as panacea for sustainable development (Cernea, 1987; Rahmato.1991). This study attempts to beef-up, if not to fill the gap in, the literature on the contribution of these organizations to sustainable development at the local level.

1.4.2 Community-Based Organizations and Sustainable Development in Kenya

It is now widely accepted that local organizations can only effectively contribute to sustainable development if they are "people's organizations" and are self-managed (Rahmato, 1991; Salmen, 1992; Holmen and Jirstrom, 1994). This calls for an understanding of the people's initiatives in the formation and management of Community-Based Organizations (CBOs) in Western Kenya as a starting point in comprehending their contribution to sustainable development.

A number of perspectives to explain the formation of CBOs have been advanced in the literature. Whereas some scholars have attributed the existence of these organizations to the socio-cultural base by arguing that they are largely a continuation of traditional mutual aid activities (Holmquist, 1970; Hyden, 1983; 1986), others have maintained that they are formed in response to political pressures. The latter group of scholars has argued that CBOs are either formed through the initiative of local political leaders as mechanisms for extracting development resources from the state to their local constituencies or as part of the patron-client networks for exercising political control at the local level (Holmquist, 1970; Barkan, 1978; 1984; Ngethe, 1979; Ngau, 1987; Kanyinga, 1994). There is also the view that the formation of CBOs was mainly encouraged by the state after independence as a way of formalizing *harambee* self-help initiatives for development in the rural areas (Barkan, 1994; Chitere, 1994).

Besides these socio-cultural and political dimensions, there is also the economic perspective that links the formation of CBOs to the material conditions of production. The argument here is that the proliferation of CBOs partly depends on the availability of surplus resources at the local level for people to contribute towards their development projects. Consequently, *harambee* activities have been more conspicuous in those areas where, and at those times when, peasant surpluses have been largest (Holmquist, 1970; Hyden, 1986; Kanyinga 1994; Oyugi, 1995).

The implication of these analyses is that CBOs are products of the social, economic and political environments in which people find themselves. Though the said environments do also influence the structure of households, the question of why an individual should

participate in CBOs is not adequately addressed. This question is pertinent to establishing the extent to which CBOs are actually "people's organizations".

In addition, the people's role in the management of CBOs is not well explained in the existing literature. It has been argued that organizations with "closed" leadership structures adversely impinge on members' participation in their management, thereby reproducing systems of patronage in local organizations (Lewis, 1993; Schmale, 1993). Schmale (1993: 3) extends the argument by pointing out that "despite using fashionable jargon such as empowerment, people-centeredness and (popular) participation, many local organizations continue development work in a top-down, non-participatory, and non-sustainable manner". The literature on CBOs in Kenya is not explicit as to whether this assumption holds true. Besides the mention that CBOs are increasingly becoming formalized (Adagala *et al*, 1989; Alila, 1992); that leaders are either elected or appointed by members; and that meetings are regularly held (Chitere, 1994; Alila and Wanyama, 1995; Wanyama, 2001), the level of people's involvement in the management of development activities is not adequately explained.

Moreover, the observation that leaders of CBOs are elected raises the question of what determines the choice of leaders in these organizations and with what results in terms of members' participation in the management of the organizations? Holmquist (1970: 223-4) has argued that these organizations usually operate in a context of socio-cultural and political feuds, which penetrate the leadership of the organizations with far-reaching implications for the management of their activities. This calls for an understanding of the influence of the external environment, particularly the political, on the leadership of CBOs

and the subsequent impact on people's participation in the management of "their organizations". This study attempts to make a contribution in this regard.

With regard to the question of popular participation in CBOs, there is a consensus that sustainable development can best be realized if people actively participate in the development process. That this would improve or build their capacity to satisfy livelihood demands in the context of their socio-economic and political circumstances of existence (Korten and Klauss, 1984; ECA 1990; Salmen, 1992; Stiefel and Wolfe, 1994; Burkey, 1993; Gsanger, 1994). Ake (1996: 140) has further argued that a popular strategy for sustainable development requires that people be the agents, the means, and the end of development. That development cannot be received; it has to be experienced through participation in the process of bringing it about. The implication for CBOs is that members' popular participation in their activities is central to their contribution to local level sustainable development. There is, therefore, need to have a proper understanding of the level of members' participation in the development projects of these organizations.

Besides the observation that members regularly attend meetings and contribute resources towards the implementation of projects (Adagala *et al*, 1989; Riria-Ouko, 1985; Chitere, 1994; Alila and Wanyama, 1995; Kanyinga, 1995a; Wanyama, 2001; Oyugi, 1995; 2002), it is not well known whether members participate in the full cycle of development projects, i.e. identification, formulation, implementation and evaluation. Participation in all stages of a project cycle is significant for sustainable development since it gives people an opportunity to learn how to improve their livelihoods in the context of their social, economic and political circumstances (Cernea, 1985; Salmen, 1992; Rahmato, 1991). That the available literature is not explicit on what local people have learnt towards the

improvement of their livelihoods through their organizations could be a pointer to inadequate participation of members in CBOs. Whether this is the case is a research imperative.

Partial participation in CBOs can be attributed to a variety of factors, but the external environment is crucial, particularly the political context. Holmen and Jirstrom (1994:20) have argued that whereas the freedom of people to organize is fundamental for popular participation, "it is often the case that governments are negative, or even hostile, to organizations they don't control". In Kenya, local organizations are formally linked to specific technical ministries by way of mere registration or direct supervision and control in order to tame the emergence of an autonomous center of power that can challenge governmental authority (Alila, 1988b; Barkan, 1984; Holmquist, 1984; Thomas, 1985; Kanyinga, 1995b). At the local level, the political elite is usually averse to independent organizations that may produce rivals in the political arena. In any case, the weak and the poor tend to be strongly dependent on the wealthy elite that the latter would subjugate local organizations under its interests or even prevent the emergence of such organizations (Hyden, 1983; Chambers, 1991). The end result is that the local elite gets a leeway to influence the activities of the organizations in order to serve their interests, with adverse implications for popular participation.

Consequently, CBOs' activities are vulnerable to interception by the state as well as the local elite who strive to monopolize control over these organizations through patronage. How this control from "above" has affected popular participation in CBOs is an important issue that this study will attempt to shed light on. This should help us appreciate the extent

to which the development activities of these organizations actually originate from “below” and with what results in terms of sustainable development?

The issues so far raised clearly show that the extent of these organizations’ contribution to sustainable development at the grassroots level is a research imperative. This is particularly the case given that most of the attempts to show the contribution of CBOs to development has ended up with a “shopping list” of their activities, like advancing credit to the poor; putting up water sources; providing farm labor; constructing and equipping schools, polytechnics and health clinics; among others (cf. Mutiso, 1975; Pala *et.al*, 1978; Wipper, 1985; 1995; Ondiege, 1992; Chitere, 1994). The question that is yet to be answered is how sustainable are the developmental activities of CBOs? To what extent have the activities of CBOs contributed to durable improvements in the people’s livelihoods, both at the household level and at the Community level?

In a nutshell, this brief review of selected literature raises the following research questions that this study seeks to address: 1. To what extent is the formation of CBOs a result of people's own initiatives? 2. How has the political environment influenced the formation of CBOs? 3. Are leadership and management of CBOs democratic? 4. What has been the impact of the political environment on leadership in CBOs? 5. Do members of CBOs participate in decision-making in their organizations? 6. Do members of these organizations participate in the full cycle of the development projects? 7. What has been the impact of organizational leadership on members’ participation in the management of CBOs? 8. How has the political environment affected popular participation in the development activities of CBOs? 9. What have members learned towards the improvement

of their living conditions as a result of their participation in CBOs? 10. What has been the overall contribution of CBOs to sustainable development at the local grassroots level?

1.5 HYPOTHESES

This study is premised on the broad assumption that popular participation in CBOs is a prerequisite for the realization of sustainable development at the local grassroots level; and that popular participation is a function of both the internal leadership and management structures of CBOs as well as the external political environment in which CBOs operate.

The following hypotheses will be used to test this assumption.

1. CBOs that are formed through people's own initiative elicit greater popular participation in their activities.
2. Democratic leadership and management style contribute positively to popular participation in the activities of CBOs.
3. External assistance to CBO projects triggers popular participation in the activities of the organizations.
4. Popular participation enhances the capacity of CBO members to improve their livelihoods and, therefore, contribute positively to sustainable development.

1.6 CONCEPTUAL AND OPERATIONAL DEFINITION OF KEY CONCEPTS

Concepts are usually developed through a process by which some human group, like scholars in distinct disciplines, agree to give a phenomenon a particular name and meaning. This process is essentially on-going and does not necessarily ensure that all

scholars everywhere will give the same phenomena the same names, or meanings for that matter (Johnson and Joslyn, 1989: 39). It is, therefore, significant that we explain what is meant by our key concepts in this study. The central concepts here include sustainable development, community-based organizations, popular participation, political environment, democratic leadership and management, capacity building, dependence, external assistance and patronage.

1.6.1 Sustainable Development

This concept was originally defined in The Brundtland Report as “development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their needs” (WCED, 1987: 43; Brundtland, 1987: 43). This definition has since been interpreted differently by many writers. Some have perceived it in terms of the physical environment; thereby putting more emphasis on optimal resource utilization and environmental management over time (McCracken and Pretty, 1990), while others have broadly used it to refer to social, economic and ecological development. The latter category of writers define sustainable development as the process of “reducing the absolute poverty of the world’s poor through providing lasting and secure livelihoods that minimize resource depletion, environmental degradation, cultural disruption, and social instability” (Barbier, 1987: 103). Thus the focus is on reducing poverty through the provision of secure livelihoods.

We approach the definition of ‘sustainable development’ by first defining the two component terms separately. The term ‘development’ has been used to refer to positive socio-economic change, albeit using different indicators. For instance, whereas economists

have used economic growth measures like per capita income, Gross National Product (GNP), Gross Domestic Product (GDP), etc. as the key indicator, other social scientists have used non-economic factors like participation and access to resources that impinge on peoples living conditions as the yardstick (Ghai, 1988; UNDP, 1991; World Bank, 1993; Ake, 1996; UNDP, 2002a; Oden, 2002; Lumumba-Kasongo, 2002). This study adopts the rural livelihoods perspective and defines 'development' as the process of improving the way in which people get access to assets or resources for carrying out activities through which a living is gained by the individual or household (Ellis, 2000: 7-10). Thus development is discernable when local people improve their ability to get access to assets or resources required for starting and running activities that enable them to earn a living.

The term 'sustainable' has literally been used to refer to the durability of a given activity, process or condition over a period of time (Anyang'-Nyong'o 2002: 99; Mafeje, 2002:115). In this context, it conveys the notion of continuity in the very long term of the capacity of a process or system to be replicated (Ellis, 2000: 125). The application of this conception of sustainability to the notion of livelihoods means the capacity of a resource, activity, or a system that provides for human needs to keep up the same or increase its contribution to people's welfare and well being (Ibid.).

The concept 'sustainable development' is, therefore, used in this study to refer to the capacity of a process that enables people to get access to the assets for setting up activities through which they earn a living to be replicated over time and keep up or increase its contribution to their well-being. The study is premised on the assumption that the process that enhances the ability of people to get access to assets and engage in activities that enable them to earn a living is a matter of organization. It is organizations

that mediate people's access to assets or resources that they utilize to start or sustain activities for earning a living. Consequently, for this process or system to reproduce itself over time and keep up or increase its contribution to their welfare, people's participation in organizations, especially at the local level, is crucial. It is through participation in local organizations that people learn of the factors behind their poor living conditions and the alternative means for improving their living conditions; formulate viable activities for providing a livelihood; mobilize local resources for setting up the identified activities; and finally implement the said activities that enable them to earn a living as per the obtaining social, economic and political circumstances of their existence.

1.6.2 Local Organizations

Since the invention of the nation-state in Africa, the state has been organized into hierarchies of authority and service provision from the highest (national) level to the lowest (local) level. The term 'local' is used in this study in the context of the administration of access to services by people at the lowest hierarchy of state authority. It is, therefore, defined as the level where people in lower hierarchies of state administration are organized and/or organize themselves to get access to services that individuals or households cannot access on their own. This is the level where there is contact between service providers and recipients at the lower levels of state administration (Oyugi, 2002: 4).

What constitutes a 'local level' would, therefore, be the lowest level in the hierarchy of the Provincial Administration in Kenya where the provision of the respective service is organized. The implication is that the 'localness' of the said level would depend on the nature of the service being sought (Ibid.). For instance, if water is required at the

village level, to which the government or any other service provider responds by building a water source there, then the village would be the local level for that service. But if the provision of health services can only be provided at the locational level where a dispensary is built, then the location would be the local level in this regard. Thus, this term as used in this study refers to the lowest level of the hierarchy of the provincial administration where services are organized by, or provided to, the people. The sub-location is used here as the level where people organize CBOs to provide the required services.

With regard to the term 'organization', it is used in this study to refer to a formalized group of people who join together to work towards the attainment of shared objectives under established rules and procedures over a period of time (Holmen and Jirstrom, 1994: 12). Thus, rural spontaneous action groups that spring up to perform a task and immediately dissolves once the task has been accomplished are excluded from this definition.

The concept local organization is, therefore, used in this study to refer to formal associations or groups of people formed and/or operating under established rules and procedures for purposes of providing services at lower levels of the Provincial Administration. Examples of such organization in Kenya include co-operatives, non-governmental organizations (NGOs) and community-based organizations. Co-operatives are defined as associations of persons, usually of limited means, who voluntarily join together to achieve a common economic end through a democratically controlled business venture by making equitable contributions to the capital required and accepting a fare share of the risks and benefits of the undertaking (International Labour Office, 1960: 5). Then the concept NGOs is used in this study to refer to national and international voluntary, non-

profit and legally constituted organizations outside the state apparatus to assist people at various levels of society improve their livelihoods. Thus, co-operatives and NGOs are distinct from community-based organizations as the following definition shows.

1.6.3 Community - Based Organizations

The term "community", from which this concept is derived, refers to a specific geographic area and its residents. The area is surrounded by boundaries that are known to the residents as well as their neighbors and has a distinct name. The residents of such a locality have certain shared values, traditions, norms and belief systems through which they establish communication networks, share common facilities and services, and also psychologically identify themselves. The size of the community may be as small as a rural village, or as large as an urban city (Chitere, 1994; 84).

In Western Kenya, and indeed other parts of Kenya, three principal structures can be utilized to identify different rural communities. First, ethnic ties. People who belong to the same ethnic group, clan or lineage tend to be the predominant occupants of specific geographical localities, with such localities being named after the said ethnic group or an alternative accepted name that has significance to the group. Secondly, the boundaries of the Provincial Administration. The various levels of this Administration, which sometimes coincide with the boundaries of some ethnic groups, have specific boundaries and their residents. The smallest unit, which is also the lowest level, of this Administration is the village. The next units and levels of administration are the sub-location, location, division, district and province. Third, the boundaries of local authorities. Kenya has four types of local authorities, namely, Town Councils that

administer the upcoming urban areas; Municipal Councils that are in charge of the main towns in the countryside; City Councils that administer the country's cities; and the County Councils that are in charge of the rural areas. All these can be interpreted to constitute "communities".

This study uses the boundaries of the Provincial Administration as a guide to identifying communities and utilizes the lower units of this Administration, i.e. village and sub-location, to demarcate the communities where the organizations are located. As already mentioned, this criterion is likely to draw up communities whose residents also belong to the same ethnic group, clan, or lineage.

Given that the term "organization" refers to formal associations of individuals who mutually agree to work together under established rules and procedures for the attainment of specific objectives, the concept "community-based organizations" is used in this study to refer to local-level voluntary self-help associations that are endogenous within a community (in this case a village(s) within a sub-location), with established rules, regulations and procedures of operation for mutual attainment of specified goals. It should be emphasized again that the concept is used in this case to exclude spontaneous action groups that spring up to perform a task and immediately dissolve once the said task has been accomplished (Chitere, 1994a: 99; Wanyama, 2001: 57; UNRISD, 2000).

Thus, CBOs are significantly distinct from co-operatives and NGOs. Whereas co-operatives have their membership and activities extending beyond a single community and are essentially business ventures with a profit motive, CBOs are not necessarily business oriented and profit motivated. Some CBOs engage in business activities, but mainly as a means of generating resources to satisfy mutual interests rather than making

profit *per se*. CBOs also differ from NGOs in the sense that whereas the former are formed and operate within a specific community, the latter tend to be formed and carry out their activities across communities, mainly at national and international levels. In addition, unlike CBOs, NGOs do not engage in business activities that generate a profit - they are purely non-profit organizations that mobilize their resources through philanthropic and charitable activities.

CBOs may range from community-wide associations to small groups of a few individuals within a locality or village. The size of the organization notwithstanding, we classify CBOs into five main types in this study. These are women's groups, welfare associations, savings and credit associations, youth groups and communal self-help groups. They are defined as follows.

A women's group is a self-help association formed by women within a locality to satisfy specific interests and needs. Whereas the members of these groups are virtually all women, who exclusively provide their leadership, a few men are occasionally co-opted in some of the groups to play an advisory management role.

Welfare associations are those groups formed on the basis of kinship ties within a locality for the purpose of satisfying social welfare needs of the members and sometimes the entire community. The kinship ties may be based on a lineage, a clan or the wider ethnic group of people residing in a locality. Members include both males and females. Though the main goal is usually to satisfy socio - cultural interests, the recent trend is for these associations to engage in activities geared towards improving the living conditions of their members and the community as a whole.

Savings and credit associations are essentially informal financial institutions for mobilizing savings and lending to their members. They are usually formed within particular localities among individuals who know and trust each other, and also share the problem of raising funds for various socio-economic needs. Membership is, therefore, restricted to those able to trust each other. There are two types of these associations: the rotating savings and credit associations (ROSCAs) and the accumulating savings and credit associations (ASCRAAs).

A synthesis of the diverse definitions of ROSCAs available in the literature (cf. Alila, 1992; Adams and Fitchett, 1992; Bouman, 1995; Aryeetey and Steel, 1995) denotes that they are informal and spontaneous groups of people who voluntarily agree to contribute equal amounts of money (or any other agreed upon resource) to a common pool within a specific period of time and give to each member in turn. ASCRAAs, on the other hand, are essentially informal financial institutions for mobilizing savings to establish a fixed or permanent fund (as opposed to a rotating fund) for a specific purpose. Thus, members of the association collect contributions to build up a fixed fund that is then utilized to satisfy the purpose agreed upon by the members.

Youth groups, as the name implies, are self-help associations formed by young people within a locality for the purpose of starting, or sometimes improving, income-generating activities to satisfy their felt needs. Membership is not restricted to either gender, but there is usually an age limit.

Finally, the communal self-help groups. These are groups that emerge spontaneously or through the initiative of some members of the community in response to the felt need to realize a common goal for the good of the whole community. Such groups

are usually formed around communal projects like schools, churches, roads, health centers, cattle dips, water sources, among others. Whereas the tendency is for these groups to be formed around a single communal project, some have ventured into other activities upon completion of the initial project. Membership in these groups is open to any adult individual in the community who wishes to participate in the initiative for improving the living conditions.

1.6.4 Popular Participation

A dictionary definition of the term participation is involvement or taking part in a process, activity, or event in a society. This can take various forms given that everyone is a potential "participant" either as an effective and active actor or a passive victim who quietly consents to everything that is going on (Stiefel and Wolfe, 1994:5). Furthermore, participation can be spontaneous, where people voluntarily get engaged; coercive, in that engagement is obligatory; or induced, in which case involvement is a prerequisite for obtaining goods and services (Holmen and Jirstrom, 1994: 15). It should be noted that induced participation implies at least two different levels of engagement. At one level is where a member may seek to make use of only the economic sides of the activities (like contributing to and/or using a loan fund, buying inputs and selling produce) without bothering about the political activities of the organization (like voting at elections, taking leadership responsibilities, making decisions, etc.). At the second level is where a member participates in both the economic and political activities of the organization (Holmen, 1991; Holmen and Jirstrom, 1994: 15-16). Gyllstrom (1991) refers to these two levels of members' participation as "functional" and "reflective" participation, respectively.

The working definition of popular participation for this study is derived from "reflective participation", wherein we refer to the conscious and active engagement of members of an organization in exercising control over leadership, decision-making and resource mobilization as well as allocation processes in their organizations. Through this process, members of CBOs consciously think, decide and act to initiate development projects. Thus, popular participation will be analyzed in terms of members' involvement in choosing leaders, decision-making processes and the various stages of the cycle of development projects, namely project identification, formulation, implementation and evaluation.

1.6.5 Political Environment

This concept is used to refer to the circumstances that pertain to the process through which authoritative allocation of values and resources is made in an enduring social system (Easton, 1965: 50). In the modern society, the authority to make decisions on the allocation of values and resources is vested in the state that exercises control over society; occasionally resulting into tension between the state and society (Shively, 1997: 28-30). In situations where the state excludes society in the decision-making process, an authoritarian and repressive relationship exists between the two. A reverse is where the state uses a participatory approach in decision-making and is tolerant to the views and activities of societal actors like political parties, pressure groups and individuals, who occasionally influence it in the decision-making process. In this case, a democratic and pluralist relationship exists between the state and society.

Thus, the concept political environment is used in this study to refer to the nature of the relationship between the state and society with regard to the making of decisions on "who gets what, when and how" (Lasswell, 1936). The state maintains this relationship through formal instruments like the public bureaucracy, political parties, parliament and local authorities as well as the informal linkages like patronage. The subject of this investigation is how the relationship between the state and society in Western Kenya has affected the activities of CBOs and with what results in terms of sustainable development?

1.6.6 Democratic Leadership and Management

The term "democratic" is derived from the word "democracy", which means rule in accordance with the people's will (Bryce, 1924; Sartori 1965). This implies an exchange of opinions, views or ideas between the people and their rulers, or simply people's participation in decision-making, especially decisions that affect them. Leadership refers to the process as well as role of influencing the behavior of others in the course of carrying out the activities of an organization. Management is the exercise of control over the activities of an organization towards the attainment of specific goals through such functions like co-ordination, planning, communicating, decision-making, among others.

The concept "democratic leadership and management" in our context, therefore, denotes a style or approach to decision-making that seeks and takes into account suggestions and opinions of the members in leadership and management functions. With regard to leadership, this involves members' participation in choosing leaders and the ability of members to influence leaders' decisions and execution of tasks. As for

management, it includes members' participation in making decisions on how the activities of the organization are carried out. This can be done through committees elected by the members or through direct individual/group participation during meetings. Thus, democratic management is discernible where members exercise control over the activities of their organizations rather than leaders by themselves, whether this is a single-handed individual or a small clique.

1.6.7 Capacity Building

This concept is used in this study to refer to the process of imparting to individuals, groups or the wider community adequate and relevant skills for realizing their felt needs (Ngethe *et. al*, 1990). With such skills, people are better informed about their environment and life situation. This helps to create an environment in which people question and challenge the structural reasons for their poverty through learning and taking action to transform their livelihoods (Farrington and Lewis, 1993). The end result is that people develop skills for handling local problems, which enable them to effectively mobilize local resources to initiate durable self-help development projects.

Whether community-based organizations facilitate this process is the focus of this study. Our assumption is that such a learning process can only occur if members of these organizations participate in the full cycle of the development projects that they initiate. A fundamental question, therefore, is what members have learned towards the improvement of their living condition as a result of their participation in the activities of CBOs.

1.6.8 Dependence and Dependency

An Oxford dictionary definition of 'dependence' is a state of being supported by others to do something; or reliance on others for support to do something. Drawing from this definition, dependence is used in this study to refer to the situation where CBOs rely on non-members for advice as well as financial and material support to carry out their activities. As it will be explained later, the assumption of 'development from below' paradigm is that these organizations are self-sustaining, i.e. that they rely on their membership to generate ideas and raise resources to carry out development activities. Dependence refers to the opposite of this assumption. It should be emphasized that this concept is **not** used in this study in the context of the conventional dependency theory where it is understood to mean a situation in which the economy of certain countries is conditioned by the development and expansion of another economy to which the former is subject (Santos, 1993).

With regard to 'dependency', it is used here to refer to the relation of CBOs to the non-member actors from whom they receive or expect support to carry out their activities. This relationship tend to be characterized by subjection of the former (recipient) to the latter (donor); with the result that the CBOs may be conditioned by the donor in the process of carrying out their activities.

1.6.9 External Assistance

The word 'external' is defined in Oxford Dictionary as that which is outside of something. In this study, it is used in the context of CBOs to refer to non-members of these organizations. On the other hand, the word 'assistance' is used in the study to refer to aid,

help or support that is extended to these organizations. The concept external assistance, therefore, refers to the various forms of support that CBOs receive from non-members for purposes of carrying out their activities. As already alluded to, such support may take the form of ideas or advice in the formulation and implementation of development projects as well as financial and material resources for carrying out their activities.

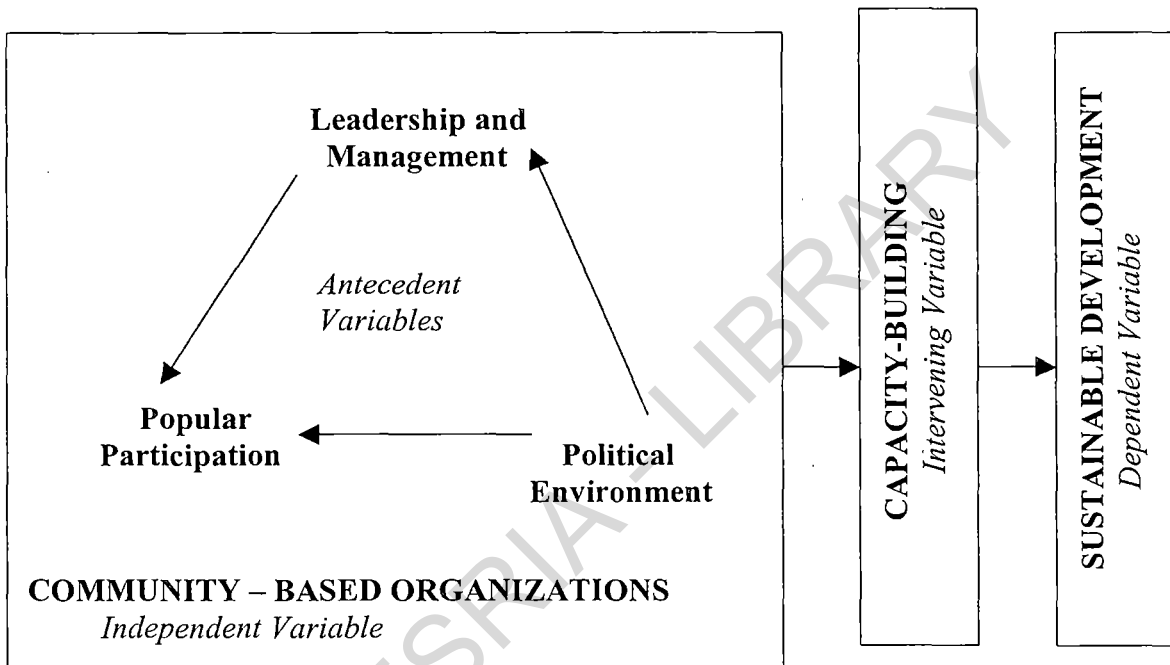
1.6.10 Patronage

This concept is derived from the word 'patron', which means protector or defender. It refers to an exchange relationship between two actors of unequal power and status, in which the more powerful actor (patron) offers protection to the less powerful actor (client) in return for the support that the latter provides to the former. The protection offered by the patron may be in the form of defending valued interests as well as facilitating access to scarce resources like money, land, or jobs; while the support provided by the clients to the patron may take the form of services like labor and votes during elections (Ng'ethe, 1979; Clapham, 1993). The link between the patron and the clients is often expressed in terms of personal or communal obligations: whereas the patron is expected to protect the interests of the clients by securing their access to scarce resources, in return, the clients are obliged to support the interests of the patron through service provision. A political structure based on such patron-client exchanges is also known as clientelism. At the local level, local elites or bosses trading the votes of their subordinates for favors received from the central government may exemplify this relationship.

1.7 A CONCEPTUAL MODEL

The concepts defined above are used to describe the variables in this study. In accordance with the assumptions and hypotheses of the study, we show their relationship in a conceptual model presented in Figure 1.

FIGURE 1: A CONCEPTUAL MODEL



The central concern in this study is to explain how community-based organizations contribute to the realization of sustainable development. As shown in the model, sustainable development is the dependent variable while CBOs constitute the independent variable of the study. Nevertheless, the contribution of these organizations to sustainable development is dependent on some internal and external factors that condition their nature as well as functioning. We call these factors the antecedent variables and these are organizational leadership and management, popular participation in the organizations and the external political environment. Above all, CBOs can be more

effective in contributing to the realization of sustainable development if they build the capacity of local people to develop self-supporting mechanisms for solving their poverty-related problems. Consequently, capacity building constitutes the intervening variable of the study. This conceptualization is based on the “development from below” paradigm, which we locate in the theoretical discourse on African development in the next section.

1.8 AFRICAN DEVELOPMENT: A THEORETICAL OVERVIEW

At independence, African leaders correctly identified the leading development challenges as poverty, disease and illiteracy. They subsequently formulated a development ideology that revolved around African socialism and self-reliance as a means of addressing the problem. African leaders, such as Kenyatta of Kenya and Nyerere of Tanzania, argued that now that independence had been won, the overriding task was development and the restoration of “African traditional society”, without which political independence could not be consolidated and that it would be difficult to eradicate the humiliation of colonialism. Against the pressure for redistribution of wealth, they argued that what was needed was hard work to enhance development, because the surplus had to be produced before it could be shared. Thus, the emphasis was dedication to hard work, with East African leaders adopting *Uhuru Na Kazi* (freedom and hard work) as the rallying call for self – help and self – reliance initiatives for development (Ake, 1996: 9).

Whereas this ideological argument was logical, many leaders, perhaps Nyerere being the only exception, seem not to have been actually committed to it. Instead of remaining steadfast with self – reliance, they passed on the responsibility for development to their foreign patrons as they concentrated on the struggle for power. Ake (1996) has

convincingly argued that at independence, the struggle for power in most African countries was so absorbing that everything else, including development, was relegated to the periphery. This gave neo-colonial powers and the West in general an opportunity to extend to Africa its version of development as had been initiated during the colonial period. As much as development plans were written and proclaimed, such plans were largely informed by the latest fads of the international development community that was immersed in the cold war. With time, development in Africa came to be conceptualized as something to be achieved through changes in the vertical relations between Africa and the West, wherein there would be a greater flow of technical assistance to Africa; more loans on better terms; more foreign investment in Africa; accelerated transfer of technology; better prices for primary commodities; greater access to western markets; and so on (Ake, 1996: 8; Anyang-Nyong'o, 2002).

As African countries increasingly became dependent, it fell to the West to supply development theory and approaches to Africa. This justified the western claim that Africa had no capacity for development. Accordingly, the West went on to present a number of theories and practical prescriptions for the reconstruction of Africa and other Third World countries, marking what Leys (1996) has termed as "the rise of development theory". But how relevant have been these theories to African development? Without necessarily attempting to present taxonomy of these theories, we briefly review some of the salient ones to facilitate our understanding of the current trends in African development thinking.

1.8.1 Modernization Theory

This theory was based on the definition of development as “modernity”, in which the latter was understood as the “phasing out” of traditional society. It held that development occurs through society's transition from "traditional" to "modern" forms of social organization (Leys, 1996:9). With the Western forms of social, economic and political organization as the universal yardsticks for modernity, local cultures in the Third World countries were dismissed as the barriers to development. The theorists argued for the discarding of traditional organizations, norms and practices in these countries to create room for "development" (Mehmet, 1995:58). Practically, they envisaged modern values and norms being diffused through education and the transfer of technology as well as resources from the West to the "elites" of the periphery (Leys, 1996: 10). Subsequently, the West embarked on formulating cheap technical assistance and scholarship programs to build urban-based industries and infrastructure and to educate the " elites" as benchmarks in the modernization of the Third World.

The immediate impact of this theory in Africa was the creation of a dual economy that featured the co-existence of a relatively advanced or modern sector in the emerging urban areas with a backward or traditional sector in the rural areas (Burkey, 1993:27). Technical assistance was concentrated in the urban areas where industries were to be built, thereby neglecting the rural areas where the majority of the Africans lived. Whereas the flow of foreign aid to Africa contributed to the dependence of African countries on the West and the burgeoning of debt, the neglect of agriculture in the rural areas caused food deficits. This notwithstanding, the West continued with this development thinking for

Africa, though it shifted its definition of development from "modernity" to "economic growth" in the 1960s.

1.8.2 Economic Growth Perspectives

Economic growth theorists considered development and modernization to be synonymous with "growth," which was defined by the rate of growth of Gross National Product (GNP) per capita. Thus, development was associated with the achievement of a high rate of growth of GNP per capita (Jazairy *et. al*, 1992; Mehmet, 1995). Third World countries were expected to realize this by imitating the western industrialized nations that had increased their gross levels of savings and investment (both internal and external, private and public) until their economies reached take-off points into self-sustaining development (Burkey, 1993:27).

Economic growth was essentially viewed as a simple matter of applying appropriate levels of investment after taking into consideration the rates of population growth; the capital to output ratio; and the desired rate of growth. In the Third World countries, it was argued, a combination of domestic savings, international investment and foreign aid would provide the fuel to drive the process through Rostow's (1960) "stages of economic growth" (Burkey 1993: 27).

It was envisaged that the resultant growth from this process would eventually bring the benefits of modernization to the entire population. That growth in the overall economy through investment in industrialization would automatically lead to wealth "trickling-down" to the poor. Thus, accelerating economic growth would filter down and

spread across, bringing the benefits of capitalist growth to the poorest segments of developing or underdeveloped societies.

Nevertheless, after a decade of economic growth rhetoric, the evidence showed that domestic inequality between the rich and the poor within the developing countries was worsening (Mehmet, 1995; Jazairy *et. al*, 1992). At any rate, the preoccupation with imitating the pattern of development in the West relegated poverty alleviation efforts in the rural sector to the periphery. Little attention was paid to the potential for internally generated development with the participation of the larger segments of the population, especially the poor. Consequently, the optimism of the 1950s and 1960s could not be sustained. The empirical evidence in Africa pointed towards a growing poverty complex that involved the marginalization of the poor, mass unemployment and recurrent starvation crises. If there was any economic growth spurred by these theories, then it was growth with poverty rather than development.

1.8.3 Dependency Theory

The early 1970s was the hey day of dependency theory. Formulated by Latin American social scientists, the theory questioned the assumed mutual benefits of international trade and aid, as propagated by modernization and economic growth theories, to the developing countries. It held that the beneficiaries of international trade were the central (developed) nations and not the peripheral (underdeveloped) nations. That the resultant unequal relationship between the centres and the peripheries led to the development of the former and to the underdevelopment of the latter. That socio-economic dependence of the periphery on the centre (otherwise called neo-colonialism) only

contributed to the development of underdevelopment in the Third World countries. Dependency theorists explained that this was the case because the long-term trends in the terms of trade favored the centres. The inflows of foreign investment gave rise to much greater interest rates and profit outflows to the centres just as the balance of economic and political power was based at the centres. Moreover, the same centres controlled finance and technology (Burkey, 1993:28; Leys, 1996: 12).

This structural arrangement at the global level, they argued, was replicated at the national level in the Third World countries. That these countries essentially had dualistic societies consisting of a proportionately large traditional agrarian society and a small modern, urbanized society; with the former representing the periphery and the latter standing for the centre. That the urban centres, which were largely capitalistic, were developing at the expense of the rural peripheries. The "modernizing elites" in the centres were really compradors or lumpen - bourgeoisie who were serving their own and foreign interests rather than those of the local people (Ibid).

Maintaining that capitalist development offered nothing to the periphery, dependency theorists argued that a solution could only be found by the Third World countries reducing their links to the metropole and bringing about "autocentric" national economic growth (Leys, 1996:12). To this end, they stressed industrialization by import substitution; central economic planning and state intervention in general; and regional integration to reverse the situation (Burkey, 1993:28).

Though this theory was widely accepted in Africa by Africanists and many African social scientists, it was not adopted by many countries as an explicit basis for development policy, except in Nyerere's Tanzania. In any case, it was economically

unsuccessful in Tanzania. At the theoretical front, dependency failed to construct its own theory of development. By exclusively focusing on the external obstacles to Third World development, dependency theory failed to address the question of how to initiate an internal self-reliant development process. Some critics found the theory to be a replication of modernization theory in an isolated national economy (Hettne, 1982), which essentially amounted to once again studying the Third World through Western glasses (Hyden, 1986).

Nevertheless, the theory is credited for the replacement of the idealized and mechanical vision of development that had been presented in modernization and economic growth theories by a more historical method. It led to a necessary analysis of the particular conditions affecting the development process in the Third World and the many unforeseen contradictions that characterize this process (Burkey, 1993:29). The use of an historical method to study development in the Third World contributed to the rise of alternative development thought in the mid – 1970s.

1.8. 4 Alternative Development: From Positivist to Normative Approaches

The 1973 oil crisis shattered the optimism and confidence of development theoreticians. It exposed the vulnerability of western industrialism and the decreasing capacity of nation-states to control their own economies. In the circumstances, attempts were made to incorporate approaches that stressed global interdependence in the development process. Cases in point were the demands in the late 1970s and early 1980s for a New International Economic Order favoring the developing nations; and the Brandt Commission Report titled: North - South: A Programme for Survival, proposing a massive transfer of financial resources to the poor countries in the South (Burkey, 1993; 30).

Unfortunately the demanded massive transfer of resources only served to increase the debt crisis in most of the African countries.

Besides global interdependence, the decline of dependency theory also triggered concern among some scholars and practitioners about the question of how development should take place rather than the preoccupation with theories on how it actually took place. The thinking was directed towards the content of development rather than the form of development. Thus, normative approaches were being preferred to the positivist approaches that were emphasized in the modernization, economic growth and dependency theories. Normative approaches were concerned with the purpose and meaning of development rather than the positivist limitation to questions relating to the mobilization of productive forces of development (Ibid.). One example of the normative approaches that gained currency in the 1970s was the basic needs approach.

1.8.5 The Basic Needs Approach

The realization that economic growth in the aggregate did not necessarily eradicate poverty in the developing countries led to the Cocyoc Declaration of 1974 to the effect that a process of growth that did not lead to the fulfillment of basic human needs was a travesty of development. This contributed to the formulation of the basic needs approach that was adopted by the International Labour Organization (ILO) in 1976. The approach held that development ought to be need-oriented. Subsequently, the meeting of the basic human needs of poor people became an important element in alternative development strategies (Bibangambah, 1985; Burkey, 1993).

The ILO defined basic needs to include at least two broad sets. First, certain minimum requirements of a household for private consumption: adequate food, shelter, clothing and furniture. Second, the essential services provided by and for the community at large, such as safe drinking water, sanitation, public transport, health and education facilities. ILO argued that within the framework of economic growth, appropriate measures should be taken to ensure the satisfaction of these needs.

Nevertheless, there was no agreement on how these needs could be satisfied. Whereas some proponents suggested the creation of employment or earning opportunities for the poor to satisfy their needs, others argued for the giving of handouts to deprived “target groups” (Streeten, 1981). This question remained controversial and is yet to be resolved.

It should be pointed out in this regard that despite its concern for the alleviation of poverty in the developing countries, the basic needs approach emphasized the consumption needs of the poor rather than their productivity and capacity to generate a surplus. This emphasis led to a heated debate between proponents of the approach and economists who rightly argued that any diversion of scarce development resource from “productive” investment to basic needs “welfare” would harm the development prospects of the developing countries (Jazairy *et. al*, 1992; Mehmet, 1995). Indeed, the approach neither alleviated poverty nor solved Africa’s development problems. The 1980s had, therefore, to start with a fresh look at African development.

1.8.6 The Rise of Neo-liberalism in African Development

The response to the crisis of development in Africa since the 1980s has been the neo-liberal conception of development, which is based on the notion of freedom. For the neo-liberals like T.H. Green, freedom is the ability of the individual to develop and attain individuality. This involves the ability of the individual to realize his or her potential, attain skills and knowledge and achieve self-actualization. The aim is to empower the individual and safeguard people from the social, economic and political evils that cripple their lives (Heywood, 1998:57). From this perspective, development occurs when individuals, who have sympathy for one another, act morally and possess social responsibilities, have equal opportunities to realize their freedom.

The neo-liberals argued that such opportunities are to be found in a market economy, but cautioned that if the market society does not provide individuals with equal opportunities to grow and develop, this can only be achieved through collective action, regulated by a minimalist state. Thus, the state is viewed not merely as a threat to individual freedom, but also as its guarantor. It is an enabling state that is expected to exercise a wide range of regulatory social and economic responsibilities to guarantee the freedom of the individual to develop (Ibid.: 58).

In a nutshell, neo-liberalism advocated for self-reliant individuals who take responsibility for their own lives in a market-regulated society where the state only plays a regulatory role to provide an “enabling environment”. Therefore, the central thrust of neo-liberalism is to help individuals to help themselves (Ibid.).

Against this theoretical background, neo-liberals attributed Africa’s development problems to an “over-grown state”. Besides curbing individual freedom to develop his/her

potential, development had been blocked by inflated public sectors. Governments were inefficient, often corrupt and hence parasitic, not stimulators of growth. That governments were part of the problem rather than the solution to development: they were never exclusively concerned to promote the development goals to which they were ostensibly committed (Leys, 1996: 18).

To reverse this situation, two neo-liberal answers have been in vogue. First, the prescription of structural adjustment programmes by the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund (IMF). Second, the adoption of the “bottom-up” approach to development in the context of “development from below” or “people-centered development” paradigm. The question worth raising relevant to our analysis is the extent to which neo-liberalism has contributed to African Development?

1.8.7 Structural Adjustment Programs

Structural Adjustment Programs (SAPs) were essentially economic reform policies and measures that sought to rectify economic imbalances in African countries by reallocating resources in a manner leading to the emergence of a market-oriented economy. This was based on the neo-liberal assumption that development problems in Africa were due to the dominance of an inefficient state in the economy and an “underdeveloped” market, both of which had curtailed the freedom of the individual to realize his/her potential. The policies and measures included, among others, the privatization of public enterprises; removal of subsidies on public goods and services; liberalization of internal and external trade; new foreign exchange regimes that resulted in severe currency devaluation for purposes of promoting external trade; introduction of

“cost-sharing” for state supplied services; and restructuring government institutions, including retrenchment of staff in the public service (Bangura and Gibbon, 1992; 7).

The experience with the implementation of these market-oriented reforms in most African countries has been disappointing. The human and social costs that have arisen in the process of liberalizing and privatizing the economy have been extremely burdensome, especially to the poor. In their poverty, the majority of the people have been unable to meet the cost of social services previously provided by the state. Thus, SAPs have increased, rather than reduced, the suffering of the poor (Mehmet, 1995). It is partly for this reason that SAPs have been criticized for lacking a “human face”. Contrary to neo-liberal expectations, the individual is yet to regain his/her freedom to develop his/her potential.

Moreover, SAPs have been based on wider macro-economic assumptions that have disregarded the unique circumstances of African countries. The economic situation of each African country is different from the other, requiring specific policies rather than the "common medicine" or standard policy of SAPs. In this respect, SAPs are not any different in terms of being Eurocentric macro-economic theories like modernization and economic growth, which had virtually no regard for the African situation. SAPs have not, therefore, made a way out for African development (Mehmet, 1995; Beckman, 1992).

In reality, there may not be a universal path to development, more so in Africa where diverse socio-economic conditions obtain between and within states. Each society may need its own strategy that suits its circumstance. It is in this regard that the second neo-liberal option for African development makes sense.

1.8.8 Development From Below Paradigm and the "Bottom-Up" Approach

The neo-liberal call for the retreat of the state in the development process was viewed not only as a strategy for setting up a market economy, but also as a means of empowering the people to take charge of their development. The retreat of the state was to go hand in hand with the fostering of grassroots organizations capable of promoting development from below (Beckman, 1992:85-86). This thinking contributed to a shift in the development paradigm in the 1980s from the state-centered development that utilized the "top-down" approach to the people-centered development. This paradigm emphasized concepts of popular participation in development decision-making by the clientele group; building the capacity of individuals and institutions in the development process; and the sustainability of development activities initiated at every level, but more so at the grassroots level (Blunt and Warren, 1996: xiii). This paradigm has been referred to as "development from below" and relies on the "bottom-up" approach to development (Sanyal, 2000).

It should, however, be pointed out that this paradigm is not essentially new. Ideas on this model of development can be traced to the populist and anarchist thought of nineteenth century Europe as well as the "alternative development" thinking of dependency theorists in the Third World countries (Taylor, 1996: 78-79). It is partly these ideas that influenced the formulation of the concept of "development from below" and its subsequent adoption as a development paradigm in the 1980s (Ibid.).

In its original formulation, the concept "development from below" viewed development as an essentially indigenous process in which self-reliance and popular participation were the essential elements. It was based on the maximum mobilization of

each area's natural, human and institutional resources to satisfy the needs of the inhabitants of that area. The said area was basically a rural, territorially based community. As a strategy for development, "development from below" was basic needs oriented, labor intensive, ecologically sensitive, regional resource based, rural centered and argued for the use of appropriate rather than the highest technology (Ibid: 79). This conception of development has been revitalized by neo-liberals as a local-level development paradigm for empowering people to satisfy their needs and thereby make the development process sustainable.

It posits that people, especially the poor, should be enabled to take control over their lives and secure a better livelihood, with the ownership and control of indigenous productive assets as one of the key elements in this process. It is argued that through people's participation in the activities for improving their living conditions, they build their capacity and initiate durable development activities in response to their social, economic and political environments. Participation, therefore, enables people to exploit the diverse complexities of their own environment, generate local solutions to their problems and thereby determine their path to development (Korten and Klauss, 1984; Cernea, 1985; 1987; Chambers, 1993).

The "bottom-up" approach is the principal operational mechanism for this paradigm. It has been argued that how people can participate in the development process at the grassroots level is a matter of organization (Holmen and Jirstrom, 1994). Consequently, the existence of local organizations at the grassroots level is a fundamental element of this approach. It is through these organizations that people will participate in development decision-making by identifying their felt needs; adopting the necessary action

to be taken to satisfy the needs; mobilizing resources for the purpose of implementation; and evaluating the impact of that action on their livelihoods. It is through such initiatives that sustainable development can be realized at the local grassroots level.

An analysis of the contribution of community-based organizations to sustainable development from this theoretical perspective should give us an insight into the question of whether this version of neo-liberal assumptions on African development is well founded.

1.9 SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY

Since the mid-1980s, there seems to have been a tendency to neglect research on the micro-level of development in the Third World countries in general and Africa in particular. With the prescription of Structural Adjustment Programmes by the IMF and the World Bank as the basis for extending development assistance to African countries, most researchers shifted their attention to development policy reforms at the macro-level where SAPs had been directed. With SAPs in vogue, it is already being lamented that there is a shift in the development focus or agenda, once again slipping back to macro-economic policies, specifically to the "top-down" planning and "trickle-down" approaches that were part of the underdevelopment problem in Africa (Horowitz, 1994). The focus of this study on local level development initiatives is, therefore, significant for contributing to our knowledge on micro-level development that has direct implications for the lives of the majority of the population in Africa as a whole and Kenya in particular.

Moreover, recent interest in development studies has focused, not on questions relating to the starting or implementation of "new" development initiatives *per se*, but on the sustainability of such initiatives in African countries (Asiedu, 2002). This focus is

partly due to the fact that many development projects tend to collapse at the end of donor funding. The question of how to realize sustainable development in Africa is, therefore, yet to be answered adequately by development thinkers, practitioners and policy makers. It is increasingly being accepted that local organizations can make a contribution towards the realization of sustainable development, but such acknowledgement is not supported by adequate empirical evidence. This study will, therefore, broaden our knowledge at two frontiers in this regard: first, on the possible option for realizing sustainable development; and second, on the actual contribution of local organizations in general, and community-based organizations in particular, to the building of local capacity for sustainable development in Western Kenya in particular and Kenya in general.

Besides this contribution to knowledge, this study is also significant in the formulation of public policy on self-reliant development in Kenya. In this age of chronic external debts, national budget deficits and donor fatigue with foreign aid, the economic destiny of African countries now rests on indigenous, domestic development initiatives and resources as well as actors. Consequently, there is an urgent need to formulate policies that will revitalize and guide the development of indigenous solutions in the quest for sustainable development. This can effectively be done with the use of empirical data. This empirical study with a local focus will, therefore, give insights into the achievements and problems of indigenous local level development, which can serve as a guide for formulating or reviewing public policy to address self-reliant development in the country.

1.10 METHODOLOGY

Both primary and secondary data are used in this study. However, primary data constitute the core of the data with secondary data playing a supplementary role, especially in offering further detailed explanations. Whereas primary data were obtained through survey research in Western Kenya between January 2000 and April 2002, secondary data were derived from published books and articles, records of CBOs kept by the Department of Social Services in the districts surveyed and the annual reports of the said Department. It would have been ideal to also use the minutes of meetings of CBOs in this regard, but these were not available in most of the organizations.

1.10.1 Data Collection

Quantitative and qualitative techniques were used to collect data in a survey of CBOs in Western Kenya. These two techniques were essentially used in a complementary manner. Whereas the quantitative technique was used to generate factual data on CBOs, the qualitative technique generated explanatory data to enhance our understanding of the issues in these organizations.

1.10.2 Quantitative Techniques

A self-administered structured questionnaire (see Appendix 1) was used to interview members of CBOs during the survey. In view of the large size of the region referred to as Western Kenya in this study and the large number of CBOs, samples of organizations and members to be interviewed had to be drawn from selected socio-economic and administrative units in the survey area.

1.10.3 Delineation of the Survey Area

Western Kenya in this study refers to the neighboring administrative provinces of Western and Nyanza. This region was chosen mainly because the researcher previously worked there on studies of local organizations and rural development (Wanyama, 1993; Alila and Wanyama, 1995; 1996; Wanyama, 2001). This study is, therefore, broadly a continuation of the research on rural development in Western Kenya, but with a more refined focus and in-depth analysis of the contribution of CBOs to sustainable development.

The two provinces were also chosen for this study to facilitate a comparative analysis of the influence of the political environment on the activities of CBOs. At the time the survey was conducted, inhabitants of the two provinces had generally contrasting political allegiances. Whereas most of Nyanza province (the only exception being parts of Kisii, Nyamira, and Gucha districts) was identified with opposition politics until March 18th 2002 when the National Development Party (NDP) was dissolved to merge with the then ruling Kenya African National Union (KANU), Western Province was largely a pro-government region, with the exception of Bungoma district. It was, therefore, of interest to compare the impact of the contrasting political environments on the contribution of CBOs to sustainable development.

Due to the shortage of research resources, four districts were purposively sampled from the two provinces for the survey: two districts from each province. Two main factors guided the sampling of the districts. First, the general political affiliation of the district in terms of the political parties to which the majority of the Members of Parliament and councilors in the district belonged. Second, the agricultural potential in relative terms,

especially the main cash crop grown or the alternative economic activities undertaken in the district. This factor was put into consideration in order to bring into focus more of the impact of the contrasting political environment than the economic environment. The social environment had already been taken care of by virtue of the fact that whereas the Nilotic speaking Luo ethnic group largely inhabits Nyanza Province, Western Province is largely occupied by the Bantu-speaking Luhya ethnic group. Consequently, Butere-Mumias and Nyando districts from Western and Nyanza, respectively, were sampled as the high potential districts where sugarcane was also grown as the main cash crop. Busia and Siaya were selected as the low potential districts from Western and Nyanza provinces, respectively, where there was no key cash crop following the collapse of the cotton industry in the 1980s and fishing was a major economic activity. Whereas the majority of the Members of Parliament and councilors from Butere-Mumias and Busia districts were affiliated to KANU, those in Nyando and Siaya were affiliated to the defunct NDP.

In order to be objective and consistent with regard to sample size, two administrative units were sampled downwards from the district to the sub-location. Accordingly, two divisions were sampled from each of the four districts using systematic sampling technique. Thus, a list of the divisions in each district was drawn; the sampling interval calculated by dividing the number of the divisions by two (our sample size); and then the division that fell immediately after the determined sampling interval on the list was sampled. This gave us the eight administrative divisions that were surveyed.

This method was repeated in each of the sampled divisions to select two administrative locations, which gave us sixteen locations for the survey. Then within each

location, the same method was used to sample two sub-locations, which gave us a sample of thirty-two (32) sub-locations for the survey.

The villages that were surveyed were selected on the basis of the location of sampled CBOs. Within each sub-location, a reconnaissance survey was conducted to create sampling frames for the various types of CBOs. From the so-created frames, CBOs were sampled and their members traced to the respective villages for interview. This approach gave each village in the sub-locations a probability to be sampled and it gave us a random sample of one hundred and twenty four (124) villages for the survey.

Table 1.1 overleaf captures the specific names of the provinces, districts, divisions, locations and sub-locations that were covered in the survey. However, it should be mentioned that though only sixteen locations and thirty-two sub-locations had been formally sampled, the actual interviewing of the members of CBOs was not confined to these units only. We ended up covering twenty (20) locations and forty-four (44) sub-locations. This happened because the activities as well as the membership of some CBOs are spread beyond the specific administrative unit's boundaries as some of the members resided outside such localities. Consequently, the names appearing in Table 1.1 are for the administrative units that were formally sampled and, therefore, where the activities of the sampled CBOs are concentrated. The additional four locations were Nangosia in Funyula division; and Marenyo, Marama South and Marama West in Butere division. The other sub-locations were Ludacho, Lugala and Mango in Nambuku location; Sirekeresi in Nangosia location; Mudoma in Namboboto location; Border I and Ayucha in Awasi location; Ugunja in East Uholo location; Lunza in Marama West location; Muyundi in Marenyo location; Isongo in Shibinga location; and Ekeru in Nabongo location.

TABLE 1.1: SAMPLED ADMINISTRATIVE UNITS FOR THE SURVEY

PROVINCE	DISTRICT	DIVISION	LOCATION	SUB-LOCATION
WESTERN	BUTERE MUMIAS	BUTERE	Butere Township	Shirotsa & Shibembe
			Marama West	Buchenya & Bumamamu
		MUMIAS	Nabongo	Lureko & Matawa
			Shibinga	Lusheya & Eluche
	BUSIA	FUNYULA	Nambuku	Ganjala & Sibinga
			Namboboto	Nyakohobi & Luanda
		NAMBALE	Nasewa	Nasewa & Buyama
			Bukhayo West	Esikulu & Mundika
NYANZA	NYANDO	NYANDO	Awasi	Border II & Watombori II
			Kochogo	Kochogo S. & Kochogo N.
		MIWANI	Nyang'oma	Sidho East I & Wang'aya
			N.East Kano	KabarWest & Kango
	SIAYA	UGUNJA	East Uholo	Sigomre & Got Osimbo
			Central Ugenya	Yiro & Sidindi
		WAGAI	South-East Gem	Kanyadet & Akala
			South Gem	Ramula & Ngiya

SOURCE: Field data

1.10.4 Sampling Community-Based Organizations and Respondents

The sampling of CBOs was preceded by a reconnaissance survey to create sampling frames of these organizations in the survey area. The survey exercise was initiated at the sub-locational level. By asking local leaders and the general public if they knew of the existence of any CBO in their locality, we managed to create separate lists of the five types of CBOs in each of the sampled sub-locations. On average, at least ten CBOs were listed in each category. Our preliminary observation on the lists was that those

of women's groups and savings and credit associations, particularly ROSCAs, were longer than those of the other types of CBOs.

Initially, the target was to sample five CBOs from each sub-location, i.e. one organization from each of the five types. This would have given us a sample of 160 organizations. Nevertheless, we decided to reduce this size by half due to the limited resources. To this end, the lists created in the sub-locations were consolidated at the locational level. Thereafter, simple random sampling method was used to sample one organization from each of the five lists representing the respective types of CBOs in every location. The lot method of simple random sampling technique was used in this process. Thus, in each location, five organizations were sampled. A total of eighty (80) CBOs were thus sampled for the study (see Appendix II).

With regard to the respondents, five members of each of the organizations were sampled for interview. Three of the members were purposively sampled on the basis of the leadership positions they held. Thus, the chairperson, secretary and treasurer were selected for interview in each organization. The other two members in each organization were sampled using the simple random sampling method. The lot method was once again used to sample the said members. This gave us a sample of four hundred (400) members to be interviewed.

However, due to logistical problems, especially the difficulties inherent in tracing rural dwellers in the midst of their busy schedules and the time constraint for the study, only three hundred and fifty (350) respondents were actually interviewed. This coverage, in any case, is adequate as it represents 87.5 per cent of the targeted sample.

1.10.5 Qualitative Techniques

Qualitative data were collected through informal discussions with key informants. First were government administrators, especially the District Social Development Officers (DSDOs) and their assistants at the district headquarters; the District Development Officers (DDOs); the Social Development Assistants (SDAs) and Community Development Assistants (CDAs) at the divisional and locational levels (we found that these officers are not posted upto the sub-locational level); Chiefs; and Assistant Chiefs. Second, some focused group discussions were held with selected members of some CBOs excluding the members who had been formally interviewed. A checklist of questions was used to guide the discussions.

1.10.6 Data Analysis

Using the Statistical Package for Social Science (SPSS) computer programme, quantitative data were analyzed in two stages. First was univariate data analysis where descriptive statistics were used to summarize the measurements of each variable. The specific statistics used in this exercise were the frequency distributions and percentages. The second stage involved measuring the relationships between variables through bivariate and multivariate data analyses. Cross-tabulations were used along with the gamma measure of association to determine the existence, direction and strength of the relationship between variables. These enabled us to draw conclusions for the study.

1.10.7 Problems Encountered in Executing the Study

Any researcher in rural Kenya is likely to encounter a number of problems ranging from logistical to physical difficulties of travelling through a hostile terrain with a poor communication infrastructure while carrying out a study. This study is no exception. Nevertheless, one major problem that shaped the research methodology deserves to be mentioned.

With the understanding that the Department of Social Services in the then Ministry of Culture and Social Services registers CBOs in the districts and keeps their registers at the district headquarters, we initially set out to use the registers as the sampling frames of the CBOs in the respective districts. This, however, presented the main problem to this study. In the first place, the registers were largely incomplete, especially in the relatively new districts of Butere-Mumias and Nyando. Furthermore, the registers had not classified CBOs into the five categories identified in this study. Rather, the tendency was to label these organizations as women groups, youth groups, or self-help groups. Thus, savings and credit associations and welfare associations could not be identified in the registers. Moreover, we came to realize that some of the groups classified as “self-help” could pass for welfare associations, savings and credit associations or communal self-help groups. Similarly, some of the “women groups” were actually savings and credit associations. This overlap made it difficult for us to sample all types of CBOs as envisaged.

In addition to these, it was even more problematic in tracing the organizations listed in the registers on the ground. Most of the organizations only had postal addresses and no physical addresses, with some of the organizations sharing the postal addresses. There were also cases of organizations with similar names operating postal addresses at a post

office, such that it became difficult to determine which organization we were tracing from the post office. All these presented challenges in locating the organizations at the local level, with the result that we were unable to reach most of the sampled CBOs. The staff of the Department of Social Services at the locational level admitted that some of the CBOs only existed in the registers, some of them without a membership, and attributed this to the 1997 National Women Development Fund and National Youth Development Fund that saw the surge of politically initiated women's and youth groups ostensibly to get a share of the Funds. We shall get back to this point in the thesis.

It was in response to these problems that we introduced the reconnaissance survey component in the methodology. This helped to create sampling frames of CBOs on the ground and, hence, give all organizations a chance to be sampled. This, however, increased the cost of the study, which we solved by reducing the sample size of organizations by half.

1.11 SUMMARY

The study is on the contribution of local organizations to sustainable development in Western Kenya. It identifies community-based organizations as one type of the local organizations and questions the impact of the political environment on these organizations' activities for realizing sustainable development at the local level. The broad objective is to assess the contribution of community-based organizations to local level sustainable development in the context of the political environment that obtains in Kenya in general and Western Kenya in particular.

The study is premised on the assumption that members' popular participation in the activities of CBOs is a prerequisite for the realization of sustainable development at the local level; and that popular participation is a function of the internal leadership and management structures as well as the external political environment in which CBOs operate. The 'development from below' paradigm provides the analytical framework for the study. The paradigm posits that for sustainable development to be realized, people should be enabled to take control of their lives and secure better livelihoods, with the ownership and control of indigenous productive assets as the elements in this regard. It is argued that this occurs through people's participation in the activities for securing their livelihoods, a process that enables them to build their capacity to initiate durable development activities in response to their social, economic and political environments.

Participation, therefore, enables people to learn and exploit the diverse complexities of their environment, formulate local solutions to their socio-economic problems and initiate durable activities for improving their livelihoods. Given that such participation is a matter of organization, the existence of local organizations is a fundamental element of this paradigm. It is through these organizations that people participate in the development process and make it sustainable. Whether CBOs in Western Kenya have played this role is the subject of inquiry. The starting point in this inquiry is to show the development potentials and challenges in the study region in order to appreciate the role that these organizations could play.

CHAPTER TWO

THE POTENTIAL FOR SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT IN WESTERN KENYA

2.1 INTRODUCTION

It is now widely accepted that since independence, most African countries have experienced a multiplicity of socio-economic problems manifested in a decline in people's living standards, with adverse implications for the development process. In some countries, these problems have reached crisis proportions, culminating into an increase in absolute poverty. The current concern with the alleviation of poverty has stimulated the quest for the realization of sustainable development as a lasting solution to the problem. This chapter highlights the development potentials and problems in Western Kenya that need to be addressed in order to realize sustainable development. This is preceded by a general overview of the trend of development in Kenya as a benchmark for understanding the development problems in Western Kenya. The broad objective here is to justify the preoccupation with the sustainability of development initiatives in recent development literature and show the implications for the development process in Western Kenya.

It has already been observed that this study is essentially a continuation of research on local organizations and rural development in Western Kenya that the author started in the early 1990s. Consequently, this chapter is mainly based on the findings of earlier research in the region that informed the formulation of this study (See Alila and Wanyama, 1995; 1996; Wanyama, 1993; 2001). Field and secondary data from sources that are duly acknowledged supplement this.

2.2 AN OVERVIEW OF THE DEVELOPMENT TREND IN KENYA

Like in most African countries, independent Kenya embarked on the development process via a paradigm that was influenced by the “top-down” transfer of resources and technology approach, which emphasized centralized planning and management of development by the state and other “experts” (Schuurman, 2000). It thus relied on the exchequer and foreign assistance to finance most of the development projects. Though Kenyatta launched the *harambee* movement to mobilize local resources for development, such initiatives were meant to only play a supplementary role to the state and they had to conform to the political dispensation of the state. Consequently, until the 1980s, it was the duty of the state to “deliver” development to the people.

From a general perspective, the development trend in Kenya since independence has been downward. During the first decade of independence, the country generally recorded commendable economic performance that translated into generally improved living conditions of the people. Thereafter, the good economic performance was not sustained, thereby setting off the downward trend in the overall development process.

In terms of economic performance, the country’s economic growth record was at its peak between 1964 and 1973. As shown in Table 2.1, Gross Domestic Product (GDP) grew on an average of 6.6 per cent per year during this period. With an average per capita income growth rate of 2.6 per cent per year, the majority of Kenyans were in a position to satisfy most of their basic needs (Republic of Kenya, 1997:1). Perhaps another contributory factor to the improved satisfaction of basic needs was the apt provision of public services by the government. It is evident in Table 2.1 that the provision of government services was at its peak since independence.

TABLE 2.1: AVERAGE GROWTH OF GROSS DOMESTIC PRODUCT IN KENYA, 1964 –2001 (Percentages)

	1964- 1973	1974- 1979	1980- 1989	1990- 1989	1997- 1998	1998- 1999	1999- 2000	2000- 2001
Agriculture	4.6	3.9	3.3	0.4	1.5	1.2	-2.1	1.2
Manufacturing	9.1	10.0	4.8	3.0	1.4	1.0	-1.4	0.8
Finance, Business, Real Estate	9.8	12.4	6.7	6.6	3.2	2.0	0.4	1.0
Government Services	16.9	6.5	4.9	2.6	0.8	0.7	0.7	0.7
Domestic Services	3.5	14.5	10.0	10.5	5.7	4.6	2.4	2.6
Other Services	-	3.3	4.2	1.9	1.8	2.0	0.5	1.0
Gross GDP	6.6	5.2	4.1	2.5	1.8	1.4	-0.2	1.2

SOURCE: Republic of Kenya (1997), *National Development Plan 1997-2002*, Nairobi: Government Printer, P.3; Central Bureau of Statistics (2002) *Economic Survey 2002*, Nairobi: Government Printer, P. 20.

Since the mid-1970s, the performance of the economy has, on the whole, been poor. The growth rate in all the main economic sectors as well as that of overall GDP declined each year throughout the remainder of the 1970s. By the early 1980s, the rate of economic growth could not keep pace with the rate of population growth (Bahemuka *et. al*, 1998:18), resulting in a remarkable decline in per capita income. This situation reversed the steady and continuous increase in the standard of living that most of the citizens had enjoyed during the first fifteen years of independence (Barkan, 1994:22). The government attempted to reverse this trend by adopting the World Bank and International Monetary Fund (IMF) prescribed Structural Adjustment Programmes (SAPs) in the mid 1980s (Alila 2001:85). However, the government had become reluctant to implement some aspects of SAPs by the late 1980s due to the political

implications, thereby setting off bad relations between the government and most of the donors. The subsequent deterioration in economic performance saw the annual average growth rate of per capita income decline to only 0.4 per cent by 1989 (Republic of Kenya, 1997:1), with adverse effects on the people's living conditions.

The political upheavals that surrounded the quest for multi-party democracy from the late 1980s saw the 1990s decade begin with even a worse development record for the country. Following the government's reluctance to implement SAPs and reintroduce multi-party democracy, bilateral and multilateral donors suspended aid to Kenya in November 1991. The growth rate of GDP declined to 2.3 per cent during this year while the per capita income fell to its lowest level of -2.0 per cent (Barkan, 1994:22). The continued suspension of foreign aid to the country and the ethnic clashes that rocked parts of Western, Nyanza and Rift Valley provinces in the run-up to the 1992 general elections worsened economic performance. In 1992 and 1993, the GDP growth rate further declined to 0.5 and 0.2 per cent, respectively (Republic of Kenya, 1997:4).

In the mid-1990s, there was a slight improvement in economic performance, but this could not be sustained. The country recorded improved GDP growth rates of 4.8 and 4.6 per cent in 1995 and 1996, respectively. However, this rate dropped to 2.3 per cent in 1997 following the suspension of aid by donors once again and the recurrence of ethnic clashes in the run-up to the December 1997 general elections (Central Bureau of Statistics, 2000:18). Since then, the annual growth rate of GDP has remained on the decline. Whereas this rate stood at only 1.8 percent in 1998, it declined to 1.4 per cent in 1999 (Ibid.). Economic performance in the year 2000 even worsened following the long drought that culminated into the rationing of water and electricity for consumers. The

GDP growth rate declined to its lowest ebb of -0.3 per cent. This rate relatively improved to 1.2 per cent in 2001 (Central Bureau of Statistics, 2002: 17), but this did not significantly change the pace of overall development.

The decline in economic performance was generally accompanied by a similar deterioration in people's living standards. The introduction of "cost-sharing" in the provision of social services, following the removal of government subsidies as prescribed by SAPs, worsened people's living conditions. With rising rates of inflation, coupled with retrenchment of staff in the public service that enhanced the growing unemployment, most Kenyans became unable to meet medical and educational expenses as well as satisfy other basic needs (UNDP, 2002b). On its part, the government could not afford to maintain, leave alone to develop, the socio-economic infrastructure; more so after the 1997 *el nino* rains that destroyed most of the road network.

In the circumstances, the level of poverty went on to rise. On the basis of the 1997 poverty lines, which were developed as per the minimum requirements of food and non-food expenditure needed to meet the minimum basic needs, the national overall poverty level stood at 52.6 per cent in 1997. With a poorly performing agricultural sector, the majority of the population living below the poverty line was located in the rural areas. Thus, whereas 53.1 per cent (about 11.4 million people) of the population in the rural areas was absolutely poor, 50.1 per cent (about 2 million people) of the urban dwellers were living below the poverty line (Central Bureau of Statistics, 2000:18). In 2001, the national overall poverty level was estimated to be 54.0 per cent.

The implication of this scenario is that the level of poverty in Kenya has been rising with poor economic performance over the years. The upshot is that the trend of

development in Kenya has been downward since the mid 1970s. The question to be addressed is how the trend of development at the national or macro level has shaped the development process at the local or micro level, particularly in Western Kenya. Before we turn to this question, it is instructive that we familiarize ourselves with the geographical background of the region

2.3 WESTERN KENYA: A GEOGRAPHICAL AND SETTLEMENT BACKGROUND

Western Kenya, comprising the neighbouring Nyanza and Western provinces, is located in the Lake Victoria basin in Southwestern Kenya. Whereas Western Province borders the Republic of Uganda to the West, Nyanza borders the Republic of Tanzania to the South and the Republic of Uganda to its Southwest. Both provinces border the Rift Valley Province of Kenya to the North and East (see the highlighted region on Map 1). Administratively, Western Province is divided into eight districts while Nyanza is composed of twelve districts. The districts in Western Province are Busia, Teso, Mt. Elgon, Bungoma, Butere-Mumias, Vihiga, Lugari and Kakamega (see Map 2. Highlighted districts were surveyed). Those in Nyanza include Siaya, Bondo, Kisumu, Nyando, Rachuonyo, Homa Bay, Suba, Migori, Kuria, Kisii, Gucha and Nyamira (see Map 3. Highlighted districts were surveyed).

The region has variable climatic conditions. Generally, rainfall distribution tends to increase with the rise in altitude from the lakeshore upwards. Consequently, the lakeshore area receives lower rainfall than the highland parts. For instance, whereas Kisii, Nyamira, Vihiga, Butere- Mumias and Kakamega districts that lie in the upper highland region receive an average annual rainfall of 1,800-2,000 mm, Busia, Siaya and

Homa Bay districts that are located in lakeshore region receive an average of 750-1,500mm annually. Temperatures also tend to fall with the rise in altitude from the lakeshore, such that cooler temperatures are experienced in the upper highlands than in the lowland around the lake. Consequently, the highland region has greater agricultural potential than the lowland region (Ministry of Planning and National Development, 1994a; 1994b; 1994c; 1994d; 1994e).

Agriculture being the main economic activity, the agricultural potential of the various parts of the region has to a large extent influenced population distribution. Whereas population is sparse along the shores of Lake Victoria, it is dense at higher altitude where rainfall is high, temperatures are cooler, and soil is also fertile. This is evident in districts like Siaya, Busia and Homa Bay where population is sparse, while Vihiga, Butere-Mumias, Kisii and Nyamira districts have higher population densities. This population distribution vis-à-vis the climatic conditions have posed a dilemma for agricultural productivity, with adverse implications for the entire development process. Thus, the dense population in the high potential agricultural zone has resulted in land scarcity while adverse climatic conditions and low soil fertility have hindered agricultural productivity in the sparsely populated regions where land is abundant.

In order to cope with the low incomes resulting from this paradox, there has been an outflow of people from the region, either to the urban areas in search of wage employment opportunities or to settle in other relatively less densely populated and agriculturally productive areas of the country. Out-migration to the urban areas is, however, the most predominant due to a fast-growing labor force brought about by large numbers of school leavers in the recent past who cannot be absorbed by the agricultural

sector as well as the rural informal sector. In any case, Western Kenya is historically known for being a labor reservoir since the colonial period and, therefore, an area of out-migration of males in the 20-40 years age bracket to commercial farming regions and urban centers throughout the country (Alila, 1998:161).

Though this out-migration has contributed to the in-flow of productive resources from other parts of the country into the region in the form of remittances (Oucho, 1996: 85- 97), it has partly led to the emergence of a demographic structure that comprises more females than males. This, coupled with death, has given rise to a high percentage of female-headed households in the largely patrilineal societies of Western Kenya. In fact Nyanza and Western provinces are reported to have the highest percentage of female-headed households in the country (Central Bureau of Statistics, 2002:237).

Moreover, out-migration has left a population that comprises a disproportionately large number of dependants in the region. More than half of the population is composed of school-age children and people over 60 years of age, some of whom have retired from wage employment in the urban areas. This is a population that is largely dependent on others for their livelihood. The implication of this demographic structure, in the midst of the constraints on agricultural production in Western Kenya, is that alternative means for feeding and improving the living conditions of the population in the region have to be devised. A review of the economic activities and the socio-economic infrastructure should show us the extent to which such efforts have been made.

2.4 ECONOMIC ACTIVITIES IN WESTERN KENYA

The rural dwellers in Western Kenya are engaged in a variety of economic activities in order to earn a living. The salient ones include agriculture, non-farm small-scale enterprises, and fishing. In the survey area, respondents identified agriculture, non-farm small-scale enterprises and dairy farming in the respective order as the main economic activities.

2.4.1 Agriculture

Agriculture contributes over 80 per cent and 60 per cent of employment and income, respectively, in Kenya. This is particularly the case given that close to 80 per cent of the country's population live in the rural areas and derive much of their livelihood from land through crop and livestock production (Republic of Kenya, 2001: 39). Land is, therefore, one of the most critical resources in agricultural production that a discussion of agriculture ought to start with the land question in the region.

In Western Kenya, land is owned in personal smallholdings with variations in the size of the holdings. As already mentioned, the size of the land owned by individuals depends, to a certain extent, on the population density of the area. For instance, the available records show that the average size per holding in the densely populated district of Vihiga is 1.25 acres while the average holding in the sparsely populated Homa Bay district is 7 acres (Ministry of Planning and National Development, 1994 a; 1994 b). Nevertheless, this should not be interpreted to mean that all households in the region have equal plots of land relative to the population density. This should particularly be understood in the context of the variations in property accumulation entrenched by private

ownership in Kenya. Consequently, some households have relatively bigger plots of land than the others, irrespective of the area's population density (Republic of Kenya, 2001: 21).

This pattern of land distribution came out clearly in the interviews for this study. Respondent reported ownership of different sizes of land as shown in Table 2.2 on the next page. The data shows that the majority of the respondents (up to 62.7%) own less than 3.4 acres of land. Included in this category are 17% of the respondents who don't own land at all, some of whom are the youth still leaving on their parents' farms. The implication in this regard is that some of the available pieces of land will have to be subdivided to satisfy land inheritance demands as per the traditions of the societies in the region. In the circumstances, most of the people in Western Kenya own relatively small pieces of land, which cannot satisfy the desired agricultural activities by the households. This is particularly the case in the sugarcane growing areas where farmers need more land to grow food crops as well. This is a pointer to the scarcity of land in the agriculturally high potential areas of the region, with adverse implications for agricultural production.

TABLE 2.2: LAND OWNERSHIP IN THE SURVEY AREA

Acres of Land	Frequency	Percentage
0	60	17.0
0.25 - 1.4	45	12.8
1.5 - 3.4	115	32.8
3.5 - 4.5	49	14.0
4.6 - 6.0	60	17.0
6.1 - 8.0	9	2.7
8.1 - 10.0	8	2.3
10.1 - 15	3	0.3
Over 20	1	0.3
Total	350	100

SOURCE: Survey data

On these relatively small pieces of land, both cash crops and food crops are grown. With regard to cash crops, sugarcane is predominant in the survey area. It is grown on small-scale holdings in parts of Butere-Mumias, Nyando and Busia districts. We learnt through informal discussions that it used to be grown in Wagai, Yala and parts of Ugunja divisions of Siaya district as well, but the poor marketing arrangements after the collapse of the Yala White Sugar factory discouraged many farmers from growing it.

Though sugarcane is a major source of income, respondents identified some problems associated with its production. First, its adverse impact on food crops production. With small pieces of land, it was argued that the cane occupies virtually all the available land yet it takes up to two years to harvest. The implication is that the farmers earn once in two years, a situation that has left most of the small farmers unable

to feed themselves and meet other basic needs. In the circumstances, some of the farmers have resorted to selling the farm inputs procured on credit from their co-operatives and outgrowers' companies to satisfy household basic needs; a situation that has resulted into poor yields. In addition, small-scale farmers are also selling off premature cane on the farm at cheap prices to middlemen, who eventually sell the mature cane to the sugar companies to reap huge profits. As it will be shown later, some CBOs have got into this business to earn a profit to finance their activities.

The second problem, which has also been highlighted in other studies of the industry (Odada *et.al*, 1986; Wanyande, 2001), has to do with the harvesting of the cane. It was pointed out, particularly in Butere-Mumias and Busia districts, that the sugar milling companies delay to harvest mature cane, thereby denying the farmers the high prices that accrue from quality cane. Moreover, some respondents complained that the companies charge high transportation costs and that they do not pay for the wastage of cane in the transportation process, which reduces the income to the farmers.

Third was the lack of market for sugarcane. The collapse of Miwani and Muhoroni sugar factories in Nyando district was of concern to the farmers as they were deprived of a market to sell their cane. The few sugarcane farmers in Siaya district only had the option of selling the cane to local jaggeries that offered very low prices. The implication of these problems is that sugarcane farming seems to be further impoverishing the small-scale farmers in the region.

Cotton used to be another major cash crop in the survey area, particularly Busia and Siaya Districts, but none of our respondents reported its cultivation. The production of cotton declined in the mid 1980s due to the poor marketing arrangements by the Cotton

Board of Kenya and co-operative societies, wherein farmers were paid low prices for their produce and after a long period of time (Wanyama, 1993; Republic of Kenya, 2001: 40). Though there are efforts to revive its production, cotton is increasingly becoming a “forgotten” crop in the region despite being suitable to the climatic conditions of the low potential districts around Lake Victoria.

With tea, coffee and pyrethrum production limited to the highland and densely populated Vihiga, Kisii and Nyamira districts, the vast section of Western Kenya is confined to subsistence agriculture. The main food crops grown include maize, sorghum, millet, beans, potatoes, cassava and groundnuts. Even with the emphasis on subsistence farming, most of the areas in the region still experience a food deficit. Thus, some households are still unable to feed themselves in the better part of the year though they consistently grow food crops. This was attributed to a variety of factors, which are presented in Table 2.3.

TABLE 2.3: THE MAIN PROBLEMS IN FOOD CROP PRODUCTION IN WESTERN KENYA

Main Problem	Frequency	Percentage
Unreliable & inadequate rainfall	101	40
Lack of farm input	73	29
Fluctuation of produce prices	40	16
Lack of agricultural credit	22	8
Small pieces of land	16	6
Theft on the farms	3	1
Total (N=252)	252	100

SOURCE: Field data

The first problem that was cited by a majority of the respondents, as shown in Table 2.3 above, is unreliable and inadequate rainfall. It was explained that rainfall has become increasingly unpredictable and inadequate in the sense that the seasons for long and short rain in the region have significantly changed. For instance, in Busia and Siaya districts, the long rains season that used to start in March up to June sometimes starts towards the end of April and lasts only up to June. Then the short rain season that used to begin in September up to December sometimes comes early or later. These variable climatic conditions have left farmers unable to predict when to start planting and when they eventually plant, the rain season ends before the crops are ready for harvesting. In the circumstances, farmers either don't harvest or get poor yields.

The second problem is the lack of farm inputs particularly fertilizers and improved or better quality seeds. Most of the respondents explained that they had used the small pieces of land that they own to grow the same crops over the years, resulting into soil exhaustion. Consequently, high yields can only be possible with the use of fertilizers, which such farmers cannot afford. Moreover, the farmers plant poor quality seeds because they cannot afford to buy the better quality seeds, which even worsens crop productivity.

Third is the fluctuation of prices, especially during the harvesting season. Given that most of the farmers, particularly in Busia and Siaya districts, do not grow any cash crop, they sell surplus food crops to earn an income for meeting other basic needs. However, the prices of the produce, especially maize, sorghum and beans, fall during the harvesting season when the farmers have a surplus and need money most. The result is that they earn very little from the sale of their produce. For instance, the price of a 90kg

bag of maize that usually retails at about Kshs.850 falls to as low as 400 Kenya Shillings during the harvesting season. This demoralizes the farmers to increase productivity, culminating into food deficits in the region.

Fourth is the lack of agricultural credit. We have already highlighted the problem of farm inputs. Credit would have been one of the ways through which small-scale farmers could afford farm inputs, but such facilities are not available.

The problem of land has already been mentioned, but the fact that some respondents identified theft of produce on the farms can be interpreted to mean that some people are increasingly becoming unable to feed themselves and seem to have resorted to stealing food from other people's farms. These problems are pointers to the broad question of food security in Western Kenya. If these problems persist, the region will continue to experience food deficits with adverse implication for sustainable development.

2.4.2 Livestock Farming

Though crop production is the main agricultural activity in the region, livestock farming is also significant. From the interviews, it was established that a significant proportion of the respondents keeps cattle (67%), goats (46%), sheep (41%) and poultry (100%). Up to 12.3 per cent identified dairy production as the main alternative source of income. Moreover, livestock farmers are increasingly diversifying their breeds, given that 21 per cent and 19 per cent of the respondents keep exotic poultry and cattle, respectively. Table 2.4 below gives a breakdown of the number and type of cattle kept by our respondents.

TABLE 2.4: TYPES OF CATTLE KEPT BY RESPONDENTS

NUMBER	EXOTIC CATTLE (Percentage)	LOCAL CATTLE (Percentage)
0	81.0	33.0
1 – 4	18.0	50.1
5 – 9	1	13.3
10 –14	0	3.0
15 – 19	0	0.3
20 –24	0	0.3
Total	100	100

SOURCE: Field data

The data in Table 2.4 show that the majority of farmers in the region keep local cattle rather than the exotic breeds that are excellent in dairy production. Most of the farmers who keep exotic breeds have between one and four heads of cattle only. The implication is that there is need to transform livestock farming in the region by diversifying the cattle breeds in order to improve dairy productivity, yet most of the farmers may not afford the cost.

This transformation would also help to solve the problem of scarcity of grazing land, which is becoming a major barrier to livestock farming. With diminishing sizes of land parcels through the fragmentation of land to satisfy inheritance demands as already mentioned, there is growing scarcity of grazing land. The solution to this problem lies in the zero-grazing method of feeding cattle, which is most suitable with exotic cattle.

Besides the lack of adequate grazing pastures and the poor quality cattle breeds, the other problem affecting dairy production is animal diseases. Most of the livestock farmers cannot afford, and therefore do not use, veterinary services/medicines. In some

areas, there are not even cattle dips to eradicate ticks and where there are dips, such dips are not operational due to the lack of chemicals. This has contributed to the prevalence of tick-borne diseases, which have adversely affected dairy production (Republic of Kenya, 2001: 42).

There is also the problem of marketing dairy produce. Milk in Western Kenya is mainly marketed through dairy co-operative societies, but such societies are quite few. Some of the farmers cannot get their produce to the marketing centers where these co-operatives operate due to the high transportation costs associated with the poor communication network. For instance, in Busia district there is only one such co-operative society, which does not have a vehicle to collect milk from the farmers in the entire district. In the circumstances, farmers use bicycles to ferry their milk to the district headquarters, with some farmers unable to do this. The latter group of farmers ends up selling their milk at lower prices to the middlemen or at the local market for local consumption. This does not augur well for improved dairy productivity in the region.

2.4.3 Small - scale Non-farm Enterprises

The constraints on agricultural and dairy production, in the midst of dwindling wage employment opportunities in both the urban and rural sectors, has contributed to the rise of non-farm enterprises as an alternative income generating option. A significant proportion of the population in Western Kenya relies on these enterprises to feed itself and meet other basic needs. In the survey, 30.6 percent of the respondents considered small-scale enterprises to be their main occupation while 23 per cent of the respondents

regarded them as the alternative main source of income. The implication is that over 50 per cent of our respondents are engaged in small-scale enterprises.

Small-scale non-farm enterprises in Western Kenya range from the agriculture-based enterprises to the non-agriculture-based enterprises. In our survey, the agriculture-based enterprises identified included selling cereals, milk, fruits and vegetables. The nonagriculture-based enterprises were retail shops, tailoring, selling second-hand clothes, carpentry, selling fish, handicraft, pottery, food kiosks, posho mills, bicycle repair, hawking household commodities and bicycle transport (popularly known as *boda-boda*, which literally means “border to border” transport by bicycle. It was originally coined in Busia town where bicycle operators, for the first time, lifted people at the border to and from Kenya and Uganda at a fee). Despite this broad classification of the enterprises, it should be pointed out here that there is a close linkage between agriculture and non-farm enterprises in the region. Whereas the initial and working capital for the enterprises is sometimes derived from agricultural production, the profits generated from the enterprises also ends up being invested in agriculture (Alila and Wanyama, 1995).

However, the effective contribution of these enterprises to sustainable development is hampered by a number of problems. Some of these include inadequate working capital for the expansion and/or diversification of the enterprises; stiff marketing competition among enterprises engaged in similar activities in an area where purchasing power is limited; high transportation costs due to poor roads; lack of proper operating premises; and excessive license and market levies charged by local authorities. There is need to pay attention to the solution of these problems in order to enhance the growth of

the enterprises as mechanisms for improving people's living conditions and, hence, the realization of sustainable development.

2.4.4 Fishing

Though the respondents did not identify fishing as one of their economic activities, mainly because the sampling strategy did not take the researcher to the shores of Lake Victoria, it is a significant source of income that must be at least mentioned. The fishing industry has considerable potential to raise income and improve livelihoods of fishing-based communities in the region. In fact, most of the families residing along the lakeshores rely entirely on fishing for their livelihoods.

However, the contribution of fishing to sustainable development in Western Kenya is hampered by the low prices at which fishermen are compelled by circumstances to sell their fish. Fish is a perishable commodity that requires refrigeration facilities for preservation, yet fishermen do not have these facilities. At the same time, the fishermen do not have transport facilities to ferry their fish to the market in time. In the circumstances, they sell most of their fish to the middlemen at the fishing beaches, who then use refrigerated vehicles to transport it to the markets in the urban centres. The said middlemen usually offer low prices for the fish to desperate fishermen who cannot preserve the commodity and bargain for better prices. The situation in pricing gets even worse during the rainy season when fishermen land large catches of fish, yet only a few middlemen make it to the beaches due to the muddy, impassable roads. The few middlemen who eventually get to the beaches dictate lower pricing terms to the desperate fishermen, whose alternative buyers are the local fishmongers. The latter offer the

fishermen even lower prices so that they (the fishmongers) can also make a profit at the saturated local markets where the purchasing power is too low (Alila and Wanyama, 1995; Byaruhanga, 2002).

Fishermen in the region have tried to solve this problem by forming co-operative societies as mechanisms for bargaining on prices with the middlemen, pooling resources to acquire transport and refrigeration facilities, and also advancing credit for the purchase of fishing gear. However, the organizational and management problems inherent in these co-operatives have thwarted their efforts to realize these ends (Ibid.). In the circumstances, fishermen have been confined to low incomes from the activity, unlike the middlemen who transport the commodity to the urban areas to sell at higher prices.

As it is apparent, some of the problems affecting the economic activities in the above discussion are associated with the socio-economic infrastructure. We now turn to the infrastructure situation in Western Kenya.

2.5 THE SOCIO-ECONOMIC INFRASTRUCTURE

The development process of any community, particularly in the rural areas, is, to a large extent, influenced by the nature of the socio-economic infrastructure. The transport and communication network, educational facilities, health facilities, water sources, energy supply, marketing arrangements, among others, matter a great deal for the development process. What is the status of this infrastructure in Western Kenya?

2.5.1 Transport and Communication Network

This concept is used here to refer to both physical transport and the transfer of information. With regard to physical transport of people and commodities, road transport is the norm in Western Kenya. There is a railway line from Kisumu to Butere, but at the time of the survey, Kenya Railways Corporation, allegedly due to the high operational costs, had suspended the train service between the two towns. Though road transport is predominant, the status of the roads is generally poor. Only a few roads in Western Kenya are tarmacked. In most cases, it is the roads that link the district headquarters to the national trunk roads that are tarmacked and not access roads that link the district headquarters to the interior of the district. Though this gives an approximate description of the trend in tarmacked roads in the region, Butere-Mumias district is an exceptional case. Butere town that serves as the headquarters of the district is not linked to the national trunk road by a tarmacked road. It is therefore correct to say that most of the roads in Western Kenya have earth surfaces.

Despite the fact that rural access roads are relatively well distributed in the sense that there is at least a murrum road linking market centers to the urban centers and the district headquarters, almost all of them are impassable during the rain season (Republic of Kenya, 2001: 21). Rural access roads have continued to deteriorate over the years. In an earlier study in the region, 70 per cent of the respondents said that the roads linking their communities to the market and urban centers in the districts were virtually impassable by vehicles and bicycles during the rainy season. The state of the roads partly explains why 89 per cent of the respondents identified bicycles as the predominant mode of transport in the region. Walking was identified as the second mode of transport by 73

per cent of the respondents while the use of the public service vehicles (popularly known as *matatu*) came third with 57 per cent of the respondents. Most of the buses ply the routes from the district headquarters to Nairobi; thus confining their operation to the tarmacked roads in most cases. Donkey and oxen carts are also used to transport commodities in the region partly due to the poor roads (Alila and Wanyama, 1995: 23 –24).

The information communication network is not any better. Kenya's tele-density by 1999 was as low as 1.03 telephone lines per 100 people on average. In the rural areas the average distribution was a mere 0.16 lines per 100 people (Republic of Kenya, 2001: 51). Postal services were also inadequate. Consequently, postal and telecommunication facilities are in general poorly distributed and undeveloped in Western Kenya's rural areas. On average, the majority of the residents are 12km away from the nearest post office and some of these offices lack telephone services, particularly the Subscriber Trunk Dialing (STD) telephone booths (Wanyama, 2001: 61-62). The recent introduction of mobile telephone system in the telecommunications sector is set to solve this problem, though the cost will remain a major constraint, for these phones are relatively much more expensive as per the income of the majority of the rural dwellers.

With inadequate postal and telecommunication facilities, the press could be an alternative source of information. Nevertheless, the print media are largely not accessible to the rural dwellers given that the majority of the residents live an average of 15km away from the nearest urban center served by newspapers on a daily basis (Ibid.). In any case, not all rural dwellers are literate to read newspapers, let alone affording the cost of the newspapers. It is, however, significant that most of the rural dwellers in Western Kenya listen to radio to source information, although the cost of batteries remains a major

constraint to the poor. This energy constraint is even higher with regard to ownership and use of television sets to source information.

2.5.2 Energy

The significance of energy supply, especially electricity, for the development process cannot be over-emphasized. This determines not only the growth of manufacturing, but also the type of lighting and cooking fuel, both of which are significant for environmental conservation and sustainable development.

The three main sources of energy in Kenya are wood fuel, petroleum and electricity, accounting for 70, 21 and 9 per cent, respectively, of all energy consumption. Though wood fuel is the most significant source of cooking fuel in rural areas, it is estimated its demand outstrips supply. If the consumption pattern continues, the country may face a wood fuel deficit of 4.1 million tonnes by 2005, which could be a major threat to the environment (Republic of Kenya, 2001: 50).

With regard to lighting fuel, it should be noted that the consumption of electricity in Western Kenya is confined to the towns and some urban centers. Most of the rural areas are not electrified. The Rural Electrification Programme (REP) established by the Government in 1973 to support electricity schemes in rural areas, with the Kenya Power and Lighting Company acting as the Government's managing agent, is far from complete (Central Bureau of Statistics, 2002; 166). Rural communities in the region have tried to raise funds through *harambee* to supplement the government's funding of the programme but the task is enormous. Consequently, the demand for electricity in Western Kenya greatly exceeds supply.

In the circumstances, the majority of the population relies on kerosene and wood fuel for lighting and cooking. Table 2.5 below shows the percentage distribution of households by the main type of cooking fuel at the national level and in Western Kenya in 1989 and 1999.

TABLE 2.5: PERCENTAGE DISTRIBUTION OF HOUSEHOLDS BY MAIN TYPE OF COOKING FUEL, 1989 AND 1999

REGION	Firewood		Kerosene		Charcoal		Other	
	1989	1999	1989	1999	1989	1999	1989	1999
National	73	68.8	15.5	17.2	7.2	9.7	4.3	4.3
Rural Areas	90.1	88.4	4.2	4.2	3.6	6	2.1	1.4
Urban Areas	13.1	9.6	56.6	56.6	19.8	20.8	12.2	13
Nyanza Province	83.2	82.1	5.7	5.7	7.1	10.6	7.9	1.6
Western Province	86.8	87.3	5	4.2	6.2	7.3	6.4	1.2

SOURCE: Central Bureau of statistics (2002), *Economic Survey*, Nairobi: Government Printer, P.241

The data in Table 2.5 show that the use of firewood for cooking has been on the rise in Western Province while the same has declined in Nyanza Province. With both provinces generally reducing the use of kerosene to cook, probably due to the high cost of the fuel, Nyanza has recorded a higher increment in the use of charcoal than Western Province. This can be interpreted to mean that the availability of firewood in Nyanza province is on the decline as compared to the availability of charcoal. Thus, the shrubs that provide most of the firewood are increasingly being cleared, just as the trees for burning charcoal to supplement the scarce firewood. The trend in Western province is not significantly different from this, but the rate seems to be higher in Nyanza than in Western. This has far-reaching implications for environmental conservation. With

increased clearing of shrubs and trees to produce cooking fuel, there is growing environmental degradation in the region. Perhaps this partly explains the increasing changing climatic conditions as already discussed.

2.5.3 The Marketing Arrangements

The marketing infrastructure is quite significant for the development process, for it is at the markets that people can dispose of surplus resources and obtain other commodities for improved living conditions. It is for this reason that neo-liberals have argued for a free market to enable the individual attain his / her full potential.

In an earlier study already cited, it was established that the majority of the people in Western Kenya have access to local daily and periodic markets where they sell and purchase subsistence commodities. Whereas 45 per cent of the respondents had daily markets within their communities, 80 per cent had periodic markets within their communities. Where such markets were not found within the communities, the majority of the respondents lived less than 10 km away from the respective markets (Alila and Wanyama, 1995:33). The periodic markets are mainly held once in a week while a few are held twice in a week.

A wide variety of household goods and consumer commodities are sold at such markets. These markets, along with the numerous retail shops and kiosks at market centers as well as within the villages, play a significant role in facilitating the availability of consumer commodities and exchange of subsistence goods in the region. Thus, to a large extent, there is a free market for food crops and household consumer commodities like matches, soap, salt, sugar, and kerosene, among others.

Cash crops, on the other hand, are marketed through private companies, parastatal and statutory boards and co-operative societies. Whereas sugarcane is marketed through private and parastatal sugarcane millers, tea is marketed through the Kenya Tea Development Agency, a statutory body, and some private multinational companies. Coffee, pyrethrum, milk and cotton are marketed through co-operative societies, most of which are reportedly inefficient. For instance, it has already been mentioned that cotton co-operatives have been unable to pay farmers promptly for their produce while the dairy co-operatives lack transportation and milk preservation facilities. The marketing problems facing the sugarcane sector have also been highlighted. The alternative market for sugarcane are the jaggery owners, but they offer low prices that end up discouraging increased sugarcane production, as is the case in Siaya district.

2.5.4 Educational Facilities

Quality education plays an important role in human development by empowering people to improve their livelihoods and participate actively in nation building. Availability of, and the physical facilities in, primary and secondary schools in rural areas constitute key indicators of the quality of education provided to children in a community. In Western Kenya, most of the communities have adequate primary schools given that there is at least one school within a radius of 1 km on average. The furthest school from a village without one is about 3km away, which is not a long distance in a rural setting. Secondary schools are also adequate since there is at least one secondary school within an average radius of 5km (Alila and Wanyama, 1995: 26).

Nevertheless, the most worrying issue is the quality of these schools. In primary schools, the poor quality is generally reflected in terms of the inadequate and inappropriate classrooms; lack of adequate desks for pupils; lack of textbooks; lack of workshops for practical subjects as required by the 8.4.4 syllabus; and even lack of teachers. Sanitary facilities, particularly toilets, are also not adequate in these schools. In secondary schools, the problems include lack of science laboratories, libraries, textbooks and adequate students' boarding facilities (Ibid). These problems have partly contributed to the relatively falling educational standards in the region. Only a few students qualify to join secondary schools as well as tertiary colleges and universities.

Up to December 2002, the government had abdicated the responsibility of solving the above-identified problems to the parents and the general public. In the circumstances, schools had set building levies to be paid by each parent in addition to the numerous *harambee* fundraisers where parents' contributions were mandatory. Such levies, as well as the costs of uniforms and tuition materials, were increasingly becoming unaffordable for the majority of the poor in the region. The end result was that a reversal in educational attainment, characterized by low school enrolment; high level of school dropouts; low completion rates; and poor transition rates, partly due to the inability of people to meet the educational costs of their children. This, coupled with the increasing number of the youth who could not get employed upon leaving secondary schools and/or colleges, contributed to the relatively large number of idle youth found in the region. It is significant that the NARC government introduced free primary education from January 2003. This may help to curb the cost factor in accessing primary education and reduce school dropout at primary level, but it remains to be seen whether the government will

adequately foot the cost of putting up infrastructure in the schools. In any case, the problem at the secondary and tertiary levels of education remains.

2.5.5 Health Facilities

The significance of good health for the development process cannot be overemphasized. Consequently, the availability of health facilities is crucial to the development of any community. The range of medical facilities in Western Kenya includes public and private hospitals, public health centers and dispensaries, and private clinics.

There are very few public hospitals in the region. To be specific, there were only three public hospitals in our survey area, namely Busia, Butere and Siaya district hospitals. All were located at the respective district headquarters, in conformity with the general trend in the country where the only public hospital is located at the district and/or provincial headquarters. Nyando district had no public hospital because it is relatively new. Consequently, the majority of the people in Western Kenya do not have easy access to public hospitals, considering that some of them stay up to 70 km away from the district headquarters. On average, over 80 per cent of the population in Western Kenya take more than one hour to travel to the nearest public hospital (Ministry of Finance and Planning, 2000: Map 22). However, there are a few private hospitals run by Christian Missions to supplement the public ones, but there is a cost constraint given that their charges are higher than those in public hospitals. Indeed, the majority of the people do not seek medical care when sick due to affordability constraint (Ibid.: Map 23).

The distribution of public health centers and dispensaries is better than that of hospitals. On average, there is at least a health center and/or a dispensary within a radius of 10 km (Alila and Wanyama, 1995:29). Over 60 per cent of the residents of the region take less than one hour to travel to the nearest dispensary (Ministry of Finance and Planning, 2000: Map 21). It should, however, be pointed out that the availability of a health center or a dispensary in a community is only but one side of accessing medical services. The other side is whether the facility actually provides the required services.

A number of problems impede the provision of services in public medical institutions. First, inadequate trained personnel, particularly doctors. The few doctors in public medical institutions are posted to work mostly in the public hospitals and not the health centers and dispensaries. Lower cadre personnel, therefore, man the latter institutions. Second, the lack of medicine. The trend since the introduction of “cost-sharing” in the provision of social services by the government is to ask the patients to go and buy the necessary medicine from private pharmacies where the prices are very high. Third, lack of medical equipment. For instance, virtually all dispensaries do not offer laboratory services. These problems are pointers to the poor services offered in public medical institutions in the region.

The poor distribution of public medical institutions and the equally poor medical services in these institutions have partly contributed to the mushrooming of private clinics in the region. But these clinics do not necessarily offer better services, given that personnel who are not properly qualified operate most of them and they also lack appropriate medical equipments. Just like the private hospitals, these clinics are expensive by local standards, but they at least stock some medicine.

On the whole, the majority of the people in Western Kenya face a dilemma in accessing medical services. In their poverty, they cannot afford the services provided by the private hospitals and clinics yet the public hospitals, health centres and dispensaries lack the requirements for providing better medical care.

2.5.6 Water Resources

Water is a critical resource in the livelihood of a people and, therefore, fundamental to the development process in the community. To ensure their good health, people ought to have access to clean drinking water. This has, however, remained elusive in Kenya in general. For instance, between 1989 and 1999, there was no improvement in the proportion of households with access to piped water. Only 30.7 per cent of households had access to piped water in 1999 as compared to 31.9 per cent recorded in 1989. Rural households were worse off in getting access to clean and safe water as compared to their urban counterparts (Central Bureau of Statistics, 2002:238).

In Western Kenya, rivers, Lake Victoria, springs and boreholes – thanks to communal initiatives and donor support – constitute the main sources of water. A few areas have piped water and ponds or dams, but these are largely insignificant as shown in Table 2.6 on the next page.

TABLE 2.6: PERCENTAGE DISTRIBUTION OF HOUSEHOLD BY THE MAIN SOURCE OF WATER, 1999

REGION/PROVINCE	POND/ DAM	LAKE/ RIVER	SPRING	WELL/ BOREHOLE	PIPED WATER
Kenya (National)	4.8	28.3	11.7	21	30.7
Rural Kenya	6.1	36	15	24.7	15.1
Urban Kenya	0.9	5.2	1.7	9.8	77.7
Nyanza Province	7.2	42.2	25.2	16.9	5.6
Western Province	1.3	21.6	38.4	28.2	9.9

SOURCE: Central Bureau of Statistics (2002), *Economic Survey 2002*, Nairobi: Government Printer, P. 239.

The data in Table 2.6 show that whereas Lake Victoria and rivers are the main sources of water in Nyanza Province, springs, wells and boreholes are the main sources of water for the majority of the residents in Western Province. The availability of natural sources of water in Nyanza, especially the lake and rivers, seems to have contributed to the relatively slow development of alternative sources like boreholes and water pipes as compared to Western Province.

This implies that permanent water sources in Nyanza Province are located far away from the majority of the people than is the case in Western Province. Table 2.6 shows that there are more wells, boreholes and springs in Western province than in Nyanza province. On overage, however, water sources in the entire region are estimated to be about 3 km away from the majority of the homesteads, though in the relatively dry areas in Busia and Siaya districts such sources are located up to 5km away from the majority of the homesteads (Wanyama, 2001:63).

In addition to the long distance that people have to walk to fetch water, some of the permanent water sources do not provide access to clean and safe drinking water, given the increasing pollution of Lake Victoria and the rivers in the region. Thus, the lack of adequate pipe water infrastructure and water purification facilities, especially in the rural areas, implies that the majority of the people basically “survive” on polluted water that is obtained a long distance from the homestead. Indeed, many people in the dry areas are relieved of the long distance they walk in search of water during the rainy season as they rely on rainwater and the few ponds that subsequently form. Consequently, the availability of safe and clean water in Western Kenya remains a major development problem.

2.5.7. Sanitation and Public Health

One of the best ways to maintain good health in a community or household is to prevent diseases rather than cure them. A clean environment is a significant preventive measure in this regard. The availability of a sanitary infrastructure, especially for the disposal of human waste, is one of the basic indicators of a clean environment and, therefore, a pointer to public health awareness in the community. The significance of proper human waste disposal for public health and the prevention of diseases like cholera and typhoid cannot be overemphasized.

Table 2.7 on the next page shows the percentage distribution of households by the main type of human waste disposal at the national level and in Western Kenya in 1999.

TABLE 2.7: PERCENTAGE DISTRIBUTION OF HOUSEHOLDS BY THE MAIN TYPE OF HUMAN WASTE DISPOSAL, 1999

PROVINCE	Main Sewer	Pit Latrine	Septic Tank	Bush	Other
National	7.1	72.8	2.5	16.5	1
Nyanza	1.3	78.1	0.6	18.7	1.3
Western	1.2	92.8	0.6	4.9	0.5

SOURCE: Central Bureau of Statistics (2002), *Economic Survey 2002*, Nairobi: Government Printer, P240.

The data in Table 2.7 show that on average, 87.3 per cent of the households in Western Kenya have access to proper sanitation for the disposal of human waste, which is higher than the national average of 82.4 per cent. However, there is a disproportionate distribution of sanitary facilities in Western Kenya. It is apparent that though pit latrines are the dominant human waste disposal method in the region, more households have access to these facilities in Western province than in Nyanza province. Moreover, more households in Nyanza province do not have access to any type of sanitary facility for the disposal of human waste as compared to Western province.

Whereas both provinces have room for improvement of sanitation to enhance public health conditions, data in Table 2.7 point to a higher magnitude of sanitary problems in Nyanza province than in Western province. This calls for public health awareness campaigns in the region, but more so in Nyanza province, to improve hygienic practices and thereby prevent sanitary related diseases.

2.6 CONCLUSION

The objective in this chapter has been to highlight the salient issues that have influenced the realization of sustainable development in Western Kenya by way of a review of the state of the main economic activities and the socio-economic infrastructure in the region. With the “top-down” development paradigm that emphasized centralized planning and development management by the state and other “experts” up to the 1980s, a number of challenges have emerged in the development process and are yet to be solved. With regard to the economic activities, this discussion has shown that the agricultural sector faces the problems of land scarcity, changing and variable climatic conditions and poor marketing arrangements for the cash crops. The non-farm enterprises lack adequate working capital and are concentrated in similar activities in a region that has low purchasing power due to low income. The poor marketing arrangements for fish have also reduced the income of fishermen.

The socio-economic infrastructure has adversely affected the economic activities in the region. The earth surfaced roads are impassable during the rainy season, rendering the transportation of commodities expensive or impossible; the postal and telecommunication network for the easy flow of information is inadequate; dependence on wood fuel for cooking is increasingly degrading the environment; health facilities are inadequate and not well equipped; the marketing arrangement for cash crops and dairy produce is poor; and many people do not have access to safe and clean drinking water, especially in the dry areas of the region.

With all these problems in the economic activities and the socio-economic infrastructure, the quest for sustainable development in Western Kenya is still on. State-

directed development since independence has not offered lasting solutions to development problems in the region and, therefore, the key issue remains how best to organize people to address the impediments to sustainable development in Western Kenya. It is against this background that the contribution of CBOs to sustainable development in Western Kenya is to be discussed in the subsequent chapters of this thesis. Accordingly, the next chapter expounds on the nature and activities of community-based organizations in Western Kenya.

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CHAPTER THREE

COMMUNITY - BASED ORGANIZATIONS IN WESTERN KENYA

3.1 INTRODUCTION

The discussion of the development situation in Western Kenya showed that the poor socio-economic infrastructure, coupled with the various constraints on economic activities, have largely impeded the realization of sustainable development in the region. With a steady decline in the people's living conditions, there has been a growing disenchantment with the state-directed development since the 1980s. Informed by neo-liberalism, it has been argued that local organizations constitute an alternative way of organizing people to address the impediments to their living conditions, given the steady withdrawal of the state from the development process relative to the immediate post-colonial period. This chapter explores the nature of community-based organizations as one type of local organizations for solving the socio-economic problems that have impeded the realization of sustainable development in Western Kenya. The broad objective here is to show the extent to which community-based organizations are a response to the development problems identified in the region and how they have organized their activities to solve them. This is intended to set the basis for analyzing the relevance of "development from below" paradigm to sustainable development in Western Kenya. The starting point is to examine the explanations for the origin of these organizations in the region.

3.2 THE ORIGIN OF COMMUNITY-BASED ORGANIZATIONS IN WESTERN KENYA.

As already alluded to, explanations for the formation of CBOs in Kenya abound in the literature. The first of such explanations holds that CBOs are essentially extensions of traditional societies' mutual aid initiatives. One of the proponents of this explanation is Stephen Orvis (1997: 82-86) who has argued that self - help groups in Kisii district are largely a modification of the traditional *ebisangio* (the small daily women's work groups who worked one another's farm in turn) that existed in the pre-colonial period. He argues that the changing socio-economic structures have compelled the Gusii to modify *ebisangio* into *ebiombe*, which are complex self-help groups that combine communal labor efforts with savings schemes for investment in development projects. This arrangement has given way to the emergence of women's groups, savings and credit associations and communal self-help groups.

Whereas this explanation holds in the sense that similar patterns in the formation of CBOs have been observed in other parts of the country, like among the Samia ethnic group of Busia district, there is yet a compelling political explanation in this regard, albeit in two versions. One version holds that CBOs have their origins in the late President Kenyatta's efforts to bring about institutionalized *harambee* in the country by introducing the notion of "constituency service" for Members of Parliament (MPs). This notion defined the role of MPs as one of assisting rural self-help projects within their constituencies in order to legitimize "practical" as opposed to "empty" ideological politics (Okumu and Holmquist, 1984:54; Barkan, 1994; Chitere, 1994a). Subsequently, local politicians took the initiative to form self-help groups as means of extracting development

resources from the state to their constituencies to foster their "development record" and thereby demonstrate their political power via the subsequent development projects.

The second version, which is related to the first, explains that CBOs have their origin in the politics of patronage in the sense that politicians have initiated the formation of these organizations as mechanisms for exercising political control at the local level. As it will be further explained later, this politicization of *harambee* self-help has seen CBOs become the mechanisms through which local leaders have sought to establish and maintain their political careers. Members of Parliament and councilors of Local Authorities as well as the aspiring political elite seek to form and/or patronize local CBOs, which they utilize as mechanisms for exercising political control or mobilizing support at the local level (Barkan and Holmquist, 1989; Ngethe, 1979; Ngau, 1987; Kanyinga, 1994). Consequently, CBOs tend to proliferate in areas where there is intense competition among local politicians and the elite who give them financial resources to support their activities (Ng'ethe and Kanyinga, 1994:36).

Besides these political dimensions, there is yet the economic argument that links the formation of CBOs to the level of economic development. It is argued in this case that the proliferation of CBOs partly depends on the availability of surplus funds and other resources to contribute towards their projects. Consequently, self-help activities tend to be widespread in those areas where, and at those times when, peasant surpluses are largest (Holmquist, 1970; Hyden, 1986; Kanyinga, 1994). However, this argument is controversial considering that the scarcity of economic resources is also known to pull people into groups to satisfy their needs. In this case, a paucity of resources would

significantly contribute to the formation of CBOs for purposes of pooling their resources to meet their needs.

On the whole, the social, political and economic explanations for the origin of CBOs all seem to be plausible, but none of them exhaustively explains the formation of these organizations. The implication is that each, or a combination, of these explanations could be applicable only to certain circumstances that obtain in the various regions of the country. It is in view of this that we need to consider the factors behind the formation of CBOs in Western Kenya, particularly the motivation of people to form or join these organizations.

During the survey, respondents were asked to explain what led to the formation of their organizations. The responses to this question are summarized and presented in Table 3.1 below.

TABLE 3.1: REASONS FOR THE FORMATION OF CBOs IN WESTERN KENYA

REASON	NUMBER	PERCENTAGE
Demonstration effect /copying from others	71	20.3
Desire to start group business ventures	57	16.3
The lack of financial services	48	13.7
Desire to alleviate poverty	47	13.4
Need for assistance to meet funeral expenses	31	9.0
Prevalence of livestock tick-borne diseases	19	5.3
Lack of safe drinking water	18	5.0
Inadequate farm labour	18	5.0
Need for assistance to buy kitchen utensils	10	3.0
Desire to satisfy social welfare needs	10	3.0
Lack of affordable medical services	8	2.3
Assistance to meet medical bills	7	2.0
Desire to streamline <i>boda-boda</i> operations	6	1.7
TOTAL	350	100

SOURCE: Field data

The data in Table 3.1 show that demonstration effect is the leading factor behind the formation of CBOs in Western Kenya. It was explained that in such cases, interested individuals are mobilized by an initiator to form an organization similar to one he/she had seen elsewhere in order that members may reap similar benefits. Thus, whereas a member takes the initiative to mobilize others to form the CBO, the idea is essentially copied from outside the membership. Nevertheless, the driving force behind the action is the benefits that members start to reap and what is likely to follow, especially with regard to overcoming the problems in accessing socio-economic services.

The remainder of the data in Table 3.1 indeed highlights socio-economic problems in the local communities as the main reasons behind the formation of community - based organizations. From an economic point of view, the data can be interpreted to mean that the lack of adequate employment opportunities has led to the formation of CBOs to start small - scale business ventures; improve livestock farming by eradicating tick-borne diseases; provide farm labor; and streamline *boda-boda* operations for purposes of improving on the income of members. Similarly, the lack of financial services has prompted the emergence of informal credit organizations in the local communities. At the social front, the rising level of poverty; the heavy funeral expenses due to the high death rate; the lack of clean and safe drinking water; the lack of household utensils; the desire to satisfy social welfare needs; and the lack of medical facilities as well as the high cost of medical services have all contributed to the formation of CBOs. All these are pointers to the scarcity of socio-economic services. The implication is that CBOs have their origin in the scarcity of socio - economic services geared towards improving the people's living conditions.

The inquiry into why members of CBOs had joined these organizations yielded similar results presented in Table 3.2.

TABLE 3.2: INDIVIDUAL MOTIVATION TO JOIN CBOs IN WESTERN KENYA

Reason for joining the organization	Number	Percentage
To benefit from the activities of the CBO	136	39.0
To work with others to alleviate poverty	85	24.3
To get access to financial services	40	11.3
Due to peer influence	20	5.7
To get access to clean drinking water	17	5.0
To get assistance in case of a funeral	16	4.7
To improve dairy production by eradicating ticks	13	3.7
To participate in HIV/AIDS awareness campaign	6	1.7
To get assistance in paying medical bills	5	1.3
To get access to primary healthcare services	5	1.3
By virtue of belonging to the clan it serves	3	1.0
To be trained as a community health worker	1	0.3
To learn new farming and business skills	1	0.3
To avoid idleness and keep busy	1	0.3
TOTAL	350	100

SOURCE: Field Data

The data in Table 3.2 show that most of the members of these organizations joined them mainly on the basis of the benefits they stood to gain through their participation. Given that most of the CBOs are formed as a result of the demonstration effect as shown in Table 3.1, this can be interpreted to mean that it is the benefits enjoyed by members of the existing organizations elsewhere that motivate individuals to join or form similar organizations. It is, however, significant that the anticipated benefits are geared towards solving socio-economic problems at the household level. This point is clearly brought out by the nature of the remainder of the data in both Table 3.1 and Table 3.2. The responses are pointers to the fact that members of CBOs join these organizations in an effort to

solve problems that impinge on their livelihoods, such as poverty; the lack of clean drinking water; livestock diseases that hinder dairy production; expensive medical services; poor farming methods that hinder improved productivity; among others.

Elements of social and economic insecurity are also evident in the data in Table 3.2. The fact that individuals join CBOs in order to get assistance to meet funeral expenses in case a member of one's household dies; to get assistance to settle medical bills in an event of sickness in the household; and to get access to financial services should the need for unaffordable, urgent and unexpected expenditure arise can all be interpreted to be exercises in socio-economic insurance against risk and scarcity. The same interpretation can be applied to situations where individuals join a CBO by virtue of belonging to a social group, like a clan or peer group, that is served by the respective organization.

These findings and interpretations lead to the conclusion that CBOs in Western Kenya have their origins in the socio-economic problems that adversely affect the people's living conditions. It is the situations of scarcity, insecurity and risk brought about by the said socio-economic problems that prompt people to form and/or join CBOs as insurance mechanisms in this regard.

Nevertheless, we also need to understand the question of who takes the first initiative to react or respond to situations of scarcity, insecurity and risk. Does the initiative emanate from outside or within the group and/or community? During the interviews, we asked respondents to explain who took the front initiative in the formation of their organizations. The lengthy narratives that we got from an open-ended question are summarized and presented in Table 3.3 on the next page.

**TABLE 3.3: INITIATORS OF COMMUNITY-BASED ORGANIZATIONS
IN WESTERN KENYA**

INITIATOR OF THE ORGANIZATION	NO.	PERCENT
A member mobilized others to form the organization	194	55.4
All members through informal discussions	54	15.3
An NGO initiated the formation of the organization	23	6.7
A priest advised members of a church to form the CBO	17	5.0
The chief mobilized people to form the organization	17	5.0
A councilor & a political activist initiated the CBO	15	4.2
<i>Boda-boda</i> operators copied the idea from other towns	10	2.8
The MP instructed the CDA to initiate the CBO	5	1.4
Initiated by an extended family for social welfare	5	1.4
A youth drama troop changed into a youth group	5	1.4
An Officer from the District Hospital gave the idea	5	1.4
TOTAL	350	100

SOURCE: Field Data

Table 3.3 show that members at two fronts initiated the majority (adding up to 78.3 per cent) of the community-based organizations in Western Kenya. First, individual members took a personal effort to mobilize persons interested in their idea of forming an organization to solve specific problems. In the majority of such cases, it was explained that the initiators had either learnt about the "success stories" of similar organizations that existed elsewhere, or had attended community development courses and /or seminars during which they had learnt about the significance of local organizations in solving socio- economic problems.

At the second front, CBOs were initiated by groups of members as a result of their informal discussions about their common problems. Such groups of members were initially drawn together by virtue of belonging to wider social groupings like the church, clan, lineage or other ethnic identities. In addition, the said groups had come together due to proximity to each other as a result of residence and employment.

Whereas this shows that most of the CBOs in the region are formed by the people themselves in response to socio-economic problems that affect their living conditions, other responses in Table 3.3 indicate that some (21.7 percent) are formed as a result of external initiatives. Such initiatives emanate from some actors who have vested interests in the formation of CBOs.

The first of the external actors in this regard are Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs) and International Organizations. These organizations initiate the formation of CBOs to be used as delivery mechanisms for their services to the local communities. For instance, in our survey, the NGOs that were cited in this regard include CARE - Kenya, which had initiated the formation of savings and credit associations for delivering credit to small-scale enterprises in Busia and Siaya districts. Similarly, the International Christian Services (ICS) had initiated CBOs to manage its project of building and equipping primary schools in Busia district. Mazingira Institute had also initiated CBOs to popularize its cheap roofing tiles in Busia district. The international organizations that played similar roles include UNICEF, which initiated a CBO to manage a primary healthcare program and community pharmacy it sponsored in Nyando district; and the Finish International Development Agency that initiated the formation of several CBOs to manage the water boreholes it established in Western province in conjunction with the Government of Kenya under the Kenya – Finland Co-operation (KEFINCO) Water Program.

Politicians constitute the second category of external actors in the formation of CBOs in Western Kenya. Members of Parliament, Councilors and local political activists were identified to have played roles in the initiation of some organizations in connection

with their ambition of extending their influence at the local level. For instance, in Funyula division of Busia district, the local MP initiated the formation of large women's groups at the sub-locational, locational and divisional levels, to which all local women's groups at the respective levels in the division were affiliated. The divisional women group, known as *Sirindiro*, was the largest for it brought together the sub-locational and locational women's groups. All affiliated groups were required to pay share contributions for the construction of a shopping complex as an income-generating venture for the affiliated groups. The effort was, however, meant to patronize all women's groups in the constituency for purposes of exercising political control at the local level. The MP for Butere in Butere-Mumias district took similar initiatives when he formed *Butesero* self-help group to operate a public service bus project and encouraged all CBOs in Butere and Khwisero divisions to buy shares in the organization. At a lower political level, a councilor in Nyando division was reported to have initiated the formation of youth groups as a way of mobilizing political support among the youth.

The third category of external actors behind the formation of CBOs in the region is composed of Provincial Administrators and officers in departments of government ministries. Chiefs, Assistant Chiefs and Community Development Assistants (CDAs) in the Department of Social Services were said to have mobilized people to form communal self-help groups and women's groups, respectively, to help address local socio-economic problems. It is also significant to mention here the role of other leaders in society in the formation of CBOs. For instance, a church priest in Funyula division was reported to have initiated the formation of a women's group among the members of his church in an effort to solve their socio-economic problems.

For all their merits, it should be recalled that these external actors form only 21 per cent of the initiators of CBOs in the region. The rest are members of these organizations themselves, albeit with stimuli from outside, taking initiatives to respond to situations of socio-economic scarcity, insecurity and risk. We can, therefore, conclude that most of the CBOs in Western Kenya have their origins in people's own initiatives in response to situations of scarcity, insecurity and risk that could adversely affect their living conditions.

3.3 MEMBERSHIP CHARACTERISTICS

Members of community-based organizations in Western Kenya have diverse attributes with regard to their gender, age, marital status, level of formal education and occupation. With regard to gender, 57 per cent of our respondents were female while 43 per cent were male. This implies that more women participate in CBOs than men, which actually tallies with the demographic structure that is composed of more women than men as already discussed. This structure has partly contributed to the rise of female-headed households, thereby putting more women in charge of providing basic needs to many households. The effort needed to satisfy household needs in the midst of rising poverty is a possible explanation for the said trend in the membership of CBOs.

With regard to age, our respondents were between 18 years and 72 years old. Thus, whereas the youngest member was 18 years old, the oldest was 72 years old. Table 3.4 on the next page summarizes the age of the respondents into categories and shows the frequency distribution.

TABLE 3.4: AGE CATEGORIES OF RESPONDENTS

AGE CATEGORY	REQUENCY	PERCENTAGE
18 - 25	41	11.7
26 - 30	30	8.7
31 - 35	68	14.4
36 - 40	82	23.3
41 - 45	34	9.7
46 - 50	42	11.9
51 - 55	16	4.7
56 - 60	19	5.4
61 - 65	4	1.2
66 - 70	13	3.6
71 - 75	1	0.3
TOTAL	350	100

SOURCE: Field Data

The data show that most of the CBOs are composed of members of mixed ages; implying that these organizations are not exclusively formed on the basis of age. Nevertheless, the data indicate that most of the members are adults given that 88.3 percent of the respondents are over 25 years old.

This correlates with our finding on their marital status, which shows that most of the respondents (80 per cent) are married. Only 13 per cent are single and 7 per cent widowed. The former are mainly members of youth groups who are still grappling with the issue of being employed first before they marry. The implication of the data is that the majority of the members of CBOs are married and have their own households, with responsibilities of raising their own families. This can be further interpreted to mean that it is the said responsibilities that have driven them to join these organizations as a means of satisfying household needs.

With regard to the level of formal education, we found that only 5.3 percent of the respondents were illiterate. Whereas 39 per cent had completed the primary level of

education, 38 per cent had gone up to the secondary level of education. The remainder of the respondents (17.7 per cent) attended middle level colleges for various professional courses that appear in Table 3.5 below. This can be interpreted to mean that the majority of the members of CBOs are literate and are capable of making informed decisions.

We also inquired about the main occupation of our respondents. The responses to this question, which also reflects the various courses that were taken by the respondents who attained the college level of formal education, are presented in Table 3.5 below.

TABLE 3.5: THE MAIN OCCUPATION OF THE RESPONDENTS

OCCUPATION	NUMBER	PERCENT
Farmer	139	39.6
Small Businessman/woman	88	25.0
Primary school teacher	46	13.0
None	38	10.9
Bicycle taxi (<i>boda-boda</i>)	8	2.3
Nursery school teacher	5	1.3
Carpenter	5	1.3
Nurse	4	1.0
Social worker	4	1.0
Pastor/priest	2	0.7
Repairing bicycles	2	0.7
Casual wage employment	2	0.7
Mason	2	0.7
Agric. Extension Officer	2	0.3
Tailor	1	0.3
Cateress	1	0.3
Photographer	1	0.3
TOTAL	350	100

SOURCE: Field Data

Whereas the data show that the majority of the members of CBOs in Western Kenya are engaged in farming and small-scale non-farm enterprises, it is also evident that the members are from diverse occupational backgrounds. It is significant that teachers, who form the bulk of the salaried in the rural areas of Western Kenya and probably Kenya as

whole, are also participants in CBOs. This implies that CBOs are formed across social and occupational groupings and that the rural elites are also members of these organizations.

That CBOs are formed across gender, age, marital status, levels of formal education, occupation and levels of income may be interpreted to mean that these organizations bring together people of all walks of life in the rural areas. They can, therefore, be described as “people’s organizations” in this regard. However, we also need to know about the number and size of these organizations in Western Kenya, to which we now turn.

3.4 NUMBER AND SIZE OF CBOs IN WESTERN KENYA

The question of the number of community-based organizations in Kenya has been elusive due to the lack of accurate and up-to-date records of these organizations. Though there are government regulations that require all CBOs to register with the Department of Social Services in the Ministry of Gender, Sports, Culture and Social Services (formally Ministry of Culture and Social Services), not all of them have actually registered. In our survey, for example, 19 per cent of the organizations that we sampled were not registered with the Department. Consequently, the existence of some of the organizations is only known at the local grassroots level. This has made it difficult to obtain an accurate national figure for these organizations.

It has been pointed out that the Department of Social Services maintains a register of the organizations registered at the district level. We managed to peruse these registers in the districts that we surveyed and, as it has already been pointed out, we found them to

be generally inaccurate and inexhaustive. Despite their deficiencies, these registers at least serve as an indicator of the existence of a large number of these organizations in the respective districts. Among the districts we surveyed, Siaya had the highest number of registered CBOs. It had 4,281 as of November 2000. Busia had the second highest number, with 2,286 registered CBOs as of July 2000. Nyando had 897 registered CBOs as of March 2001 while Butere-Mumias had managed to put only 68 organizations in its register as of June 2000. It should be pointed out here that the registers of Nyando and Butere-Mumias had relatively small numbers of CBOs mainly because they are new districts that were hived from Kisumu and Kakamega districts, respectively, in 1998. At the time of our survey, they had just started reconstructing their records and most of the CBOs in the districts had not been included. In any case, the data show that there are well over 7,500 CBOs in the districts that we surveyed. This being an underestimation of the number of these organizations in the region, the implication is the existence of several CBOs in Western Kenya. Consequently, Matanga's (2000: 23) suggestion that a combination of Busia, Vihiga and Kakamega districts have about 1,000 women's groups is unrealistic and a gross underestimation of the number of these organizations in the region. Indeed, we found that the register of Busia district alone had over 1,000 women's groups.

As this finding might have implied, women's groups are the most common type of CBOs in Western Kenya. It has already been noted that we came up with longer lists of women's groups than those of the other types of these organizations while compiling our sampling frames during the reconnaissance survey. Similarly, we ended up sampling more women's groups in the survey to replace the other types of CBOs that were not

readily found in the identified survey areas, particularly the welfare associations. The sample was, therefore, composed of 26 women's groups, 17 communal self-help groups, 16 youth's groups, 13 savings and credit associations and 8 welfare associations. This clearly shows that women's groups are more predominant than the other types of CBOs in Western Kenya.

With regard to the size of these organizations, the range of the smallest group size to the largest was quite disparate. Whereas the smallest group had 8 members, the largest had 205 members. The most common group size was 28 members, followed by groups of 20 members. The data on the size of the surveyed CBOs are summarized into categories and presented in Table 3.6.

TABLE 3.6: MEMBERSHIP SIZE OF COMMUNITY-BASED ORGANIZATIONS IN WESTERN KENYA

NUMBER OF MEMBERS	FREQUENCY	PERCENTAGE
8 - 20	32	40.0
21 - 31	20	25.0
31 - 40	6	7.5
41 - 50	7	8.7
51 -50	3	3.8
51 - 60	4	5.0
61 -70	1	1.3
71-100	3	3.8
101-170	2	2.5
Over 171	2	2.5
TOTAL	80	100

SOURCE: Field Data

The data in Table 3.6 show that nearly two-thirds (65 per cent) of the community-based organizations in Western Kenya have between 8 and 30 members. These are relatively small organizations, which can be interpreted to mean that most of the CBOs in

the region are essentially small groups of people operating at the local grassroots level. The question to raise at this stage has to do with the activities that such small organizations undertake and how they raise the funds and other resources required for carrying out the respective activities.

3.5 ACTIVITIES OF COMMUNITY-BASED ORGANIZATIONS IN WESTERN KENYA

Community-based organizations in Western Kenya are engaged in a wide variety of social and economic activities. District registers of CBOs and annual reports of the Department of Social Services in the region list some of these activities. They include crop farming; small-scale business; poultry farming; savings and credit; dairy farming; development of water sources; primary healthcare and community pharmacies; pottery and handicraft making; bee-keeping; knitting and tailoring; cattle dips; HIV/AIDS awareness campaign; and running nursery schools and children's homes, among others (Department of Social Services, 1999a; 1999b).

During the survey, we sought to know the main activity of the CBOs that we sampled in order to ascertain the specific contribution of these organizations to sustainable development. The responses to this question are presented in Table 3.7 on the next page.

TABLE 3.7: THE MAIN ACTIVITY OF SAMPLED CBOs

MAIN ACTIVITY	FREQUENCY	PERCENT
Savings and Credit	75	21.4
Small-scale business	75	21.4
Dairy farming	37	10.7
Social welfare	29	8.4
Water supply	18	5.1
Cattle dip	18	5.1
Primary healthcare / Pharmacy	13	3.7
Crop farming	12	3.4
Bicycle transport (<i>boda-boda</i>)	12	3.4
Breeding Pigs	12	3.4
HIV/AIDS awareness campaign	12	3.4
Marketing members' milk & eggs	5	3.4
Making roofing titles	5	1.4
Building equipping Primary schools	5	1.4
Providing farm labour	5	1.4
Medical insurance scheme	5	1.4
TOTAL	350	100

SOURCE: Field data

Bearing in mind that respondents were only mentioning the main activity and that most of the organizations are engaged in more than one activity, the data in Table 3.7 show that the majority of the CBOs in Western Kenya participate in savings and credit activities and small-scale business ventures. Agricultural activities are also common, given that over one-quarter of the respondents (27.4 per cent) identified dairy farming, construction and maintenance of cattle dips, crop farming, horticulture, pig raising and provision of farm labor - all of which are related to agriculture.

As it may be evident, the activities of CBOs are spread across the main economic sectors in Western Kenya, namely, agriculture and small-scale enterprises. Some of the activities are also intended to address problems in the socio-economic infrastructure of the region, particularly health, water, public transport, education and agricultural

marketing. This can be interpreted to mean that CBOs have largely chosen their activities in response to the region's development problems that we highlighted in the chapter two. This interpretation correlates to our finding that CBOs have their origin in the socio-economic problems that adversely affect people's living conditions. The activities of these organizations in this case are geared towards solving these problems. A further discussion of the said activities should help to expound on this point.

3.5.1 SAVINGS AND CREDIT ACTIVITIES

It ought to be pointed out that though there are savings and credit associations that are formed as distinct CBOs, other types of CBOs also operate savings and credit facilities as their activities. In the latter case, the schemes constitute one of the activities of the organizations while in the former, they are the only activity around which the organization coalesce. Consequently, savings and credit activities are quite prevalent among CBOs in Western Kenya. As already alluded to, there are two forms of savings and credit schemes: the rotating savings and credit on the one hand, and the accumulating savings and credit on the other hand.

3.5.1.1 Rotating Savings and Credit Schemes

It has been explained that rotating savings and credit associations (ROSCAs) or schemes are based on the principle of rotational distributions being given to one member at a time among a group of people. Those involved agree to contribute equal amounts of specific resources to a common pool that is given to each member in turn after an agreed upon period of time (Bouman, 1995). The period of time may be a few days, weeks, or a

month. It is the rotational contribution of resources that has earned these schemes the labels “merry-go-round” or “money-go-round” to signify the circular disbursements on to all the members.

The resources contributed in these schemes vary from household utensils, furniture or labor to money. In our interviews and informal discussions, we established that most of the ROSCAs were initially formed around the provision of farm labor, especially among women who faced labor shortfalls before the contribution of money in these schemes was introduced. Thus, the resource here was labor, such that members worked on each other's farm on a daily basis in turn. Whereas this solved the labor demands on their farms, it did not answer the question of scarce finance for other household needs. Hence the introduction of money as a standard resource to be contributed to the pool to be given to a member in turn.

In some cases, members of these groups agreed on how money that accrued from these schemes would be spent. We established that some groups set aside that money for buying kitchen utensils, furniture, livestock, school uniforms, bicycles, paying school fees and even building houses with corrugated iron sheet roofs. The limiting factor on the choice of the project for the ROSCA money was the little amount that the members could afford to contribute within a short period of time if the pool was to “go round” the membership. Among the organizations that operated rotating savings and credit schemes, we established that over 70 per cent made their contributions after a month. Table 3.8 below indicates the amount of regular periodic contributions in the said organizations by each of the members.

TABLE 3.8: THE RATE OF MONTHLY CONTRIBUTIONS IN ROTATING SAVINGS AND CREDIT SCHEMES

AMOUNT (K.SHS)	NUMBER	PERCENTAGE
50	11	29.7
60	3	8.1
100	7	19.0
150	3	8.1
200	3	8.1
250	2	5.4
300	4	10.8
500	2	5.4
1,500	1	2.7
2,000	1	2.7
TOTAL (N = 37)	37	100

SOURCE: Field data

Data in Table 3.8 show that a total of 56.8 percent of the organizations had set Kshs. 100 and less as the monthly rate of individual contribution towards rotating savings and credit schemes while 16.2 percent contributed Kshs. 200 and less. Another 16.2 per cent contributed between Kshs 250 and Kshs 300 per month towards these schemes. Only 10.8 per cent contributed Kshs 500 and above. Thus, each member in the majority of these schemes contributes less than Kshs. 300 per month. Given that CBOs in the region are relatively small in size, the implication is that the pool that is raised in a month to be given to the receiving member is relatively small. For instance, if we take the average size of these CBOs to be 25 members vis-à-vis the least amount of contribution as Kshs. 50, the monthly pool would be only Kshs 1,250 (about US \$ 16 at the time of the survey), which cannot meet the basic requirements of a household in a month and finance other projects as some members would wish.

It is such little contributions that have led participants in these schemes to invent the *sindikiza* component. *Sindikiza* is a Kiswahili word that literally means, “escort”. It is used in this case to refer to the additional funds that are usually raised on *harambee* basis (according to one’s ability in the spirit of mutual aid) to be added to (or escort) the regular pool that each member receives in turn. Thus, for purposes of increasing the amount of the pool that a member receives, members conduct a fundraiser during the sitting for presenting the pool to the recipient, where they contribute additional funds besides the fixed rate of regular contribution according to ones ability. The member who is to receive the pool is usually mandated to invite non-members as "guests" to participate in the *sindikiza* fundraiser. Since the purpose of inviting such guests to the function is to increase the amount of the pool by extracting more resources from outside the membership, the tendency is for members to "search" for local elite to be invited as "guests of honor", for they are presumed to have more money to contribute. Through these functions, the local political elite is increasingly filtering into ROSCAs that were hitherto operating *incognito*.

It should be emphasized here that the *sindikiza* innovation does not operate outside the principle of balanced reciprocity upon which ROSCA funds are usually shared or distributed. In one way or another, each member draws from the pool as much as he/she contributes to it. This is because members always strive to do their utmost to contribute more towards the *sindikiza* so that each member receiving the pool would reciprocate when his/her turn comes. Thus, the logic of reciprocity would dictate that one’s *sindikiza* contribution be pegged to what he/she received from the respective members (Wanyama, 2001:72).

On the whole, this innovation has significantly improved on the amount of funds made available to the participants of rotating savings and credit schemes, especially those who are able to attract relatively "well-to-do" guests to their functions. For instance, in one of the functions that the author attended in Nambuku location of Funyula division, Busia district, Kshs 16,000 were raised to "escort" a pool of Kshs 2,600.00. The "guest of honor", who was a nephew to the recipient, brought a contribution of Kshs. 8,000 to the function. Thus, a member who was expecting only Kshs 2,600 from the activity ended up receiving Kshs 18,600 due to the *sindikiza* innovation. This is just but an indicator of how local people can be innovative in their struggle to improve on their living conditions. We shall examine the sustainability of these schemes in the later chapters.

3.5.1.2 Accumulating Savings and Credit Schemes

Unlike the ROSCAs that mobilize savings and give to one member in turn, accumulating saving and credit associations (ASCRA) or schemes mobilize savings from the members to build up a fixed sum that is utilized to achieve specific purposes agreed upon by members. Thus, the term "accumulating" is derived from the fact that the mobilized funds are retained in a pool and efforts are always made to increase the amount of the pool rather than distributing it to members in rotation as is the case in ROSCAs.

During the interviews, we learnt that members participating in these schemes use at least four methods to mobilize the funds. First is through providing farm labor. Labor could be provided to both members and non-members at a fee, with members charged less than the non-members. Thus, whereas non-members are charged according to the size of the farm on which the group is to work, members pay at a fixed rate for one

morning's work. Each member pays that amount each time the group works on his/her farm. It has already been observed that Orvis (1997: 84) found similar arrangements in Kisii district of Nyanza province.

The second is through members' direct contributions to the pool. We established that such contributions were made in two forms. One was where members had set a fixed amount that each member had to contribute within a set period of time. The other was where each member's contributions were recorded in terms of shares and the members were free to contribute as many shares as they could. In the latter case, members would first of all determine the value of a share as a standing rate for individual contribution. For instance, whereas the value of a share in one of the schemes in Siaya district was Kshs 20, we found the value of a share in a similar scheme in Busia district to be Kshs 50. Hence, the amount of money contributed by an individual would be divided by the respective value to get the number of shares owned by the individual member in the scheme. The understanding here was that the member's share contribution would count when sharing the accrued profit or the principal sum of the pool. Thus, members with many shares would receive a higher proportion of the profit and/or principal sum of the pool than members with few shares. This served to encourage members to mobilize more saving into these credit schemes.

Third, small-scale business enterprises are also utilized to mobilize funds for these credit schemes. In the survey, we found that some CBOs had utilized members' initial deposits to start business ventures for purposes of making a profit to build a larger pool of funds. In some cases, CBOs engaged in other activities had used funds from such

activities to start the businesses; then ploughed the profit derived from the businesses into accumulating savings and credit schemes.

Finally, some groups have utilized external resources to set up accumulating savings and credit schemes. The main donors in such cases have been NGOs involved in the extension of credit to small-scale business enterprises. As already mentioned, these NGOs have been using CBOs as mechanisms for delivering their services to the grassroots level. In the process, the tendency is for these NGOs to seek CBOs engaged in small-scale enterprises and introduce to them their services. Alternatively, these NGOs encourage entrepreneurs at local markets or trading centers to form groups through which they can get access to their credit facilities. This has led to the formation of several accumulating savings and credit associations or schemes among small-scale business entrepreneurs for purposes of getting access to NGO-supported credit. Either way, the arrival of donor NGOs in this regard has seen a substantial amount of money flow into accumulating savings and credit schemes in the region.

We found CARE (Kenya) to be the most active NGO in extending credit to these schemes, especially among women. For instance, there are reports that in 1998, it provided Kshs.5, 553,000 to these schemes in Busia district and Kshs 9,041,000 to the schemes in Siaya district (Department of Social Services, 1998a: 8; 1998b: 8). In 1999, these figures increased to Kshs 16,806, 500 and Kshs 19,688,200 for Busia and Siaya districts, respectively (Department of Social Services. 1999 a: 11; 1999b: 7). Whereas such relatively huge sums of money help ASCRAs to take off in the provision of credit and significantly benefit the poor at grassroots, the danger is that it is likely to encourage dependence on donor funds among CBOs. We shall explore this possibility shortly.

On the whole, these methods of mobilizing funds have seen CBOs build relatively large pools of money in accumulating credit schemes for various functions. Two of the functions were, however, outstanding in our survey. First is lending to earn a profit. Virtually all members of CBOs that operate these schemes indicated that their organizations lend money to members to be repaid with an interest. The rate of interest ranged from 10 per cent to 25 per cent per month, which is too high for the rural poor, especially when compared to savings and credit co-operatives (SACCOs) that charge an average of 1 per cent on reducing balance per month. In addition, some of the schemes had developed stringent conditions for lending to members. The main conditions are summarized and presented in Table 3.9.

TABLE 3.9: THE MAIN CONDITIONS FOR LENDING TO MEMBERS IN ACCUMULATING SAVINGS AND CREDIT SCHEMES

LENDING CONDITION	NUMBER	PERCENTAGE
Provide 3 guarantors and collateral	11	35.5
Be an active member and regular contributor	8	25.8
Have a genuine reason to borrow	4	12.9
Show ability to repay the loan	3	9.7
Have adequate shares to guarantee the loan	3	9.7
Should not have a running loan	1	3.2
None	1	3.2
TOTAL (N = 31)	31	100

SOURCE: Field data

The data in Table 3.9 show that most of the accumulating savings and credit schemes (35.5 percent) required that members give collateral to secure their loans in addition to providing guarantors who would bear responsibility of repaying the loan in case of default by a loanee. Similarly, some schemes (19 per cent) advanced loans on the

basis of credit worthiness and a member's share contribution as a guarantee for the loanee. On the whole, these are relatively tough conditions, but necessary for guarding against defaulting on loan repayment and institutionalizing informal credit at the grassroots level. That many people are participating in these credit schemes despite the high interest rates and strict borrowing conditions is a pointer to the lack of alternative financial services and significance of ASCRAs in this regard at the grassroots level in the region.

The second purpose for which funds from these savings and credit schemes are utilized is celebrating annual festivities. Some of these schemes are specifically set up to mobilize savings into a pool, which are then shared among the members at the time of celebrating the annual festivity. Christmas was cited as the most common festivity for which people save in these schemes to celebrate. The pool fund for this purpose is shared in two ways. One is where the money is shared among the members proportionately while the second is where the pool fund is used to buy a bull, which is slaughtered and members share the meat. It was explained, however, that in some schemes where more money is mobilized, both methods are combined in sharing the proceeds.

In this relatively small way, it is significant that accumulating savings and credit schemes are increasingly helping to mobilize savings to satisfy both economic and social welfare needs in the region, despite the rising dependence on donor funds to set up some of the schemes. This we established during the interviews. With regard to lending activities, 32.3 percent of our respondents confirmed that they had obtained loans from these schemes. They reportedly used the loans to finance working capital for small-scale enterprises (24.8%); pay school fees (28.7%); buy livestock (22.8%); settle outstanding

debts (4.0%); pay medical bills (2.0%); buy roofing iron sheets (2.0%); buy land (2.0%); buy farm inputs (2.0%); hire firm labour (2.0%); buy animal feeds and pay for artificial insemination (2.0%); buy food (0.9%); and buy premature sugarcane to sell at a higher price when it gets ready for harvesting. In a nutshell, the loans are generally utilized to solve socio-economic problems that adversely affect people's living conditions.

3.5.2 AGRICULTURAL ACTIVITIES

It has already been pointed out that agriculture is the main economic activity in Western Kenya. It is against this background that a significant number of CBOs have organized their activities around agriculture. The main activities in this regard are discussed below.

3.5.2.1 Dairy Farming

We observed in the previous chapter that the main challenges in dairy production in Western Kenya are the diversification of cattle breeds and the adoption of appropriate grazing methods that conform to the diminishing size of land parcels. It is significant that the CBOs engaged in dairy farming activity are trying to address these twin problems that are closely related.

The diversification of cattle breeds by acquiring the exotic type is the main focus of these organizations. Given that the exotic breed is quite expensive relative to the income of the rural dwellers, some of the organizations raise money to purchase the initial cow from which members get a heifer in turn when it calves. The initial cow is, however, owned collectively and members share responsibilities of up-keep though it is kept at one

of the member's home. In this way, all members of the group are eventually expected to acquire an exotic cow on a "merry-go-round" basis. In our survey, we found only three organizations that had used this approach to enable members acquire exotic breed of cattle. Otherwise, the other fifteen CBOs engaged in this activity had acquired the initial cow from donors and shared the heifers among the members in turn.

The mode of acquiring the exotic breed of cattle has also determined members' access to extension services necessary for keeping the cattle. Whereas members of CBOs that contributed their own funds to purchase exotic cows made their own efforts to learn zero-grazing methods of feeding this breed, with some of them co-opting persons who had the requisite knowledge to assist them, donors trained members of CBOs on the basics of keeping the cows before delivering the same to the organizations. In fact some donors also required these organizations to have insurance for the cow(s), plant nappier grass for feeding the animals and construct appropriate shades before handing over the cow(s) to the groups. The end result is that whereas in the former case members of CBOs generated their own resources and taught themselves how to keep the cattle, in the latter case CBOs depended on donors for the cows and extension services. This can be interpreted to mean that the first case encourages self-reliance that is critical for the sustainability of the activity, while the second case may result into dependency. That the majority of the CBOs engaged in this activity are dependent on donors, therefore, raises the question of the sustainability of dairy farming in Western Kenya that we shall address later in the thesis.

Besides the diversification of cattle breeds and adoption of zero-grazing method of feeding livestock, CBOs engaged in dairy farming also assist their members to acquire

indigenous types of cattle on a merry-go-round basis. A case in point is where ROSCA contributions are given to a member in turn specifically for buying a cow or the latter is bought and handed over to the receiving member.

3.5.2.2 Cattle Dips

Increased dairy production is not only dependent on the type of breed and grazing methods, but also on the healthy upkeep of cattle. Tick-borne diseases have already been mentioned as part of the impediments to dairy production in Western Kenya. In response to this problem, some CBOs, through the initiative of local leaders, have set up cattle dips to eradicate ticks. Members of local communities have donated pieces of land on which dips have been constructed. Whereas members provided the labor and contributed funds to purchase other necessary materials for the construction of most of the cattle dips, funds for maintaining the dips are obtained from charges on dipping animals. We established that they charge an average of Kshs. 10 for dipping each animal. Some of the CBOs had, however, obtained donor assistance to construct and maintain the cattle dips. One example in this regard is *Bululwe* self-help group in Butere division that we shall expound on later.

3.5.2.3 Subsistence Crop Farming

This involves joint cultivation of subsistence crops, mainly cereals, by a group for sale or consumption. In the latter case, the produce is shared among the members while in the former case the produce is sold and the money utilized for various purposes. The cultivation of crops mainly takes place on either a donated or hired piece of land, the size

of which we found to be one acre or less on average. In the sample, only one women's group had bought a one-acre piece of land on which it cultivated subsistence crops. The main crops cultivated by the organizations participating in this activity include maize, beans, sorghum, millet and rice. Whereas the members provide labor whenever required, seeds and other farm inputs are bought using members' contributions. That members of CBOs are joining efforts to cultivate food crops to share among themselves for consumption is a pointer to the various efforts that people in the region are making to improve on food security. Indeed, the fact that these organizations cultivate food crops for sale is also significant in that they are involved in efforts of making food available to the local population, thereby enhancing food security in the local communities.

3.5.2.4 Horticulture

Community-based organizations in Western Kenya are also engaged in horticultural farming. Members of these organizations use donated or periodically leased land to collectively grow horticultural crops for sale. Horticulture is thus used mainly as an income-generating venture rather than a subsistence activity. Though other types of CBOs also participate in this activity, it is mainly popular among the youth groups, whose principal objective is earning an income. The crops grown here include onions, tomatoes and a wide range of vegetables, particularly cabbages and *sukuma wiki* (Kale). The funds derived from the sale of these crops are either shared among the members at the end of the year or used to run other activities of the group like small-scale business enterprises and advancing credit to members. Whereas this generates income for the members and

enables organizations to widen the scope of their economic activities, the activity contributes to improved food security in the community.

3.5.2.5 Breeding Pigs

Breeding pigs for sale is also among the agricultural activities undertaken by CBOs in Western Kenya, especially in Busia district. Though quite common among youth groups, we found at least one women's group in Bukhayo West location of Nambale division, Busia district, participating in this activity. Members of CBOs engaged in this activity collectively buy piglets and raise them in one of the member's home. The member usually volunteer to keep the pigs, then members collectively construct the sty for the animals. With regard to feeding the pigs, members draw up a roster for all to participate in turn. Some groups had organized the turn for the members on a daily basis while others had organized the turn after two or three days. The group would then sell the mature pigs to butchers and buy other piglets to keep the activity running. In one case, the group kept female pigs only in order to run a business of selling piglets to earn an income. Either way, breeding pigs for sale is increasingly becoming a viable income-generating activity for the participating CBOs as the market for the animals was reported to be widening. There were reports that marketing agents for Farmers' Choice Ltd., a Nairobi-based company that specializes in making sausages, had visited some parts of Busia district in search of pigs. With increased demand, the income to the CBOs from the activity is bound to increase. The income generated from this activity, like in other income-generating activities of these organizations, is either shared among the members annually or invested in other activities like credit schemes and small-scale enterprises.

This shows the linkage between agriculture - oriented activities and the non-agricultural activities of these organizations in the quest to improve local people's living conditions.

3.5.2.6 Provision of Farm Labor

Labor is one of the most significant inputs in agricultural production. It has already been noted that in the sparsely populated areas of the region like Busia and Siaya districts, farm labor tends to be inadequate during the peak season. It is during this season that farmers plant, weed and harvest crops. In response to labour demands during the seasons, some CBOs have set out the provision of farm labor as either their sole activity or one of their activities. As it has been explained, these organizations provide labor to both members and non-members. In the former case, members work on each other's farm on a daily basis in turns. It is thus a "merry-go-round" activity where the resource contributed is labor, which is provided within an agreed upon period of time. For instance, members could agree to start work at 7.00 a.m. and stop at 11.00 am on each other's farm. A slightly different version of this arrangement is where members work on the farms of the members who pay an agreed upon daily fee to the organization. In cases where these organizations provide labor to the non-members, the terms are on hire basis. Thus, the organizations are contracted to work on the individual's farm for an agreed upon sum of money. Whereas in the former case members combine mutual aid and savings mobilization in the provision of labor, the latter case is one of generating income and/or mobilizing savings for the organization. The implication is that whereas CBOs have utilized this activity to solve farm labor shortages among members on mutual aid basis

and to provide relatively cheap labor to the non-members, it has also helped to mobilize savings and generate income for the organizations.

3.5.3 SMALL-SCALE ENTERPRISES

As already alluded to, the popularity of small-scale enterprises as a mechanism for generating income in Western Kenya has extended to community-based organizations. This is evidenced by the fact that 21.4 percent of the CBOs we surveyed are engaged in these enterprises. These enterprises range from the agriculture-based to the non-agriculture-oriented enterprises. The agriculture-oriented enterprises in which the CBOs we surveyed are engaged include buying and selling cereals (35.3%); buying or leasing premature sugarcane for sale (17.6%); posho mills (11.8%); and butcheries (5.9%). The non-agriculture-oriented enterprises are selling fish (11.8%); handicraft (5.9%); and retail shops/Kiosks (11.8%).

At least two main factors that have already been discussed explain the prevalence of enterprises for buying and selling cereals. First, food scarcity in some parts of the region that has encouraged CBOs to set up cereals stores as a way of availing food to the local community and also generating income to benefit members. Second, the ever-fluctuating prices of cereals reaching rock bottom level during the harvesting season when there is a surplus. CBOs purchase the cereals during this season when the prices are low and sell later when the prices rise for a handsome profit. Alternatively, these CBOs buy the cereals from other parts of the region where there is a surplus and transport them to areas with food scarcity where prices for the cereals are higher. This activity is earning CBOs some income to finance their other activities for the benefit of the members. At the

same time, it is significantly improving food security in the region by either storage when there is a food surplus and avail it when there is a shortfall or redistribution of food from surplus to scarcity prone areas.

The business of buying premature sugarcane for sale when it matures is a relatively recent venture that is increasingly becoming common in Western Kenya. We, however, found this to be more prevalent in Butere-Mumias district than in Nyando district where sugarcane is also grown. Perhaps the explanation for this trend is the collapse of sugar milling companies in Nyando that has thrown the marketing of sugarcane into disarray. Be that as it may, the activity involves what we may term as middlemen arrangement in which premature sugarcane on one's farm is bought and sold to the Sugar Milling Company when it is ready for harvesting. On the part of the "buyer" or "middleman", it is an investment to generate a profit when he/she sells the harvest later while the farmer or "seller" regards it as a means of "earning in advance" before the harvesting time that could be several months away in the midst of immediate financial demands. This can be interpreted to mean that farmers sell off their premature cane to middlemen in order to earn "quick" money to solve immediate financial problems. This is indicative of the fact that sugarcane farming has not solved the problem of poverty among small-scale farmers in Western Kenya.

The explanation for poverty among these farmers, who arguably produce a cash crop, is to be found in the fact that their small pieces of land are fully occupied with cane, from which they earn equally little income only once in 24 months. Other problems related to marketing like delays in harvesting cane that drastically reduces cane weight, leading to reduced income since payment is based on weight, and late payment of farmers

for cane delivered to the factory further despairs the small-scale farmers (Wanyande, 2001: 136). Without any alternative source of income to meet immediate subsistence and other household financial demands, the available option is to sell off the premature cane, albeit at lower prices, to middlemen who could be patient with the company's delays and eventually earn more from the sugarcane that they did not cultivate nor own the land on which it was grown. CBOs in Butere-Mumias district have entered this business as "middlemen" in order to earn a profit. Thus, these organizations raise money that is used as "starting capital" for buying premature sugarcane from interested farmers and later on sell the mature cane to Mumias Sugar Company at a higher price.

Posho mill is an important business venture in which CBOs have invested, but is a relatively high capital investment for these organizations. In our informal discussions, we sought to know how two organizations, which were coincidentally women's groups, had raised the capital. We established that whereas one of the organizations in Ugunja division of Siaya district had raised the bulk of the funds through several *harambee* fundraisers as well as income from other business enterprises and members' regular contributions, the other organization in Funyula division of Busia district had obtained the posho mill as a donation from the local Member of Parliament. Thus, whereas in the first case only part of the capital was obtained from outside the membership/organization, the entire starting capital in the second case was obtained through external assistance. The implication of external financing of the activities of CBOs will be explored later in the discussion.

Women's groups are the main participants in selling fish and handicraft. Those engaged in selling fish stock dried and smoked fish in their stores at local markets for

sale. Thus, these groups do not market the perishable fresh fish that requires refrigeration facilities, but the already preserved fish. Like in the case of cereals stores, members of the groups work in the fish stores in turns. Handicraft is not a major activity in the region but we found one women's group in Nyando district that made pots and baskets for sale at the local markets. There was also a women's group in Funyula division of Busia district that made embroidered table clothes and sweaters for sale.

Retail shops and kiosks were particularly popular among youth groups. They had set up these enterprises at the local market centers. Whereas, one group in Nyando division had entrusted the day-to-day running of the shop to two members, with a weekly auditing of the stock and sales, other groups had their members work in the enterprises on a periodic rotational basis.

On the whole, small-scale enterprises are increasingly becoming significant activities through which CBOs raise funds for satisfying their objectives. Thus, these enterprises should not be viewed as ends in themselves, but as fundraising avenues. This is precisely the reason why CBOs are venturing into relatively new areas like buying premature sugarcane. The goal is to raise funds required to satisfy the principal objectives for which the organization was formed rather than making profit as an end in itself.

3.5.4 SOCIAL WELFARE SERVICES

Social welfare is a significant activity of CBOs around which many of these organizations are formed. A case in point is the Welfare Associations whose primary function is the provision of social welfare services. This should not, however, be

interpreted to mean that social welfare services are provided by welfare associations only. Other types of CBOs also provide these services, particularly the communal self-help groups and women's groups. The services provided in this regard among the CBOs we surveyed include meeting funeral expenses; fundraising for education bursary and award schemes; building and equipping schools; and providing recreational services.

Assisting members to meet funeral expenses for their immediate family members was the most common social welfare activity among the CBOs we surveyed. Whereas this was the main activity for three of the welfare associations that we sampled, our informal discussions revealed that many other organizations were engaged in it as a secondary activity. It involves the contribution of money and food to give to a bereaved member as a way of offsetting funeral expenses. The organizations have set rates of contribution that members have to abide by whenever there is a funeral.

It is now widely accepted in Kenya that the cost of education is well beyond the reach of many households. In response to this reality, some welfare associations in Western Kenya have set up education bursary schemes to support the bright pupils/students from poor families in the communities to go to school/college. The associations raise funds for these schemes mainly through *harambee* fundraisers and members' regular contributions at the rate agreed upon by the members. We found an association in Awasi location of Nyando division that had paid for the education of a student up to university level, which is not a mean achievement.

In the same spirit, these associations have set up educational award schemes to encourage better performance in national examinations among pupils/students and teachers in local schools. The awards are presented annually to pupils and students who

excel in the national examinations and to teachers whose subject most pupils/students score the highest marks in the said examinations. Similarly, some associations have set up awards for the best performing schools in the examinations within the community. These awards schemes in the form of trophies, certificates of merit and cash awards have helped to raise educational standards in the local communities.

Building and equipping of school is the other welfare service associated with CBOs in Western Kenya. Communal self-help groups and welfare associations are particularly identified with this activity. Members of these organizations raise funds through *harambee* and individual contributions to build classrooms and buy desks, textbooks and equipment for practical subjects. In one case, we established that a welfare association based in Nairobi had secured the assistance of a donor to build classrooms for a primary school in Nambale division of Busia district. This is an indicator that some welfare associations provide social services through donor funding, which is a new dimension to these previously in-ward looking organizations.

CBOs also play the role of providing recreational opportunities to their members. Through these organizations, people find opportunities to socialize with others in the communities. In our interviews, we found that some members of these organizations had joined them in order to socialize with their peers. Furthermore, song and dance crowned the gatherings or meetings of some of these organizations, particularly women's groups. The songs were used to deride women who did not participate in groups to satisfy their felt needs; sanction behavior in the community; defame lazy members of the community; badmouth enemies; etc. To a large extent, these songs served as a rallying call on members to enhance their participation in the organizations. They also gave hope to those

demoralized by a host of problems and, above all, served as a recreational activity where people would dance and go home in a happy mood.

3.5.5 PUBLIC HEALTH, PRIMARY HEALTH CARE AND COMMUNITY PHARMACIES

It has already been pointed out that the majority of the people in Western Kenya are in a dilemma with regard to accessing health services. They cannot afford the services provided by the relatively better-equipped private hospitals and clinics, yet the relatively cheaper public health institutions lack medicine and other requirements for providing proper health services. Partly in response to this dilemma, CBOs in the region have taken up the task of providing public health education to the people as a health preventive (as opposed to curative) measure. The organizations engaged in this activity, which we found in our survey to be mainly women's groups, have got their members trained as community health workers and family planning educators. It is such members that head public health awareness campaigns in which issues on hygiene, nutrition, housekeeping, home economics, family planning, child care and HIV/AIDS awareness are discussed.

Besides these educational campaigns, some of the organizations have set up primary health care programs to access basic non-prescription drugs for the treatment of common diseases like malaria, cholera, dysentery, cough, fever, among others. at relatively lower prices. They also sell treated mosquito nets for the prevention of malaria. Whereas any member may sell mosquito nets, only trained community health workers dispense drugs, usually at their homes. The supply of the drugs through these programs is self-sustaining, given that the organizations use the proceeds from the sale of the drugs to restock while keeping the small profit that they may make.

In addition, a few CBOs have established community pharmacies where they dispense drugs and offer other primary healthcare services. Thus, rather than community health workers carrying out their duties at their homes, they do so at established premises of these pharmacies. We, however, found out in our survey that the pharmacies were largely established through donor support. We shall expound on this point later, but it is discernible from this brief outline that CBOs are increasingly filling up the gaps in the provision of health services left by public and private health institutions in the region.

3.5.6 BICYCLE TRANSPORT (*BODA-BODA*)

The *boda-boda* phenomenon has spread to virtually every part of Western Kenya, wherein bicycle operators lift travelers over both short and long distances to earn an income. It was initially operated on an individual basis and was open to any person who had a bicycle and the interest to participate. This saw the flooding of bicycle operators in the urban centers, rural markets and at junctions from the main roads into the rural interior of the region. However, cartels have since emerged to control the activity, leading to the rise of CBOs, particularly youth groups, among the operators.

CBOs have been formed around this activity on two fronts. First, individual bicycle operators have formed groups, usually youth groups, to operate savings and credit schemes. We have already explained how these schemes operate. Second, some CBOs have been formed to purchase bicycles to rent out on a daily basis to those interested in "boda-boda", but do not have bicycles. A case in point is the Butere Township *Boda-Boda* Group, a youth group, in Butere division that has 16 bicycles, which are rented out to both members and non-members at the rate of Kshs. 50.00 per day. Thus, when all

bicycles are rented out, the group earns Kshs 800 per day. The money is kept in an accumulating savings and credit scheme. At the time of our interviews, the group was planning to purchase five bicycles to increase their fleet and, hence, their income from the activity. It was also explained that part of the income is shared among the members in December of every year.

Besides providing an opportunity for members to save and also earn an income, the youth groups engaged in *boda-boda* have helped to regulate operation of the activity by introducing some regulations. For instance, they have come up with uniforms to be worn by respective members, whose bicycles also bear registration numbers for identification. It was explained that this is meant to keep out hooligans and untrustworthy individuals that may endanger the security of their passengers. In addition, the operators are required to be clean for the comfort of the passengers. Though the activity is largely self-sustaining, operators complained of the poor state of the roads that increased bicycle maintenance costs and rendered their operations so difficult during the rain seasons.

3.5.7. WATER SUPPLY

As already pointed out, the availability of safe and clean water for domestic use remains a problem in Western Kenya. In response to this problem, some CBOs are engaged in the supply of water to the local communities. These are mainly communal self-help groups, welfare associations and, to some extent, women's groups. Boreholes, protected springs and wells are the main water sources developed by these organizations.

The supply of pipe water is relatively more expensive than these sources, which probably explains why most CBOs have not ventured into it much. In our survey, we

found only one organization, namely *Ejinja* Community Water Supply Project, in Funyula division of Busia district that had set up pipe infrastructure to supply water to the homes of its members from a borehole with support from donor funding. We shall expound on this project later on in the discussion.

This is not to say that other CBOs that are engaged in developing water sources have not received external assistance. We established that KEFINCO and some NGOs like Community Initiatives Support Services (CISS) had assisted most of the CBOs that had drilled boreholes in Western province and Siaya district, respectively. In most cases, the CBOs contributed about one quarter of the total cost of the project while donors raised the rest. However, these organizations remained instrumental in the maintenance of the water sources. Whereas some of them raised funds for maintaining the projects by directly selling water to non-members, as was the case with *Kwe Gi Lamo* Women group in Wagai division of Siaya district, others charged both members and non-members a monthly user fee at a flat rate. Some organizations charged Kshs 10 per household while others charged Kshs 20 per household per month.

3.5.8 MEDICAL INSURANCE SCHEMES

This is a rare and unique activity of CBOs that we found in Nambuku location of Funyula division, Busia district. It is the main activity of *Khwetebekho Mulaakha* Community Health Scheme that was started in the 1980s as a welfare association. It was converted into a medical insurance scheme in 1999 following the advice of a District Community Health Educator who had visited the community. On realizing that most of the members of the welfare association had died because they could not afford to go for

treatment, an issue that the educator had articulated, the members set up the scheme to assist each other to meet out-patient medical expenses.

The scheme is essentially a direct response to the expensive medical services that are well beyond the reach of some individuals in the local communities in Western Kenya. Members of the organization pay a monthly premium of Kshs. 30 per person for outpatient treatment of the members of their households, i.e. spouse and children. Thus, the monthly premium of a household would depend on its size, which is calculated by multiplying the number of the members of the household by Kshs. 30. At the time of the interviews, the scheme covered 67 households, which means that a minimum of Kshs 2,010 was contributed every month to the scheme.

The Organization had identified a mission dispensary where all members go for treatment. The dispensary at Namboboto is about 5km from the community, which is not a long distance for the rural dwellers that are used to walking longer distances in search of medical services. The organization made an arrangement with the dispensary, wherein the latter treats the members and receives respective payment from the former later. Thus, whenever a paid-up member falls sick, he /she simply obtains a "sick sheet" from the organization's secretary to authorize treatment at the dispensary. The organization would then settle the bill later, usually at the end of the month. In this small way, this arrangement has enabled many individuals in the local community to access medical services at an affordable cost and at times when one may not have money to pay for the service. It is significant that the scheme is sustained not by donations, but individual members' contributions.

3.5.9 MARKETING DAIRY PRODUCE

The problems associated with marketing dairy produce in Western Kenya have been highlighted. The magnitude of the problem has been compounded by increased productivity following the acquisition of exotic cattle through the dairy farming activities of CBOs. Thus, the upshot is that some members of these organizations have been able to produce more milk, but are cannot easily access the market. In response to this problem, some CBOs have started marketing members' dairy produce and also selling animal feeds as well as veterinary medicines to the members.

The best example that we found in our survey in this regard is *Emarenyo* Zero-grazing Group that was formed in 1994 among exotic livestock farmers in *Muyundi* Sub-location of *Emarenyo* location, Butere division. The organization was initially a self-help group to facilitate exchange of experiences, information and resources in the management of their "zero-grazing" farms. With increased production of milk and eggs among the members, the immediate problem became how to market the produce. In 1998, it transformed itself to *Emarenyo* Multi-purpose Co-operative Society in order to focus on marketing dairy produce. It subsequently opened its membership to any interested person in Butere division, subject to paying membership fees and a minimum share contribution of Kshs 10,000 within two years. At the time of our interviews, it had 82 members, 42 of whom were women.

The organization has set up a store in Butere town where it collects members' produce for marketing. It sells the milk to dairy processors in Kakamega as well as to local consumers. Eggs are sold on wholesale terms to local traders. In the same premise, the organization stocks animal feeds and veterinary medicine for sale to the members and

the general public. Members can obtain these on credit terms, with their share contributions and proceeds from the sale of their produce serving as security for the credit. Thus, what was essentially a CBO is now operating like a marketing co-operative society due to the lack of a proper marketing infrastructure for members' produce. In fact it was explained in our interviews that the CBO had to transform itself into the co-operative simply to satisfy the legal requirements for marketing dairy produce.

3.6 PROBLEMS AFFECTING THE ACTIVITIES OF CBOs

The foregoing discussion has served to demonstrate how CBOs have endeavored to solve the various socio-economic problems that have hindered the realization of sustainable development in Western Kenya. It is evident that these organizations have attempted to cover most of the issues in the economic activities and the socio-economic infrastructure, but not without some problems. During the interviews, we asked our respondents to identify the main problem they perceived to be affecting their organization in implementing their development projects. A summary of their responses is presented in Table 3.10 on the next page.

TABLE 3.10: PROBLEMS AFFECTING DEVELOPMENT PROJECTS OF CBOs IN WESTERN KENYA

MAIN PROBLEM	FREQUENCY	PERCENT
Lack of external assistance/funds	195	55.7
Delay in remitting contributions/donor funds	28	8.0
Unpredictable and unreliable rainfall	19	5.3
Embezzlement of funds by officials	16	4.6
Defaulting on loans & regular contributions	13	3.7
Poor and untrustworthy leadership	11	3.1
Lack of motivation/morale to participate	9	2.6
Loss-making business ventures	9	2.6
Poor attendance of meetings	7	2.0
Lack of entrepreneurial/technical skills	7	2.0
Lack of transport & milk preservation facilities	7	2.0
Internal squabbles among members	6	1.7
Poor roads and communication network	6	1.7
Competition from similar business ventures	5	1.3
Poor animal breeds and husbandry	5	1.3
Lack of operating premises	3	1.0
Illiteracy among members	3	1.0
High Borehole maintenance cost	1	0.3
TOTAL	350	100

SOURCE: Field data

The problems appearing in Table 3.10 are for the most part self-explanatory. However, the fact that 55.7 percent of our respondents identified the lack of external assistance as the main problem in their organizations is interesting and deserves further interpretation. It may be interpreted to mean that most of the CBOs in Western Kenya expect external assistance to finance their activities and when such assistance is not forthcoming or is not adequate, then that constitutes a problem. This is a pointer to the fact that most of the CBOs initiate activities that they cannot afford to finance on their own, hence their dependence on donations and other forms of external assistance like *harambee* fundraisers, grants, material support and revolving credit schemes.

This becomes more apparent when we revisit the data on how these organizations finance their activities. In the discussion of the activities of CBOs in the previous section, it has been evident that most of them (activities), including savings and credit schemes that have a long tradition of relying on internally generated resources, have been carried out using a substantial proportion of external resources. Indeed, of the 17 activities in which the sampled CBOs are engaged (see Table 3.7), only 7 had been implemented without external assistance, namely medical insurance schemes; marketing dairy produce; bicycle transport; provision of farm labor; breeding pigs; horticulture; and subsistence crop farming. This implies that about 60 per cent of the activities of CBOs in the region are carried out using a substantial proportion of resources obtained from outside the organizations. The main sources of external resources for these organizations include NGOs, government programmes and/or departments, *harambee* fundraisers and political leaders.

The NGOs that were specifically identified here include CARE-Kenya, Mazingira Institute, Family Health International, Heifer Project International, Bernard van Leer Foundation, Rural Outreach Programme (ROP), International Youth Exchange Organization of Japan, and African Medical and Relief Foundation (AMREF). Mumias Outgrowers Company (MOCO) and Kenchic Ltd. are the private companies that extended credit facilities to these organizations. The government-funded programmes were the Kenya-Finland Livestock Development Program, Kenya-Finland Co-operation (KEFINCO) Water Programme, the National Women Development Fund and the National Youth Development Fund. It should, however, be clarified here that the last two were actually Funds established through mammoth fundraisers organized by the state as

campaign tools for patronizing all women and youth groups in the whole country in the run-up to the 1997 general elections. We will return to their significance later in the discussion.

On the whole, it can be concluded that most of the CBOs in Western Kenya are dependent on external assistance to finance their activities. This probably explains why organizations that are originally formed around the virtues of mutual trust and mutual aid are reportedly under the leadership of untrustworthy leaders who embezzle funds (see Table 3.10). This could be happening because most of the funds are not actually contributed by the members themselves, but donated to the organizations. This might have created the impression that the funds are "free" resources available for plunder by those who can get access to them. This kind of attitude among the leadership could be responsible for other organizational and management problems listed in Table 3.10, like defaulting on repayment of loans and regular contributions; lack of morale to participate in the activities of the organizations; and internal squabbles among members. These issues are the subjects of discussion in the subsequent chapters of this thesis.

3.7 CONCLUSION

It has been the objective of this chapter to examine the nature of community-based organizations to facilitate our understanding of how they organize local people to address the problems that affect their living conditions. We have done this by discussing the origin and membership composition of these organizations; their number and size in Western Kenya; and the development activities in which they are engaged, with special reference to the main sources of the funds for financing these activities.

This discussion shows that CBOs in Western Kenya have their origins in the socio-economic problems that adversely affect the local people's living conditions. Such problems manifest themselves in terms of the scarce socio-economic resources that people require to satisfy their basic needs and the insecurity and risks that people face when their needs are not satisfied. It is in response to the said situations of scarcity, insecurity and risk that local people form community-based organizations. The organizations are generally formed among people of all walks of life as they transcend age, gender, marital status, level of formal education and occupation. They are quite numerous in the region given that at least an organization exists in each village, though they are relatively small in size.

The activities of these organizations are spread in all the major sectors of the economy and the socio-economic infrastructure in Western Kenya. It is evident that these organizations have devoted their activities to the solution of problems in rural finance, agriculture, small-scale enterprises, livestock production, health, social welfare, education, transport and other aspects of the socio-economic infrastructure. To a large extent, it is the socio-economic problems that people face in their daily life that determines the activities undertaken by CBOs.

Most of these organizations are, however, unable to raise adequate funds to finance these activities. The tendency is for them to form the organizations, set up the activities, and then look out for external assistance to finance them. Consequently, most of the CBOs in Western Kenya are dependent on external assistance to finance their activities. The questions that arise in this regard for consideration in the subsequent chapters is what has contributed to the rise of the culture of dependency in these organizations that seem to

start off with a spirit of self-reliance? What is the impact of dependency syndrome on the contribution of these organizations to sustainable development at the local grassroots level? To answer these questions, the next chapter addresses the contribution of the political environment to dependency in these organizations.

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CHAPTER FOUR

THE POLITICAL ENVIRONMENT OF COMMUNITY-BASED ORGANIZATIONS IN WESTERN KENYA

4.1 INTRODUCTION

It has long been acknowledged that the totality of physical, social, economic and political influences that constitute the environment of an organization will affect or even determine its evolution, structure and ability to operate effectively (Esman and Uphoff, 1988:102). Explanations for the nature and functioning of an organization can, therefore, be sought from its environment. Against this proposition, it should be recalled that the discussion of the nature of CBOs in the preceding chapter has concluded that these organizations are largely dependent on external assistance to finance their activities. This is in spite of the fact that CBOs are formed mainly through people's own initiatives in response to the deficiencies in their livelihoods. This chapter sets out to show the correlation between the political environment and the prevalence of dependency in these organizations. The most appropriate starting point in this exercise is to trace the origin of the linkage between politics and self-help in Kenya.

4.2 POLITICS AND SELF-HELP IN KENYA

4.2.1 The Colonial Roots

The influence of politics on self-help initiatives in Kenya can be traced to the colonial period following the entrenchment of the theory of separate development as the foundation of the colonial state. This theory saw Kenya literally partitioned into three distinct societies of Africans, Asians and Europeans. Subsequently, racial discrimination became the guiding principle for social, economic and political development of the

respective societies, with Africans occupying the lowest rank in terms of status. In the economic sphere, Europeans occupied the fertile land to produce lucrative cash crops using African labor while the Africans were confined to the unproductive "reserves" for subsistence farming in the midst of heavy taxation. The objective here was to ensure that Africans kept on supplying labor on the "white highlands". Racial discrimination was also applied in the provision of social services, given that medical, educational, residential and recreational services were organized on strict racial lines. There were no government provisions for social services in the African "reserves". Similarly, Africans were politically suppressed by being restricted to the then inconsequential local and "tribal" politics rather than the influential national politics (Ogot, 1968). In the circumstances, the European and, to a certain extent, Asian communities developed at the expense of the African reserves.

It is this repressive and discriminatory socio-economic and political environment that partly contributed to the formalization of traditional societies' mutual aid practices into self-help initiatives. People came to realize that they could only satisfy their needs through self-determination as they had done during the pre-colonial period rather than relying on the colonial state. Consequently, people started to form self-help groups to address problems that the colonial state had neglected or created. For instance, as able-bodied men in Nyanza province continued to migrate to the urban centers and the "white highlands" in search of wage employment to enable them pay taxes, women left in the "reserves" went on to depend on each other to fill the labor deficits through self-help working groups (Hay, 1972; 229-231). Similarly, the Kikuyu of Central province - where missionaries had barred those practicing traditional cultural norms from attending their

schools - formed self-help groups to establish independent schools for their children in the 1930s and 1940s (Barkan, 1992; 176). In the same province, particularly in Nyeri district, women who had participated or lost their husbands in the *Mau Mau* rebellion resorted to forming self-help groups from the mid 1950s to help themselves adjust to the effects of the war. Their decision to improve their homes by contributing money to buy corrugated iron sheets (called *Mabati* in Kiswahili) for roofing their houses earned these groups the name *Nyakinyua Mabati* women group (Mutiso, 1975:279-283). Thus, to a large extent, colonial politics significantly helped to transform traditional mutual aid initiatives into formal self-help groups.

When Kenya became independent in 1963, popular expectations for rural development that emanated from the nationalist politics rose sharply, but were beyond what the state could afford. The resources at the state's disposal were far from what was required to satisfy the socio-economic demands. In response to this situation, Jomo Kenyatta introduced the notion of *harambee* that urged all Kenyans to engage in self-help efforts to satisfy their needs as they had done in traditional societies and during the colonial period rather than waiting for the state. Thus, *harambee* self-help initiatives became a mechanism for diverting popular political demands that the government could not satisfy. Even more significant in entrenching self-help in Kenyan politics is the way Kenyatta went on to use *harambee* to consolidate his power and unite politicians in nation building, to which we now turn.

4.2.2 The Politicization of *Harambee* Self-help in The Kenyatta Era

At independence, the political system in Kenya was quite fluid yet Kenyatta preferred a strong unitary state. A fragmented political structure based on a federal (or *majimbo* as it was called) constitution that provided for the sharing of power between the central government and the regional authorities had been put in place on the eve of independence. Under this form of government, most of the major functions of the state were divided between the central government and the regions, to the chagrin of Kenyatta and the ruling party: the Kenya African National Union (KANU) (Oyugi, 1992:154).

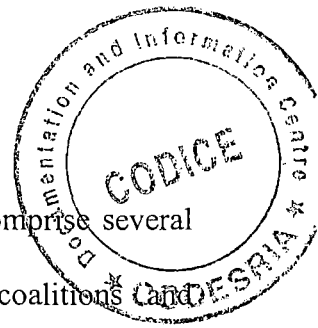
Besides the structure of government, Kenya also inherited a multi-party political system at independence, yet Kenyatta preferred a one-party political system. Kenyatta's preference for a one-party political system had become apparent in 1961 when he was released from detention. Before joining any political party, he made it clear that he was against the existence of more than one party and called for the amalgamation of KANU and the Kenya African Democratic Union (KADU) for the sake of national unity (Oyugi, 1992:158). It is, therefore, not surprising that Kenyatta's major preoccupation during the first year of independence was to set up a unitary one-party political system. We shall return to this point in a while, but let us first exhaust the issues that demanded Kenyatta's attention in his quest to consolidate his authority.

Even more fluid were the political parties themselves. Both KANU and KADU were essentially loose coalitions set up in 1960 through the amalgamation of several district-level political organizations that had been established in the late 1950s; most of them along ethnic lines (Barkan, 1994:10). Whereas KANU was viewed to represent the Kikuyu, Luo, Meru, Embu, Kamba and Gusii ethnic groups, who were also the "big,

mobilized and have”, KADU was deemed to represent the other smaller ethnic communities from the Western, Coastal and Rift Valley regions. KADU’s main supporters were the Luhya, Kalenjin, Maasai and Mijikenda ethnic groups that considered themselves “the small and have-nots” (Barkan, 1992: 169 - 170; Oyugi, 1992:156). Indeed, it is this difference in ethnic composition that saw KADU forge an alliance with the white settlers to support a federal system of government ostensibly to protect the interests of its minority coalition members while KANU sought to establish a strong centralized government. It is from the background of this fluid political structure that Kenyatta went on to mould a unitary state; a process that significantly contributed to the politicization of harambee self-help activities in the country.

To achieve his end, Kenyatta spent the first year of independence negotiating and bargaining with an array of established regional and ethnic leaders who commanded significant following and respect in KADU. The bargaining essentially consisted of a combination of "carrots and sticks". This took the form of promises of cabinet and sub-cabinet appointments as well as state development resources to leaders who would defect to KANU and the denial of government development services to the constituencies of those leaders who remained in KADU (Barkan, 1994:11). The result was the wooing of KADU, which dissolved itself to join KANU in 1964 "for the sake of enhancing national unity". This was Kenyatta’s first score in his effort to consolidate his power and form a unitary state.

Nevertheless, the merger between KANU and KADU did not necessarily enhance unity in the ruling party as anticipated. Instead it intensified factionalism as the party brought more divergent groups on board that went out to jockey for power and



development resources around Mzee Kenyatta. Thus, KANU came to comprise several factions and organized interests that ranged from ethnic-regional coalitions and ideologically defined groups to personal followings (Kanyinga, 1995a: 72-73). This turn of events led Kenyatta to realize that it would be almost impossible to establish a strong unitary state based on institutional rule through KANU. He, therefore, abandoned the ruling party in the governance process in favor of personal rule relying on the civil service, especially the Provincial Administration that was located in the Office of the President. Subsequently, power came to be centered around Kenyatta and the Provincial Administrators, i.e. the Provincial and District Commissioners, District Officers, Chiefs and Assistant Chiefs who assumed the role of personal representatives of the President in their respective areas of jurisdiction. This arrangement put Kenyatta above the day-to-day conflicts of party politics that would have cost him his popularity and political prestige (Okumu and Holmquist, 1984: 53). He went on to assume the role of the "father of the nation" (or *Mzee* as he was popularly referred to), from whom political power emanated.

With the adoption of personal rule, Kenyatta gradually developed patronage as the framework within which Kenyans would participate in the political system. The ruler was linked to the ruled through a hierarchy of patron-client networks under the overall supervision of the chief patron (Kenyatta). Barkan (1984) aptly describes the said hierarchy:

"In most cases these linkage chains embrace four tiers of patron-client relationships. At the apex of the system is the president of the republic who, as the chief-patron, coordinates and balances the claims of competing linkages. As head of the government, the president awards government ministries (and the resources of patronage they command) to senior politicians of longstanding reputation who wield power beyond their own parliamentary districts --- who have demonstrated their ability to "bring in their ethnic base," or region in support of the government. These regional leaders are simultaneous clients of the president and patrons of

aspiring younger politicians including backbenchers in the National Assembly and potential backbenchers. The latter are in turn clients of ministers and patrons of local (Political) notables in their constituencies. These notables, some of whom might hold elective office themselves as members of (local authority) councils, are in turn patrons of small segments of the general public" (Barkan, 1984:79).

This four-tiered patron-client system was maintained through constant supply of resources to the respective clients in exchange for political support to the patron. Thus, to keep their pyramid of followers intact, patrons distributed personal favors (like assisting to obtain employment, commercial bank loans, school admission, trade licenses, land or even organizing *harambee* fundraisers for various projects) to their clients. In the system, successful patrons (and hence politicians) had to bring (or appear to bring) to their constituencies tangible socio-economic improvements such as roads, water sources, schools, health centers, etc. (Haugerud, 1995: 46).

To widen the scope of the network, Kenyatta tolerated the clientelist activities of local political patrons as long as they did not challenge his authority as the undisputed Head of State (Barkan, 1992: 171). Instead of suppressing political leaders who sought to build and fortify their local power bases, he recruited, assisted and manipulated their efforts to satisfy his goal of consolidating political authority by selectively dispensing or withholding patronage resources. Thus, Kenyatta changed patron-client alliances with various factions according to political expediency. He would dispense patronage resources to leaders of the factions within the alliance at the time, who would, in turn, extend such resources to their respective clients below the hierarchy as a means of mobilizing political clout for the regime. In the meantime, those factions outside the alliance would receive the "stick" rather than the "carrot". This shrewd and skillful manipulation of the various factions in the political system saw virtually all the factions

compete among themselves to get in the core of Kenyatta's alliance in-order to get access to the patronage resources.

This art of alliance building through patron-client networks was perfected when Kenyatta introduced the notion of "constituency service" for Members of Parliament. As it has already been pointed out, this notion defined the role of Members of Parliament and by extension all aspiring politicians, as one of assisting rural self-help projects in their constituencies in order to legitimize "practical" as opposed to "empty" ideological politics. That the worth of a politician was to be measured in terms of the self-help development activities he/she initiated in the constituency (Okumu and Holmquist, 1984: 54). At the same time, Kenyatta encouraged rural residents to seek assistance from their elected leaders to start or complete self-help projects and allowed local leaders willing to contribute to such projects to build their political clout through such assistance. On its part, the government pledged to assist all completed self-help projects start operating or improve service provision by, for example, posting staff to schools, polytechnics, health centers and dispensaries or providing equipment to such institutions. This served to increase pressure on local politicians to pay attention to self-help activities in their constituencies for political gain.

It should be mentioned here that Kenyatta's effort in realigning politicians towards development in their rural constituencies was partly meant to scuttle the ideological rift that gripped the party in 1965. The rift centered around the debate as to whether Kenya should adopt capitalism or socialism in its approach to development, with leaders like Tom Mboya and Kenyatta supporting the former ideology while the likes of Oginga Odinga and Bildad Kaggia preferred the latter ideology. Indeed, Kenyatta's reference to

"empty" ideological politics targeted socialism that he considered not having practical solutions to Kenya's development. Consequently, he set out to redirect the socialist rhetoric of his critics to "practical work" in the self-help movement.

Whatever the explanation for championing "constituency service," the immediate effect of this notion was to turn parliamentary and local authority elections into a series of referenda on the ability of individual politicians to contribute to local self-help development projects. The incumbent Members of Parliament and councilors of local authorities were assessed with regard to their performance in securing resources from the state to implement self-help projects in their constituencies and wards, respectively (Barkan, 1984; 1992). This brand of electoral politics served to coalesce more Members of Parliament, councilors and aspiring politicians around the chief patron. Incumbent Members of Parliament sought to secure more resources from the state for self-help projects in their constituencies as an assurance of retaining their seats in the next elections, while aspiring politicians wished to be identified with Kenyatta's alliance as a sign of their potential to "deliver resources" if elected.

In a nutshell, patronage became a major feature of self-help activities in Kenya. Politicians jostled for space in the movement in order to make a contribution to development projects in their constituencies and build their political careers. Others made frantic efforts to join Kenyatta's "inner circle" as a means of drawing resources to contribute to self-help projects to satisfy the demands of their constituents. Consequently, contribution to self-help projects became political levers with which local - level patrons edged into national politics. Indeed self-help became a vehicle for the articulation of the various hierarchies of patron-client networks that constituted the mechanisms for political

control throughout the Kenyatta era (Kanyinga, 1995a: 74). This politicization of self-help activities continued into the Moi era, albeit with some restructuring to suit the regime's goal of centralizing authority in order to redirect the distribution of development resources as it will be explained shortly. The point to note here is that the politicization of self-help through the notion of "constituency service" marked the onset of dependency in CBOs. The obtaining politics raised the expectation of the members of these organizations for external assistance from local politicians and the state to finance their self-help projects.

4.2.3 Realignment of Self-help in the Moi Era

Daniel arap Moi assumed the leadership of the country in 1978 following the demise of Mzee Jomo Kenyatta. Though he pledged to continue with the political framework that Kenyatta had set up and went on to coin the *Nyayo* (Kiswahili for "foot-steps" - implying continuity of leadership style and policy) slogan to express this sentiment at all public gatherings, Moi's real goal in his leadership seems to have been a drive for ethno-regional equity rather than any "peace, love and unity". The said equity translated into a commitment to redistribute development resources away from the regions and ethnic groups that formed the power base of the Kenyatta regime to those that gave him political support. Thus, the target of the redistribution effort was Kenyatta's Kikuyu ethnic group of Central Province while the main beneficiary of the exercise was to be Moi's Kalenjin ethnic group of Rift Valley Province (Barkan, 1994:24; Kanyinga, 1995a).

To achieve this goal, Moi had to centralize political power; the starting point of which was to dismantle the Kenyatta state and deal a blow to the Kikuyu politicians who attempted to block him from ascending to the presidency through the so-called "change the constitution" campaign of 1976 (Karimi and Ochieng, 1980; Throup, 1987). An ethno-regional welfare association known as Gikuyu, Embu and Meru Association (GEMA) which was dominated by the Kikuyu had spearheaded this campaign. Alarmed by Kenyatta's old age and imminent death, GEMA initiated a move to change the constitutional provision that the vice-president succeeds the president when the latter is deceased or unable to perform his duties. GEMA's goal here was to ensure that the presidency remained in Central Province, if not among the Kikuyu. However, Kenyatta nipped this campaign in the bud and retained the constitutional provision that enabled Moi to takeover power.

Upon assuming power, Moi took an early opportunity to assert himself on the political scene and contain the GEMA clique. Accordingly, he banned all ethnic welfare unions (of course the target being GEMA) and embarked on a highly publicized crackdown on corrupt associates of the previous regime. He also went on to rein in all independent centres of power that had developed during, and formed the "inner circle" of, the Kenyatta regime.

The first casualty in this regard was the *harambee* self-help movement that was at the center of electoral politics as we have already explained. To control this movement, Moi revived the then moribund ruling party, centralized it under himself and used it to consolidate his regime. Thus, though self-help continued to play its role in electoral politics, the party became more significant in this regard. In addition, he curbed the

autonomy of self-help organizations (read CBOs) by using the Provincial Administration to regulate their fundraising activities. These organizations were henceforth required to obtain licenses and permits from the said Administration to hold *harambee* fundraisers. This requirement was often used to bar politicians who were deemed not to be 'loyal' to the president and his clients (who were in turn patrons at the local level) from participating in self-help activities, for that would have enabled them to build their political clout. Thus, self-help was now reserved for the president and those politicians who were 'loyal' to him.

To perfect this arrangement, fundraisers for self-help projects were reorganized with a view to centralizing them around the president. It should be recalled here that though Kenyatta exhorted local communities and political leaders to participate in self-help activities, he rarely got involved directly in raising funds for particular projects. Most self-help organizations were left to generate their own revenue or attract assistance from local and regional leaders or the state apparatus. In contrast to this tradition, Moi went out to the countryside to raise funds for self-help projects patronized by politicians loyal to him (Barkan, 1992: 186). Furthermore, the organization of *harambee* fundraisers for self-help projects changed with a tendency towards holding large-scale fundraising events for similar projects within particular regions, initiated by the president himself. This is how Barkan (1992) describes the organization of such events:

"At these gatherings the presidential entourage typically rolls into a selected district to raise funds for many small projects at one time; for example, all *harambee* primary schools in the district. The event is preceded by several weeks of collections in the area by government chiefs directed by the district administration. These collections, which are tantamount to a mandatory tax (with properties of those who fail to contribute auctioned by force to settle their bit), are then presented to the president at the fundraiser. The President himself makes his own contribution, as do members of his entourage, which includes Cabinet

Ministers, Senior Civil Servants and other notables currently in favour. The funds collected are subsequently divided among all (participating) projects (or self-help organizations), with the result that the entire exercise generating revenue is out of the hands of those who run self-help" (Barkan, 1992: 186; emphases in brackets mine).

This reorganization of *harambee* self-help had at least two main implications for the place of CBOs in local politics.

First, with the president initiating large fundraisers that collected huge amounts of money, Moi got credit for the "success" of self-help activities in the country and cut off local politicians from the process. Such politicians were henceforth left with the option of striving to link up with the president to organize similar fundraisers in their constituencies or regions. Thus, their role was reduced to that of linking CBOs to the chief patron rather than initiating and contributing resources to self-help activities on their own.

Second, some CBOs were amalgamated and linked to the president through the various hierarchies of patron-client networks in the country. Thus, local patrons, such as Members of Parliament and councilors of local authorities, went out to mobilize all CBOs in their respective constituencies and wards under their patronage for "delivering" to the chief patron. This saw the emergence of sub-locational, locational and divisional CBOs that consisted of smaller affiliate groups. Typical examples that we found in our survey include *Sirindiro* Women Group in Funyula Division of Busia District; *Bukhayo* West Joint Women Group in Nambale Division of Busia District; and the *Butesero* Bus Project in Butere-Mumias District that we have already referred to. Whereas, this arrangement raised expectation of huge financial assistance from the chief patron among CBOs, it also compelled the organizations that wished to benefit from such assistance to become appendages of the patron-client networks that linked the locality to Moi. This only served

to heighten dependency among CBOs, especially when it is recalled that these organizations did not directly participate in collecting funds towards the mammoth fundraisers that were organized for them.

The emerging scenario shows that during the Moi era, CBOs became part and parcel of the patron - client networks that linked the president to the communities at the local level. Largely patronized by the president through the "loyal" Ministers and Members of Parliament, these organizations ceased to be avenues for "other" local politicians to build their independent political careers. Thus, politicians whose loyalty to the president was in doubt lost their patronage over CBOs just as these organizations also lost their autonomy to shape local politics. To a large extent, CBOs became appendages of state patronage.

It should, however, be pointed out here that this structure of politics and its subsequent influence on self-help organizations was crafted and perfected under a one-party political system. This system was abandoned in December 1991 when Kenya embraced a multi-party political system. Under the latter system, one would expect that the basis of political power would change with implications for the nature of the relationship between political leaders and self-help organizations. With specific reference to Western Kenya, we turn to the influence of multi-party politics on community-based organizations in the next section.

4.3 MULTI-PARTY POLITICS, PATRONAGE AND CBOs IN WESTERN KENYA

So far, it should be apparent from the discussion in this chapter that Kenyan politics from independence to the end of the 1980s was largely authoritarian in nature.

Under a one-party political system, a political culture that put the president beyond reproach had been cultivated. The powers of the Executive had been strengthened through constitutional amendments and other political practices at the expense of the Legislature and the Judiciary. Although this trend of politics started during the Kenyatta era, it was reinforced under Moi, especially after the failed coup d'etat in 1982. Throughout the 1980s, any democratic debate that was previously tolerated was gradually replaced by a personal rule style that thrived on executive directives and orders. Criticism, however constructive and well founded in facts, was quickly dismissed as "anti-Nyayo" and critics were ruthlessly suppressed (Andreassen *et. al*, 1993: 1- 4; Haugerud, 1995; Barkan, 1992; 1994)

This was essentially political decay and it went hand in hand with economic decline in the country. There was increased political protection to the elite and corruption consequently became a major vice that significantly contributed to poor economic performance. Corruption continued to provide enormous wealth to the elite while the ordinary citizens were called upon to shoulder the burden of nation - building "patriotically". The crumbling economy saw Kenya's donors prescribe economic reform policies under the broad package of Structural Adjustment Programmes (SAPs) in the mid-1980s. However, the implementation of SAPs measures like the removal of subsidies on social services and introduction of "cost-sharing" in the provision of educational and health services led to adverse socio-economic effects in the people's living conditions. The economic hardships at the end of the 1980s that resulted from this process only served to open up the wounds that had been inflicted by the one-party state.

The 1988 general elections that were held through the queue system of voting generated a lot of protest and debate in the country. The system, introduced in 1986 under the pretext of being open and transparent, entailed conducting party nominations by way of queuing behind the preferred candidate or a placard with the portrait of the candidate. There was also a 70 per cent rule that stipulated that if a candidate got at least 70 per cent of the votes in the primary party election, such a candidate would be declared duly elected unopposed and there would be no secret ballot general election level of voting in the respective constituency. In a one-party system, this system meant that individuals who did not participate in the primaries were effectively disenfranchised in such constituencies in the general election. Indeed, it turned out in 1988 that the majority of the voters did not take part in queue voting at the primaries due to fear of intimidation and victimization for voting for candidates that were not in the good books of the state. The results of the 1988 general elections were, therefore, widely seen to be illegitimate and products of election rigging. The election became a major addition to the catalogue of grievances that a simmering opposition underneath the 'repressive lid' had against the state.

In 1990, opposition to the repressive state finally burst out of the lid. In May of that year, prominent politicians and businessmen Kenneth Matiba and Charles Rubia held a joint press conference in Nairobi and called for the repeal of section 2A of the constitution that outlawed 'other' political parties to pave way for a multi-party political system. They embarked on preparations for a major public rally at Kamkunji grounds in Nairobi in July to agitate for the restoration of multi-partyism in the country. Their arrest and subsequent detention without trial just before the planned rally sparked off the so-

called *Saba - Saba* riots on the seventh of July 1990 in Nairobi and other urban centers in the country.

The *Saba-Saba* riots were quite significant in terms of intensifying the struggle for democracy in Kenya. Churches and religious organizations, particularly the National Council of Churches of Kenya (NCCCK), as well as professional associations, notably the Law Society of Kenya (LSK), joined forces with political activists and other civil society groups to spearhead a huge political movement for the restoration of multi-party politics in the country. Donor countries and organizations joined the fray in 1991 by introducing political conditionality for aid to Kenya. The decision by bilateral and multilateral donors to suspend aid in November 1991 forced the KANU government to succumb. In December 1991, section 2A of the constitution was repealed to allow the formation and operation of other political parties.

In 1992, several opposition political parties came into existence. The Forum for the Restoration of Democracy in Kenya (FORD) pressure group that had been formed in August 1991 as a forum of less than ten personalities to circumvent the ban on political parties was officially launched as a party in January 1992. A host of other parties were also formed, among them the Democratic Party of Kenya (DP) headed by Mwai Kibaki, who on Christmas day of 1991 resigned as Minister for Health in government to found the party. Within FORD, tensions mounted over the procedures for electing officials of the party as personalities jostled for positions. These squabbles led to the split in the party, leading to the formation of FORD - Asili and FORD- Kenya under the leadership of Kenneth Matiba and Oginda Odinga, respectively. In a nutshell, a multi-party political system was taking root in Kenya by 1992.

As already alluded to, the advent of multi-party politics in the country saw the *Luo* of Nyanza Province embrace opposition politics while most parts of Western Province continued to support the ruling party KANU. The main exception were the Bukusu sub-group of Bungoma district who largely followed their patrons, namely Masinde Muliro and Wamalwa Kijana, to join FORD- Kenya. The *Luo* also found themselves in FORD- Kenya to give support to their patron, Oginga Odinga, to ascend to the presidency of the country. This pattern of political realignment in the multi-party era needs at least a brief explanation.

4.3.1 Patronage, CBOs and the Politics of Collaboration in Western Province

An explanation as to why the larger part of Western Province chose to support the KANU government rather than the opposition in the multi-party era can be traced to the history of the *Abaluyia* ethnic group. The group constitutes a hybrid community that brings together seventeen sub-groups with tremendous diversity of origin as well as social and political organization (Were, 1967a: 133; Fedders and Salvadori, 1979: 99-103). Subsequently, the *Abaluyia* was not (and has never been) a homogeneous political entity, for there was no central authority at the head of the community. Similarly, each of the sub-groups was heterogeneous in the sense that it consisted of a congeries of patrilineal clans with diverse backgrounds (Were, 1967a: 101).

With the exception of the Wanga Kingdom, the clan was the real basis of government in *Buluyia* community (Ibid; Kenyanchui, 1992). Power was vested in a council of elders (known as *luyia*, from which the ethnic group's name is derived), made up of respected clan elders (called *amaguru* in plural and *muguru* in singular). A

constituted *luyia* appointed an influential and respected elder to be its leader (*Omwami* or *Omukhulundu*). *Omwami* effectively became the head of the clan. He was appointed on the basis of a combination of attributes like wealth; demonstrated courage in defense of the clan's interests; intelligence as a counselor; and wit in his role as an arbitrator (Katumanga, 2001: 513). He, however, exercised influence rather than rule, for he did not wield executive powers.

The role of the council of elders changed from time to time depending on the issue at hand. It could assume a legislative role, in which case the deliberations would be open to the general public. The reverse was the case when it attended to judicial matters, where conflicting parties were allowed representation by good public speakers who could courageously articulate the interests of the parties they represented. In its resolutions, the council always sought to evolve a consensus by engendering a win-win situation for all its participants. In the circumstances, everyone's voice was heard, whether meek or mighty (Ibid.: 514-15).

Due to this orientation of freedom and "collective authority", each clan jealously guarded its independence and sovereignty, such that every major clan was a sovereign state. This form of political organization ingrained in the *Abaluyia* psyche certain moral codes that guided relations between the leaders and the led. First, since *Omwami* was appointed partly due to his wealth, he was expected to entertain and provide for the needs of the people who visited him, though such people also brought him presents. Second, the leader was expected to use his courage and intelligence to defend the interests of the clan and his people. Third, the leader was not expected to exercise authoritarian power, but to seek consensus in resolving issues. Indeed, even in Wanga Kingdom the King did not

have coercive, despotic or authoritarian power as was the case in Ugandan or West African Kingdoms (Fedders and Salvadori, 1979:119; Kenyanchui, 1992). Rather, he ruled by consultation and consensus.

A composite view of leadership among the Abaluyia can be extracted from these moral codes and attributes of *Omwami*. That the leader is not only expected to be honest, wise, articulate and courageous, but also a provider of his people's needs. This, coupled with the orientation towards freedom, justice and sovereignty, has seen *Abaluyia* sub-groups and clans vote differently in general elections relative to the *Luo* who, as we shall see shortly, have tended to vote as a block. Three main considerations derived from this composite view of leadership are, however, discernible in the voting patterns of *Abaluyia* since independence: the courage to openly defend the interests of the people; the ability to honestly and wittingly articulate the interests of the people as evidenced by outspokenness; and the ability to acquire and distribute resources to the people.

The Bukusu of Bungoma district best exemplifies the first rationale of courage. Their respect for courageous leaders can be traced to both the pre-colonial and colonial periods when they rallied behind eminent heroes like Mukite Wa Nameme and Wakoli Wa Mukisu Lufwalula. Mukite was reputed for combining political wisdom and military techniques to rebuild the Bukusu from clan fragments, which had disintegrated under the pressure of Teso invasions, to a successful power in the region (Were, 1967b; Makila, 1978). Wakoli was famous as a war hero who defeated the British at the battle of Lumboka in 1895 when the neighboring Wanga people were collaborating with the colonizers (Makila, 1978). The same support was later extended to Elijah Masinde when he founded his *Dini Ya Musambwa* in protest against Western culture and colonialism

(Were, 1967a; 1967b; 1977; Nandi, 2001). It should be emphasized here that both Wakoli and Masinde exercised influence over the Bukusu due to their courage to face the British in defense of their (Bukusu) interests while Mukite was influential for resisting Teso invasions. At independence, the emergence of Masinde Muliro as a courageous critic of the hegemonic tendencies of the Kikuyu and Luo in KANU saw them vote for Muliro's KADU (Katumanga, 2001: 516). Muliro subsequently remained the Bukusu patron and led them to join the opposition FORD and later FORD-Kenya in the multi-party era. He is said to have bequeathed Bukusu leadership to Michael Wamalwa Kijana before he (Muliro) passed away in 1992. This claim saw the Bukusu transfer their loyalty to Wamalwa, the eighth Vice President of Kenya who passed away in August 2003. It is in this regard that they overwhelmingly voted for him in the 1997 general elections (Cowen and Kanyinga, 2002: 144-45) and also in 2002 when they supported the National Rainbow Coalition (NARC) to which he belonged.

The second rationale of being honest, witty and articulate would best explain the voting pattern of the Marama and Kisa sub-groups of Butere-Mumias district up to 1997. These communities remained loyal to Martin Shikuku partly due to his oratory skills that enabled him to wittingly articulate the interests of his people. In the 1963 elections, they overwhelmingly voted for KADU, to which Shikuku belonged. They continued to vote for him in the subsequent elections and remained the MP for Butere until 1976 when Kenyatta detained him for criticizing KANU as a dead party. When Moi released him from detention in 1978, he went on to win back his seat in the 1979 general elections and retained it up to 1988 when he was rigged out in the infamous queue voting system (Katumanga, 2001: 516-17). In the 1992 elections, he was back on a FORD-Asili ticket as

a presidential running mate. He won back his seat and influenced a substantial portion of the *Abaluyia* community to vote for his party in anticipation that he would become Vice President in the event of FORD-Asili forming the government. However, in 1997, the Kisa got their constituency of Khwisero while the Marama who remained in Butere seem to have become amenable to the dependency syndrome prevalent in the larger part of *Buluyia* and voted Shikuku out of parliament.

The third rationale is behind this dependency syndrome. The majority of the *Abaluyia* sub-groups seem to subscribe to the view that a good leader is one who has the ability to acquire resources and distribute them to his people. Consequently, they tend to vote for those individuals who have the wealth to redistribute and also capable of enabling them to gain access to state resources at the center. This played well into KANU's politics of patronage that saw the party literally "buy voters" in the region in the multi-party era. The situation was exacerbated by the acute levels of poverty in the region partly due to the national decline in economic performance during this period. The rising levels of poverty served to entrench a dependency syndrome as local people sought *Omwami's* assistance in the solution of their problem. This only served to attach voters to the ruling elite that was capable of supplying resources (some of which were as little as a packet of salt or a tin of maize called *gorogoro*). In a way, *Buluyia* political participation was increasingly reduced to receiving handouts from politicians seeking votes (Katumanga, 2001: 524-25). It was in this regard that the larger part of the region found itself collaborating with the KANU regime rather than opposing it. However, this pattern changed in the 2002 elections when the NARC euphoria swept the whole country and

sent KANU out of power. For the first time, the Abaluyia voted as a block for NARC along with the majority of the Kenyans.

To recapitulate, whereas the Bukusu remained loyal to the opposition due to their quest for courageous leaders who could defend their interests vis-à-vis a “predatory state”, the majority of the *Abaluyia* sub-groups succumbed to the “politics of the stomach” that found expression in political patronage. It should be emphasized that the sub-groups chose their political affiliations independently partly due to the tradition of freedom and sovereignty ingrained in their culture and history.

Against this background, CBOs in Western province have tended to forge alliances with the local political elite that is capable of mobilizing development resources for them in exchange for electoral support. Similarly, politicians have sought to patronize these organizations by providing development resources as a means of exercising political control at the local level. It has been shown that some of the politicians have even attempted to strengthen their patronage over all CBOs in their constituencies by affiliating all the smaller organizations to one larger organization serving the entire constituency. This “centralized” form of patronage that is based on the direct supply of resources to the organizations and blocking “other” political competitors from patronizing the organizations is relatively different from the rather “decentralized” version of patronage that obtained in the so-called opposition zones exemplified by *Luo Nyanza*.

4.3.2 Patronage, CBOs and the Politics of Opposition in *Luo Nyanza*

Like the *Abaluyia*, the *Luo* did not have central authority at the head of the community. The community was made up of heterogeneous lineages and clans, with

every clan having its own political, social and economic organizations under a ruler called *ruoth*. The *ruoth* was the first man to settle on the ridge and the other members of the clan as well as refugees and slaves who joined him on that ridge would recognize him as their leader (Ochieng', 1974: 47). *Ruoth* was, however, a leader rather than a ruler. He had limitations in the exercise of his authority in that the subjects had the option of migrating in protest against excesses by the *ruoth*. Indeed, his prestige came less from his political duties than from his ritual duties (Ibid.: 48). Consequently, the *Luo* were not a homogeneous political entity. The relative political unity that obtains today is a recent phenomenon and may probably be traced to the recognition of Oginga Odinga as the "*Luo ruoth*" partly due to his supposedly courageous defense of *Luo* interests.

Oginga Odinga has been credited for playing a leading role in anti-colonial politics by organizing protests against forced terracing introduced by the white man in Nyanza province in the name of soil conservation from the 1940s. He went on to sacrifice his teaching career to politicize people against colonial rule. When a State of Emergency was declared in 1952 by the colonial regime in order to suppress the *Mau Mau* rebellion, during which African national political organizations were banned, it is Tom Mboya, another *Luo*, who took the mantle of agitating for the rights of the Africans through the trade union movement that he headed as Secretary-General, the Kenya Federation of Labour (Mboya, 1990:35 - 43). Then in 1961 when Kenyatta was still in detention, the colonial government gave Oginga Odinga an opportunity to lead Kenya to independence, but he declined and demanded Kenyatta's release first. In view of such examples among others, the *Luo* have commonly expressed the sentiments that they made a great contribution to the anti-colonial struggle but have never been properly rewarded since

independence (Cohen and Atieno Odhiambo, 1988:81-83). They have, therefore, sought for a leadership that would articulate this discrepancy at the political center to enable them get a fair share of the “national cake”.

From the late 1950s through the 1960s, *Luo* politics revolved around Tom Mboya and Oginga Odinga. Whereas Mboya was seen to symbolize meritocracy and individual achievement, Oginga Odinga was considered to stand for socialism that had room for "the collective defense of the *Luo* Community through both corporatist radical thought and *Luo* conservatism" (Parkin, 1978: 214 in Kanyinga, 1994:90). The majority of the *Luo*, particularly in Siaya district, interpreted this to mean that it is Odinga who stood for the interests of the *Luo* rather than Tom Mboya.

The appointment of Odinga as Kenya's vice-president at independence seems to have gone well with the *Luo*, but this turned out to be short-lived. The point has already been made that Odinga argued for the adoption of socialism in Kenya's development during the ideological debate that rocked KANU in the mid-1960s. The adoption of capitalism via Sessional Paper No. 10 of 1965 on "African Socialism and its application to planning in Kenya" occasioned a fall-out between Odinga and Kenyatta. The attempt to reduce Odinga's power as KANU's vice-president by creating eight Provincial Vice-presidents for the party at the 1966 Limuru Conference saw him leave KANU to pursue his goals in an alternative party - the Kenya People's Union (KPU) (Oyugi, 1992; Kanyinga, 1994).

However, Odinga's efforts were still frustrated through a constitutional amendment that required all Members of Parliament who had joined KPU to resign from parliament and seek a fresh mandate from the electorate. In the subsequent Little General

Election of 1967, most of Odinga's followers lost their seats, though he was re-elected back to the House by a landslide victory without personally campaigning in his constituency. But KPU acquired strong support among the *Luo* and became their "popular" political party. However, the assassination of Tom Mboya in 1969, an event in which the state was implicated, and the subsequent demonstrations by the *Luo* gave Kenyatta an opportunity to ban KPU in the said year. The assassination of Mboya and the banning of KPU only served to further distance the *Luo* from the government (Ibid.).

The remainder of the Kenyatta era saw Odinga's national political career consigned to the wilderness and most of *Luo*-land deprived of state-sponsored development interventions. But this did not cut off his *Luo* following. If anything, it strengthened his image as the only man who symbolized *Luo* "persistence" in the face of political domination and persecution. In addition, the *Luo* attributed most of the development infrastructure in Nyanza to the efforts of Odinga when he was Vice-president. For instance, the Nyanza Provincial General Hospital in Kisumu was christened "Russia" in recognition of its initiation by Odinga with Soviet donor funds. His Soviet connections were also said to be the basis for many of the overseas scholarships, which saw many *Luo* achieve prominence in the education sector. Moreover, the building of a major textile factory in Kisumu in 1980, the Kisumu Cotton Millers (KICOMI) Ltd., was attributed to the brief period when Odinga was reabsorbed back into the KANU leadership during the Moi era (Kanyinga, 1994:91). All these served to build an "Odinga Cult" that became indispensable in *Luo* politics.

Thus, despite the fact that Odinga had been ousted from national politics and even detained or placed under house arrest by both Kenyatta and Moi, he continued to

dominate national, but more so local-level politics in Luoland, especially Siaya district. With the exception of the rigged election of 1988 as already highlighted, all those who won parliamentary elections in the 1970s and 1980s were his "anointees". His political advice was followed to the letter and his anointed candidates won elections without difficulty (Ibid). In the process, Odinga established himself as the patron of Luo politics and all politicians in Luo land who wanted to be successful in their careers sought his blessings.

It should be mentioned here that Odinga has rightly been referred to as the "father" of opposition politics in Kenya due to the active role he consistently played in the formation of rival parties to KANU. Indeed, it was his attempt to register a political party in 1983 that partly contributed to the fast enactment of section 2A of the constitution to make Kenya a *de jure* one-party state. He went on to play a leading role in the struggle for multi-partyism, during which he was among the many politicians who were arrested and detained. In 1991, he was involved in the foundation of FORD and took over the leadership of the splinter FORD- Kenya in 1992.

With Odinga in the opposition, it went without saying that *Luo* Nyanza became an opposition stronghold. During the 1992 general elections, FORD-Kenya was the popular party here and Odinga openly instructed his followers in Nyanza to nominate specific candidates to contest civic and parliamentary seats. Subsequently, FORD-Kenya swept all the seats in *Luo* Nyanza during the 1992 general elections. All that a politician needed to win the election was Odinga's approval to run for a seat.

It is significant to emphasize here the realignment of patronage in *Luo* Nyanza in the advent of multi-party politics. Whereas patron-client networks during the one-party

era linked the locality to the president, albeit with Odinga's tacit approval, the emergent patronage during the multi-party era openly linked the locality to Odinga, who was seen as the ultimate instrument for "bringing the presidency at home". Moreover, this patronage was not solely based on the exchange of development resources and/or other perquisites for political support, as was the case in the KANU-led patronage portrayed in Western province. Rather, ethnicity and the "Odinga cult" constituted the main "oil" for the emergent form of patronage. We shall return to this point in a while.

The demise of Oginga Odinga in January 1994 seemed to have orphaned the *Luo* politically, but only for Odinga's son, Raila Amolo Odinga, to emerge to take up his father's role. Raila attempted to play this role by taking over the chairmanship of the party that his father had led. When he found it difficult to ascend to the top leadership of FORD - Kenya, he quit the party in 1995 to rejuvenate the then dormant National Development Party (NDP), on whose ticket he won back his Lang'ata parliamentary seat in Nairobi during the by-election occasioned by his defection. NDP became the instant "Luo party" and Raila proceeded to command fanatical following in Nyanza just like his father had done. In the 1997 general elections, most of the politicians who ran on the NDP ticket found it easy to win their parliamentary seats in Nyanza, including political novices like the MP for Kisumu Rural Constituency who surprised many by beating a re-known and articulate former University Professor. This was simply because he enjoyed Raila's patronage and ran on an NDP ticket while the said Professor ran on a different party.

To sum up, patronage has continued to play a significant role in politics during the multi-party era, albeit with a reformed structure and content in the so-called opposition

strongholds. Whereas its structure has remained centralized in the KANU strongholds, where people at the local level are linked to the political elite and/or the president through patron-client networks oiled by state resources, patronage in the opposition strongholds may be described as "decentralized" in the sense that it does not necessarily link up the locality to the center of power. Indeed, Odinga's patronage did not entail absolute conformity of opinion and total loyalty to the chief patron as was the case with Kenyatta's and Moi's patronage. All that a politician needed was Odinga's approval to contest an electoral seat. Raila's patronage is even further decentralized in the sense that he does not directly control local politics, but only approves of local politicians who seek his patronage on the basis of their personal popularity at the local level. Another study arrived at a similar conclusion by observing that:

“Where opposition parties had triumphed, although development was still politicized...it had at least become subject to an increased level of public scrutiny and transparency. There had been a weakening of state control and of the ruling party's monopoly over the development space”. (Kanyinga, 1995a: 113).

Thus, the “scaling-down” of state-sponsored patronage in the opposition strongholds has served to decentralize the development space and also to stimulate competition in forging political alliances at the local level. This has left local politicians with the free hand to build their political clout at the local level and use such clout to seek Raila's approval as a seal of their membership in the clique of Luo leaders.

This form of patronage has seen politicians at the local level strive to patronize community-based organizations in order to build linkages to the people at the grassroots. We found a number of examples in this regard. In Awasi location of Nyando district, a councilor and a local political activist were reported to be instrumental in the formation of

youth groups as a way of mobilizing the youth to support their political course. Among the groups they had formed was Boarder I Youth Group that was engaged in horticulture and running two retail shops. In Miwani division, a parliamentary aspirant, who allegedly won the NDP nomination for Muhoroni constituency during the 1997 general elections but was rigged out at the party's headquarters in Nairobi, reportedly engaged in several *harambee* fundraisers for women's groups to revive his parliamentary ambition long before the 2002 general elections were called. He was eventually elected the Member of Parliament for Muhoroni when the elections were held in December 2002. Similar patterns obtained in Siaya district.

Thus, whereas patronage in the opposition dominated Nyanza Province consists of politicians striving to identify with the local people for their support through CBOs, the KANU- led patronage has seen politicians simply dangle resources to attract CBOs into their fold for either support in local power struggles or delivery to the president to enhance his national support. It is in this regard that the content of the two variations of patronage has differed. In the latter case, development resources are made available to the client CBOs by the state in exchange for political support while in the former, CBOs deliver local politicians to the Chief Patron by virtue of such politicians' contribution of development resources to the organizations. Moreover, CBOs here identify with the Chief Patron, to whom they deliver their patrons, on the basis of other considerations, such as ethnicity, rather than direct supply of resources. It is in this regard that CBOs in Nyanza have independently sought assistance not directly from the Chief Patron, but from the local politicians and the aspiring politicians who organize *harambee* fundraisers for them or link them to donor NGOs; thereby further decentralizing political patronage as already

mentioned. Whatever the form of patronage, it is evident that CBOs have remained under the influence of patronage both in the one-party and multi-party era.

4.4 CONCLUSION

It has been the objective in this chapter to show the contribution of the political environment to the rising level of dependency among CBOs in Western Kenya. It has been argued that though the linkage between politics and self-help in Kenya can be traced to colonial politics and the subsequent African nationalism that raised expectations for development among citizens beyond what the independent government could satisfy, the introduction of the notion of "constituency service" through the *harambee* movement during the Kenyatta era served to politicize self-help activities in the country. This notion was essentially part of the strategy that Kenyatta adopted in order to consolidate his power under a unitary one-party political system.

The ideological and personality rifts that rocked KANU in the mid 1960s compelled Kenyatta to adopt personal rule in governance rather than institutional rule through the party if he were to stamp his authority on the political scene. Subsequently, patronage became the main framework through which the state was linked to society. *Harambee* self-help activities formed a major component of the patron-client networks of this system. The realities of "constituency service" compelled politicians not only to align themselves to the president's political persuasion, but also to make contributions to self-help projects in their constituencies. At the same time, local people were encouraged to demand for contributions from political leaders towards their self-help projects. Thus, *harambee* self-help projects became avenues through which the state was linked to

society and the president controlled local politics. They also became fora through which political leaders built their careers in return for contributing development resources to local communities via CBOs. The resultant nexus that *harambee* self-help facilitated between the president, political leaders and the local people in a four-tiered patron-client network marked the origin of dependency in CBOs.

This framework for political interaction continued during the Moi era, but *harambee* was restructured to enhance the president's personal control over self-help activities. Though CBO self-help activities remained part and parcel of the patron-client networks that linked the political elite (and sometimes the president or the state) to society, their autonomy to fundraise was controlled in order to cut off and reduce the power of those politicians who were perceived not to be 'loyal' to the president. The other aim was to give the president credit for the *harambee* projects across the country for purposes of boosting his national political leverage. In the process, CBOs became appendages of political elite and state patronage; a situation that only helped to increase their dependency.

The advent of multi-party politics in the early 1990s did not significantly change the status of CBOs in this regard. Though the relationship between CBOs and the political elite slightly changed in 'opposition areas' in the sense that these organizations regained some influence over politicians, the one-party era form of patronage remained the norm in the areas that continued to support KANU. Thus, in the opposition strongholds, CBOs reclaimed their autonomy to seek assistance from leaders of any political persuasion while those in 'KANU zones' had to stick with the politicians who supported the then government. Nevertheless, even in the so-called opposition areas, the basis for CBO

support to political leaders continued to be, albeit not exclusively, the provision of development assistance. The implication is that the prevalence of patronage over most of the CBOs has enhanced dependency in these organizations, both in the one-party and multi-party eras. The question that arises in relation to the contribution of these organizations to sustainable development is how patronage and dependency have affected members' participation in leadership and management of their organizations.

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CHAPTER FIVE

POLITICS, LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT OF COMMUNITY-BASED ORGANIZATIONS IN WESTERN KENYA

5.1 INTRODUCTION

It has been observed that local organizations do not operate like modern bureaucratic organizations, which have established principles as well as rules and procedures for establishing authority, recruiting and firing of leaders, and regulating behavior without great regard for extra-organizational considerations (Holmquist, 1970: 223-24). Rather, these organizations tend to respond to numerous socio-political feuds and power structures inherent in local communities that may not be compatible with the organization's leadership and management requirements. Such "political burdens" are likely to derail the organization's leadership and management norms, with adverse implications for the functioning of the organization. It is against this background that this chapter seeks to analyze the influence of the politics of patronage and the resultant dependency on the leadership and management of CBOs in Western Kenya.

5.2 LEADERSHIP AND THE POLITICS OF PATRONAGE IN CBOs

5.2.1 Leadership Positions in CBOs

Survey data show that most of the CBOs have three main formal positions of leadership. These are those of the chairperson, secretary and treasurer. In addition, some organizations have positions for the organizing secretary, vice-chairperson, Assistant Secretary and a "captain" - who is the collector of regular contributions in ROSCA's. None of the CBOs had an Assistant Treasurer, the explanation of which was that the

custody of group funds could not be entrusted to more than one person for security reasons. Nevertheless, the chairperson, secretary and treasurer were joint signatories to bank accounts in the organizations that had opened such accounts.

In the relatively large organizations, i.e. mainly those with over 50 members, there were also management committees composed of the formal officials and between two and five elected ordinary members of the organizations. However, we found only twelve of such organizations in the sample, which represents just 15 per cent of the CBOs surveyed. Nevertheless, this adds another dimension to the form of leadership positions in CBOs in Western Kenya. The implication of the findings here is that leadership in CBOs is increasingly being formalized. This is a new development relative to the earlier studies (Alila, 1992; 1998; Alila and Wanyama, 1995) that depicted the prevalence of informal leadership in most of these organizations, especially the savings and credit associations.

To understand the role of leadership positions in CBOs, respondents were asked what the duties of their officials were. We specifically sought information for the three key officials who were found in all of the organizations surveyed, namely, chairperson, secretary and treasurer. Whereas the responses for the chairperson were quite divergent, those for the other two officials were generally few and focussed. Table 5.1 on the next page presents data on what members gave as the main duty of the chairperson in their organizations.

TABLE 5.1: THE MAIN DUTY OF THE CHAIRPERSON IN CBOs

MAIN DUTY	FREQUENCY	PERCENTAGE
Chair meetings	274	78.3
Ensure development of the Organization	21	6.0
Call meetings	12	3.4
Make decisions in the organization	12	3.4
Choose & supervise development activities	11	3.1
Controller & spokesperson of the organization	9	2.6
Ensure payment of regular contributions	5	1.4
Solve problems in the organizations	3	0.9
Read the constitution to the members	3	0.9
Total	350	100

SOURCE: Field data

The data in Table 5.1 show that whereas the overwhelming majority of the members (78.3%) identified chairing of meetings as the main duty that the chairperson performed in their organizations, it is significant that a total of 21.7 per cent of the members mentioned a wide range of other duties. That the said duties include making decisions; choosing and supervising the implementation of development activities in the organizations; controlling development activities of the organizations; calling meetings of organizations; and acting as the spokesperson of the organizations are all pointers to the power and influence that chairpersons have in CBOs.

This is in sharp contrast to the limited duties that secretaries and treasurers perform in these organizations. Whereas the main duties of the secretary were identified as writing notices for, and minutes of, meetings (91.3 per cent) and keeping records of the organizations (8.7 per cent), those of the treasurer were reported as collecting and keeping money along with financial records (85.3 per cent) and controlling the income and expenditure of the organizations (14.7 per cent). Where management committees existed, it was explained that their role was to deliberate on key issues in the management of the

organization's activities and making decisions. Such decisions were then presented to the members during regular meetings for approval.

Since the chairperson is part of the management committee and, indeed, chairs it, these data may be interpreted to mean that he/she has more leadership responsibilities in CBOs than other officials. In our informal discussions, we confirmed this fact. We were informed that chairpersons are essentially the 'backbones' of these organizations as they take charge of the effective running of the organizations. Indeed, they tend to be more influential than other members in making decisions; establishing contacts with donors who assist the organizations to implement their development projects; and rallying members behind the cause and activities of the organizations. This was further corroborated by the fact that some members were not even willing to be interviewed without the express knowledge and/or permission of their chairperson. Others referred us to the chairperson for the "official" answer to some questions, especially those that related to external assistance and political affiliation. We interpreted this to be likely efforts in concealing the level of donor funding that the organizations had received in order to attract more "sympathy" assistance. The other purpose could have been to consistently portray the "correct" political affiliation in order to receive external assistance that accrues from patronage. We shall return to this point in a while, but it is imperative at this stage to familiarize ourselves with how individuals ascend to leadership positions in these organizations.

5.2.2 Choosing Leaders in CBOs

During the interviews, we asked respondents how they chose leaders in their organizations. In response, an overwhelming majority (87.7 per cent) indicated that the members elect leaders. But 10.7 per cent of the respondents reported that members appoint leaders while 1.6 per cent told us that leaders of these organizations volunteer to serve in various capacities whenever there is a vacancy. We can, therefore, interpret this to mean that most of the CBOs elect their leaders.

Respondents reported three methods of electing leaders. The first method that was reported by the majority (84.8 per cent) of the respondents is where members raise hands for their preferred candidates in the process of electing leaders. Thus, the name of a candidate proposed by the members would be called out and then members asked to raise their hands in support of that candidate for a count. The winner would be the candidate with the highest number. The second method that was reported by 8.5 per cent of the respondents is secret ballot. The common practice here was for members to write the name of their preferred candidate for a given position on a piece of paper, fold it and put in a bowl to be counted. The candidate who got the highest number of votes would then be declared the winner for the contested position. As it may be apparent, this method was mainly used in those organizations where all members were literate. Finally, queue - voting was the other method of electing leaders that was reported by 6.7 per cent of the respondents. Here, members simply line up behind their preferred candidate for a particular position. This was mainly used in the relatively large organizations, such as *Emarenyo Zero* - grazing group in Butere division that had 82 members.

On the whole, it is evident that all members have an opportunity to participate in electing leaders in CBOs and that the methods used in this exercise are fairly democratic in nature. An election is, however, a political process in the sense that people use it to express preferences between alternatives presented, thus making choices on the basis of some factors or reasons. This raises the question of what determines the election of individuals into the various leadership positions in CBOs? Our respondents were therefore asked to identify the factors that determine the election of the chairperson, secretary and treasurer. With regard to the chairperson, the factors are summarized and presented in Table 5.2.

TABLE 5.2: FACTORS THAT DETERMINE ELECTION OF THE CHAIRPERSON

FACTORS	NUMBER	PERCENTAGE
Ability to "bring" development	92	26.3
Popularity among members	90	25.7
Trustworthiness and honesty	63	18.0
Commitment to the organization	50	14.3
Knowledge on organization's activities	18	5.1
Literacy	18	5.1
Social status/personal integrity	14	4.0
Duration of membership/seniority	5	1.4
TOTAL	350	100

SOURCE: Field data

Data in Table 5.2 show that most of the respondents considered the ability of an individual to "bring" development to the organization to be the most significant determinant in the election of a chairperson. In our informal discussions, this was explained to mean the ability of an individual to mobilize members behind the cause of

the organization and its activities, and also to link the organization to potential sources of external assistance. Given that participation in these organizations is basically on voluntary basis and most of the members are committed to their organizations, mobilization of members to participate in the organization's activities may not be very significant in relation to "bringing development" since these organizations thrive on external assistance. This leaves the propensity of individuals to link their organizations to external donors as the main consideration in this regard.

This consideration fits well into, or perhaps has been a result of, Kenya's politics of patronage as we have already explained. The said politics have seen the state and local politicians seek to control the avenues for channeling resources to self-help organizations in the country in order to exercise political control. As it has been alluded to in the previous chapters, such avenues include *harambee* fundraisers, donor NGOs and state-sponsored programs. Politicians as well as other local leaders who are linked to these sources of donor funds tend to be popular among local CBOs and these organizations usually strive to forge working relationships with them. In turn, members of CBOs who are linked to, or are capable of forging alliances with, these politicians and local leaders tend to be influential in these organizations, for they are considered to be capable of "bringing development". This has partly contributed to the election of such members as chairpersons of most of the CBOs, thereby paving way for the infiltration of the politics of patronage into these organizations.

The significance of patronage in these organizations is amplified by the fact that out of the 80 chairpersons we interviewed, 56 were alleged to be members of KANU that controlled state development resources and also influenced the location of donor NGOs in

Kenya. Thus, a possible explanation for this pattern of political affiliation is that these leaders were elected partly on the basis of their links to the then ruling party for purposes of extracting patronage resources to their organizations. The credibility of this explanation is enhanced by the fact that this pattern obtained in both the pro-government and opposition affiliated areas in Western Kenya.

We were surprised that 18 of the chairpersons of CBOs affiliated to KANU were from Siaya and Nyando districts where the then opposition National Development Party (NDP) was the predominant political party at the time of the interviews. That such influential leaders of CBOs, which were steadily gaining ground in influencing local politics, were affiliated to KANU in a region that had a near fanatical following for NDP can only be explained in terms of the patronage resources that accrued to the organizations from the leaders' partnership. In fact some informants explained to us that some of the individuals that claimed to belong to KANU were simply doing so to get access to patronage resources supplied by the state, but only to vote for the opposition during elections. This explanation may be interpreted to mean that CBOs front persons perceived to be affiliated to the ruling party, especially in the predominantly opposition areas, as their chairpersons in order to attract state patronage resources to financing their activities. In the process, patronage influences the choice of leaders even in the so-called opposition zones.

The second most significant determinant in the election of a chairperson was identified as the individual's popularity. Popularity in an organization can be as a result of a wide variety of factors such as economic prosperity, social status and esteem, ethnic identity, generosity and political affiliation. Upon examining these factors, we established

that there was no correlation between ethnic identity and the choice of leaders in most of the CBOs, given that 92 per cent of our respondents informed us that ethnic considerations do not influence the election of leaders. The few (8 per cent) respondents who reported a positive relationship in this regard were members of welfare associations, which are formed on the basis of ethnic identity as it has already been explained. Thus, such a correlation is expected with regard to welfare associations, but not the other types of CBOs. Therefore, it can be said that ethnicity does not contribute to the "popularity" of an individual in these organizations that would enable him/her to ascend to leadership.

Though our research tools did not generate adequate data to show the correlation between economic prosperity and the popularity of an individual in relation to leadership in CBOs, a cross-tabulation between leadership positions and the main occupation of the leaders could provide a useful pointer. It shows that 39.6 per cent of the chairpersons of CBOs are subsistence farmers while 26.4 per cent are engaged in small-scale non-farm enterprises. The other chairpersons are teachers (15%), housewives (9.4%), nurses (1.9%), cateresses (1.9%) and social workers (1.9%). An interesting finding is that 3.9 per cent of the chairpersons claimed to have no significant occupation. We established that these were mainly members of youth groups who were still dependent on their parents to earn a living. On the whole, these data show that the majority of the chairpersons occupy common occupations in the rural economy that rarely attracts high income. The implication is that some of them constitute part of the rural elite, chairpersons are not necessarily the most prosperous individuals in society. Economic prosperity was therefore not found to be the basis for the popularity of chairpersons in CBOs.

Considering that individuals join CBOs in order to solve socio-economic problems that affect their living conditions, in the midst of growing dependence of these organizations on external assistance, persons who attract such assistance to their organizations are likely to be more influential than the others. The point has already been made that most of the external assistance to CBOs emanates from political patronage. These propositions imply that political affiliation is a significant determinant of an individual's ability to link the organization to external sources of funding, which would, in turn, boost the popularity of the individual in the organization. Subsequently, that popularity would influence the election of the said individual as the chairperson in the organization.

On the basis of these interpretations, the data in Table 5.2 show that a total of 52 per cent of the chairpersons of CBOs in Western Kenya are elected to their positions on the basis of considerations related to local politics. The main consideration in this regard is their linkage to patron-client networks through which CBOs obtain patronage resources in exchange for the political clout that patrons build using these organizations. The remaining 48 per cent of the chairpersons are elected on the basis of factors revolving around the character of the individual person, such as trustworthiness and honesty; commitment to the cause of the organization; knowledge about the objectives and activities of the organization; the level of literacy in relative terms; personal integrity and social status.

Whether these factors hold for the election of the secretary and treasurer is the next question to be answered. The factors regarding the election of the secretary in CBOs are presented in Table 5.3 on the next page.

TABLE 5.3: FACTORS THAT DETERMINE ELECTION OF THE SECRETARY

FACTORS	NUMBER	PERCENTAGE
Level of literacy	111	31.7
Knowledge on organizations activities	67	19.1
Trustworthiness and honesty	62	17.7
Hardworking & personal integrity	60	17.1
Commitment to the course organization	50	14.3
Total	350	100

SOURCE: Field data

It is evident that literacy is the most significant factor that members put into consideration when electing the secretary in these organizations. This is in conformity with the main duty of a secretary, which was identified as writing notices for, and minutes of, meetings. Besides contribution to the ability to write, perhaps literacy also facilitates quick and proper understanding of the objectives and activities of these organizations. During the interviews, we observed that members who were literate offered better explanation of the activities of their organizations than those who were illiterate did. That consideration of an individual's knowledge on the objectives and activities of CBOs was the second significant determinant in the election of a secretary made those who were literate the front runners in this regard. It is, therefore, plausible to argue that literacy accounts for the election of over 50 per cent of the secretaries of these organizations.

Indeed, we observed during the interviews that secretaries had achieved relatively higher levels of education than other leaders of these organizations. This is reflected in the results of a cross - tabulation between the level of education and leadership positions presented in Table 5.4 on the next page.

TABLE 5.4: A CROSS-TABULATION OF THE LEVEL OF FORMAL EDUCATION WITH LEADERSHIP

LEADERSHIP POSITION	LEVEL OF FORMAL EDUCATION				TOTAL SCORE
	NONE	PRIMARY	SECONDARY	COLLEGE	
Chairperson	3	27	30	20	80
Secretary	-	15	49	15	79
Treasurer	-	44	20	15	79
Total Score (N)	3	86	99	50	238

SOURCE: Field data

If we consider the secondary level of formal education and above to constitute a high level of education, the data shows that 81 per cent of the secretaries have achieved high levels of education as compared to 62.5 per cent and 44.3 per cent for chairpersons and treasurers, respectively. It is also noticeable that the proportion of the least educated (i.e. primary level and below) officials is lower among the secretaries than the chairpersons and treasurers. Given that the majority of the treasurers had attained lower levels of formal education, it is pertinent to raise the question of what determines the election of treasurers? The responses to this question that we obtained from our respondents are presented in Table 5.5 on the next page.

TABLE 5.5: FACTORS THAT DETERMINE ELECTION OF THE TREASURER

FACTORS	NUMBER	PERCENTAGE
Trustworthiness and honesty	168	48.0
Social status and financial stability	94	26.7
Commitment to the organization	50	14.3
Seniority/duration of membership	36	10.4
Residence near the project site	2	0.6
TOTAL	350	100

SOURCE: Field data

It seems from Table 5.5 that members of CBOs apparently put a lot of weight on the ability of an individual to safely keep their money while electing the treasurer. The majority of the respondents' identification of trustworthiness and honesty evidences this. This factor is particularly significant in this regard given that most of the CBOs are formed and carry out their activities on the basis of mutual trust rather than the provisions of any law. It was explained in our informal discussions that in addition to trustworthiness and honesty, individuals who are financially stable (meaning that they are able to satisfy most of their basic needs) and are well placed in society are not likely to embezzle organizations' funds. This explains why the majority of our respondents (a total of 74.7%) identified these two factors as the main determinants in the election of the custodians of their funds. The remainder of the factors actually constitutes an evaluation of the individual's place in the organization that could warrant members' trust and confidence. These were identified as personal commitment to the activities of the organizations; the length of the individual's membership in the organization; and the proximity of the individual to the project site of the organization – thus, whether the person can be easily reached whenever members want to get access to the funds.

On the whole, the discussion of the factors that determine the election of leaders indicates that different factors tend to be considered for particular positions. Whereas political patronage is crucial in the election of the chairperson, literacy and trustworthiness are significant factors in the election of the secretary and treasurer, respectively. Considering that the chairperson is the most influential leader in these organizations with regard to decision-making and implementation of development projects, his/her engagement in the patron-client networks that link the political elite and/or the state to the locality implies that patronage has significantly influenced leadership in CBOs. It can, therefore, be concluded that patronage has significantly contributed to dependency in CBOs given that leaders, particularly the very influential chairpersons, are elected on the basis of their ability to “deliver” development resources to the organizations through their linkages to patron-client networks.

This finding confirms the existence of an association between community service and good leadership. There seem not to be any distinction between “development leadership” and “political leadership” at the local level, where most of the people perceive effective political representation in terms of addressing communal or development needs. So that individuals who identify with the community’s development problems and aspirations are considered to be good leaders (Kanyinga, 1995a: 117). It is against this background that the members of CBOs who were identified with patronage networks through which the development needs of the organizations were addressed were elected into leadership positions of the organizations. The question that arises is the extent to which the political environment influences the management of CBOs.

5.3 PARTICIPATION IN THE MANAGEMENT OF CBOs

It has been hypothesized in this study that popular participation in CBOs could be a function of democratic leadership and management as well as the external political environment, particularly the patron-client networks that link the locality to the state. We have so far observed that members of CBOs have avenues for choosing their leaders and that electoral processes in this regard are fairly democratic. Thus, members do participate in electing their leaders, though the choice of the chairperson, who is the most influential leader, tends to be partly based on the individual's political linkages that enables him/her to secure external assistance for the organization. In this section, we turn to the extent to which members of CBOs are involved in management decision-making processes and the stages of the cycle of development projects. The goal is to show the influence of the political environment on these processes. The starting point is to examine the forum for decision-making in these organizations.

5.3.1 Attendance of Meetings

Meetings constitute fora through which members of an organization can take part in the decision-making process. Our survey data show that CBOs hold their meetings regularly. Table 5.6 on the next page presents data on the duration that CBOs take before holding their meetings.

TABLE 5.6: THE DURATION FOR HOLDING MEETINGS IN CBOs

PERIOD OF TIME	NUMBER	PERCENTAGE
One month	225	64.3
One week	35	10.0
Two weeks	34	9.7
Three weeks	22	6.3
Whenever necessary	16	4.7
Two months	7	2.0
Four months	6	1.7
One year	5	1.4
Total	350	100

SOURCE: Field data

Table 5.6 show that up to 84 per cent of the CBOs at least holds a meeting within a month. Nearly five per cent (4.7) hold their meetings whenever it is deemed necessary, which raises the possibility for meetings to be held more than once in a month just as none may be held in the said period of time. Some organizations (10 per cent) hold their meetings after two to four months while a paltry 1.3 per cent hold annual meetings. We interpret this to mean that the majority of the CBOs constitute fora through which members can participate in development decision-making.

We established that in most organizations, the date and venue of the next meeting is usually decided and verbally communicated during the preceding meeting. These meetings are convened at different venues within the local community. Those identified by the respondents include members' homes in turns (61%); the local market center (7.3%); the nearby church compound (6.7%); the organization's project site (15%); the chairperson's home (5.0%); the compound of the local chief's office (3.3%); and at the place of work (1.7%). Thus to a large extent, the venues of the meetings are located

within the local communities where the organizations operate and are, therefore, accessible to the members.

The convening of meetings within reach can be said to partly explain why an overwhelming majority of our respondents (94.7%) reported that they regularly attend meetings of their organizations whenever they are held. The other 5.3 per cent of the respondents explained that they could not regularly attend all the meetings due to unavoidable personal commitments from time to time and also the scheduling of some meetings on Sundays, which coincided with the time for worship. Otherwise, it was explained that such members wished to attend the meetings. The point to note, therefore, is that CBOs regularly hold meetings within the local communities and the majority of the members usually attend. However, attendance of meetings does not adequately portray the level of participation in decision-making in these organizations. It, to some extent, only indicates the opportunity for the individual to participate in the said process. The question that arises in this regard is the extent to which members have effectively participated in management decision-making in their organizations.

5.3.2 Participation in Decision-making

We asked our respondents whether they participate in the decision-making process in their organizations. The resounding answer was yes, for 95.7 per cent answered in the affirmative. This concurred with the answer to the question of who makes key decision in these organizations, where 96.3 per cent indicated that it was the members while 3.7 percent reported that it was the officials of the organizations. The latter conforms to our earlier finding on the role of the leaders of these organizations, where 3.4 per cent of our

respondents identified decision-making as the main duty of the chairperson (See Table 5.1).

To establish the nature and level of members' participation, we inquired into the decision-making process in these organizations. This we started by referring our respondents to their last meeting and asked about the most important decision that was made during that meeting. We established that the said decision revolved around the election of officials; the management of the organizations' activities; raising funds for running the activities of the organizations; diversifying the development projects of the organizations; and sharing the benefits that accrued from the activities of the organizations.

In response to the question as to who made the decision, 82.7 per cent of the respondents indicated that the members made it while 8 per cent indicated that it was the officials. In addition, 6.3 per cent reported the chairperson while the remaining 3 per cent said the secretary made the decision. Thus, a total of 17.3 per cent of the respondents reported that the officials of the organizations made the decision. This slightly varies from the responses generated from the question of who makes key decisions, where only 3.7 per cent of the respondents said it was the officials. The rise in the frequency of responses to a similar question is a pointer to the fact that officials of CBOs are actually more influential in the decision-making process than the ordinary members. Moreover, it further strengthens the earlier finding that chairpersons are more powerful and influential in these organizations, considering that 6.3 per cent of the respondents attributed the making of the decision specifically to the chairperson.

Of much interest to us, however, was how the most important decision was arrived at. We asked our respondents to briefly describe how this was done. Most of the respondents (47.4%) explained that the officials presented the issues at hand to the members. Some members then gave suggestions on how to resolve the issues, which were subsequently discussed by all members to reach a consensus that became the decision. Another 35.3 per cent explained that officials suggested the solution to the problem at hand and members approved it while 14.3 per cent said that members adopted the suggestion of the chairperson. Finally, 3 per cent of the respondents reported that members adopted the suggestion of the secretary.

It can be observed from the data that a total of 52.6 per cent of the respondents explained that the decision emanated from the officials of the organizations and members simply approved or adopted it. Furthermore, it is also apparent that members discussed the suggestions that were made by ordinary members, but not those that were made by the officials. Though not necessarily implying those officials imposed their decisions on the members, it is apparent that the decisions made by the officials were respected and tended to be 'final' in most of the cases while those emanating from the members were subjected to debate. This further serves to drive home the fact that leaders are more influential in the decision-making process than the ordinary members are. Indeed, Matanga (2000: 199) has argued that the leadership of most of these organizations has tended to exclude the general membership from the overall decision-making process. It should be emphasized here that this is partly the case due to the fact that most of the said decisions have to do with the mobilization and sharing of resources that are largely obtained through patronage linkages in which the influential leaders are well entrenched. This gives the leaders,

particularly chairpersons, a leeway to largely influence the outcome of the decision-making process.

Nevertheless, it is significant that members at least participate in approving decisions that emanate from the officials. Thus, in most cases, ordinary members do not initiate the decision-making process, but give approval to the final decision in their organizations. Whether this also obtains with regard to participation in the cycle of these organizations' development projects is the subject of the next sub-section.

5.3.3 Participation in the Cycle of Development Projects

In seeking to understand the level of members' participation in the cycle of the development projects, the starting point was to ask respondents to identify the main development projects that their organization hand initiated. The responses are presented in Table 5.7 on the next page.

TABLE 5.7: THE MAIN DEVELOPMENT PROJECTS OF CBOs

MAIN DEVELOPMENT PROJECT	NUMBER	PERCENTAGE
Dairy farming	66	18.9
Accumulating Savings and Credit scheme	60	17.1
Buying and selling cereals	30	8.6
Horticulture	20	5.7
Rotating savings & credit scheme	20	5.7
Primary healthcare and community pharmacy	18	5.1
Cattle dip	18	5.1
Water borehole	18	5.1
Buying pre-mature sugarcane for sale	18	5.1
Funeral/burial scheme	16	4.6
Food crop farming	13	3.7
Posho milk	9	2.6
Poultry farming	9	2.6
Building and equipping primary schools	7	2.0
Hospital insurance scheme	5	1.4
Providing farm labour	5	1.4
Making roofing tiles for sale	5	1.4
Nursery school	5	1.4
Butchery	5	1.4
<i>Boda-boda</i> bicycle transport	3	0.9
Total	350	100

SOURCE: Field data

It is shown that CBOs have initiated a variety of development projects aimed at improving the living conditions of their members by way of generating income or providing services. It is significant that the projects are spread in most of the sectors of the rural economy and also endeavor to provide social welfare services to the members as well as the local communities in general. It is also noteworthy that some of the projects, like posho mills, involve high capital investment that may be out of reach for the rural poor who form the majority of the membership in CBOs.

With regard to members' participation in the implementation of these projects, the question asked was: who gave the initial idea to start these projects? The responses are summarized and presented in Table 5.8 below.

TABLE 5.8 INITIATORS OF DEVELOPMENT PROJECTS IN CBOs

INITIATOR OF THE PROJECT	NUMBER	PERCENTAGE
A member of the organization	179	51.5
The chairperson	54	15.4
Officials of the organization	30	8.6
CARE- Kenya (NGO)	24	6.9
Chief/Assistant chief	17	4.9
Local Authority Councilor	13	3.7
Officers of Government Departments	8	2.3
Members of Parliament	5	1.4
Mazingira Institute (NGO)	5	1.4
UNICEF officials	5	1.4
Family Health International (NGO)	5	1.4
A parent to one of the members	5	1.4
TOTAL	350	100

SOURCE: Field data

Table 5.8 has evidence that ordinary members and officials of these organizations initiated most (75.1%) of the development projects of CBOs. However, it is worth noting that a significant proportion of these projects (24.9%) were initiated from outside the organizations by donor organizations, government officers, politicians and ordinary people in the local communities. This is a pointer to the role of the politics of patronage in the initiation of projects, given that patronage significantly influences the availability of external assistance to CBOs. This we confirmed using qualitative techniques.

In our informal discussions with officers of the Department of Social Services in Siaya, Busia and Nyando districts, we sought to know how donor NGOs identified the

recipients of their services. The officers gave three broad ways. First, that such NGOs had their own criteria for identifying the recipients as per their missions and, hence, went into the local communities to carry out reconnaissance surveys that they used in the exercise, albeit after notifying and seeking the approval of the Department and the District Commissioner's office. Second, that some influential politicians and the local elite who wished to help solve socio-economic problems in their communities linked NGOs to the recipients. Of course such politicians as well as the elite had vested interests in doing so, particularly the need to build political power bases for retaining power or entering elective politics. Third, that some NGOs sought the assistance of the Department of Social Services, which then directed the NGOs on where to find self-help groups of their interest.

We verified these explanations with our respondents in the field through informal discussions. For instance, we established that Mazingira Institute that had introduced the making of roofing tiles to CBOs in Funyula division of Busia district found its way to the region through, and was linked to specific CBOs by, the local Member of Parliament. Similarly, Family Health International that was spearheading the adoption of exotic cattle in dairy production in Butere division of Butere-Mumias district had been linked to local CBOs by a prominent University Professor who hails from the division. The same Professor was also reported to have brought Heifer Project International (NGO) into the division to enhance the diversification of dairy cattle. It was reported that the husband to this Professor, who is also a University Professor, capitalized on these initiatives to enter the race for Butere parliamentary seat in the 1997 general elections, but was beaten in the KANU nomination primaries. On the other hand, CARE-Kenya had its own criteria of

identifying participants in its micro-finance program for small-scale enterprises in Busia and Siaya districts, though it worked through the office of the District Social Development Officer in the administration of the credit. In the process, it was alleged that the officers in the department got a leeway to influence the recruitment of other CBOs to the program.

The import of these explanations and examples is that whereas some donor NGOs identify with CBOs through political influence, others do so as a result of their shared interests with the CBOs. The politics of patronage that is widespread in the local communities, as we have already shown, would, however, give the latter NGOs little room to pursue their criteria in identifying their recipients. Against this background, the fact that some projects of CBOs are initiated by NGOs, government officers and politicians implies that patronage influences the choice and initiation of development projects of these organizations. The question to raise at this stage is whether the said political influence affects members' participation during the whole or just part of the cycle of the projects.

We asked our respondents whether they participated in at least three stages of the cycle of the main development projects of their organizations, i.e. project identification, formulation and implementation. The first stage involves the proposal of the initial idea for the project and its adoption by the members of the organization. We have already shown who proposed the initial ideas for the projects (see Table 5.8). In response to the question as to whether they participated in adopting the project proposal, 48.7 per cent of the respondents replied in the affirmative while 51.3 per cent indicated that they did not participate. That a disproportionately larger part of the membership did not participate in

project identification contradicts the view that the members, as presented in Table 4.8, initiated most of the projects. This goes a long way to strengthen the point that most of the projects of these organizations could have been initiated by external actors and that politics significantly influences the process.

With regard to the second stage of project formulation, it involves the basic preparations required for starting the project. Issues to consider here would include, for example, how to raise funds and/or other necessary materials for the project; the role of the members at the implementation stage; and the site of the project. Interestingly, the rate of members' participation slightly improved in this stage, for 66.7 per cent of the respondents indicated that they participated while 33.3 per cent of the respondents did not participate. This can be interpreted to mean that more members get interested in participating in the projects or activities upon learning what type of projects have been adopted by the organizations and evaluating what they stand to gain from such projects. It should be recalled here that a substantial proportion of the members of CBOs joined these organizations in order to benefit from their activities. Our interpretation here is that the "benefit factor" seems to be the main explanation behind the increased rate of participation at this stage. More people, who might not have been members of the organizations from the very beginning, might have evaluated what they stood to benefit from the projects and decided to get engaged. But does this also obtain at the implementation stage?

The implementation stage of a project involves setting up the proposed activity or facility and making it operational. To this end, funds and other necessary resources are mobilized and members play their assigned roles to make the project operational. In the

interviews, 94.6 per cent of our respondents indicated that they took part in this process, with only 5.4 percent reporting that they did not participate in this stage of the projects. This is a significant improvement on the rate of participation, which confirms our explanation that participation in CBOs is basically functional in nature. Most members get engaged at the stage of mobilizing resources in anticipation of the benefits that are likely to accrue from the projects. That benefits of a project are usually expected with its implementation, in the midst of the norm in most CBOs that those who do not contribute towards the implementation of the projects do not share the benefits, explains the increased rate of participation at the implementation stage of the projects.

Our inquiry into why members of CBOs participate in the development projects of their organizations further demonstrates this point. The starting point was to establish whether participation was indeed voluntary as it has always been assumed. Consequently, we inquired whether there were rules that compelled members' participation and whether members actually participated due to their fear of such rules. Though 85 per cent of the respondents informed us that their organizations had rules that compelled members' participation, only 23.7 per cent of the respondents indicated that they participated in the projects due to fear or the need to follow such rules. This means that participation is voluntary and that there are reasons behind members' participation other than the rules of the organizations. These reasons are summarized and presented in Table 5.9 on the next page.

TABLE 5.9: REASONS FOR PARTICIPATION IN DEVELOPMENT PROJECTS OF CBOs

REASON FOR PARTICIPATION	NUMBER	PERCENTAGE
Benefits derived/expected from projects	202	57.7
Individual commitment to the organization	110	31.3
To honour the obligation of membership	30	8.7
To set a good example as a leader	8	2.3
Total	350	100

SOURCE: Field data

Data in Table 5.9 can be interpreted to mean that the main motivation for members of CBOs to participate in the development projects of their organizations is the benefits that are usually expected or accrue from such projects. This explains the observed variation in the rate of participation in the cycle of the development projects. At the project identification stage where the likely benefits of the project are not certain, we have observed that participation is low. But participation increases at the formulation and implementation stages where the benefits of the projects are at least probable if not real. This implies that participation in the development projects of CBOs is more often “functional” than “reflective.” The tendency is for most members to contribute towards the implementation of projects already initiated by some members and/or external actors rather than engaging in the whole process of thinking, deciding and acting to initiate development projects that suit their needs.

The Assistant District Social Development Officer for Nyando district alluded to this point during our informal discussions. She informed us that due to the relatively high rate of dependence on external assistance among CBOs, most of the organizations tend to remain dormant until they learn of a donor’s arrival in the vicinity. It is then that some of the organizations become active, either because of the resources that they would have

received from the donor or due to the effort to attract the attention of the donor to offer assistance to the organization.

Similar sentiments are expressed in the 1998 Busia and Siaya districts Annual Reports of the Department of Social services. With reference to the impact of the politically initiated 1997 National Women's Development Fund (NWDF) and the National Youth Development Fund (NYDF) on the proliferation of the respective CBOs, the reports note that many women's groups and youth groups were formed in 1997 ostensibly to benefit from the said Funds that were set up by the President through mammoth *harambee* fundraisers to woo women and the youth to vote for KANU in the 1997 general elections. The Funds were shared proportionately among the groups that registered with the Department of Social Services and sent their contributions to the national *harambee* that was held in Nairobi. Thus, many of these organizations were formed and/or participated in raising funds in order to benefit from the national funds. The 1998 Busia District Annual Report puts this more succinctly:

“At the end of the year under review, 37 youth groups were registered with a membership of 581. This is unlike 1997 where a total of 136 youth groups registered with a membership of 2,779. ...The 1997 National Youth Development Fund made most groups to register because they wanted a share from the Fund” (Department of Social Services, 1998a: 7).

This can be interpreted to mean that the said functional participation in the development projects of CBOs tends to increase with the extension of external assistance to these organizations, from which members wish to benefit. That the availability of external assistance is, to a large extent, a function of patronage implies that politics influence members' participation in this regard. This point requires further exposition.

Respondents were asked to tell us the assistance their organizations had received from political leaders. In response, we learnt that CBOs had received assistance from the Community Development Assistants of the Department of Social Services (21%); the Chief (19.7%); the Member of Parliament (14.3%); the Assistant Chief (7.3%); the Councilor (6.6%); and the District Officer (5.35%). However, 25.7 per cent of the respondents indicated that their organizations did not receive any assistance from political leaders. It is nevertheless evident that the majority of the organizations were in one way or the other assisted by political leaders. The form of assistance that the said leaders extended to CBOs is summarized and presented in Table 5.10.

TABLE 5.10: THE FORM OF ASSISTANCE TO CBOs BY POLITICA LEADERS

FORM OF ASSISTANCE	NUMBER	PERCENTAGE
Advice on starting / managing projects	83	31.9
Assisted to get funds from the 1997 NWDF & NYDF	48	18.5
Conducted harambee for the organization	33	12.7
Registration of the organization	27	10.4
Linked the organization to donors	21	8.1
Donated money to the organization	18	6.9
Donated a posho mill to the organization	5	1.9
Assists marketing the organizations products	5	1.9
Attends meetings / regularly visits the CBO	5	1.9
Gave the organization an office	5	1.9
Presented a presidential award to the CBO	5	1.9
Conducted organization's elections	4	1.5
Assisted officials to attend a seminar	1	0.4
TOTAL (N=260)	260	100

SORUCE: Field data

Whereas data in Table 5.10 show a wide variety of assistance that CBOs have received from political leaders, it is significant that the majority of the cases (adding up to 53.8%) directly revolve around the supply of resources to these organizations. This serves

to emphasize the point that patronage constitutes the avenue through which external assistance gets to CBOs.

To determine the relationship between the politics of patronage and participation in the development projects of CBOs, we computed cross-tabulations of participation in project identification and implementation with assistance from political leaders in these organizations. Table 5.11 below presents the results of a cross-tabulation of participation in project identification and assistance from political leaders.

TABLE 5.11: A CROSS-TABULATION OF PARTICIPATION IN PROJECT IDENTIFICATION WITH ASSISTANCE FROM POLITICAL LEADERS

PARTICIPATION	ASSISTANCE		TOTAL (N)
	YES	NO	
YES	133	37	170
NO	127	53	180
TOTAL (N)	260	90	350

SOURCE: Field data

The results in Table 5.11 show that most of the organizations that received assistance from political leaders had most of their members participating in the process of identifying the main project. This means that there is a positive relationship between participation in the development projects of CBOs and receipt of assistance from political leaders. To ascertain the strength of this relationship, the gamma measure of association statistic was calculated. Its result was +0.2000, which means that there is a weak positive

relationship between participation in project identification and assistance to CBOs from political leaders.

With regard to participation in the implementation of development projects and assistance from political leaders, the results are in Table 5.12.

TABLE 5.12: A CROSS-TABULATION OF PARTICIPATION IN PROJECT IMPLEMENTATION WITH ASSISTANCE FROM POLITICAL LEADERS

PARTICIPATION	ASSISTANCE		TOTAL (N)
	YES	NO	
YES	255	76	331
NO	5	14	19
TOTAL (N)	260	90	350

SOURCE: Field data

Table 5.12 show that 331 (or 94.6 per cent) of the respondents participated in the implementation of the main development projects of their organizations. Of these, 255 (or 77.0 per cent) belonged to organizations that had received assistance from political leaders while 76 (Or 23.0 per cent) were members of organizations that had not received any assistance from political leaders. That the majority of the members who participated in the implementation of the main development projects belonged to those organizations that had received assistance from political leaders means the existence of a positive relationship between these two variables. The gamma measure of association statistic result of +0.8076 means that there is a very strong positive relationship between participation in the implementation of the development projects of CBOs and assistance to these organizations from political leaders.

It is significant to note that the relationship between participation in the development projects of CBOs and assistance from political leaders is weak at the identification stage, but very strong at the implementation stage. This is in conformity with our earlier finding that participation tends to be low at the project identification stage, but rises at the implementation stage partly due to the benefits that are likely to accrue from the projects. Matanga (2000: 199) arrived at a similar finding, but explained increased participation at this stage in terms of the need for members to contribute labor and other materials for setting off the projects. However, this explanation is unlikely to hold in most cases given that the majority of the organizations rely on external resources rather than members' contributions to implement their projects. It is in this regard that the drive to share in the benefits of the projects is likely to offer a more plausible explanation for the increased participation.

On the whole, these findings imply that participation, especially at the implementation stage, tends to be higher in those organizations that enjoy the patronage of political leaders, and hence receive external assistance, than in those organizations that do not enjoy such patronage. The case of *Esimba Ikona Abakwane* Women group in Nambuku location of Funyula division in Busia district further illustrates this point. Most of the group's members were said to be associated with the opposition FORD-Kenya political party to the chagrin of the local MP who belonged to the then ruling party KANU. Subsequently, the MP endeavored to frustrate the development initiatives of this group by ensuring that it did not receive any donor support. It was alleged that the MP had instructed the Community Development Assistants in the Department of Social Services not to allow "donors" to visit the group because he did not patronize it.

involvement in the projects at least increases in those organizations that are patronized by political leaders and the local elite.

5.4 CONCLUSION

It has been the objective in this chapter to show the influence of the politics of patronage and the resultant dependency on the leadership and management of CBOs in Western Kenya. To this end, the discussion has shown that due to the prevalence of political patronage, the choice of leaders, particularly chairpersons, tends to be based on the ability of individuals to link the organizations to sources of external assistance. Similarly, such leaders tend to dominate decision-making processes in these organizations by virtue of their linkage to donors of these organizations.

Patronage has also partly influenced participation in the development projects of CBOs, given that the benefits derived or expected from external assistance significantly form the basis of members' engagement. The consequence is that participation of members in development projects tends to be minimal at the project identification stage, but rises at the project implementation stage, partly due to the availability of resources from external assistance. Moreover, such participation tends to be higher in the CBOs that receive assistance from external actors like NGOs and political leaders than in those organizations that do not have access to such assistance. Consequently participation in the development projects of CBOs has been more "functional" than "reflective".

This functional participation has further enhanced the dependency syndrome in these organizations. Given that this form of participation is a product of the politics of patronage, we conclude that the rising level of dependency among CBOs is a result of the

political environment in which these organizations have operated. The question that arises from this conclusion is the extent to which such dependent organizations can contribute to the sustainability of development initiatives at the local grassroots level. This is the subject of the next chapter.

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CHAPTER SIX

COMMUNITY-BASED ORGANIZATIONS AND LOCAL CAPACITY-BUILDING FOR SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT IN WESTERN KENYA

6.1 INTRODUCTION

The significance of local organizations in the "development from below" paradigm is that they constitute the forum through which people at the local level identify the causes of their poverty and the necessary course for remedial action; mobilize resources to implement the identified course of action; and evaluate the impact of that action on their livelihoods. This is a process of reflective participation through which people build their capacity to solve local development problems. It is in this regard that local organizations contribute to positive and lasting socio-economic gains for members in terms of improved quality of life, which is the essence of sustainable development. Local capacity to solve socio-economic problems as they emerge from time to time is, therefore, a mediating factor for sustainable development.

Consequently, the purpose of this chapter is two-pronged. First, to show the extent to which CBOs in Western Kenya have contributed to local capacity building for sustainable development. Second, to assess the sustainability of the development projects of these organizations and the nature and form of their contribution to sustainable development at the local level. The starting point in this exercise is to ascertain the lessons of participation in the activities of CBOs as a basis for assessing the capacity-building initiatives of these organizations.

6.2 LESSONS OF PARTICIPATION IN CBOs

Participation in local organizations, as already alluded to, is expected to be a learning process for the people who are engaged if sustainable development is to be realized. The rationale is that lessons people learn constitute the foundation of their capacity to initiate relevant and durable socio-economic projects for improving their livelihoods. The respondents were therefore asked to tell us the main lesson that they had learned towards the improvement of their living conditions through participation in community-based organizations. The responses are summarized and presented in Table 6.1.

TABLE 6.1: LESSONS LEARNT THROUGH PARTICIPATION IN CBOs

LESSON LEARNT	NUMBER	PERCENTAGE
There are Benefits from CBOs	135	38.6
Small-scale entrepreneurship	33	9.4
Social interaction/exchange of information	30	8.6
Better farming methods	28	8.0
Zero-grazing method	26	7.3
Basic hygiene and home economics	20	5.7
Water can improve living standards	17	4.9
Mobilization of funds via group savings	14	4.0
A tick-free cow produces more milk	12	3.4
How to keep pigs	8	2.3
How to make bricks	2	0.7
None	25	7.0
TOTAL	350	100

SOURCE: Field data

The data show that most of the members (38.6%) had realized that they could utilize the resources and services that CBOs offered to improve their livelihoods while 8.6 per cent had exchanged information and experiences in their daily life through social

interaction in these organizations. What is common in these two responses is that they constitute awakening experiences that could stimulate and enhance local people's participation in the development process. Nevertheless, they do not constitute skills for solving specific socio-economic problems relative to the other responses. Given that seven per cent of the respondents reported that they had not learned anything, the data can be interpreted to mean that the majority of the respondents (adding up to 54.2%) had not learned specific skills for solving particular socio-economic problems.

However, it is significant that at least 45.8 per cent of the respondents indicated that they had learned some skills and strategies for improving their livelihoods. Through their participation in CBOs, they had acquired skills for tackling problems in small-scale enterprises, agriculture, exotic dairy farming, primary health care, household hygiene and home economics, keeping pigs, and making bricks for sale. In addition, some members had realized how water and informal credit could transform their livelihoods if properly utilized. It would be useful to expound on some of these lessons.

Enhanced involvement of people in small-scale enterprises relative to agriculture is a recent occurrence in this region and rural Kenya in general. Consequently, most of the people have inadequate entrepreneurial skills to initiate and manage small-scale enterprises, yet the sector is the main alternative to agriculture that is facing a host of impediments like unreliable climatic conditions and dwindling size of land parcels. It was reported in the informal discussions that NGOs engaged in providing credit facilities for small-scale enterprises have become instrumental in training members of CBOs in entrepreneurship. Before providing credit to CBOs, the NGOs train members on available business opportunities in the region; the viability of the various business options; business

management; the significance of credit in business; revolving funds and personal guarantor system; among others. Though this is usually done for purposes of ensuring proper utilization of the credit funds extended to the organizations, members of CBOs participating in such programs acquire skills for starting and managing their own enterprises. Moreover, some of the members we interviewed informed us that they had gained confidence to borrow money and invest in business enterprise as a result of their participation in revolving credit schemes initiated by donors in their organizations. This should be understood in the context of the "fear" that local people have developed about credit due to the severe consequences that some formal bank credit defaulters have faced in the past, particularly auctioning their land and other property to recover the loans (Ondiege, 1996: 168; Alila, 1998: 174 Table 5).

With regard to farming methods, some CBOs reportedly organize "farmers' field schools" to educate members on better farming methods. During the field demonstration, usually on a member's farm, the organizations invite agricultural extension officers to advise them on better farming methods and also demonstrate how the methods can be utilized. We found this to be very common in Butere division where an NGO - the Rural Outreach Programme (ROP) - had on many occasions contributed resources to organize farmers' field schools for CBOs. ROP would provide resources to a member of a CBO who volunteer his/her farm to be used for the purpose of demonstration. The resources include seeds, fertilizers and extension services. The farm is prepared and crops planted in advance and members of CBOs invited on a particular day to learn about the farming methods used. The farmers' field schools have reportedly helped to impart knowledge on the preparation and use of manure; intercropping practices; mixed farming, especially the

use of poultry and cattle waste in crop farming; preservation of indigenous crops and their significance for food security; appropriate seeds; etc.

Nevertheless, the politics of patronage has on some occasions hindered the free participation of some members of CBOs in some of the field schools. For instance, ROP was identified with a University Professor whose husband contested the KANU primaries in the 1997 general elections in Butere. This resulted in “bad blood” between the then Member of Parliament (MP) for Butere and the said Professor’s family as a whole, for the MP viewed them as political opponents. Consequently, the MP endeavored to frustrate the Professor’s efforts to initiate development activities at the local level, for he considered that to be a means of preventing her and her husband from building a political power base in the constituency. Subsequently, CBOs that enjoyed the MP’s patronage or those that wished to benefit from his assistance tended to avoid attending field schools organized by ROP. Indeed, we learned during the survey that even the district administrators shied away from attending public functions organized by ROP for fear of clashing with the interests of the then powerful cabinet minister. This kind of political tension threatened the participation of some members of CBOs in the field schools as much as they were quite useful in imparting better farming methods.

With regard to zero-grazing method of livestock farming, it is relatively recent in Western Kenya but is increasingly being popularized through CBOs. The donors involved in diversifying cattle breeds provide exotic cattle to CBOs and train members on zero-grazing method to feed the animals as well as proper animal husbandry. Similarly, CBOs that are not supported by donors also make their own arrangements to impart these skills to the members. For instance, such organizations co-opt non-members who have the

knowledge to train them. We found that some men had become members of women's groups in this capacity. This has enabled members of CBOs engaged in this activity to acquire skills for keeping exotic cattle in the region.

In the health sector, public health awareness campaigns spearheaded by community health workers have enabled members of CBOs as well as some non-members to learn skills for preventing common diseases, particularly malaria and cholera. Improved household hygienic practices as a result of the awareness campaigns and exchange of ideas and experiences during the meetings of these organizations, particularly women's groups, have improved people's perception of public health and the prevention of diseases.

Besides these specific skills for addressing socio-economic issues, it is also significant to observe that participation in CBOs has also enlightened people on how eradication of ticks and the availability of water and informal credit can transform their livelihoods. For instance, in one of the CBOs in Wagai division of Siaya district that has a water project, we established that the group had set up a horticultural farm at the borehole site and used basic irrigation skills to produce cabbage, *sukuma wiki*, onions and tomatoes. The improved production of the vegetables on the group farm had enabled most of the members to realize how irrigation could significantly transform agricultural production. Unfortunately, most of the members could not put these skills to use on their farms because such farms did not have water sources. But it is worthwhile for their general awareness of what impedes agricultural production in the region and the possible options for solving the problems.

The lessons as presented in Table 6.1, however, are essentially answers or solutions to socio-economic problems and not questions as to the circumstances that have contributed to the emergence or existence of the livelihood problems. This can be interpreted to mean that most of the members of CBOs get engaged in the activities of these organizations as a way of addressing what they already perceive to be their constraints to improved living conditions, but only few get enlightened on the structural reasons behind their poverty. In other words, the imparted skills are a response to the "how" question rather than the "why" question of problem solving.

This serves to confirm two of our earlier findings. First, that a significant proportion of the development projects of these organizations are initiated by non-members from outside the organizations. These are mainly donor NGOs that wish to channel their services to the grassroots through these organizations and the political leaders who wish to mobilize local people for either enhancing their political power or to implement state development projects. The end result in such cases is that members of the CBOs do not participate in project identification and formulation. Second, that engagement in the development projects of these organizations tends to be more of functional than reflective participation. Thus, most members only participate in mobilizing resources required to implement, or sharing proceeds from, the projects and not in the thinking and reasoning behind the identification and formulation of the projects. In both cases, members miss the opportunity to think, debate and eventually learn about the structural reasons behind their socio-economic problems. This partly explains the predominance of lessons in the "how" question rather than the "why" question.

At any rate, it should also be recalled that less than half of our respondents seem to have learned meaningful skills for solving socio-economic problems. Since the learning process would normally start at the project identification stage where the "why" question is asked and significantly progress at the formulation stage where the "how" question is raised, this finding is in agreement with our earlier observation that participation in the development projects of CBOs is low at the identification stage but rises proportionately in the subsequent stages. Thus, the fact that the majority of the members have not acquired specialized skills for solving their socio-economic problems implies that they might not have participated in the identification and formulation of the development projects of their organizations. This is partly because some of the projects are identified and formulated by non-members from outside the organizations. Consequently, participation in CBOs has served not as a learning process through which people question reasons behind their poverty and acquire skills to identify and formulate solutions to their socio-economic problems, but primarily as a means of getting access to development resources and services, most of which are provided by donors. Given that participation in these organizations takes the functional form, the question to raise for consideration in the next section is the extent to which such participation has improved the capacity of members to mobilize local resources for the development projects of CBOs.

6.3 MOBILIZATION OF LOCAL RESOURCES FOR DEVELOPMENT PROJECTS

Participation in the development projects of CBOs, it has been argued, is higher at the implementation stage than at the other stages of the project cycle. The question to be

addressed therefore is the extent to which the improved rate of participation that is basically functional in nature has contributed to the mobilization of local resources for development projects in these organizations. To this end, we asked about the main source of funds and other resources for implementing the main development projects of these organizations. The responses are summarized and presented in Table 6.2 below.

TABLE 6.2: THE MAIN SOURCE OF FUNDS FOR THE MAIN DEVELOPMENT PROJECTS OF CBOs

SOURCE OF FUNDS	NUMBER	PERCENTAGE
Donations / grants	152	43.6
Members' contributions	107	30.7
NGO revolving funds / loans	40	11.4
<i>Harambee</i> fundraisers	39	11.1
Income from business / farm labour	12	3.3
TOTAL	350	100

SOURCE: Field data

Table 6.2 data show that donations or grants that were mainly obtained from NGOs, the government and local political leaders constitute the main source of funds. Revolving funds and loans from NGOs and private companies as well as *harambee* fundraisers are also significant sources of funds. If we exclude *harambee* based on the assumption that part of the contributions came from the members and consider the fact that revolving funds would not be repaid, it is apparent that about 55.0 percent of the resources that were utilized to implement the main development projects of these organizations were obtained from outside the organizations. Indeed, this percentage could even be higher due to the fact that local contributions at *harambee* fundraisers tend to be much less than that of the invited guests (Chitere, 1994a). This further confirms our

earlier finding that most of the CBOs are dependent on external assistance to carry out their activities.

Since internal resources accounted for a substantial proportion of the resources for implementing the projects, we sought to understand the form of the contributions that members made. Their responses are presented in Table 6.3.

TABLE 6.3: TYPE OF INDIVIDUAL CONTRIBUTION TO THE MAIN DEVELOPMENT PROJECT

FORM OF CONTRIBUTION	NUMBER	PERCENTAGE
Regular financial contributions	175	50.0
Labour and materials	69	19.7
Starting capital	66	18.9
None	40	11.4
Total	350	100

SOURCE: Field data

It is evident that the majority of the members made their contribution in the form of regular or periodic financial contributions. However, the rates of contribution in these organizations, as already observed in the case of ROSCAs, tend to be relatively low. Table 6.4 below further illustrates this point.

TABLE 6.4: THE RATE OF REGULAR CONTRIBUTIONS IN CBOs

MONTHLY CONTRIBUTION (Kshs.)	NUMBER	PERCENTAGE
Less than 50	135	38.5
51 - 100	70	20.0
101 - 200	38	10.9
201 - 300	31	8.9
301 - 500	12	3.3
501 - 1,500	16	4.6
Over 1,500	5	1.4
NA	43	12.4
Total	350	100

SOURCE: Field data

Table 6.4 figures show that whereas the rate of contribution in over one-third of the organizations was less than Kshs. 50 per month, about half of the organizations had fixed their contributions at the rate of between Kshs 51 and Kshs 500 per month. The highest rate of contribution reported was Kshs.2, 000 in one of the women's groups that brought together businesswomen who had retired from public service in Butere division. These data reaffirm that the rate of regular monetary contributions in the majority of the CBOs in Western Kenya is relatively low. It was explained that such rates had been fixed in order to make the contribution affordable to the generally poor members of these organizations in the region. Given that the organizations are mostly small in size, the implication is that limited amounts of money are mobilized at the time for making contributions.

This problem is compounded by the fact that most members do not even pay their "little" stipulated contributions on schedule. In the interviews, 58.7 percent of the respondents indicated that they usually delay to remit their regular contributions to the organizations, and some of them, we were told, eventually defaulted altogether. The delay and failure to pay was attributed to the lack of steady income (61.9%); the rising cost of living (15.9%); the low income from agriculture (10.8%); the high rate of regular contributions relative to their income (8.0%); and the low salaries paid to those who are employed. The implication is that the regular contributions cannot be sustained by the income of the majority membership of CBOs however low the rate of contribution may be. This partly explains why these organizations look out for external assistance to finance their activities, thereby compromising their capacity to mobilize local resources for development.

Nevertheless, some of the CBOs have put in place measures to curb defaulting on remittance of regular contributions. For instance, there are sanctions with regard to the use of the organizations' facilities and services as well as the peer pressure on those who have not paid up their contributions. These are reflected in the actions that are taken against defaulters presented in Table 6.5.

TABLE 6.5: ACTION TAKEN AGAINST DEFAULTERS ON REGULAR CONTRIBUTIONS

ACTION	NUMBER	PERCENTAGE
Warned and given more time to pay	113	55.1
Penalized by paying a fine	40	19.5
Barred from group's facilities / services	28	13.7
No specific action is taken	14	6.8
Expelled from the organization	10	4.9
TOTAL (N=205)	205	100

SOURCE: Field data

The responses shown that the majority of the organizations simply warn those who have not paid their contributions and give them more time to pay while a small proportion (6.8%) do not take any specific action against defaulters. This can be interpreted to mean that the majority of these organizations rely on mutual trust and peer pressure to enforce payment of regular contributions. Though the fear of paying fines in addition to the expected contribution and the prospect of being barred from using the organization's facilities and/or services significantly help to check defaulting, it is apparent that it is the spirit of mutual trust and goodwill that makes the majority of the members pay their contributions. The fact that 58.7 per cent of the members of CBOs do not pay their contributions promptly, therefore, implies that the measures that these

organizations have utilized to curb delayed remittances and defaulting may not be effective in enhancing the mobilization of local resources for development projects.

The indications are that CBOs have not significantly improved the capacity of local people to mobilize their own resources to initiate development projects of their choice. Thus, functional participation has not necessarily meant contributing more local resources for development projects. The question that further arises is the extent to which this form of participation has improved people's capacity to solve local development problems both at the household and the community levels.

6.4 FACILITATING THE SOLUTION OF HOUSEHOLD SOCIO-ECONOMIC PROBLEMS

The ability of local people to solve their socio - economic problems, especially at the household level, is crucial for the sustainability of development initiatives. Consequently we sought to understand the extent to which CBOs have enhanced the capacity of local people to address their livelihood problems at the household level. The starting point was to ask respondents to identify the main socio-economic problem in their households. The responses are presented in Table 6.6 on the next page.

TABLE 6.6: THE MAIN SOCIO-ECONOMIC PROBLEM IN THE MEMBERS' HOUSEHOLDS

SOCIO – ECONOMIC PROBLEM	NUMBER	PERCENTAGE
High cost of living / low income	168	48.0
Unable to pay school fees	60	17.1
Poor housing	28	8.0
Unemployment	20	5.7
Unable to meet medical expenses	20	5.7
Food shortages/malnutrition	18	5.1
Lack of furniture/utensils	12	3.4
Lack of clean water nearby	5	1.4
Domestic disputes	5	1.4
Frequent funerals	3	0.9
Insecurity/theft of crops	3	0.9
Small piece of land	1	0.3
Lack of market for produce	1	0.3
Lack of farm inputs	1	0.3
None	5	1.4
TOTAL	350	100

SOURCE: Field data

The two outstanding problems for the majority of the members were the high cost of living and school fees demands (adding up to 65.1%). A possible interpretation is that the majority of the members of CBOs have low income, which is inadequate first and foremost to meet their basic needs at the household level. This interpretation is strengthened by the fact that another 27.9 per cent of the respondents identified poor housing; unemployment; high medical expenses; food shortages and lack of household furniture/utensils as their main socio-economic problems, all of which constitute their household basic needs. The implication of the data is that the main problem of over 90 per cent of the members of CBOs is lack of adequate income for meeting household basic needs.

It was of particular interest for us to establish how CBOs have contributed to the solution of this problem. Our respondents were therefore asked how their organizations had assisted them solve the identified household socio-economic problems. The responses are presented in Table 6.7.

TABLE 6.7: SOLUTIONS OFFERED BY CBOs TO HOUSEHOLD SOCIO-ECONOMIC PROBLEMS

SOLUTION	NUMBER	PERCENTAGE
Provision of credit facilities	121	34.6
Activities are a source of income	62	17.7
Sells cereals/medicine at lower price	15	4.3
Held a <i>harambee</i> to assist	9	2.6
Made clean water available	7	2.0
Pays out-patient medical bills	5	1.4
Trained members in horticulture	5	1.4
Counsels members with domestic disputes	4	1.1
Helps to offset funeral expenses	2	0.6
Milk as a food supplement	2	0.6
Markets milk and eggs	1	0.3
Public health/hygiene awareness	1	0.3
None	116	33.1
Total	350	100

SOURCE: Field data

Table 6.7 data show that though 33.1 per cent of the respondents did not get any assistance from their organizations to solve their main socio-economic problem, a total of 39.2 per cent of the respondents got financial services in form of credit; *harambee* fundraisers; settlement of out-patient medical bills; and contributions towards offsetting funeral expenses. In addition, about 20 per cent of the respondents had sources of income through their participation in the activities of CBOs. These sources include dairy farming,

poultry, small-scale enterprises and horticulture. The remainder of the respondents (8.6%) got solutions to their problems by getting access to competitive cereal stores; marketing their farm produce; being counseled by colleagues on domestic disputes; and getting access to public health and domestic hygiene education. Thus, about two-thirds of the respondents at least got some assistance to solve their household socio-economic problems from their organizations.

However, it is evident in Tables 6.6 and 6.7 that one solution can apply to several problems that the respondents identified. For instance, credit can be a solution to the problems of school fees, household basic needs, medical bills, among others. To establish which solution was provided for the respective problem, we computed a cross-tabulation between the main socio-economic problem (Table 6.6) and the solutions obtained from the organizations (Table 6.7). The results of the tabulation show that most of the members of CBOs use the activities of these organizations to solve diverse problems as need arises at the household level. For instance, with regard to the problem of high cost of living due to low incomes, members used various activities of these organizations to address it, namely, provision of credit (41.4%); income-generating ventures (26.7%); rotating savings and credit schemes (14.7%); *harambee* fundraisers to assist each other when necessary (2.6%); and horticulture (1.8%). The remaining 12.8 per cent of the respondents who identified this problem did not mention a solution from their organizations.

With regard to the problem of school fees, we established that most of the respondents had used credit (47%); income-generating ventures (21.6%); rotating savings and credit schemes (5.9%); and *harambee* fundraisers (2.0%) to solve the problem while

23.5 per cent of the respondents could not mention a solution from their organizations. *Harambee* was the only solution to the problem of poor shelter, with only 8.3 per cent of the respondents reporting to have benefited from it. Whereas income-generating ventures (41.2%) and horticulture (23.5%) were identified as the only solutions obtained from CBOs for the problem of unemployment, with 35.3 per cent of the respondents alleging that they had not got any solution to the said problem, four different types of solutions were offered by CBOs to the problem of high medical expenses. These were selling medicine at reduced prices (35.3%); paying out-patient medical bills for members through an insurance scheme (29.4%); public health awareness campaigns (11.8%); and provision of clean water to prevent water-borne diseases (11.8%). The remaining 11.8 per cent of the respondents did not find a solution to this problem through their organizations.

This diversity with which members of CBOs utilize the activities of their organizations to solve household socio-economic problems is significant in the improvement of their livelihoods. This is particularly the case given that increased diversity of socio-economic activities promotes greater flexibility because it allows more possibilities for substitution between opportunities that are in decline and those that are expanding their contribution to rural livelihoods (Ellis 2000; 235). In the process, households are likely to find at least a solution to their problems from the diverse activities of their organizations. Nevertheless, most of the solutions are in the form of obtaining resources and services from the organizations rather than acquiring respective skills for addressing the problems at the household level. Given that most of these activities are financed through external assistance raises the question of how sustainable

the activities of CBOs can be, and by implication, how sustainable can be the solutions offered by CBOs to household socio-economic problems?

This question is the subject of the remainder of this chapter and we approach its answer in two steps. First, we examine the extent to which CBOs have mediated local people's access to resources, not only for consumption, but also engaging in socio-economic activities for improving their livelihoods at the household level. Second, we shall evaluate the sustainability of the main development projects of CBOs with a view to understanding the extent to which they can be replicated in the local communities to enable more people improve their livelihoods.

6.5 CBOs AS INTERMEDIARIES IN RURAL LIVELIHOODS

The main socio-economic activities that constitute the source of rural livelihoods in Western Kenya have already been highlighted. It has also been shown that people's engagement in these activities requires that they get access to resources or assets. The resources may be in the form of natural capital (i.e. natural resource base like land, water, trees, etc.); physical capital (i.e. economic production materials like tools, machines, farm inputs, etc); human capital (skills, education level and health status of people); financial capital (monetary savings and credit); and social capital (social networks and associations from which people derive support that contributes to their livelihoods). The lack of access to these resources impairs people's capacity to participate in activities through which a living can be derived (Ellis, 2000: 8 - 9).

The role of CBOs in this livelihood framework would be to mediate local people's access to these resources in order to strengthen their capacity to participate in socio-economic activities. To establish the extent to which these organizations have played this

role, we asked our respondents about the benefits that they had derived from their organizations. Their responses are presented in Table 6.8.

TABLE 6.8: BENEFITS DERIVED BY MEMBERS FROM CBOs

BENEFIT TO THE INDIVIDUAL	NUMBER	PERCENTAGE
Got a share of the profit for domestic use	50	14.3
Got a heifer to start dairy farming	38	10.9
Loan / harambee to pay school fees	33	9.4
Lump sum ROSCA fund for subsistence	30	8.6
Improved food security	25	7.1
Loan for enterprise working capital	19	5.4
Contribution towards funeral expenses	19	5.4
Access to clean drinking water	18	5.1
Social interaction/sharing information	15	4.2
Public health / domestic hygiene skills	13	3.7
Learnt and started keeping pigs	9	2.6
Improved school classrooms and toilets	8	2.3
Settlement of out-patient medical bills	7	2.0
Cattle dip eradicated ticks	6	1.7
Got access to affordable medicine	3	0.9
Assistance to build a house	3	0.9
Learnt and started poultry farming	3	0.9
Bought a bicycle for <i>boda-boda</i>	1	0.3
None	50	14.3
Total	350	100

SOURCE: Field data

Following the above categorization of resources or assets as many authors label them (Chambers and Conway, 1992; Carswell, 1997; Scoones, 1998; Ellis, 2000), data in Table 6.8 show that CBOs have been instrumental in terms of local people's access to financial capital. About half of the respondents reported to have had financial services from their organizations. These were in the form of share of profits derived from the activities of these organizations; loans advanced to the members; lump sum ROSCA pools; contributions towards funeral expenses; and settlement of medical bills. Nevertheless, most of the financial resources were apparently utilized for direct

consumption rather than engaging in productive activities that could enhance rural livelihoods. Thus, of the 45.1 per cent of the respondents who got access to financial capital through CBOs, only 14.8 per cent invested the resources in small-scale enterprises and education for their children while the rest consumed it via subsistence, funeral and medical expenses.

With regard to physical capital, a total of 16.1 per cent of the respondents accessed the resources through their organizations. Included in this category were heifers for dairy farming; construction of classrooms and toilets in primary schools; cattle dips for eradication of ticks in dairy farming; provision of shelter; and purchase of bicycles for engaging in *boda-boda* transport. It is significant that all these are productive resources and that they were essentially utilized to facilitate participation in activities for earning a living or improving living conditions in general.

Human capital is equally significant for rural livelihoods, given that the individual is the most important resource in the development process. It enables individuals to command higher incomes as a result of their improved health or greater skills, as well as raising the productivity of labor (Ellis, 2000:8). Table 6.8 shows that a total of 15.2 per cent of the respondents got access to this type of resource in form of better farming skills for improved food security; public health awareness and skills in hygienic practices in the household; skills in keeping pigs and poultry; and accessing medicine within the local community at affordable prices. These skills and the improved health conditions resulting from the health-related activities are quite essential in overall rural livelihoods.

Natural capital was accessed by only 5.1 per cent of the respondents and this was in form of clean drinking water. Similarly, only a small proportion of the respondents

identified social capital as a “benefit” from these organizations. Only 4.2 per cent of the respondents recognized the significance of social interaction that results from participation in CBOs as a contributory factor in their livelihoods. Through their interaction, people exchanged information on their livelihoods; learned how to tolerate each other as they worked together to solve their problems; and most importantly, developed trust in each other. Unfortunately, a section of these respondents viewed social interaction only as a means of avoiding idleness by way of “doing something” and not as a means of networking to obtain support in their endeavor to improve livelihoods.

On the whole, it is evident in Table 6.8 that a total of 85.7 per cent of the respondents at least accessed an asset to contribute towards their livelihoods while 14.3 per cent did not acquire any asset through their organizations. This finding significantly differs from our earlier finding on the contribution of these organizations to the solution of household socio-economic problems. One would have expected only 67 per cent of the respondents who got solutions to their household problems (see Table 6.7) to report that they got access to assets for improving their livelihoods, but this percentage rose to 85.7. Similarly one would have expected 33 per cent of the respondents who did not obtain solutions to their household problems (see Table 6.7) to report that they never accessed any assets through their organizations, but only for this percentage to fall to only 14.3. This can be interpreted to mean that some of the respondents who got access to assets through CBOs found such assets inadequate to solve the main household socio-economic problem. In other words, some of the respondents who did not find solutions to their main household socio-economic problems seem to have actually accessed some resources through the activities of their organizations. The implication is that the assets acquired

through CBOs are not sufficient to solve some household socio-economic problems. This could be a pointer to the relatively modest contribution of CBOs to the improvement of rural livelihoods in Western Kenya.

To sum up, it is evident that CBOs in Western Kenya have been useful in enabling local people get access to assets for improving their livelihoods. However, the fact that most of CBO resources are mobilized from outside the organizations rather than the membership may present challenges to the sustainability of improved livelihoods. This problem may be further compounded by the fact that the bulk of the financial resources that arguably constitute the most effective productive asset tend to be consumed by the members rather than being invested. Thus, though CBOs have at least mediated people's access to assets for improving their livelihoods, prospects for the sustainability of such improvements are in doubt.

6.6 THE SUSTAINABILITY OF THE MAIN DEVELOPMENT PROJECTS OF CBOs

Whether improved livelihoods mediated by the activities of CBOs can be sustained is partly dependent on the sustainability of the main development projects of these organizations. This section, therefore, seeks to evaluate the extent to which CBO projects listed in Table 5.7 are sustainable. To this end, we revisit the initiation and implementation of the projects with a view to establishing the extent to which they have actually enabled members improve their livelihoods. This should give pointers as to whether they can be replicated in the local communities to enable more people improve their livelihoods.

6.6.1 Initiation of the Projects

Development from below paradigm emphasizes local people's participation in development decision-making, not only as a means of building their capacity to initiate durable development projects, but also as a mechanism through which they can 'own' and control the projects. To ascertain the extent to which members participated in the initiation of the main development projects of their organizations, we inquired into the origin of the projects. As shown in Table 5.8, we established that whereas the initial idea to start about three-quarters of the projects emanated from the members, slightly more than one-quarter of the projects were initiated from outside the organizations. The initiation of projects by outside actors proceeded in three broad ways.

First, donor organizations involved in community development work introduced the projects to CBOs as a means of channeling their services to the local people. For instance, non-governmental organizations like Family Health International and Heifer Project International introduced dairy farming projects to CBOs in Butere-Mumias district just as the Kenya-Finland Livestock Development Program (K-FLDP) introduced the same projects to CBOs in Busia, Siaya and Nyando districts. Similarly, the idea to start accumulating savings and credit schemes in some of the CBOs in Siaya and Busia districts originated from CARE-Kenya's WEDCO program for extending credit services to small-scale rural enterprises. In the same vein, AMREF initiated primary health care (PHC) programs for *Bukhayo* West Joint women group and *Nasewa* Community Health Self-help group in Busia district as well as *Chiegni Nyamrerwa* women group in Siaya district. UNICEF set up a community pharmacy and a PHC program for a women's group

at *Watombori* in Nyando district. Thus, it is the NGOs, international organizations and quasi-governmental organizations that initiated the projects.

Second, some projects were initiated by local political leaders as a means of recruiting or mobilizing political support. For instance, the MP for Funyula constituency initiated posho mill projects for a number of women's groups in his constituency. One of such groups was *Mungu Mbele* women group, which he formed by merging seven women's groups from a location and donated the posho mill as the main activity around which women would coalesce. The same MP introduced a women's group to Mazingira Institute that went on to initiate a project for making roofing tiles in the organization. In Butere division, the MP initiated the formation of the division-wide Butesero Self-help group and introduced a public commuter bus project as a way of mobilizing political support. Similarly, a councilor in Awasi location of Nyando district initiated the formation of a youth group and introduced to the group a horticulture project.

Third, some projects were initiated by the local provincial administrators, particularly Chiefs and Assistant Chiefs. For instance, the idea to start cattle dip projects in three organizations in Busia, Siaya and Butere-Mumias districts emanated from Chiefs and Assistant Chiefs in their respective areas of jurisdiction. Similarly, an Assistant Chief initiated a water borehole project at Sikalame in Ugunja division. In these cases, the administrators initiated the projects in response to communal needs, around which CBOs were formed to implement and manage the projects.

However, it should be emphasized that either the leaders or ordinary members initiated the majority of the projects within the organizations. Examples include a posho mill project in *Konyri Kendi* women's group in Ugunja division; all rotating savings and

credit projects; horticulture projects in four youth groups in Funyula and Nambale divisions of Busia district; cereals business enterprises in seven women's groups in Busia and Siaya districts; accumulating savings and credit projects in eight organizations from all the districts surveyed; and dairy farming projects in three women's groups in Nyando, Butere and Nambale divisions, just to mention a few. It is significant that members of these organizations initiated a variety of projects, including the relatively capital intensive ones like posho mills. Members essentially acted in response to either their common socio-economic problems or as a result of the "demonstration effect", where they copied the idea from other organizations that had successfully implemented similar projects.

It is, therefore, evident that the majority of the projects originated from within the organizations. Consequently, it can be argued that the members 'owned' the process through which most of the projects were initiated. The question that arises is the extent to which they also owned the implementation process, especially the provision of resources. This brings us to issue of how the projects were funded.

6.6.2 Project Financing

Development from below paradigm is essentially local resource-based (Taylor, 1996: 79). The implication for CBOs is that they ought to rely on local resources, especially those mobilized by the membership, to enhance the sustainability of their projects. Nevertheless, it has already been illustrated that most of the resources for carrying out the activities of most CBOs were obtained from outside the organizations (see Table 6.2). However, the extent of external assistance to CBO projects varied in two broad ways.

First, about one-third of the organizations relied entirely on external assistance to finance the implementation of their projects. Members contributed labor only. This was the case with virtually all of the projects that were initiated from outside the organizations. For instance, it has been alluded to that twelve of the eighteen CBOs that had dairy farming projects obtained the initial heifer and technical assistance from donor NGOs and the KF-LDP. The only contribution from the members was labor to construct cowsheds and plant nappier grass for feeding the animals.

Similarly, the organizations in which CARE-Kenya initiated accumulating savings and credit projects received substantial sums of money from the donor to implement the projects. For instance, *Samaki* women's group, *Obambo* women's group and *Umoja Jua Kali* women's group in Nambale division of Busia district received Kshs. 100,000, Kshs.65,000 and Kshs. 74,000 respectively from the donor in 1998. The same organizations received Kshs. 100,00, Kshs. 52,000 and Kshs. 157,000 respectively in 1999 (Department of Social Services, 1998a; 1999a). Thus, within the two years, some of the organizations received over Kshs. 200,000 from CARE-Kenya to on-lend to their members. The organizations relied on these relatively big amounts of money to run the projects.

In addition to the projects that had been initiated by external actors, some of the projects initiated by members were also implemented through external assistance. *Bululwe* self-help group in Butere division is the best example in this regard. The project was initiated by members, who thereafter went out to solicit for external assistance towards its implementation. Through the patronage of a university Professor who hailed from the locality, the group secured assistance from a number of donors to finance the

implementation of its cattle dip project. Among the donors were the World Health Organization (WHO), Family Health International, Bernard van Leer Foundation of the Netherlands, and the Rural Outreach Program that the Professor headed. In addition, the small compound of the cattle dip had a number of trees bearing commemorative plaques of dignitaries like Ministers, Assistant Ministers, Provincial Commissioners and District Commissioners who had visited the project and probably made their contributions too. The only contribution from the members was labor.

On the whole, about half of the organizations mainly relied on external assistance to implement their main development projects. Members' contributions were largely minimal and essentially took the form of labor.

Second, over one-quarter (30%) of the organizations implemented their projects with partial assistance from outside the organizations. In these cases, members contributed the bulk of the resources. It is significant to note that projects implemented through this form of financing included the capital-intensive ventures like posho mills. An example in this regard is *Konyri Kendi* women's group in Ugunja division. It mobilized about Kshs. 200,000 to implement the project in three ways: through members' regular contributions; profit generated from cereals and butchery enterprises; and through *harambee* fundraisers. Indeed, it is only through *harambee* that the organization got access to external assistance, given that non-members made their contributions. Since members also contributed at *harambee* fundraisers, it is correct to say that members mobilized the bulk of the resources to implement the project.

Similarly, five women's groups mobilized internal resources and obtained partial assistance through *harambee* fundraisers and the NWDF to start cereals enterprises. *Boro*

Gi Nyathindgi women group in Ugunja division had even set up a cereal store at Ugunja market where it stored and sold the cereals. This was a step above the other organizations, which stored their cereals in members' homes and sold them at the local open-air markets.

In the same vein, three women's groups had implemented dairy farming projects without donor assistance. They raised money for buying the initial heifers through members' regular contributions, *harambee* fundraisers and loans from NGOs. In this case, it can be argued that the actual external assistance was in the form of *harambee* contributions and not the loans since the latter would be repaid. Thus, given that members also made contributions to the fundraisers and would repay the loans, the bulk of the resources for implementing the projects were raised by the members.

Most of the rotating savings and credit projects were also implemented mainly using members' regular contributions. There was, however, partial external assistance through the *sindikiza* function. Nevertheless, it should be emphasized that though in some cases the funds raised through this function exceeded members' contributions, it is the actual regular contributions from the members that kept the projects running rather than the *sindikiza* resources. As the name already implies, this component was meant to "escort" the members' contributions and not to raise funds for implementing the projects.

Thirdly, about one-quarter of the organizations implemented their projects without any form of external assistance. It is significant that members relied on their internal resources to implement a wide variety of projects. For instance, *Mundulusia Temakho* women group in Nambale division had implemented a successful accumulating savings and credit project on which members relied to obtain small-scale enterprise working capital without any external assistance. Similarly, there were some rotating savings and

credit projects that operated without the *sindikiza* component for accessing external support.

The other example is the medical insurance project that was initiated by *Khwetebekho Mulaakha* Community Health Scheme. This was one of the unique and most innovative of the projects that we covered in the study. Members raised the required funds through affordable monthly insurance premiums to get the project on course. Similarly, all welfare associations had also implemented funeral or burial schemes without any external assistance.

There is also the example of the youth groups that had used members' regular contributions to purchase seeds and watering cans to implement horticultural projects on land donated by members. A cattle dip project at *Loho* well as a water borehole at *Sikalame* in Ugunja division were also implemented without external assistance.

To sum up, given that half of the organizations relied on external assistance while over one-quarter got partial external assistance to finance the implementation of their projects, it is evident that external resources outweighed members' contributions towards the implementation of CBO projects. In other words, most of the projects of these organizations were implemented using external assistance rather than internal resources mobilized locally by the members. The question that arises is whether the implementation of the projects was successful and with what results in terms of improving rural livelihoods?

6.6.3 Project Implementation and Contribution to Rural Livelihoods

We found that most of the organizations (76%) had completed implementing their main development projects while about one-quarter (19%) of the organizations were still implementing their projects. The projects of the remainder of the organizations (5%) had either stalled or failed.

Examples of the projects that were still being implemented are the dairy farming projects. None of the organizations participating in this activity had completed the implementation process. In other words, not all members of these organizations had received the exotic heifer to start dairy farming at the household level. Thus, the turn for receiving the heifer had not “gone round” the membership. This was attributed to a number of factors like poor animal husbandry that had resulted into death of some heifers; cattle diseases; changing climatic conditions; and the size of membership vis-à-vis the number of cows halving. Nevertheless, about half of the members in these organizations had received heifers and had embarked on dairy farming at the household level. Those who had received the heifers were very enthusiastic about the positive contributions of the projects to their livelihoods.

Another example of the yet to be completed projects was *Sidindi* women group’s nursery school. The group had plans of building the school on its plot at *Sidindi* market, but did not have adequate funds. Consequently, it was running the school in a rented mud-walled room at the said market. Similarly, the projects for building and equipping *Sidonge* and *Busulere* primary schools by two communal self-help groups in *Funyula* division were still being implemented.

Bululwe self-help group's cattle dip project had also not been completed. Despite the external assistance from a number of donors, the organization had not connected water to the cattle dip from a nearby borehole as had been planned. The building of an office at the project site had also stalled. Nevertheless, the project was operating with the difficulty of having members fetch water to fill the dip whenever it was drained for purposes of cleaning and putting in fresh chemicals.

Both the completed projects and those that were still being implemented had made some contributions towards the improvement of rural livelihoods. Some projects had, however, made more contributions in this regard than the others had. Thus, in relative terms, some projects were "positive" in terms of improving rural livelihoods while others could be said to have been "negative".

Among the examples of the positive projects were accumulating savings and credit projects. They had enabled virtually all of participating CBO members to get access to credit. The respondents reportedly utilized the loans that they acquired to finance small-scale enterprises working capital (55.6%); to pay school fees (17.8%); to buy fertilizers and pesticides for horticulture (8.9%); to buy heifers (8.9%); to buy land (4.4%); and to buy premature sugarcane for sale to sugar millers at the harvesting time (4.4%). Similarly, participants in rotating savings and credit projects had received lump sum funds to buy household furniture and kitchen utensils (33.3%); to finance starting and working capital for small-scale enterprises (49.7%); and to purchase farm inputs (17%). It is evident that most of the credit funds were used to improve productivity in both agriculture and small-scale rural enterprises. Since 23 per cent of the organizations had credit projects, it would be correct to say that about one-quarter of the members of

CBOs were able to improve the productive capacity of their farms and small-scale enterprises.

Cereals business enterprises, which were the main projects in seven of the women's groups, had not only afforded members a source of income, but had also improved food security in the local communities. They made cereals available at affordable prices, especially during the post-harvest season when there are food shortages. Similarly, primary health care projects in four of the organizations were instrumental for making non-prescriptive drugs for treating common diseases available in local communities at affordable prices. In addition, these projects' public health awareness campaigns had reportedly sensitized local people on the significance of preventive rather than curative health care. *Watombori* Community Pharmacy and *Nyamrerwa* (*Luo* for midwife or community health worker) in Nyando division had cut an edge over others in this regard. Besides operating a well stocked pharmacy under the care of a trained full-time community nurse, its community health workers focused on public health campaigns and were credited for sensitizing local people to build latrines in a community where earlier on only a few households had this facility.

The case of the medical insurance scheme is also worth noting. *Khwetebekho Mulaakha* Community Health Scheme had enabled its members get access to outpatient treatment for simple diseases like malaria that had previously killed a number of people in the community. Most of the members were so enthusiastic about their project and were no longer worried about the problem of footing outpatient medical bills.

Water borehole projects had also made commendable improvements to local people's livelihoods. This was particularly the case in the relatively dry areas of Busia

and Siaya districts. For instance, *Kwe gi Lamo* women group's borehole in South-East Gem location of Siaya district had saved local people from walking a distance of about 20Km to Lake Victoria in search of water during the dry season

On the whole, the main development projects of about half of the organizations (47.3%) were positively making contributions towards the improvement of members' livelihoods. The projects of the remainder of the organizations were "negative" in the sense that they made minimal contributions to members' livelihoods partly due to a number of factors that we shall discuss shortly.

The first glaring example of the negative projects is *Mungu Mbele* women group's posho mill. Whereas *Konyri Kendi* women group's posho mill that had been initiated by the members was operational at the time of the interviews, *Mungu Mbele's* mill that had been donated by the MP had stalled. Members were unable to maintain it due to poor management, which was attributed to the very politics of patronage through which the project had been initiated. We shall return to this point in a while.

Another example is *Ejinja* Community Water Supply project in Funyula division of Busia district. It was negative mainly because some of the members could not afford the cost of participation and was, therefore, benefiting only a small section of the intended beneficiaries. The Kenya-Finland Cooperation Water Supply Program (KEFINCO) initiated the water borehole project. Members of the CBO that was formed to manage the borehole then decided to further develop the project by setting up a pipe infrastructure to pump water from the borehole to the members' households. A generator for pumping water was donated by the *El Nino* Rehabilitation Program in the Office of the President while funds collected through members' contributions and a *harambee* fundraiser were

used to buy the pipes. Meters were then fitted on each household's tap for billing purposes. Whereas the idea behind this development was ideal for solving the problem of access to clean water for the members, it had become apparent that most of the members could not afford the cost of the water. The system was completed in 1999, but by July 2001 when we interviewed the members, about 30 per cent of the members had either pulled out or their water supply had been disconnected because they could not afford to settle the monthly bills. Some of our informants alleged that the project "had been hijacked by the elite who could afford the exorbitant bills" and were locking out the poor. Since the project relied on members to meet operational and maintenance costs, the inability of some members to pay bills and their subsequent dropout implies that the organization would have difficulties to operate the project if the trend continued. Above all, the project would benefit only a few while the rest may still be unable to get access to clean water.

Similarly, horticultural projects in five youth groups had also made little contribution towards improving members' livelihoods. This was mainly because there seemed to be no commitment or seriousness in the production of the crops. The organizations planted the crops only once in a year, yet most of the farms were near water sources. The latter could not be used for irrigation to enhance production of crops throughout the year. Consequently, little income was realized from the projects. We found an explanation for this turn of events. In our informal discussions with some members of staff of the Department of Social Services, we learned that most of the youth groups tended to use their projects, not to generate income, but as "baits" for accessing external assistance. They explained that most of the horticultural farms remained fallow most of

the time until the groups learned of a potential donor visiting the locality. It was then that they initiated some activities on the farms as a way of drawing the attention of the donor to the projects. This attitude and behavior partly contributed to the underutilization of the farms and the lack of commitment among the members to participate in the projects, both of which adversely affected the contribution of these projects to improved livelihoods.

Besides such projects that made minimal contributions towards the improvement of livelihoods, some of the projects had failed to make any contribution in this regard. For instance, *Esimba Ikona Abakwane* women's group in Funyula division initiated a fish farming project, but it failed partly due to the lack of morale. It has been alluded to that this group was affiliated to an opposition political party to the chagrin of the local MP, who went out to frustrate its activities through the Department of Social Services staff. It is the resultant isolation of the group that demoralized members to participate in its activities. Subsequently, its project failed to take off and one of the co-opted members capitalized on this to use the group's name to obtain a loan from the Lake Basin Development Authority to develop his own fish ponds.

The other example is that of *Tuungane* Women group's project for making low cost roofing tiles for sale. Though the project was initiated and funded by a donor NGO, members were unable to make quality tiles that could be easily marketed. Consequently, the project had stalled at the time of our interviews, partly due to the lack of market for the tiles.

6.6.4 Problems Affecting the Projects

There are more examples of positive and negative projects, but from these few examples, it is apparent that some problems had contributed to the failure or the minimal contribution of some projects to the improvement of rural livelihoods. Some of these problems had also affected the performance of the “positive” projects. We now examine some of these problems.

6.6.4.1 Lack of Adequate Funds

This was a standard response in virtually all of the organizations we surveyed. The magnitude of the problem, however, varied with the type of project. The problem was reported by most of the organizations that had cereal enterprises (84.6%), horticulture (76.4%), PHC and community pharmacies (73.3%), and accumulating savings and credit (55.6%) projects. Nevertheless, it was reported by a few participants in dairy farming (40%), rotating savings and credit (37.5%), cattle dips (30%), and water borehole (21.4%) projects, for example. This problem is understandable with regard to the projects that require high working capital input like accumulating savings and credit, small-scale enterprises, and community pharmacies. However, this should not be the case for projects that require relatively lower working capital input as is the case with horticulture, cattle dips and even provision of farm labor that is purely labor-intensive. Moreover, it is surprising that even the organizations that had implemented their projects through substantial external assistance, such as dairy farming, water boreholes and some of the accumulating savings and credit schemes, also raised this problem.

Whereas this problem is consistent with our earlier finding that CBOs do not have sufficient capacity to mobilize local resources to implement their projects, it is also an indicator of the rising level of dependency in these organizations. As much as these organizations need to “scale-up” their projects to meet the ever-increasing challenges of rural livelihoods, one would expect the organizations that received external assistance to start their projects to raise internal resources for the purpose through members' contributions, for example. But the tendency for these organizations is to continue expecting similar assistance to expand their activities. This could be a pointer to the pale prospects for the sustainability of the projects.

6.6.4.2 Embezzlement and Mismanagement of Project Funds

This problem was mainly mentioned in organizations that had four main types of projects: posho mills (50%), water boreholes (43%), cattle dips (40%), and PHC and community pharmacies (20%). Respondents alleged that officials embezzled or misused project funds, partly due to the influence that they enjoyed as a result of their positions in local level patron-client networks. The case of *Mungu Mbele* women's group illustrates this point.

Being an affiliated group that brought together seven smaller women's groups, representatives of each of the affiliate groups worked in the posho mill for one week in rotation under the supervision of one official of the “umbrella” organization. With time, it was alleged that each of the groups that worked in the enterprise did not remit to the treasurer the full amount of money that had been collected during the respective week. This revelation saw members of the seven groups jockey for the opportunity to work in

the posho mill and get access to the money that “others” were swindling. At the same time, those who managed to find their way to the posho mill started to resist handing over to the next group at the end of their mandatory period. Since the posho mill was a donation from the MP, some groups sought political intervention from the MP’s local clients, especially from the councilor and chief. This gave the councilor an opportunity to put in the posho mill his allies who went on to siphon funds from the project and allegedly shared with him. It is this group, with the protection of the councilor, that “presided over” the final collapse of the project by embezzling the remainder of the funds. We were informed in the informal discussions that a similar fate had befallen the other posho mills that the MP had donated to five other women’s groups in the constituency. Thus, the very politics of patronage that had brought about the project contributed to its failure by protecting some individuals as they embezzled and mismanaged funds.

The other example is that of *Sidindi* women’s group. We were informed through informal discussions that the nursery school project was a mere conduit for leaders to embezzle funds as they had done before. The leaders of the organization were said to have a long history of embezzling and mismanaging project funds, partly due to the patronage of a local councilor. It was explained that the organization started as a communal welfare association that brought together “friends” at *Sidindi* in the early 1990s, hence called *Sidindi* Friends Welfare Association. But in 1997, the leaders converted it into a “women group” in order to get access to the 1997 NWDF despite the fact that it had more men than women as members. With the assistance of the councilor, the “women’s group” got a share of the fund and the leaders allegedly embezzled it. Then in 1998 when the HIV/AIDS awareness campaign gained momentum and CBOs were

sought by the government and other donors to spearhead the campaign at the local level, the organization took up this activity allegedly as a means of getting access to the “huge sum of money” that was expected. It was after failing to get the “AIDS money” that a *harambee* was held in 2000 to “boost the development fund of the organization”. The proceeds of the *harambee* were subsequently used to start the school in 2001. However, it was alleged that the value of the school was already less than the money that had been raised at the *harambee* and the fees that parents paid. Consequently, there was lack of members’ commitment to participate in the activities of the organization and also a rising rate of non-payment of school fees. Thus, the signs were that the project would not be sustainable in the long term. This may be interpreted to mean that the leaders were essentially using the organization to obtain external assistance, not for purposes of initiating projects to benefit members, but to embezzle.

Similar situations were reported in cattle dip and water borehole projects where leaders were accused of embezzling funds that members raised towards maintenance of the facilities. Some members of *Watombori* community Pharmacy and *Nyamrerwa* also alleged that the leaders and community health workers embezzled funds that were raised through the sale of drugs and mosquito nets.

It is apparent that the problem of embezzlement and mismanagement of project funds was mainly reported in the organizations that received external assistance to finance the implementation of their projects and rarely in those organizations that relied on internal resources. We may interpret this to mean that local people tend to be honest and forthright in the management of the projects that they implement using their own resources, but not in the projects that are implemented through external assistance.

6.6.4.3 Defaulting and Delay in Remitting Contributions

This was mainly reported in rotating savings and credit (ROSCA), accumulating savings and credit (ASCRA), water borehole projects and funeral or burial schemes. In ROSCAs, about two-thirds of the respondents identified delay in remitting regular contributions as the main problem that faced the projects. This was attributed to lack of stable income in the midst of the rising cost of living. In some organizations, inability to pay regular contributions had forced some members to drop out of the schemes at the end of the “round of contributions”. The implication is that if the downturn in economic performance both at the national and the local levels persist, most of the rural dwellers may be unable to raise funds to participate in these projects, which could be detrimental to their sustainability.

With regard to ASCRAs, 15.6 percent of the respondents identified delay in remitting regular contributions as the main problem while 17.7 percent argued that defaulting on loan repayment was the main problem. Whereas the former was mainly identified in the organizations that relied on internal resources to finance the projects, the latter was a problem in the donor-funded projects. Defaulting was partly attributed to poor entrepreneurial skills by some borrowers who invested the loans in small-scale enterprises that failed. However, other respondents felt that some of the defaulters had the ability to repay, but “had just refused” to do so. This could be a pointer to the lack of local initiative/ownership in the donor-funded projects. Alternatively, it could be an indicator of the growing attitude at the local level that loans provided by donors are “free resources” whose repayment is not mandatory. Both interpretations are antithetical to the sustainability of the projects.

Organizations with water borehole projects had 22 percent of their members complain about the rising rate of defaulting on payment of monthly contributions towards maintenance of the boreholes. This, coupled with the high cost of maintenance, implies that the projects could have difficulties to sustain their operations.

6.6.4.4 Poor Leadership

Poor leadership was blamed for a number of problems that affected organizations that had projects in dairy farming, ASCRAs, cattle dips, posho mills, water boreholes, making roofing tiles, and primary health care, among others. For instance, in dairy farming projects, 13.3 percent of the respondents blamed poor leadership for lack of transparency in deciding the turn of members to receive heifers and inability to get external assistance to solve dairy production problems. Similarly, 11.1 percent of the respondents participating in accumulating savings and credit projects attributed “favoritism in the allocation of loans” and the lack of external assistance to poor leadership. This argument is a pointer to the thinking that it is the role of leaders to link their organizations to donors and thereafter make “favorable decisions” to enable all members benefit from the subsequent donations. Thus, “good leadership” is construed to mean the ability to deliver benefits to the members and not to influence the actions and behavior of members in carrying out the activities of the organization. This further strengthens our earlier finding that leaders in CBOs are expected to link organizations to donors and dominate decision-making processes.

In some of the organizations, there were leadership wrangles and squabbles that adversely affected the activities of the organizations. For instance, part of the problem in

Mungu Mbele women's group is that leaders had refused to hold elections over the years to the chagrin of the members. Similarly, *Tuungane* women's group was riddled with squabbles between members and leaders who had allegedly refused to hold elections over the years "in order to continue embezzling funds donated to the organization". The leaders, one of whom was an influential chief and a man among women, enjoyed the protection of the MP who was said to be the patron of the organization. This rendered the members powerless in removing leaders from office, partly due to the fear of losing the resources and other forms of support that accrued from the MP's patronage. Thus, dependency and patronage were contributory factors to poor leadership in some of the organizations.

6.6.4.5 Dependency

The problem of depending on external assistance to implement projects is quite evident. It has been shown that most of the resources for implementing CBO projects were obtained from outside the organizations and that these organizations have subsequently remained dependent on such assistance to finance their activities. This problem that is increasingly becoming a hallmark of CBOs, partly due to the politics of patronage at the local level, has affected development projects in at least two broad ways.

First, though aid has enabled some of the organizations to successfully start and implement valuable projects, it has raised expectations for external assistance in most organizations. The result is that some of them seem not to exhaust their internal potential for raising more resources to "scale-up" the projects. It is evident that whereas the organizations that implemented their projects through external assistance still expect aid

to meet operational expenses or working capital, those that relied on internal resources are equally looking out for aid to improve their capital base. Indeed, the impression created by the latter group of organizations is that they “also deserve to benefit” from the external assistance that accrue from the politics of patronage “just like other CBOs”. It should be recalled that this is why some respondents alleged that the main problem they had with political leaders was that they had not linked their organizations to donors for assistance in the same way they (leaders) had done for “others”. This has partly contributed to the poor mobilization of local resources to implement or improve development projects in some of the organizations.

Second, dependence on external assistance has adversely affected the sustainability of some of the projects of these organizations. The organizations have been unable to continue financing the projects at the end of donor funding. The example of *Mango* Community-Based Development Organization’s project for building and equipping primary schools in Busia district illustrates this problem.

The project was actually an initiative of the International Christian Services (ICS) NGO of the Netherlands. ICS, through the District Education Officer and the local elite, identified “needy schools” and embarked on assisting them to rehabilitate or build classrooms and toilets as well as provide some learning and teaching materials. It provided the required materials and equipments and engaged CBOs to mobilize local labor and manage the implementation of the project. When ICS identified *Sidonge* primary school in Nambuku location of Funyula division as a beneficiary, *Mango* was engaged to play the latter role. The result of this arrangement, where ICS provided all material resources while *Mango* provided labor only, is that the project would stall

whenever ICS delayed to release funds for purchasing materials on schedule. When ICS eventually pulled out of the project after building four classrooms and six toilets over a period of about three years, *Mango* was unable to continue with the project because it could not afford to sustain it. Thus though aid is useful in the development process, reliance on it reduces the capacity of CBOs to mobilize local resources to sustain the projects so implemented.

6.6.4.6 Other Problems

In addition, there were other problems that also adversely affected the projects. First were unreliable and unpredictable climatic conditions. Over 20 percent of the respondents participating in dairy farming projects in Busia, Siaya and Nyando districts reported that the variable climatic conditions had affected the production of nappier grass for feeding cows as well as the availability of drinking water for the animals. This implies that exotic farming using zero-grazing method in some parts of western Kenya is vulnerable to climatic stress and shocks and may not be replicated in the relatively dry areas without difficulties.

These climatic conditions also affected projects for subsistence crop farming and provision of farm labor. Members of three women's groups that cultivated maize, beans, sorghum and rice for sale in Busia, Siaya and Nyando districts argued that unreliable and unpredictable rainfall patterns had adversely affected the quality and quantity of harvests, with the result that income from the projects was increasingly reducing if not uncertain. Similarly, a women's group in Funyula division that provided farm labor to mobilize funds that were shared at the end of the year to celebrate Christmas and New Year

festivities complained that such poor climatic conditions reduced the demand for labor, thereby denying the group its main source of income.

The second problem was the fluctuation of cereal prices. This mainly affected subsistence crop farming and cereal enterprise projects. The former projects were particularly exposed to this problem at the harvesting season when prices fell due to the saturation of local markets with the produce. This gave cereals enterprises an entry point into the business of purchasing cereals at the low prices and store for sale when prices improved later. However, even these enterprises were affected in terms of the profit margins that they made, with some of them occasionally making losses. It was explained that the price of cereals in the post-harvest season largely depends on the magnitude of food deficit. The later is a function of the quality and quantity of the previous harvest as well as the supply of cereals from surplus areas into the region experiencing a deficit. For example, in Busia district, the price of cereals tends to fall with the amount of maize supplied to the local markets from neighboring Uganda where the crop is mainly produced for sale rather than consumption. Such that when there is a bumper maize harvest in Uganda, cereal prices in the district would fall following the flooding of local markets with Ugandan maize. This would adversely affect CBOs' profit margins, as they would be compelled to sell their stored cereals at lower prices than expected. Such price fluctuations undermined the level of income for the CBOs participating in these enterprises.

The third problem had to do with the lack of simple technical skills for repairing or maintaining water boreholes. Members of two communal self-help associations in Busia and Siaya districts complained of the frequent breakdowns of the boreholes yet the

few technicians available charged very high fees for their services. Given that the organizations did not have adequate funds to pay for the frequent repair work, the solution lied in members learning simple repair skills to enhance the sustainability of the project. There were, however, no plans to have some members trained for this purpose.

6.7 CONCLUSION

It has been the purpose in this chapter to show the contribution of CBOs to local-level capacity building for sustainable development and also to assess the sustainability of the development projects of these organizations. The discussion began by questioning whether participation in these organizations has facilitated a learning process for their members, in which they learn skills for solving socio-economic problems that affect their livelihoods. It has been illustrated that though a substantial proportion of the members has acquired specialized skills for solving their socio-economic problems at the household level, the majority of the members have not. This is partly due to the prevalence of functional participation and the initiation of development projects from outside the organizations, both of which have disengaged most of the members from the identification and formulation stages of the projects of their organizations.

These two factors have also affected the mobilization of local resources for the implementation of development projects. In most of the CBOs, external resources outweighed the internal resources in financing the implementation of projects. This was partly due to the politics of patronage that made it possible for most of these organizations to get access to some assistance. The other explanation for this has been given as the little amount of funds and other resources raised in these organizations due to the low rates of

regular contributions that are fixed for purposes of enabling all members, including the poor, participate. Thus, functional participation has not always meant contributing more local resources for development projects than sharing the benefits that accrue from external assistance to the projects. Consequently, CBOs have not significantly improved the capacity of local people to mobilize their own resources to implement development projects of their choice.

Nevertheless, most of the members of these organizations have found the activities of CBOs worthwhile with regard to the solution of household socio-economic problems. It is evident that these organizations have enabled the majority of their members to get access to some resources or assets for improving their livelihoods. However, most of these resources have been used, not for productive purposes like starting income-generating activities for sustainable livelihoods, but for immediate consumption. In any case, it has been demonstrated that the resources acquired through CBOs have been inadequate in solving the consumption needs of most of the households. The fact that these resources are obtained from external donors further compounds the sustainability of the socio-economic solutions offered by CBOs to members' household problems.

Indeed, the discussion of the main development projects of these organizations that are at the center of accessing resources to the members has revealed that though most of them were initiated within the organizations, the bulk of the resources for implementing them emanated from external assistance. Even with such assistance, most of the organizations have been unable to mobilize additional internal resources to "scale-up" the projects. Instead, they continue to expect further external assistance for the purpose. Moreover, it has been shown that most of the donor-supported projects are prone to

embezzlement and mismanagement of funds. In addition, there are other problems like defaulting and delay in paying regular contributions, poor leadership and variable climatic conditions that affect the projects. Some of these problems, such as the inability of some members to pay their regular contributions, threaten the very existence of the organizations overall. A combination of these problems and the politics of patronage that has entrenched the dependency syndrome have adversely affected the prospects for the sustainability of most of the development projects of these organizations.

The findings in chapter four and this chapter are in conformity with our hypothesis that popular participation enhances the capacity of CBO members to improve their livelihoods and, therefore, contributes positively to sustainable development. The evidence shows that dependency has contributed to the prevalence of functional participation rather than popular participation in most of the CBOs. This has adversely affected the improvement of most of the members' capacity to acquire skills and also mobilize their own resources to solve their livelihood problems. Thus, most of these organizations have not enhanced popular participation in their activities and have subsequently not been quite effective in enhancing the prospects for the sustainability of local level development initiatives.

CHAPTER SEVEN

SUMMARY OF FINDINGS, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

7.1 SUMMARY OF THE FINDINGS

This study set out to assess the contribution of community-based organizations to sustainable development at the local level in the light of the political environment in Western Kenya. It was premised on the assumption that members' popular participation in the activities of CBOs is a prerequisite for these organizations' contribution to sustainable development at the local level; and that popular participation is a function of internal leadership and management structures as well as the external political environment in which CBOs operate. This assumption has guided the discussion of the contribution of these organizations to sustainable development using "development from below" paradigm as the frame of reference. We now present a summary of the main findings of the study.

7.1.1 CBOs as "People's Organizations"

One of the central tenets of the "bottom-up" approach to development that forms the core of "development from below" paradigm is that people should participate in the activities for securing their livelihoods in order to build their capacity to sustain such activities. Local organizations that are formed and managed by members themselves are a major forum through which popular participation is likely to obtain.

In order to establish whether CBOs are "people's organizations", this study has shown that in the Kenyan context, these organizations have their origins in socio-

economic scarcity, insecurity and risk that adversely affect local people's livelihoods. They are mainly formed through three different initiatives. First are local people's own initiatives, but occasionally with stimuli from outside the membership or community. Second, some external actors respond to situations of scarcity, insecurity and risk in local communities by initiating the formation of CBOs. Cases in point are the NGOs that have initiated the formation of CBOs to be used as delivery mechanisms for their services to the local communities. CARE-Kenya for example initiated the formation of accumulating savings and credit schemes among businesswomen in Busia and Siaya districts in order to use them to extend credit to rural enterprises. The management of the CBOs so formed is, however, left to the local people. Third, political actors, including the local elite, capitalize on development problems in local communities to initiate the formation of CBOs for use as mechanisms for exercising political control. *Mungu Mbele* and *Sirindiro* women's groups in Funyula division and *Butesero* self-help group in Butere divisions are some of the examples in this regard. However, in the majority of the cases we found that either people themselves formed the organizations in response to socio-economic scarcity, insecurity and risks that threaten rural livelihoods or local political actors and the elite worked with local people to form the organizations. It can, therefore, be said that most of the members of CBOs in Western Kenya took the initiative, and/or participated, in the formation of their organizations.

The study found that membership of the CBOs cut across age, gender, marital status, level of formal education, occupation and social status. The only common factor among the members was that they resided or worked in the same community and that they were affected by similar development problems. In some communities ethnic identities

were predominant, but membership was not restricted to such identities. Thus, CBOs bring together people of different walks of life in local communities to find solutions to development problems that threaten their livelihoods. These problems are numerous and are found in virtually all sectors of the economy (as shown in chapter two). Hence the activities of CBOs in Western Kenya are spread in rural finance; agriculture; small-scale rural enterprises; dairy farming; health; education; transport; marketing infrastructure; social welfare; water infrastructure; medical insurance; among others. Indeed, the limiting factor in the design of development activities in most of the CBOs is the availability of resources both within and outside the organizations for implementation. It is therefore evident that though the activities of some organizations like *Butesero* self-help group, *Mungu Mbele* women's group and *Sirindiro* women's group are politically motivated, the activities of most CBOs are based on the socio-economic needs and aspirations of the members.

Based on these findings, the study submits that with regard to the formation of these organizations, CBOs are to a large extent "people's organizations". However, members' actual "ownership" of these organizations and their development projects has been compromised by the paucity of resources to implement the numerous projects that are necessary to solve the myriad socio-economic difficulties that affect people's livelihoods.

7.1.2 Dependency and the Politics of Patronage

Most of the CBOs in Western Kenya usually start off from a relatively poor resource base. As other studies have shown (Mbithi and Rasmusson, 1977; Thomas,

1985; Chitere, 1994a; 1994b; Oyugi, 2002), some organizations start projects without any vision as to how they will be completed and only hope that a donor would come their way to assist. Thus, the tendency is for most of the CBOs to initiate projects and then look out for external assistance to finance their completion. There are also some organizations that start projects to be used as tools for soliciting for donor assistance as the case of *Sidindi* women's group has demonstrated. Consequently, most of the CBOs in Western Kenya are dependent on external assistance to finance their activities. There is a culture of dependency that is encouraging even those organizations that have successfully implemented their projects without external assistance to go out of their way to look for donations, with the standard claim that they do not have "adequate funds" to expand or diversify the projects. This problem has indeed been highlighted by other studies (Chitere, 1994b: 157; Matanga, 2000; UNDP, 2002b: 94), but what is not adequately explained is why handouts from both government functionaries and NGOs have enhanced dependency in these organizations.

It has been explained in the study that dependency in these organizations is partly a product of the politics of patronage that were introduced by Mzee Jomo Kenyatta in the mid 1960s and enhanced during the Moi era. Both being personal rule regimes, they used the notion of "constituency service" to align politicians to the center of power that they controlled. This notion compelled politicians to make contributions to self-help projects in their constituencies in order to win elections. Whereas politicians were required to show their contribution to self-help projects as a sign of their influence at the local level, local people (read members of CBOs) were encouraged to demand assistance from political leaders for their self-help projects in return for political support. This was

interpreted in CBO circles to mean that these organizations had a "right" to be assisted by the political leaders they voted for to complete the projects that they started, while politicians expected political support in exchange for the assistance they extended to CBOs. At the same time, the state increased its control over the activities of CBOs, particularly during the Moi era, in order to align CBOs to particular politicians who were linked to the center of power. Thus, unlike the Kenyatta regime, the Moi regime controlled CBOs' efforts to fundraise in order to cut out of the patronage system those politicians who were perceived not to be loyal to the president. In the process, CBOs became appendages of the patron-client networks that linked local political elite and/or the state to society, thereby enhancing their dependence on local patrons to carry out their activities.

It is, however, evident that the advent of multi-party politics since the beginning of the 1990s has slightly changed the form of patronage in the areas that embraced "opposition politics". CBOs in such areas tend to have autonomy to fundraise and seek assistance from the elite and politicians of different political parties. Similarly, these organizations can influence local politics, though the provision of development resources continues to be part of the determinants of CBOs' support for local political leaders. This reorganization of patronage in the then so-called "opposition areas" like Nyanza province has seen politicians once again jockey for space in *harambee* fundraisers for CBOs. Thus, despite the change in the structure of patronage as a result of the relative democratization of the political environment in the region and perhaps the country as a whole, CBOs in both the "opposition areas" and the "pro-government zones" have continued to rely on patronage resources to finance their activities. The resultant nexus between the politics of

patronage and the supply of external resources to CBOs seems to have influenced leadership and participation in the management of these organizations.

7.1.3. Patronage and Participation in Leadership and Decision-Making

Most of the CBOs in Western Kenya have accessed external assistance to implement their projects through patronage linkages. Local patrons of these organizations were reported to have assisted them by way of linking them to donor NGOs; organizing *harambee* fundraisers for them; or assisting them to get access to government services and resources. This is in agreement with Chitere's (1994b: 156) observation in his study of the women's self-help movement in Machakos district that:

“Councillors and other key leaders played a leading part in attracting funds for self-help groups in their areas and even to groups they were closely associated with.....”

Thus, patronage linkages were valued for their role in extracting external resources to the organizations. Subsequently, these linkages influenced the choice of leaders and the decision-making processes in these organizations.

The study found that most of the organizations had established three main leadership positions: those of chairperson, secretary and treasurer. The members mainly elected leaders to fill these positions, with only a few of the organizations appointing their leaders. Though the electoral process was largely participatory in that all members had a chance to make their choices, such choices were generally based on some functional factors. Whereas the ability of an individual to link the organization to sources of external assistance was significant in the election of chairpersons, literacy and trustworthiness were key to the choice of secretaries and treasurers, respectively. Since the chairpersons were the most influential leaders in these organizations, the implication

is that patronage significantly determined the choice of leaders in most of the CBOs. This would seem to support Kanyinga's (1995a: 118) observation that voluntary organizations, of which CBOs are one type, tend to strengthen rather than weaken patronage linkages in personal rule regimes. In this case, CBOs have systematically sought to "fit in" with the patronage structures that define and make available external resources to the organizations; thereby reproducing political patronage within the organizations. Thus, dependence on external resources that are mainly accessed through patron-client networks has seen the politics of patronage infiltrate the leadership of most of the CBOs in Western Kenya.

With regard to participation in decision-making, we found that CBOs regularly hold meetings within the local communities and that the majority of the members usually attend. Although all members generally have an opportunity to participate in the decision-making process, it is the leaders of these organizations who make or initiate the making of most decisions and thereafter seek members' approval. The chairpersons were found to be more influential in this regard mainly because they are respected for the role they play in accessing external assistance to the organizations. Thus, it is the chairpersons' links to patronage networks through which resources are accessed to CBOs that make them more influential in decision-making processes than the other leaders and members.

The evidence in this study indicates that participation in these organizations is generally more functional than reflective. Consequently, most of the members tend to passively participate in the making of decisions that do not directly involve the contribution of resources and sharing of benefits that accrue from the activities of their organizations. Indeed, most members become active participants when making decisions

on "who should get what" and leave deliberations on other issues to the leaders. To a large extent, most of the members attend meetings mainly to receive reports on the viability of new development projects as suggested by leaders or donors; external assistance to implement new development projects; the status of members' contribution of resources to the projects; the general management of the projects; and occasionally to approve decisions on "the way forward" as charted by the leaders. Otherwise, the most significant issue to most of the members is how to get access to the benefits made possible by the projects of the organizations, especially those that are donor-funded. Consequently, leaders tend to dominate the decision-making processes in these organizations. Since patronage has influenced leadership, it has also influenced decision-making in most of the CBOs in Western Kenya. This brings to mind the issue of whether patronage also influences members' participation in development projects.

7.1.4 Members' Participation in Development Projects

The main motivation for members of CBOs to participate in the projects of their organizations was to share the benefits that accrued from such projects. This saw the levels of members' participation vary in the three stages of the project cycle. At the identification stage where there were no immediate benefits, membership participation was minimal. Of course the other explanation for the low participation is that donors from outside the organizations initiated some of the projects. Nevertheless, the level of members' engagement increased at the formulation stage where strategies for implementing the projects were laid. Increased participation at this stage is probably

because most of the members would be strategizing to place themselves in positions to share in the subsequent benefits of the projects once implemented.

The level of participation was even higher at the implementation stage, for this is where the benefits of the projects are most expected. Thus, with functional participation, the tendency is for most of the members to get engaged in the implementation of projects that are initiated by other members and/or external donors rather than taking part in the whole process of thinking, debating, deciding and acting to start development projects that suit their immediate needs.

We also found that members' participation in the development projects of CBOs tended to increase with the availability of donor assistance to the organizations. Participation in the implementation of development projects was higher in those organizations that received external assistance, especially from political leaders, than in those organizations that did not receive any assistance. We have interpreted the fact that external assistance to most of the CBOs is a function of patronage to mean that the politics of patronage has significantly influenced the level of participation in the implementation of projects. The result is that most of the organizations that are not patronized by political leaders and the local elite have tended to remain less active due to either political intimidation as the case of *Esimba Ikona Abakwane* women's group has demonstrated, or the alleged "lack of resources" for scaling-up the projects. It is this functional participation that has enhanced the culture of dependency in most of these organizations in Western Kenya.

This finding is a significant challenge to the popular neo-liberal assumption inherent in development from below paradigm that people's participation is higher in

those organizations or activities that they "own"; in which they contribute their resources and rely on them to solve their socio-economic problems. Though data may not be adequate to reject the validity of this assumption, our finding contradicts it by showing that local people participate more actively in those activities or organizations where they stand a chance of getting additional resources or benefits from external support. This may be attributed to the problem of dependency that has been enhanced by the politics of patronage in these organizations. It generally paints adverse prospects for local-level capacity building for sustainable development. The finding is even more apparent looking at the evidence on capacity building for sustainable development.

7.1.5 CBOs and Local Capacity-Building for Sustainable Development

In development from below paradigm it is argued that popular participation, referred to in this analysis as "reflective" participation, in local organizations' development activities builds the capacity of local people to initiate durable socio-economic activities for improving their livelihoods. The "capacity" is, therefore, a mediating or intervening factor in enhancing the sustainability of rural livelihoods. The study inquired about people's "capacity" with regard to skills or knowledge for initiating livelihood activities; mobilization of local resources; and solving pressing household socio-economic problems.

The finding is that due to the prevalence of functional participation and the identification as well as formulation of some development projects by donors from outside the organizations, the majority of the members have not acquired specialized or specific skills that they could use to start income-generating activities at the household

level. To a large extent, members' participation in the activities of their organizations has not led to what Mulwa (1988) has termed as open and genuine efforts to transfer the necessary skills to local people to reduce their dependence on expert assistance. Less than half of the respondents reported to have learned better farming methods; small-scale entrepreneurship; exotic dairy farming methods; primary healthcare; home economics; how to raise pigs; and how to make bricks. As much as all these skills are useful in improving rural livelihoods, they are essentially specific answers to "functional" questions rather than "reflective" inquiries into why livelihood problems have persisted. In other words, there is little evidence of improved consciousness on the causes of rural poverty as a result of participation in these organizations. Instead, there seems to be rising expectations for more external assistance to come their way through the organizations.

Consistent with the high expectation for external assistance, the study found that most of the organizations utilized more external than local resources to implement their main development projects. Though such donor funds were supplemented with members' contributions, such contributions were relatively minimal given the low rates of individual regular contributions that had been fixed by the organizations to conform to their members' low incomes. Indeed, some of the members still had difficulties in paying the said "little" contributions, with some of them defaulting and/or opting out of the organizations. It is, therefore, apparent that due to the availability of, and reliance on, external assistance to implement development projects, CBOs have not been effective in mobilizing local resources for development. Consequently, the capacity of local people to mobilize their own resources to start development projects of their choice has not significantly improved.

Similarly, reliance on external assistance to fund the activities of these organizations has adverse implications for the sustainability of CBO solutions to members' household socio-economic problems. Though the majority of the respondents used resources from the activities of these organizations to solve a variety of household problems, most of the activities were financed through external assistance. This means that CBOs may not be in a position to solve members' household problems without external assistance. Consequently, prospects for the sustainability of the solutions offered by CBOs to household problems is largely dependent on the continuity of external assistance to these organizations, yet this is unlikely given the growing donor fatigue with increasing requests for assistance. Moreover, the uncertainty that surrounds patron-client relationships through which most of the organizations receive such assistance implies that assistance to some of the organizations may cease anytime the patron finds some of the organizations less useful in the "power equation" than others. This generally raises doubt about the prospects for the sustainability of the livelihood solutions that these organizations have offered to most households. The evidence on the sustainability of the development projects of CBOs further illustrates this point.

7.1.6 The Sustainability of Improved Livelihoods and Development Projects

CBOs have been significant in mediating people's access to resources or assets for improving their livelihoods. The natural, physical, human, financial and social forms of assets have all been essential in improving people's livelihoods. Nevertheless, this study's evidence is that these assets have not been sufficient in solving most of the households' socio-economic problems. Some of the members who actually accessed some

resources through their organizations reported that the activities of the organizations had not helped them to solve their main socio-economic problems like poor shelter, unemployment, lack of school fees and high medical expenses. This means that the contribution of CBOs to the solution of household socio-economic problems, and by implication the improvement of rural livelihoods may be at most modest.

In any case, the study shows that most of the assets accessed through CBOs have mainly been used to satisfy immediate consumption needs of the households. A few of the members used the assets to engage in long-term productive activities that would enhance continuity in earning a living. The basic concern is that most of the assets do not stand a chance of being replicated or increased since they are mainly consumed. The fact that most of these assets are obtained from outside the organizations through patronage linkages further complicates the prospects for the sustainability of improved livelihoods that may result from the availability of such assets.

Of more significance to the long term continuity of improved livelihoods is the very sustainability of the projects of these organizations. The analysis of the main development projects of these organizations has shown that most of them were either initiated by donors who also provided the bulk of the resources for their implementation or were initiated by members who, thereafter, sought external assistance to implement them. Whereas this is partly because the members do not have the capacity to mobilize adequate local resources to start or complete the projects, the other explanation is the prevalence of the politics of patronage that has aggravated dependency in these organizations. Patronage has in fact raised local people's expectations for external assistance to the extent that even those organizations that have successfully implemented

their projects without donor support still expect assistance to come their way in the life span of the projects.

Patronage and the resultant dependence on external resources have also contributed to the growing attitude among some members of CBOs that is akin to the thinking that donations are “free resources” at the disposal of those who can lay their hands on them. This has partly contributed to the increasing cases of mismanagement of donor-funded projects as manifested by defaulting on repayment of the loans and outright embezzlement of funds by leaders who are well connected to the patrons. This turn of events has seen some members withdraw their participation in the activities of some of the organizations, thereby threatening the sustainability of the projects and even the very existence of these organizations.

Moreover, dependence on external assistance to implement development projects is in itself a threat to the sustainability of such projects in that members may be unable to finance them on a continuing basis at the end of the assistance. There is also evidence that some of the donor-funded projects had not been successfully implemented and they tended to have more management problems than those projects that were implemented without donor funding. We have interpreted this to mean that people tend to be more committed to the projects, and more careful with the management of the resources that they have generated themselves than with those that are donated to these organizations. Consequently, it seems that dependence on external resources tends to undermine the spirit of mutual aid and self-reliance, which is increasingly threatening the prospects for sustainability of the projects of most CBOs in Western Kenya.

In addition, the study found several internal problems in most of the organizations, some of which the organization could not solve yet they adversely affected the development projects. For instance, these organizations could not respond to climatic shocks that had led to the failure of some projects. Some of them could not also respond to the problems of poor transport and marketing infrastructure. Furthermore, problems like lack of technical skills to manage projects; delays in remitting regular contributions by some members; defaulting on repayment of loans and remittance of regular contributions; lack of funds to finance the projects; lack of commitment to participate in the activities of the organizations; and membership dropout due to their inability to pay regular contributions constitute major impediments to the sustainability of the projects. Thus, most of the organizations had limited capacity to sustain their development projects.

7.2 CONCLUSION

It is evident in the study that CBOs are largely relevant organizations in local level development, for their activities are designed along people's development needs. They have subsequently been essential in terms of local people accessing resources for improving their livelihoods. However, the paucity of resources, in the midst of the prevailing politics of patronage, has aggravated a dependency syndrome in these organizations, which has left the activities of most CBOs not self-sustaining. In addition, the resultant functional participation in the activities of the organizations has adversely affected local level capacity building for sustainable development. The study, therefore, submits that as much as CBOs are relevant and useful instruments for spearheading local

level development, they are not likely to make significant contributions to sustainable development in the context of the political environment that obtains in Western Kenya.

The implication of this finding is that the neo-liberal assumptions for realizing sustainable development inherent in the development from below paradigm are significantly dependent on the environment of the organizations. With regard to the contribution of CBOs to sustainable development, these assumptions may not be well founded in the context of the political environment that obtains in Western Kenya. It is apparent that political patronage militates against the spirit of mutual aid and self-reliance that is at the core of the “bottom-up” approach to sustainable development. The tendency has been for patrons to perpetuate dependency among clients (like CBOs) as a way of ensuring that the latter would always give them political support in exchange for the development resources that they make available. This brand of politics has crippled local level capacity building initiatives of CBOs, with adverse effects on their contribution to sustainable development.

Chabal (1992), Ake (1996), Anyang' Nyong'o (2002) and Lumumba-Kasongo (2002), among others, have convincingly argued that political conditions in Africa have been the greatest obstacle to development. That the absorbing struggle for power has rendered the development project improbable in most of the countries. This study, as well, has found the political environment to be antithetical to local level initiatives for realizing sustainable development in Western Kenya. Whereas the above studies have focused on the political conditions of development at the macro (national) level, this study contributes to our understanding of the effects of the political environment on sustainable development at the micro (local) level.

7.3 RECOMMENDATIONS

This study has shown that dependency in CBOs has steadily eroded the prospects for the sustainability of unique local level self-help initiatives for mutual aid upon which the tenets of sustainable development rests. Similarly, other studies have found CBOs to be viable for stimulating local level sustainable development, but only for their dependent status (Kanyinga, 1994; 1995a; 1995b; Oyugi, 1995; 2002; Matanga, 2000; UNDP, 2002b). Most of these studies have, however, mentioned this problem in passing and have not shown the way out of this situation. The identification of the political environment, particularly the politics of patronage, as one of the contributory factors to dependency in CBOs by this study is significant as it provides one of the avenues for addressing the problem. That the advent of multi-party politics has seen at least some CBOs regain their influence in local politics in the areas that embraced "opposition" political persuasion is an indicator that autocratic patronage is losing ground in these organizations with the changing political environment. This implies that institutional politics (as opposed to personal rule that is the hallmark of patronage) is likely to strengthen the independence (rather than dependence) of these organizations and enhance their capacity to initiate self-sustaining development activities in the long run. It is, therefore, recommended that the on-going democratization process in the country should be enhanced, especially in the rural areas where CBOs operate. Civic education would particularly play an important role in this regard. This would help to break the bonds of patronage that have seen these organizations remain dependent on external "handouts" to implement their development projects. It would also help to strengthen members' participation in the leadership and management of the development projects of these

organizations, which is critical for local level capacity building for sustainable development.

Secondly, it is evident in the study that inadequate participation of members in the initiation and management of these organizations' projects has impeded local level capacity building initiatives for sustainable development. This has been partly due to the fact that most of the projects were initiated and largely financed by donors, with some of the organizations simply receiving "handouts" to run their activities. This has denied the local people the chance to think and initiate projects on their own and also compromised the mobilization of local resources for development activities. Whereas institutional politics observed above is likely to go a long way in reducing the magnitude of the problem, it is recommended that external assistance to these organizations should be geared towards stimulating participation in the mobilization of local resources rather than giving "handouts". One way of doing this is to give aid in the form of revolving credit, in which beneficiaries would be required to repay for purposes of extending the same assistance to other organizations. Such repayment may not necessarily be at an interest, but in the form of agreed upon amounts paid back within a specified period of time. This system would work better when the "loanable" amount is minimal at a given period of time for purposes of encouraging repayment in order to qualify for further assistance. This would help to change the local attitude that donations are "free resources" and also enhance the capacity to mobilize local resources for sustainable development.

Thirdly, this study has only investigated the political environment of these organizations. There are other forms of environments in which CBOs find themselves, such as the physical, economic and social. Some studies have raised controversial and

unresolved arguments about the influence of these forms of environments on the activities of CBOs. For instance, whereas some have argued that the well-endowed economic environments have contributed to the prosperity of CBOs (Kanyinga, 1994; 1995a; Oyugi, 1995; 2002), other studies have shown that it is indeed the scarcity of economic resources that has seen the emergence and prosperity of CBOs (Bouman, 1995). Yet others maintain that it is the scarcity of resources that has enhanced the culture of dependency among these organizations (Matanga, 2000). Such contradictory arguments call for a better understanding of the influence of the economic, social and physical environments on the activities of CBOs and their contribution to sustainable development. It is, therefore, recommended that other area-based studies be conducted to establish the impact of the social, economic and physical environments on the contribution of community-based organizations to sustainable development, particularly in Western Kenya where this study has made a contribution to our understanding of the impact of the political environment in this regard.

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APPENDIX 1: QUESTIONNAIRE ON COMMUNITY-BASED ORGANIZATIONS AND SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT IN WESTERN KENYA

CASE NO.

1.0 LOCATION:

District _____ Division _____

Location _____ Sub-location _____

Village _____

2.0 RESPONDENT'S PROFILE

2.1 Sex (tick appropriately) Female Male

2.2 Age _____

2.3 Marital status (tick appropriately):

Married

Single

Separated / divorced

Widow / widower

2.4 Level of formal education (tick):

None

Primary

Secondary

College (specify) _____

University (specify degree) _____

2.5 What is your main occupation _____

2.6 What are your other sources of income (in order)

1. _____

2. _____

3. _____

2.7 How many acres of land do you have? _____

2.8 What crops do you grow? _____

2.9 How many of the following livestock types do you keep?

	Grade cattle	Local cattle	Goats	Sheep	Exotic Poultry
Number					

3.0 THE ORGANIZATION

3.1 Name of the organization _____

3.2 Type of organization (tick):

Women's group

Youth group

Saving and Credit association (Sindikiza)

Welfare association

Communal self-help group

3.3 How many members does it have? (Fill table)

	Total	Women	Men
Number			

3.4 When was it formed? _____

3.5 What led to the formation of the organization _____

3.6 Please explain how it started off _____

3.7 What is the main objective of the organization? _____

3.8 When did you join it? _____

3.9 Why did you join it? _____

3.10 What are the duties / roles expected of each member? _____

3.11 What is the penalty for a member who fails to do his/her obligations? _____

3.12 What is the main development activity of the organization?

3.13 How does the organization raise funds / resources for its activities? _____

4.0 ORGANIZATIONAL LEADERSHIP

4.1 What leadership position do you hold in this organization? _____

4.2 List the officials of this organization

1. _____

2. _____

3. _____

4. _____

5. _____

4.3 How are they chosen? (Tick appropriately)

Elected

Appointed (by) _____

They volunteer

Self-appointed

Other (specify) _____

4.4 If elected, which method is used?

Queuing

By show of hands

Secrete ballot

Other (specify) _____

4.5 What factors determine the election of an individual into the following leadership positions of this organization?

(a) Chairperson _____

(b) Secretary _____

(c) Treasurer _____

4.6 In your view, what is the duty of these officials in your organization?

OFFICIAL	DUTIES
1. Chairperson	
2. Secretary	
3. Treasurer	

4.7 Who makes key decisions in your organization?

All members

Officials

Local leaders (specify) _____

4.8 If by all members, explain how this is done _____

4.9 After how long do you hold meetings?

- One day
- One week
- One month
- One year
- Other (specify) _____

4.10 Where do you usually hold meetings? _____

4.11 What was the most important decision that was made in your last meeting? _____

4.12 Who made the decision? _____

4.13 Briefly describe how the decision was arrived at _____

4.14 Were you happy with that decision?

- Yes
- No

4.15 If No, how would you have wished it made? _____

4.16 Besides that, what are the main issues that you usually discuss at your meetings?

5.5 DEVELOPMENT PROJECTS

5.1 Identify the main development project that this organization has initiated.

5.2 Who gave the initial idea to start this project?

5.3 When was the project started?

5.4 What were your individual contributions to the implementation of the project?

5.5 What were the other sources of funds in addition to the members' contributions?

5.6 Please indicate the status of the project (Tick appropriately)

(a) In progress

(b) Stalled

(c) Failed

(d) Completed

5.7 If (c), please explain why the project failed _____

5.8 What reasons explain the successful implementation of the project? _____

5.9 How have you benefited from the projects of your organization? _____

5.10 What problems has the organization faced in undertaking its projects? _____

6.0 FINANCE, ASSETS AND CREDIT

6.1 Do members make regular monetary contributions to the organization?

Yes

No

6.2 If yes, how much money is contributed by each member and after how long?

Kshs. _____ Per (period of time) _____

6.3 Do all members pay promptly?

Yes

No

6.4 If No, what action is taken against defaulters? _____

6.5 How is the money so collected utilized? _____

6.6 Have you received funds from the merry-go-round (Sindikiza) activity?

Yes

No (Why) _____

6.7 If Yes, how did you use it? _____

6.8 List the properties owned by this organization? _____

6.9 How were they acquired? _____

6.10 Have you ever received a loan from your organization?

Yes

No

6.11 If Yes, state the amount and how you used it? _____

6.12 If No, please explain why? _____

6.13 What are the conditions for obtaining a loan in your organization? _____

7.0 POPULAR PARTICIPATION AND CAPACITY BUILDING

7.1 Do you regularly attend the meetings of your organization?

Yes

No

7.2 If Yes, do you always contribute to the making of decisions?

Yes

No

7.3 If No, please explain why? _____

7.4 Please indicate whether you participated in the following stages of the main development project of your organization (Tick where applicable)

(a) Project identification

(b) Project formulation

(c) Project implementation

7.5 Are there rules that compel members to participate in the projects of the organization?

Yes

No

7.6 If Yes, do you participate in the projects due to the fear of violating these rules?

Yes

No

7.7 If No, please explain why you participate? _____

7.8 What have you learnt towards the improvement of your living condition through your participation in this organization? _____

7.9 Identify two main socio-economic problems in your household

1. _____
2. _____

7.10 How has your organization enabled you to solve them?

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____

7.11 In which way has your organization attempted to solve some of the problems facing this community? _____

7.12 What do you consider to be the main achievements of this organization? _____

8.0 THE POLITICAL ENVIRONMENT

8.1 Is this organization registered with the Department of Social Services?

Yes

No

8.2 If Yes, when was it registered? _____

8.3 What assistance has your organization received from the Department of Social Services? _____

8.4 Does the Department supervise the activities of your organization?

Yes

No

8.5 If Yes, explain how this is done with examples _____

8.6 Has your organization ever consulted local leaders for advice in carrying out its activities?

Yes

No

8.7 If Yes, please explain the leader(s) consulted, purpose for consultation and the advice offered

8.8 What assistance has this organization received from the local leaders. (Fill the table)

LEADER	ASSISTANCE
M.P	
Councilor	
D.O	
Chief	
Asst. Chief	
C.D.A/S.D.A	

8.9 Is your organization facing any problem from the local leaders?

Yes

No

8.10 If Yes, explain with examples _____

8.11 Which political party do you belong to? _____

8.12 Do you think all members of this organization belong to this party?

Yes

No

8.13 If No, to which political parties do other members belong? _____

8.14 Does political affiliation determine the choice of leaders in your organization?

Yes

No

8.15 If Yes, explain with examples _____

8.16 What other leadership roles do the officials of this organization play in the community?

OFFICIAL	COMMUNITY ROLES
Chairperson	
Secretary	
Treasurer	

8.17 How has their community leadership roles affected this organization? _____

8.18 What problems does this organization face from the local administration?

9.0 THE SOCIO-ECONOMIC ENVIRONMENT

9.1 What is the dominant ethnic group in this village? _____

9.2 Do all members of your organization belong to this ethnic group?

Yes

No

9.3 If Yes, do they also belong to the same clan?

Yes

No

9.4 Do clan considerations influence the choice of leaders in your organization?

Yes

No

9.5 Do you belong to any other organization within this community?

Yes

No

9.6 If Yes, list three of the organizations to which you belong and their activities

ORGANIZATION	ACTIVITIES
1	
2	
3	

9.7 List the main economic activities in this community _____

9.8 What are some of the main problems affecting these activities? _____

9.7 List the main economic activities in this community _____

9.8 What are some of the main problems affecting these activities? _____

9.9 Do you find it difficult to pay your contributions to the organization?

Yes

No

9.10 If Yes, explain why _____

9.11 Do other members also find difficulties in paying their contributions?

Yes

No

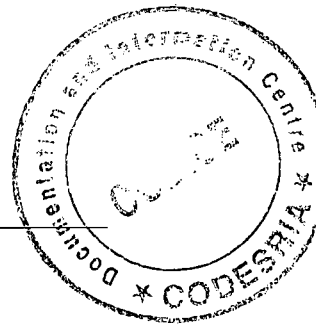
9.12 Has your organization ever organized a harambee fund-raising function?

Yes

No

9.13 If Yes, for what purpose was the harambee? _____

9.14 How much was raised and how was the money used? _____



9.15 Does your organization contribute funds at communal harambees?

- Yes
- No

9.16 If Yes, name the local leaders who have requested your organization to contribute

9.17 To which communal harambee project has your organization contributed? _____

9.18 Why has your organization contributed? _____

THANK YOU FOR YOUR CO-OPERATION

INTERVIEWED BY _____

DATE _____ TIME _____

OBSERVATIONS _____

APPENDIX II: LIST OF SAMPLED ORGANIZATIONS

NAME	ADMINISTRATIVE LOCATION
1. <i>Mane Mane</i> Women Group	- Butere Township
2. Sisters Women Group	- "
3. <i>Abetsa Sindikiza</i> Women Group	- "
4. Butere Township <i>Boda Boda</i> Group	- "
5. Emarenyo Communal Self-help Group	- "
6. <i>Emaola (Sindikiza)</i> Round Group	- Marama West
7. <i>Asubwe</i> Women Group	- "
8. <i>Bukubi</i> Women Group	- "
9. <i>Uzima</i> Vision Youth Group	- "
10. <i>Bululwe</i> Self-Group Group	- "
11. <i>Watenya</i> Women Group	- Nabongo
12. <i>Ekeru Boda Boda</i> Youth Group	- "
13. <i>Nzuha</i> Sindikiza Group	- "
14. <i>Wachwisakulira</i> Women Group	- "
15. Consider Self-help Group	- "
16. <i>Eshilarumwa Sindikiza</i> Women Group	- Shibinga
17. <i>Tuwe</i> Welfare Association	- "
18. <i>Wanga</i> United <i>Boda Boda</i> Youth Group	- "
19. <i>Bidii</i> Women Group	- "
20. <i>Snak</i> Self-help Group	- "

21. <i>Khwetebekho Mulaakha</i> Community Health Scheme	-	Nambuku
22. <i>Tumaini Sindikiza</i> Group	-	"
23. <i>Mungu Mbele</i> Women Group	-	"
24. <i>Esimba Ikona Abakwane</i> Women Group	-	"
25. <i>Mango</i> Community - Based Development Organization	-	"
26. <i>Busubiri Sinidkiza</i> Women Group	-	Namboboto
27. <i>Tuongane</i> Women Group	-	"
28. Revival Community Women Group	-	"
29. <i>Ejinja</i> Community Water Supply Project	-	"
30. <i>Sibale</i> Youth Group	-	"
31. <i>Obambo</i> Women Group	-	Nasewa
32. <i>Khabondi</i> Youth Group	-	"
33. Nasewa Community Health Self-help Group	-	"
34. <i>Umoja Jua Kali</i> Women Group	-	"
35. St Mary's Women Group	-	"
36. <i>Mundulusia Temakho</i> Women Group	-	Bukhayo West
37. <i>Singingire</i> Development Youth Group	-	"
38. <i>Buriang'i</i> Water Self-help Group	-	"
39. <i>Samaki</i> Women Group	-	"
40. Deeper Life Christian Women Group	-	"
41. <i>Abonyo</i> Multi-purpose Women Group	-	Awasi
42. <i>Watombori</i> Community Pharmacy & <i>Nyamrerwa</i>	-	"
43. <i>Nyayo</i> Merry-go-round group	-	"

44. <i>Komolo</i> Welfare Association	-	Awasi
45. Border I Youth Group	-	"
46. <i>Kagwanda</i> Women Group	-	Kochogo
47. <i>Kopiko</i> Communal Development Foundation	-	"
48. <i>Kula Chako</i> Women Group	-	"
49. <i>Karesa</i> Self-help Group	-	"
50. <i>Apondo Nam</i> Development Foundation	-	"
51. <i>Sengetoti</i> Women Group	-	Nyang'oma
52. <i>Korando</i> Women Group	-	"
53. <i>Kawamburi</i> Self-help Group	-	"
54. <i>Ng'ong'o</i> Mixed Group	-	"
55. <i>Korando</i> Youth Group	-	"
56. <i>Kikomi</i> Women Group	-	North-East Kano
57. <i>Kandede</i> Community Welfare Group	-	"
58. Heart to Heart Brothers Youth Group	-	"
59. <i>Omueri</i> Women Group	-	"
60. <i>Kamumbo</i> Women Group	-	"
61. <i>Chiegni Nyamrerwa</i> Women Group	-	South Gem
62. <i>Ramula</i> Youth Group	-	"
63. <i>Ngiya Ohala</i> Group	-	"
64. Victoria Women Group	-	"
65. <i>Thur Gem</i> Welfare Association	-	"

66. <i>Kwe Gi Lamo</i> Women Group	-	South-East Gem
67. <i>Kopeya</i> Self-help Group	-	"
68. <i>Kowour</i> Welfare Association	-	"
69. <i>Kanyadet</i> Youth Group	-	"
70. <i>Akala Sindikiza</i> Women Group	-	"
71. <i>Airo</i> Welfare Association	-	Central Ugenya
72. <i>Mos Mos</i> Women Group	-	"
73. <i>Sidindi Boda Boda</i> Youth Group	-	"
74. <i>Sikalame</i> Community Water Project	-	"
75. <i>Sidindi</i> Friends Self-help Group	-	"
76. <i>Konyri Kendi</i> Women Group	-	East Uholo
77. <i>Loho</i> Cattle dip	-	"
78. Agro - Community Youth Group	-	"
79. <i>Boro Gi Nyathindgi</i> Women Group	-	"
80. St. Vincent <i>Ramunde</i> Youth Group	-	"

NB.

In addition, we got information about three affiliated organizations by virtue of some of the sampled organizations being their affiliate members. These were *Sirindiro* Women Group in Funyula division of Busia district; Bukhayo West Joint Women Group in Nambale division of Busia district; and *Butesero* Self-help Group in Butere division of Butere - Mumias district.