

**THE CONCEPT OF WELL BEING IN THE BUTIKI VILLAGE: A
CRITICAL PERSPECTIVE ON DEVELOPMENT AND
MODERNIZATION IN A UGANDAN VILLAGE**

BY

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DEDICATION

This work is dedicated to my late brother John Kasozi Lubavu who has been a protagonist of my education, yet I did not have a chance to say the last goodbye as I was attending the program.

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PREFACE

Improving the conditions of the poor is an essential part of the dominant development discourse. This discourse does not often include the actors' point of view in the design process of development projects. Although the sequence of the chapters in this study does not pretend to deal exhaustively with the problems of well being, it attempts to indicate the path to be followed to guarantee well being in areas where development projects are to be carried in a meaningful way.

When development agents claim to work for the improvement of the conditions of the poor, we must ask, how should projects improve conditions of the poor? Keeping this in mind, the study proposes the need to pay attention to the conception of well being of the actors.

It is because of the above that the study employed methodological and thematic perspectives that reveal and are relevant to investigating the concept of well being in the Butiki village.

The study was conducted in the Butiki village in Jinja district found in the Busoga region of Uganda. The study set out to investigate how the people of the Butiki village understand and interpret the meaning well being.

In order to write a concrete case study, I contacted the Organization for Development and Co-operation as the organization has a number of development projects in the Butiki village.

Since the study has as its major objective to establish the actor's point of view the main topics center on three themes, namely: conceptualization of well being, the role of ODECO in the village, then gender relations and how they affect well being.

In this study, I contribute to the development discussion by use of both descriptive and normative approaches. Chapters one to five are mostly descriptive, providing the basis for the normative assessment in chapter six and chapter seven. The normative

assessment is an attempt to suggest the idea that development projects ought to consider particular conceptions of well being relative to good life of the actors.

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STRUCTURE OF THE THESIS

Chapter one introduces the general study. It begins by a general account of the geographical, historical and economic background of Uganda and also describes the conditions that have led various NGOs to begin projects in the various parts of the country. The chapter proceeds to present the research proposal that gives insight into the various issues the study set out to investigate.

Chapter two introduces the conceptual framework or theoretical perspective of the study. The chapter is divided into two parts with the first part dealing with conceptualizations of development, while the second part is about the re-conceptualization of development. More precisely I try to analyze new ways of understanding development.

The chapter presents how development has been conceptualized, starting from the classical period, the evolving meaning and interpretations it has acquired up to the contemporary period. However, since the study is an attempt to enlist the actors' point of view, this chapter puts more emphasis on the conceptualization of development from the late 20th century when development concern took on a global perspective.

The chapter analyzes and at the same time problematizes the discourse of development in as far as the discourse dominates how development is understood by official agencies. In this, the changing development paradigms are analyzed with emphasis put on the paradigm of modernization, since the modernization paradigm presents itself as a powerful and irreversible force that continues to dominate the development discourse.

The study makes use of analytical tools of human development and empowerment as espoused by Amartya Sen as far as how it provides strategies for meaningful development. The chapter is summarized by a section on the relevance of human rights to human development.

Chapter three gives an introduction to some methodological aspects of the study. In this chapter, I discuss briefly the various methods that are relevant in this kind of research. I am focusing on qualitative methods, giving special attention to focus group discussion and participant observation. I also try to show the relevance of hermeneutics for this study. This methodological chapter thus provides a bridge between the theoretical and practical perspectives of the study.

Chapter four is about the ethnography of the Butiki village where the data collection was conducted. This presents the way of life of the people in the Butiki village. The chapter presents the way people organize themselves in their village, the social constructions and meanings they derive from them. Inside this chapter is also some of the challenges the people of the Butiki village express as constraining their possibilities to maintain well being.

Chapter five presents the empirical findings of the study in a descriptive way. The three themes the study set out to investigate are enlisted here: The notion of well being as conceived by the people of the Butiki village is presented in detail. Under this theme, you find physical, psychological and social notions of well being and the way they are guaranteed. At the end of this theme I give a summary of the conception of well being as seen by the people who do not belong to any NGO. The second theme deals with the role of the ODECO¹ in the Butiki village. The study presents how ODECO projects are affecting the well being of the people. This theme is based on data I collected from the ODECO director and that of the people in Butiki. The third theme is about gender relations in the village and how the relations affect well being. Again the voice of the director and those of the Butiki people are presented insofar as the voices describe gender relations and well being.

The modernization process is also present in the village. In some way questions related to modernization continued to emerge as to how they affected peoples' lives. This chapter ends with a section on how modernization of food production proceeds because food to the Butiki people was highlighted as among the crucial needs for guaranteeing well being.

¹ ODECO stands for Organization for Development and Co-operation. It is the NGO where the study was based during data collection in the Butiki village.

Chapter six introduces the analysis and discussion of the findings, using both the theoretical and methodological perspectives. The chapter begins by contrasts and convergences to well being as developed in the ODECO strategies and the Butiki peoples' view.

The chapter also presents the institutionalization of values as far as it affects the various forms of well being. This is followed by an analysis of the importance of improving gender relations to guaranteeing well being. Emphasis is put on paying attention to the question of women suffering and experiencing deprivations since evidence shows that improving the condition of women in society is important for guaranteeing well being of a large section of society.

The chapter continues to give an account of how development ought to be conceived by development agents. The issue of means and ends of development is discussed. I try to argue that if development is to enhance freedom from poverty, then development ought to be defined in terms of fulfillment of human rights and the goals of development projects should be related to particular conceptions of the good life.

Chapter seven gives a normative assessment of how to guarantee meaningful well being for those affected by development projects. The chapter proposes the need to re-examine the specification of human rights in Africa as a guarantee of good life.

The chapter analyzes the different conceptions of person and human rights in Western and African perspectives. Since the study aims at giving a normative assessment of good life in a rural African village, the chapter attempts to develop a conception of good life in an African context. The study claims that human rights ought to be compatible with diverging attitudes concerning what constitutes a good life.

INTRODUCING THE WORK

The concept of development has presented itself as being elusive, especially from its conception as an idea from the late 1950s. From the inception of the concept, it was used to mean the opposite of underdevelopment. The binary conception of the concept involves attainment and achievement of certain conditions. Most specifically development is often used to mean underdeveloped parts of the world attaining conditions and catching up with the developed parts of the world. This reveals itself in various forms within the discourse of development and its paradigm.

For the underdeveloped parts of the world to develop, development experts are seen as being crucial. This forms part of the reason why many third world countries have excellently trained experts [both local and international] of development at the highest planning level. They know sophisticated techniques. The only snag is that they incline much to the liberal model of training [Dube 1988:77]

Within the changing paradigms today there is the rhetoric of participation involved but even here, the role of experts in the name of development agents takes precedent in determining the development goals and processes in the framework of rural change. No wonder, conventional approaches to development research and practice value the technical knowledge of the 'outside expert'. In consequence, general solutions manufactured from the outside are offered to problems which are highly localized [Booth 1994:280]. In the contemporary period, the experts work in the name of NGO implementers, civil society organizations and other agents. These take themselves to be agents of change.

Development in the above context is not actor centered and since the actors' experiences are often not involved in the design and formulation of the development projects, there emerge misconceptions about underdevelopment, especially in terms of poverty. The misconceptions about the causes and consequences of poverty have led to a great deal of errors and ill conceived development [Dube 1988:85]. The agents come up with very excellent development models, but as Dube says, "they fail to comprehend complex cultural reality and contextual specificity [Dube 1988:77].

The consequence of having development models that aim at making others ‘catch up’ is that economic development has reduced most of the people into objects to be ‘developed’ for their own good by the all knowing development technocrat. In the process, local narratives, cultural meanings and social arrangements have been devalued. Thus, development has resulted in the colonization of indigenous views relating to a good life [Melkote 2001:156].

It is with the above perspective that this study set out to investigate the actors’ point of view in the Butiki village in trying to find out how they understand and interpret the meaning of well being. It thus attempts to suggest a deconstruction of the discourse of development that at times influences development projects. The study hence calls for the involvement of the actors in the formulations and design of projects that aim to ensure good life as they understand and interpret it. In this there is an actor development model in its true sense.

CHAPTER ONE

1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 HISTORICAL BACKGROUND OF UGANDA

Uganda is geographically located in East Africa having 22 million people and a low human development index. Life expectancy is at 40.7 in 1998 [HDR2000:160]². The figure for women is at 41.5 years compared to men who have a life expectancy of 39.9 in 1998 [HDR2000:164]. The country largely depends on agriculture with 85% depending on subsistence cultivation.

Uganda is composed of different small communities and tribes that were conglomerated during the colonial period to form the present day Uganda. The formation of a new entity was an architectural plan of the colonialists to bring together the different people. Justus Mugaju, a Ugandan historian reminiscing about the circumstances under which Uganda was formed says, “the development of Uganda as an artificial entity with potentially antagonistic nationalities was not an accident. It was part and parcel of the grand design to perpetuate British colonialism not only in Uganda but throughout the colonized world” [Mugaju 1996:76].

The country was able to get independence from the British through round table negotiations in October 1962. However, since 1965 Uganda has witnessed numerous military overthrows. In 1981, the current government of the National Resistance Movement (NRM) formed a rebel group to fight for political power based on their ten point program that embedded the political ideology. In January 1986, the NRM took over political power and Uganda since then has been able to realize relative peace in some parts of the country. Besides other reasons that the NRM called fundamental in the ten point program, economic revival of the economy was among its priorities as the national economy was witnessing an inflationary rate of about 26% in the early 1980's. Economic revival was seen as a means to improve the deteriorating conditions of the people.

² HDR2000 is an abbreviation for the Human Development Report 2000.

Today, 18 years since the NRM took over political power, the social conditions of the majority of the population seem to be changing but poverty persists. It has been observed that Uganda has for the last 15 years pursued economic reforms that have imposed fiscal discipline, restructuring of public expenditure and liberalization of the economy. These reforms came after the massive setbacks that saw economic and social indicators in shambles prior to 1986. Because of the prudent macro-economic policies, Uganda has recorded an impressive economic performance over the last decade with average annual growth rate of GDP recorded at 6.9%, inflation fallen over the last 16 years to an average of about 5.2%. Despite Uganda's record performance, with a population of about 22 million people, the country is still one of the world's poorest countries. This is despite the fact that poverty fell from 44% to 33% according to the Uganda Bureau of Statistics (UBOS) Report 2001³

1.2 CONTEXT

Many development projects based on the dominant development paradigm are operating in the Busoga region and Jinja district, in particular with the major objective of helping people to be emancipated from poverty. But too often, uniformed attitudes take a central part. People are not asked what is good for them on the assumption that there are desirable universal values that are beyond discussion. But development agencies coming to the Jinja district confront people who define, understand and interpret their own lives differently. This accounts for reasons why some development projects fail to be properly implemented. There is no automatic or overlapping consensus between these agencies and the people in the region. This points to a need for a critical attitude because not all values associated with development may be desirable and they may often conflict with values crucial for the poor. When development projects are presented as desirable, we need to ask desirable for whom? We have to ask the consequences the projects have on the material and non-material values of the people.

³ <http://www.myuganda.co.ug/categories/about/economy> 20.11.03

One question that perturbs many people is: How can meaningful development be achieved in the Busoga region? This forms the gist of my research and what ignited my desire to investigate how universal values and notions embedded in development projects are affecting particular values of the Butiki village.

Perhaps another question that needs to be asked is: What type of development is lacking? This means the discourse and paradigm of development associated with development agencies have to be problematized against development as understood by the people of the Butiki village. We cannot take for granted that the so-called “universal values” really are universal in a strong sense. They are not necessarily shared by all people.

1.3 OBJECTIVE IF THE STUDY

The objective of the study was to investigate how the people of the Butiki village understand and interpret the meaning of well being. In this, the study looked at categorization of well being and how the categorizations convey meaning to the people of Butiki.

I have investigated the role of the ODECO in the Butiki village and how the ODECO projects affect well being in peoples’ homes, and in the community.

The study also analyzes gender relations and how important the gender relations are in ensuring wellbeing and the good life.

I have felt a need to re-examine the specification of well being and good life for any development intervention into the life of the Butiki people and other communities.

1.4 SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY

The finding of the study hopefully provides a new order of knowledge within the discourse of development.

The study acts as a ‘window’ through which development institutions and agencies could appreciate particulars in the promotion of universal values. In this, it suggests the inevitability and relevance of specification of the meaning of values related to human development and specifically values of well being and good life.

The study is relevant in the field of the academia. If the order of knowledge the study aims at becoming part of the public discussion in Uganda, it intends to help in arousing critical attitude with regard to development policies and projects.

Lastly, the study will hopefully contribute to deeper critical insight into the current endeavor of enhancing human development in many developing parts of the world.

1.5 SCOPE OF THE STUDY

The study lies in the sphere of human development drawing major references from development studies using Social and Political Philosophy and Social Ethics in highlighting critical insights necessary for a meaningful development ethics.

1.6 THESIS

Development projects that impose the notion of development and well being that are based on the dominant development discourse and paradigms often constrain the enhancement of meaningful development and well being of those affected. The actors’ interpretation and understanding of development and well being therefore becomes important and ought to be considered in the design of any development intervention.

1.7 FOCUS OF THE STUDY

The study focuses on three themes: how the people of the Butiki village understand and interpret the meaning of well being, how the notion of well being is affected by ODECO and the third themes deals with gender relations and how they impact on well being.

1.8 CASE STUDY

Today, many development agencies like USAID, international and local NGOs are operating in the Jinja district with the major objective of helping to improve the conditions of the people to overcome poverty. Among the local NGOs that receive funding from some international development agencies I use ODECO as my case study. The ODECO organization is having various development projects in various villages in Jinja district and Mukono district. Among the various villages, I decided to choose to conduct my research with the people of the Butiki village in Jinja district

When conducting empirical research, it can not be done in a vacuum. Such research is done in a context where theoretical perspectives and empirical data of the problem or phenomenon being studied are brought together. Choosing a case study is a methodological step but I have decided to present it here only giving detailed reasons for selecting the Butiki village in the methodology chapter.

Case study has been defined and interpreted by various scholars but among them Yin (1989) in (Blaikie 2001) defines case study as an empirical inquiry that investigates a contemporary phenomenon within a real life context; sometimes when boundaries between phenomenon and context are not clearly evident and multiple sources of evidence are used [Blaikie 2001:213]. Similarly, case study has been defined as a way of organizing social data so as to preserve the unitary character of the social object being studied [Blaikie 2001:213]. What this means in practice is that the case study attempts “to keep together, as a unit, those characteristics which are relevant to the scientific problem being investigated” [Goode et al 1952:215 in Blaikie 2001:215]. Putting together relevant characteristics will be crucial for the study as with a view to making some generalizations.

Case study according to Blaikie can provide a meaningful opportunity for the researcher to study one aspect of a problem in some depth within a limited time scale [2001:213]. With regard to this study, the case study provided an opportunity to study the aspect of well being among the Butiki people in depth. It is contended by various scholars that case studies have been used for various purposes; exploratory, descriptive and explanatory research, and to generate theory and initiate change. In

this context, the case study becomes an opportunity to produce knowledge about how the case is specific to and representative of a larger phenomenon [Ragin et al 2000:170]. The case study hence, became an avenue for the study to produce knowledge about well being that is specific to the Butiki people and at the same time the knowledge is representative of the need to give attention to the social actors' views when dealing with development projects and initiation of change and social processes in communities.

1.9 PURPOSE OF THE STUDY

“Many of the available texts approach the development through the lens of theory yet texts are organized around competing theories”[McMicheal 1996:xv]. In such a context, the actors' point of view slips to the background. The purpose of this study was to investigate the way the people of the Butiki village understand and interpret the meaning of the contemporary phenomenon of well being in their context using the multiple sources of evidence from the data I gathered using ODECO as my concrete case study

1.10 ORGANIZATION FOR DEVELOPMENT AND CO-OPERATION

The Organization for Development and co-operation (ODECO) is a local NGO based in Jinja district. The organization carries out various projects being funded by development agencies. The projects being funded are representative of the mission and strategy of the organization to realize some of the objectives for which it was founded.

The mission of the organization is to promote integral development through improving the socio-economic conditions of the poor people in rural villages. The strategy and mechanism to achieve the mission is through promoting sustainable development by teaching and training people in sustainable agriculture and entrepreneur skills necessary for generation and management of income by women as well as men.

CHAPTER TWO

2 CONCEPTUALIZATION AND RE-CONCEPTUALIZATION OF DEVELOPMENT

2.1 INTRODUCTION

Changing conceptualizations of development are the major concern of this chapter. Though the chapter attempts to give a historical background of the understanding of development from the classical perspective, its focus is on the understanding of development from the mid 20th century when development became a policy objective. The chapter hence presents the changing paradigms within the discourse of development that have consequently led to the present focus on human development.

2.2 CLASSICAL MEANING OF DEVELOPMENT

Development was conceptualized in Ancient Greece to mean an achieved state of a higher status. Aristotle used this conceptualization in a comparative way, “when Aristotle compared his own polity to that of the Cyclopes of Homer and then adduced 'barbarous' people living even in his time, he was pointing to a presumed line of development from kinship through community to the polis. Barbarous people seemed to Aristotle to be evidence of what the Greeks had once been like" [Nederveen 2001:18]. Aristotle's view is similar to that of Herbert Spencer who believed that human society, nature and the cosmos were subjected to same immutable law of progress.

Thomas Patterson (1999) in the book; *Change and Development in the 20th Century*, presents Spencer's view and elucidates this point when he says that according to Spencer, "human society had evolved slowly under contradictory circumstances. Each society attempted to achieve the highest degree of happiness, which brought them into conflict with other communities. However, this actually hindered the development of civilization. On the other hand, each society had a desire to diminish the misery of inferior creature-laborers, children and primitive societies, by ameliorating their conditions of existence...as a result, civilization could emerge only when sympathetic circumstances based on the amelioration of misery outweigh the earlier unsympathetic ones rooted in war of man against man" [Patterson 1999:21]. This highlights the

meaning of development as a path to progress. It also presents development as involving a tension between the developed 'civilized' in contrast to savages and primitive peoples who live close to nature; the undeveloped 'uncivilized' [Bohme 2001:23]. The classical conceptualization of development had great bearing and influence on the later definitions, understanding and interpretation of development especially from the 1950s when the major concern of development was intervention to ameliorate misery of developing countries by correcting imbalances in the economic growth.

2.3 DEVELOPMENT FROM THE LATE 20TH CENTURY

The concept development has come to be defined and interpreted differently by different proponents of economic development. Just as what astronomers see depends on the type of telescope through which they peer, so too does the interpretation and conception of development depend on the concepts through which the topic is approached. Indeed in development, it often seems as though everyone has his own telescope and so claims that his interpretation is the best. The notion of development from the mid 20th century has witnessed the evolving meaning of the term from being conceived in a descriptive way as economic growth especially in the late 1940's and 1950's, to structural and institutional change in the 1960's and 1980's and to normative definitions since the 1990's conceiving what development ought to be, best exemplified in the various Human Development Reports.

2.3.1 DEVELOPMENT AS ECONOMIC GROWTH

In the 1950s when development of the developing countries became a concern of the developed countries, the division between the developed and developing countries was seen as a matter of degree that could be put right by economic growth. Development from this time came to be equated with economic growth, ultimately economic development of developing countries becoming a major objective in development knowledge. Arndt (1989) in the book *Economic Development: The History of the Idea*, defines economic development as, "a sustained, secular

improvement in material well-being ...reflected in an increasing flow of goods and services" [Arndt 1989:51].

Similar to the above definition, economic development has come to be defined as a "process by which an economy is transformed from one whose rate of growth of per capita income is small or negative to one in which a significant self-sustained increase of per capita income is a permanent long run feature" [Arndt 1989:51]. The definition presents economic development as a goal and development identified as a process of economic growth that result in a society's achievement of a high or improved per capita gross domestic product. This is a maximalist conception since development is seen as aiming at the maximization of economic growth.

2.3.2 DEVELOPMENT AS STRUCTURAL AND INSTITUTIONAL CHANGE

Some scholars have argued that development as general desirable social change requires structural and institutional change. Gunnar Myrdal conceived of development as an improvement in the host of undesirable conditions in the social systems that have perpetuated underdevelopment. To him, " the cause of underdevelopment and the cure for poverty are to be found in the study of changes in attitudes and institutions of the less developed" [Rist 2002:13]. Gilbert Rist (2002) argues in the book *The History of Development; From Western to Global Faith*, that, " development consists of a set of practices, sometimes appearing to conflict with one another, which require for the reproduction of society-the general transformation and destruction of the natural environment and of social relations"[Rist 2002:13]. These views tell us that development entails some kind of changes in any society according to J.C Cypher et al: "development necessitates a substantially transformed future in which new values, institutions, markets and the products emerge, as old society slips from view and becomes the new" [Cypher et al 2003:27].

The above perspectives presuppose that when there is development, there is always some change involved. Change is used here in a descriptive form. It can be bad or good. Since my concern in this study is not about a neutral description of development but is focusing on the normative concerns of what development means to people in developing countries, I will have to bring in the actors' point of view.

For me it is important to establish what the people of the Butiki village consider to be relevant development and what kind of social and ethical values that are involved in relevant development seen “from below”. These conceptions of development should always be taken into account by development projects. I am here talking about a normative conception of development as expressed by the people in the Butiki village. Development is used in this study to mean normative improvement in peoples' way of life for the better according to their needs. Or according to own conceptions of what is "better", as I will argue out later in the section about Human Development.

The definition and understanding of development in terms of economic growth, and also structural and institutional change are articulated in the discourses of development that for a long time guided development programs. As already pointed out, I think we should focus more on the peoples' own ideas of relevant development.

2.4 THE DISCOURSE OF DEVELOPMENT

Development has traditionally been presented in form of a discourse. Discourse is used here to mean the use of language to give meaning to some reality. This discourse produced knowledge and exercised power over the third world, bringing about geo-political imaginations that have shaped the meaning and purpose of development since the 1950s. On the onset, the discourse produced knowledge of demarcation between first and third world countries or rather developed north and underdeveloped south. This involved forms of knowledge elaborated in theories, concepts and systems of power that regulate the practice and forms of subjectivity through which people came to recognize themselves as either being developed or underdeveloped. In the discourse of development people in third world countries were perceived of in terms of overpopulation, facing permanent threat of famine, poverty, and being illiterate and oppressed by their stubborn lack of initiatives and innovations.

The proponents of the discourse of development through the Bretton Woods Institutions⁴ envisaged themselves as “having found the solution to the quest for some fixed point, stable rock upon which people in the under developed countries can secure their lives against the vicissitudes that constantly threaten them” [Bernstein 1988:18].

The essential trait for the third world was underdevelopment and the solution was economic development that was seen as self-evident, desirable, inevitable, necessary and universal truth. This in itself called for some kind of intervention to take place at the level of science, economy, culture and politics that were woven together under the custodianship of development representatives. This is similar to Michel Foucault’s discussion about the *global organizations and the confrontation with power*. Foucault expresses this view in the following way: “For a long time, the intellectuals [development agents] spoke and were acknowledged the right of speaking in the capacity of the masters of truth and justice. They were heard or purported to make themselves heard, as the spokesmen of the universal good [development]” [Foucault, “Truth and Power” in Colin Gordon, *Power/Knowledge*, 1980:126]. The spokesmen of the universal good that is development are sent to third world countries with a view to influencing the ways of life of the people to adopt patterns of thinking that is seen as the way to finding solutions to problems that beset them.

The forms of knowledge in the discourse of development perceived the third world and its people as ‘existing out there’ to be discovered, known through theories and intervened upon from the outside. Thus, poor peoples’ ability to define and take care of their own lives was eroded in a deeper manner than perhaps even before the interventions. Development hence, becomes a space of systematic creation of concepts, theories and practices in which the poor became targets of more sophisticated practices, programs that seemed inescapable.

With the forms of power and control, hunger, education, health, overpopulation and quality of life were constructed as problems requiring extensive knowledge and

⁴ Bretton Woods Institutions is used in reference to the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund.

planning to be solved. Arturo Escobar succinctly elucidates the forms of power and control embedded in the discourse of development when he says that to “ understand the discourse of development, one must look not at the elements themselves but at the systems of relations among them...In sum, the systems of relations establish a discursive practice that sets the rules of the game; who can speak, from what point of view, with what authority and according to criteria of expertise, it sets the rules that must be followed for this or that problem, theory or object to emerge and be named, analyzed and eventually transformed into a policy or plan” [Escobar 1995: 40].

The discursive practices revealed by the discourse of development used language to systematize certain elements to give them meaning, validating and invalidating some, speaking in the name of universal truths as I noted earlier. It emphasized scientific knowledge based on a particular rationality as the only way to the truth. The aim of this was to influence people in developing countries for whom the discourse was produced, to change their patterns of life that were considered unscientific, backward, uncivilized and thus to adopt a Western scientific culture that was considered the essence of civilization. For example the Quakers set out on a mission to Seneca⁵ to civilize the natives of this place. The colonizers established their hegemony and changed the structures they found because they considered them uncivilized. Most missionaries and colonizers presented the Western way of life as being the ideal for the Seneca people [Etiene 1980:82].

Similar attitudes can be found also among Western missionaries in Africa in the 20th century. They based most of their activities on a dichotomy between civilized Europeans and uncivilized or not yet civilized Africans.

There has been shifting emphasis within the discourse of development. The major shifts have been related to different perceptions about economic growth on one hand, and poverty reduction as part of the project of human development on the other. These also came with different paradigms within development theories on how to help developing countries achieve development.

⁵ Seneca constituted one of the five nations of the league of the Iroquois , which was expanded to include the Tuscarora in the late 18th century North America.

To make a recap on the paradigms, the 1950s and 1960s were dominated by the modernization paradigm whose aim was to modernize spheres of production and reproduction in developing countries. This was taken over by the dependency paradigm in the 1970s that was based on critique of the modernization paradigm. Its emphasis was on the analysis of the uneven power relations in the economic, political and cultural spheres. Then in the 1980s there emerged the participatory paradigm. The emphasis here was on active participation of people at the grass roots and the process of development was seen to be specific for each developing country. But the 1980s became the "loss decade" because of the supremacy of structural adjustment theories from the Bretton Woods Institutions.

Much as there has been change in paradigms, what has always been clear is that modernizing the spheres of production and reproduction is a central goal as part of the dominant development policies in developing countries. One can refute or even deny the centrality of modernization to other development paradigms, but as long as the West is taken as the ideal of development, modernizing developing countries becomes the only way forward to its achievement as it happened in Western countries.

Development is considered the end and modernization is taken as the means to achieve the ends. It is because modernization has presented itself as an inescapable paradigm in development knowledge that I set out to investigate its consequences on the social, economic and cultural rights specifically the right to food, arguably, a moral priority above any notion of modernization, and modernization always seems to involve some kind of rationalization of production and distribution.

2.5 MODERNISATION THEORY

Modernization evolved as a marriage of evolutionism and functionalism. The goal of modernization is modernity. When it arose in the 17th century, it served to distinguish moderns from ancients, but by the 20th century it was identified with improvement and moving away from tradition. The theory was first developed to explain the development of the West, that is, the transition from traditional, pre-capitalist society to modern industrial and capitalist society. Most classical modernization theorists

presupposed that this was the path all societies would follow. Industrialization, urbanization, rationalization, secularization and capitalism were perceived as something 'law like' and inevitable. All societies would sooner or later be part of this universal process. Modernization was conceived of as an irreversible process.

The sociological tradition of the 19th and 20th centuries played an important part in developing this concept. People like Karl Max, Emile Durkheim and Max Weber were among the most important thinkers of modernization.

Modernization is virtually synonymous with Westernization as in the words of Edward Shills (1964), "modern means being Western without the onus of dependence on the West...The Image of the Western countries; and the partial incorporation and transformation of that image in the former Soviet Union, provide the standard or models in the light of which the elites in Asia and Africa seek to reshape their countries" [Shills 1964:]. Modernization is defined by Jan Nederveen (2001) as " a movement from particularism to universalism, from ascription to achievement, from functional diffuseness to functional specificity" [Nederveen 2001:21]. Similarly Melkote et al, define and describe the modernization process as “ a transition, or rather a series of transitions from primitive, subsistence economies to technology-intensive, industrialized economies; from subject to participant political cultures; from closed, ascriptive status systems to open, achievement-oriented systems; from extended to nuclear kinship units; from religious to secular ideologies” [Melkote et al 2001:74]. This is an accurate description of what is going on in present day Africa, Uganda, Busoga region, Jinja district and the Butiki village.

2.6 MODERNIZATION AS PARADIGM OF DEVELOPMENT

Modernization as a paradigm of development for poor, developing countries was invented in the USA in the 1950s, arguably, as an excuse for intervention into the life histories of people in other continents and most especially in Latin America, Asia and Africa.

The paradigm outlines the importance of economic growth through industrialization, capital intensive and machine intensive technology, a top down structure of authority with economists in charge and use of scientific technology in spheres of production and reproduction. Jan Nederveen continues to talk about the modernization paradigm and says, "modernization arose as the theoretical corollary of American globalism [] in the context of the cold war and de-colonization. Initially it took shape as a substitute for knowledge; the conceptual schemes of modernization served as "surrogates" for a tradition of inquiry in Africa and Asian societies which was lacking entirely in the USA"[Nederveen 2001:20]. Here I can say that the debate about modernization paradigm can be paraphrased as a debate about 'universalization of values' since conceptualization of the paradigm of modernization presents itself as teleological, the destination being development of thirds world countries. It is embedded with normative, universalizing Western values, and the USA's life styles as the epitome of modernity.

To understand how modernization as a paradigm of development started to be a policy objective of the USA, one needs to know the atmosphere of events that was prevalent in the post second world war era. At the end of the war, there was emergence of nationalism in the various parts of the world, especially in Asia and Africa. There was fear of the spread of communism as this period saw the beginning of the cold war. This was seen to lead to loss of raw materials and markets for Europe and America, threatening the existence and spread of capitalism.

Modernization as both theory and practice of development is grounded in the idea that economic and structural changes are essential for development in third world countries and this modernization of Africa should be compatible with the development of capitalism. Modernization of the economy became essentially the introduction of a capitalist mode of production that heavily affected traditional economies. Economic development and scientific values for a long time have constituted key themes in development as a solution to underdevelopment.

Harry Truman on January 20th 1949 announced a fair deal, making an appeal to the USA and the world to solve problems of the underdeveloped areas of the globe. Truman announced that "more than half of the people of the world are living in

conditions approaching misery. Their food is inadequate and they are victims of disease. Their economic life is primitive and stagnant. Their poverty is a handicap and a threat both to them and more prosperous areas. For the first time in history, humanity possesses the knowledge and the skill to relieve the suffering of these people...I believe that we should make available to peace loving people the benefits of our store of technical knowledge in order to help them realize their aspirations for a better life...What I envisage is a program of development based on the concept of democratic fair dealing...great production is the key to prosperity and peace. And the key to greater production is a wide and more vigorous application of modern scientific and technical knowledge"[Escobar 1995:3].

With the Truman speech, modernization as a paradigm of development turned into Policy and America as the father took lead in executing it. We may call this paternalism. Since the 'children of Africa' do not know the way to prosperity, they must be led by 'grown up' people from the West. With the Harry Truman 1949 inaugural speech as President of the United States of America, development took on an interventionist role with the agenda laid in the United States of America to extend and intensify the longstanding Westernization project, but now without the negative connotations of colonialism and with a comprehensive global scope: 'development's hidden agenda was nothing less than the Westernization of the world' [Sachs 1992:3-4].

As modernization aims at the maximization of economic growth in many cases economic growth was regarded as a means to development: without economic growth, no development. Only economic growth could do anything to poverty. However, after realizing that economic growth was not bringing about the desired development, there emerged a need to reformulate the discourse and this saw the change of focus with regard to social objectives.

Mahbul uL Haq, a leading economist in the Bretton woods institutions from the early 1970s to mid 1990s offered an alternative to economic growth as he contended that "a high growth rate is no guarantee against worsening poverty and political explosion. Where did the development process go astray? We conceived our task not as eradication of poverty but as pursuit of certain levels of average income...The basic

problem of development should be redefined as a selective attack on the worst forms of poverty...Development goals must be redefined in terms of reduction and eventual elimination of malnutrition, disease, illiteracy, unemployment and inequalities...We were told to take care of our GNP as this would take care of poverty. Let us reverse this and take care of poverty as this will take care of GNP" [Haq 1976:92].

With Haq's contention and influence within the Bretton Woods institutions the discourse of development began to change orientation, becoming a struggle to remove the worst forms of poverty or the 'poverty curtain' that separated the developed from the underdeveloped countries.

Mahbul uL Haq claimed that a " a poverty curtain has descended right across the face of our world, dividing it materially and philosophically into two different worlds, two separate planets, two unequal humanities, one embarrassingly rich and the other desparately poor. This invisible barrier exists within nations as well as between them, and it often provides a unity of purpose to the third world that otherwise have their economic, political and cultural differences. The struggle to remove this curtain is certainly the most formidable challenge of our time" [Haq 1976:36].

Haq's statement introduced new knowledge within the discourse of development that marked the beginning of new shifts to social objectives as noted earlier.

2.7 RE-CONCEPTUALIZATION OF DEVELOPMENT

As opposed to economic growth through modernization, there emerged redefinitions of what development ought to be focusing on in terms of human development. This subsequently culminated into the Human Development Reports which since 1991 have been a powerful force for addressing issues related to poverty. The discourse of development from the 1990s changed but still it is a discursive practice.

2.7.1 HUMAN DEVELOPMENT

Human development according to the Human Development Report 2000 is defined as, " a process of enlarging people's choices by expanding human functioning and

capabilities that is the range of things a person can do and be in leading a life, the freedom of being able to live as she\he would like and even the opportunity to choose own fate” [HDR2000:17].

Human development hence, brings a re-conceptualization of development focusing on what development ought to be. Underdevelopment according to human development is seen broadly in form of unfreedom and development seen as a process of removing unfreedoms and of extending the substantive freedoms of different types that people have reason to value [Sen 1999:86].

For a long time poverty was defined in terms of lack of income, but what the capability perspective does in poverty analysis is to enhance the understanding of the nature and causes of poverty and deprivation by shifting primary attention away from means and one particular means that is usually given exclusive attention, for example income, to ends that people have reason to pursue, correspondingly, to the freedom to be able to satisfy these ends [Sen 1999:90]. Human development brings a shift in the perspective of poverty. We are moving from aggregate income to capabilities. It moves way from income as means to development to put more attention on enlarging peoples’ choices as defined above.

From the above, we see that development ought to aim at the improvement of personal as well as social welfare. This means that development as such should not be to develop technology and means of production as is mostly the case with modernization but should develop human beings. According to the HDR 2000 development should aim at enhancing human dignity. As people in abject poverty cannot maintain their dignity, poverty becomes a violation of their human dignity. Human dignity has been, historically, understood in terms of rights. Human beings have aspirations, desires, claims and entitlements or rather rights. Here I make a link between human development and human rights.

2.7.2 HUMAN DEVELOPMENT AND HUMAN RIGHTS

Development all over the world has to address issues of human rights and human rights that do not address the conflicts with development projects would end up being unrealizable. The Human Development Report 2000 succinctly puts it that, "human development is essential for realizing human rights and human rights are essential for full human development". Human rights hence, are integral and pre-condition for enlarging people's choices.

CHAPTER THREE

3 METHODOLOGY

3.1 INTRODUCTION

The chapter presents the methods that were used in the study process from the time of collecting data, analyzing it and consequently in writing the thesis. To describe a human behavior in a valid way is in principle to be able to participate in the forms of life which constitute, and are constituted by, that behavior [Giddens1982:7]. The chapter, hence, is a combination of methods and the experience of my encounter with the people of the Butiki village in trying to listen to their voices on the themes of development and well being, the role of ODECO in the village and changes in gender relations which are important in realizing development and well being.

3.2 AREA SELECTION

Before I went to conduct my research, I was not aware that I was going to do it in Butiki village but I knew that ODECO is doing some of its work around Butiki village. Since I had no formal contact with the directors of ODECO before I went to conduct the research, when I went to Uganda in June 2003, I contacted the ODECO directors since I had known them for about five years before. When I informed them of my wish to conduct my study with their NGO, they were happy that I had chosen to work with their organization among the many NGOs in Uganda.

The directors told me they had many groups in different villages among which I could choose. From their description of the groups, I decided to choose the Butiki groups since these groups are only two kilometers from our home in Mafubira village in Jinja district.

To get a better view on the themes of my research topic, I also did some in-depth interviews with four people who do not belong to any NGO in Mafubira village.

3.2.1 ACCESS TO THE BUTIKI VILLAGE

Even if there is a small murrum road that I could use from our home to Butiki village, I decided to use another road that involved making a lot of connections. Using the small road that was at the same time shorter implied walking the journey. On the first days of my research, I had to board a Kamunye⁶ to take me to Jinja town and specifically to the ODECO offices where I met one of the ODECO field officers. From the offices, we could get boda boda⁷ bicycles to ride us for about a kilometer. After here, we had always to change the means of transport and use another type of boda boda (motor cycle boda boda). These would take us to Butiki village and then we could give them the time to pick us. The change in the modes of transport is because of the difficulty in accessing means of development especially in most villages of Uganda.

In conducting any research, inquiry, or study about a phenomenon, the issue of methodology becomes paramount. Two types of research methods have received predominance in form of either quantitative or qualitative methods. However, despite the relevance of both quantitative and qualitative research methods, we have to be aware that any object one desires to know, understand, inquire about, proposes the methods in other words, the object proposes or imposes the methods of research [Giussani 1997:4]. But if we have quantitative research questions, they can only be answered using quantitative methods, and if we have qualitative research questions normally qualitative methods should be used. This means, neither quantitative nor qualitative approach is superior to the other. The strategy to use depends primarily on the concrete and specific research problem that is to be analyzed [Grønmo 1984:156-157].

3.3 EVOLVING FRAMEWORK

The methodological procedures placed me in a precarious position but yet I had to choose those methods that would clearly bring out the views of the people of the

⁶ Kamunye is a fourteen seater taxi

⁷ Boda Boda is used to refer to either bicycles or motor cycles engaged in transporting people for a payment.

Butiki village. I hence had to choose those methods that would allow the participation of the people. Before I went to the Butiki village, I drafted a methodology that enabled me to keep clarity and purpose of my study.

3.4 CHOICE OF METHODS

It is hard and we can not do away with the dichotomy or categorization between qualitative and quantitative research methods. But while qualitative methods concentrate on words and observations to express reality and attempts to describe the view and opinions of people in natural situations, quantitative approach grew out of a strong academic tradition that places considerable trust in numbers that represent opinions or concepts [Krueger 1994:27]. Since it is hard to engage in a meaningful dialogue with numbers, I chose methods whose results would be an outcome of meaningful dialogue

Given that the major purpose of this study was to establish the actors' point of view as regards their conception, understanding and interpretation of development and well being, the role of ODECO in the village and how changes in gender relations are important for enhancing development and well being of the Butiki people, I tempted to use methods that would efficaciously bring out the actors' point of view. Hence faced with a choice between quantitative and qualitative methodological procedure, I chose qualitative procedures as I saw them as being significant in enlisting the actors' view.

3.5 QUALITATIVE PROCEDURE

Since I wanted to be present inside the human situation and conditions of the people of the Butiki village, who are the subjects of my study, I chose qualitative procedures given that qualitative research is sensitive to the human situation. It involves an empathic dialogue with the subjects, and it may contribute to their emancipation and empowerment [Kvale 1996:70]. Consequently qualitative methods gave me a possibility to identify and understand the attribute, characteristics and traits of the object of the inquiry [Landman 2002:18].

Qualitative methods had an advantageous position to the study given that it has a unique sensitivity and powerful method for capturing the experiences and lived meanings of the subjects' everyday world [Kvale 1996:70]. Kvale highlights the importance of qualitative research in capturing experience and lived meanings of the subjects' everyday world when for example used in feminist research. For Kvale says, "In contrast to an often eclectic qualitative research, feminist approaches have in common, work with methods appropriate for understanding the very lives and situations of women, and understanding is the means for changing the conditions studies"[Kvale 1996:72].

Qualitative methods were significant to my study. Unlike quantitative methods that do not involve the researcher in the social world of inquiry, qualitative method, usually require an extended and intensive period of involvement in some social world [Blaikie 2001:242]. Qualitative research hence, gave me a possibility to encounter the people of the Butiki village, listen to their descriptions of their diverse lived experiences that I would not have had a chance to encounter if I had used quantitative methods.

3.6 SITUATEDNESS IN THE FIELD

It is important to tell how I was situated during the research process. In other words, this raises the question of my identity in the field in relation to the Butiki people. Was I identified as an insider or outsider? The answer to this question is not conclusive because in one way or another I could belong to either category as I discuss below.

3.6.1 OUTSIDER

I was introduced to the groups by one of the implementers of ODECO as a researcher coming from Norway to conduct research with these groups and learn from them how development projects are affecting their livelihood. Thereafter, the people introduced their names. Being the guest (Omughenhi) as I was always referred to throughout the period, I was with the people of Butiki. I was told to be the last person to introduce myself and also tell them the purpose of my being their guest.

The introductions signified a process of an outsider coming to Butiki village. Being referred to as Omughenhi manifested how I was an outsider to the social world of the Butiki people whom the people did not know. The first meeting hence was an

encounter of the insiders (the Butiki people) and the outsider. Given that much as I have been to some parts of the Butiki village but not particularly to the one I was to conduct my study from, I felt being an outsider in a way as I was meeting people I had never seen before.

Being introduced to the groups as a young person coming from a European University (University of Bergen, Norway) also meant that I was an outsider to the Butiki village. In a few instances, I heard people refer to me as the 'Norwegian'. In other words, coming from a Norwegian university meant that I had acquired a new form of identity that had more or less replaced my Ugandan identity. This again was a meeting of a person regarded as 'highly educated', studying a Master's degree meeting with people who have low levels of education. In fact apart from four people, most of the group's members hardly attained any formal education. My position as a 'highly educated' person introduced a discourse of power⁸

As a matter of courtesy and practical ethics I promised to send a copy of my Thesis to the Butiki people and to the NGO that helped me to identify these groups.

Any study faces challenges or limitations and my study was not exceptional. I will of course not tell everything about the Butiki people and the way they are being affected by development projects, but only tell and interpret what I was able to hear, observe and experience during the data collection process.

The people accorded me a special privilege during my research. I had to accept the special privilege because not to accept it would negatively affect my study as when I tried to tell the people not to treat me in a special way, one lady told me that if I refused to accept the special treatment, it was a sign that maybe I had not appreciated the values and norms the people of the Butiki village accord guests (abaghenhi). This situation placed me in a hard condition in relation to the discussions I was to have with the people since in one way or another, as an outsider, the special position I was accorded could lead the people to censor the information to give me and consequently

⁸ Discourse of power is used to refer to power relations, my status introduced within Butiki village and how this affected my research process since the discourse had great bearing on my identity and those who wanted to identify with me

leading me to wrong interpretations of the results. Through trust of my informants and use of diverse methods, I tried to minimize and overcome the worry of telling me what the people thought I wanted to hear. However, I think that maybe some of my informants were telling me what they thought I wanted to hear in a few cases. Since I am from the same area, in some cases I could use my own knowledge of everyday life in the Jinja district.

The discourse of power is also relevant to members of the groups who worked with me. Some members of the groups wanted to identify with me and also get new identities for themselves as those who are close: to the 'educated young man from Norway'. For example, given time constraint and fatigue, I only managed to visit fourteen homes and gardens of the members of the groups but the leaders told me that the members whose homes and gardens I could not visit were asking why I did not visit them. I had to explain the time constraint involved in this research project.

3.6.2 THE INSIDER

When I introduced my name and where our home is, that is three kilometers from the Butiki village, some elderly people in the groups immediately linked me to my late father who had worked with some of them at Ivannamba Growers Society that was two kilometers from the Butiki village. Ivannamba Growers Society was a branch of the defunct Busoga Growers Co-operative Union, a Co-operative Union that used to buy people's produce in Busoga region. It was easy to identify and link me to my father because people in rural areas know each other and those in neighboring villages. With these historical circumstances the people of the Butiki village came to understand that they were dealing with an insider. In fact I was an African coming from the same district.

Unlike other people who go to conduct research in foreign places, I was doing my research in my home district and actually subcounty given our home is in Mafubira village where the sub county headquarters for the neighboring villages including Butiki are located. At the sametime conducting the study in Lusoga; the language spoken by the people of Butiki village that I also speak fluently, gave me a possibility of conducting my research as an insider who had some knowledge about the social world of the Butiki people.

But even for outsiders when they stay in their communities of study for a long time, there are some aspects in which they become insiders. There is always a possibility for outsiders to become insiders merely by mixing with the natives; that is acquiring a legitimate identity among them and participating in their common culture [Schwartz 1979:254]. This may take a form of acquiring a traditional name of the group (society), eating their food and participating in the life of community. Going to peoples' homes and gardens, eating jack fruit, sugar cane, paw paws, ground nuts and maize that even at times people gave me to take home, made me feel that I was one of them.

Through my study, focus group discussions was the major tool when dealing with the groups and this was reinforced and supported by other methods as I discuss them in detail below.

3.7 SETTING OF FOCUS GROUP DISCUSSIONS

The group discussions were always conducted under a big mango tree in Lusoga language with women sitting on the grass and a few on mats while I, a female ODECO field officer who often accompanied me and men sat on chairs that were provided.

Focus group discussion historically emerged as a method of investigation within social sciences studies against individual interviewing. The method emerged in the 1930 as a response to the dominant Social scientist method of individual interviewing that used a predetermined questionnaire with closed-ended response choices. Limiting the choices offered, findings could unintentionally be influenced by the interviewer by oversight or omission. On the other hand, a focus group discussion is based on non directive interviews and uses open-ended questions and allows individuals to respond without setting boundaries or providing clues or potential response categories...allow the subject ample opportunity to comment, to explain and to share experiences and attitudes as opposed to the structured and directive interview that is led by the interviewer [Krueger 1994:7]. This does not only manifest a shift of attention from

interviewer to the respondent but also manifests a change in paradigm⁹ in which the actors' point of view is given priority.

Focus group discussion was one of my major tools for collecting data especially during meetings with the two groups that always had between 8 to 15 people. I decided to use this method given that focus group discussion are typically composed of participants who are selected because they have a certain characteristic in common that relates to the topic of the focus group [Krueger 1994:6]. They were also effective in saving time and money that I would be using to visit people individually. When conducting focus group discussion, care must be exercised to be alert to subtle characteristics that are not apparent to the researcher, such as social status, educational level, and occupation status [Krueger 1994: 12]. In the introduction, I emphasized the relevance of unity and people's differences and my study being interested in the unity of the differences. I highlighted how the people in the groups had a common characteristic of being ODECO members with a desire to change their lives for the better.

I envisaged this method as being of paramount importance in bringing out vividly the actors' point of view since focus groups are unique and allow for group interaction and greater insight into why certain opinions are held. This approach can improve new programs, provide means to evaluating existing programs, and provide insight for developing strategies [Krueger 1994:3]. From my first encounter with the groups, I had to clarify purpose and the focus of my study as lack of clarity in defining the group purpose can result in confusion, frustration, misunderstanding, wasted time and most likely to wrong outcome [Krueger 1994:6].

Given I handled the focus group discussions alone, I obviously had a number of functions: moderating, listening, observing and eventually analyzing issues. I derived understandings based on the discussion as opposed to testing theories.

⁹ An embodiment of a new way of looking at phenomena hence, representing a break with the existing tradition of practices.

3.8 VALIDITY AND RELIABILITY OF FOCUS GROUP RESULTS

Validity¹⁰ of focused group discussions is challenged based on the difficulty of establishing objectivity of opinions, attitudes and perceptions but focus group discussions are valid if they are used carefully for the problem that is suitable for the group inquiry. Validity is hence challenged when the researcher deviates from the clarity and purpose of the study [Krueger 1994:31]. In this, the results of my study have to be understood and interpreted in the context of the Butiki people.

3.9 ADVANTAGES AND DISADVANTAGES OF FOCUS GROUP DISCUSSION

Some of the advantages of focus group discussion is that they are socially oriented research procedures. People are social creatures who interact with others. They are influenced by comments of others and make decisions after listening to the advice and counsel of people around them [Krueger 1994:34]. So this form of interaction can also be described as a learning process of all the actors that are involved. Because of the interaction with the Butiki people in one way or another, I was influenced by them in as much as I influenced them in certain aspects.

I was also able to make personal friendship with some members. I was besides also able to identify some attitudes and socially unacceptable norms. Gilbert Nigel has pointed out that focus group discussions allow you to see how people interact in considering the topic, and how they react to disagreement. They can help in identifying attitudes and behaviors that are socially unacceptable [Nigel 1995:142].

Focus group discussions were always a meeting for sharing knowledge about development and well being between the group members themselves, and myself as a researcher. Tim May says that group interview constitute a valuable tool of investigation allowing researchers to explore group norms and dynamics around issues and topics they wish to investigate [May 2001:125]. In many ways I think this was also the case with regard to my research.

¹⁰ A degree to which the procedure really measures what it proposes to measure.

There are also some disadvantages associated with focus group discussion that I encountered in the data collection process. At times I found myself as if I was losing control of the discussions especially in some instances when each person was talking. People often could raise irrelevant questions and responses. Hence, on many occasions I had to keep the discussions in focus of the topic I was investigating. There is, thus, also an element of control in focus group discussion. To some degree I controlled the situation.

Data analysis presents a difficult task. It demands special attention and care not to put the analysis out of context that may have the consequences of leading to invalid conclusions and generalizations. This is also discussed in the challenges the study has encountered.

During the period when I was conducting the focus group discussions, it was evident that peoples' views, attitudes and opinions kept on being influenced by others and were changing. Krueger notes that throughout life, human beings form ideas or concepts of how they want to portray themselves. These concepts may be conditioned by family, social networks, social or religious organizations. People tend to be selective about what they disclose about themselves [Krueger 1994:12]. They create a public self.¹¹ This was also the case with people of the Butiki village.

Some negative experiences with focus group discussions made me also employ in-depth interviews with about seven people at their homes and also participant observation. These were used to explore and find out whether there was a private self¹² that people did not want to reveal in focus group discussions.

3.10 IN-DEPTH INTERVIEWS

In-depth interviews were conducted with two field officers and one director of ODECO. They were also used when I interviewed five members from the two groups I was working with. Again, they were used with the five people who were part of my study, yet they do not belong to any NGO

¹¹ The way people present themselves in the public.

¹² The way people present themselves in the private.

In-depth interviews based on open ended questions were conducted with seven group members. The aim of this method was to explore emerging themes that could not be discussed in the groups. In other instances this was used to check whether there was correspondence between the information I got in the discussion. In-depth interviews were important since interview is a conversation that has a structure and a purpose. It goes beyond the spontaneous exchange of views as in everyday conversations, and becomes a careful questioning and listening approach with a purpose of obtaining thorough knowledge [Kvale 1996:69].

Using language, conversation was a form of communication for the respondents to share knowledge about their social world and how it is being affected by interaction with ODECO strategies. In other words, in-depth interviews became a process of production of knowledge for my study through human interaction. In my unstructured interviews appropriate and relevant questions normally emerged from the process of interaction between the interviewer and the interviewee. Through this informal process of give and take the investigator becomes sensitized to which questions constitute relevant and meaningful issues to the respondent and others like him [Schwartz 1979:40].

Being present to the human situation of the people of the Butiki village meant that I had to be open to their life and this at the same time implied that I had to observe with an open gaze reality in the totality of its factors hence using the method of participant observation.

3.11 PARTICIPANT OBSERVATION

This method was used right from my first encounter with the people of the Butiki village and also as I visited their homes and gardens. I used it to observe the conditions of the village and of homes of ODECO members and also observing the social dynamics of the village. Even if I did not really participate in all the activities of the village, I still had the possibility to see how things were done.

The method was at the same time used to observe what was going on as far development projects are concerned in other villages around Butiki since during the period of my data collection, I used to move around to some other villages though not necessarily doing research, but I often found myself getting insightful knowledge.

This method was important to the study. Schwartz has pointed out that if we want to find out something, one way to do it is to look for it out in the world in different places. Another way is to change our method of looking at the world in order to discover it [Schwartz 1979:247]. It was also important in as much as it is one of the most variant of the practical methods any lay person can use to get at consensual meanings of a group of people with whom he is not familiar [Schwartz 1979:37].

As I was an outsider in one way to the lived experiences of the people of the Butiki village, using participant observation in combination with other methods, this opened for me a possibility to be critical about the relationship between words and deeds, and hence making careful generalization in some instances since participant observation allows the investigator to generalize his findings given it allows him to see what the actor and others in similar or different situations, holding similar or different definitions of the situation, have in common [Schwartz 1979:48]. In other words, I was interested in finding out what people had in common.

After collecting all the data and using the various methods that I employed, the data can not be of any significance if it is not analyzed. Analysis of the data for the study is a process that begun from the time I was preparing the research proposal. The process has been complex given that I am dealing with diverse data from books and other written sources, data from narratives and human actions that were communicated to me in various forms. Inside this complex situation, I decided to use hermeneutics as my tool of analysis.

3.12 THE ANALYTICAL TOOL OF HERMENEUTICS

Historically, hermeneutics was a subject that dealt with texts of literature, religion and law but, there has been an extension of the concept of 'texts' to include discourse and even human action [Kvale 1996:46]. I can not say that my study was able to capture

all aspects that I set out to investigate but I tried first of all to grasp the actors' own interpretations of their lives and situations, focusing especially on their understanding of well being.

In as much as hermeneutics is concerned with interpretation, understanding and the deeper structures of meaning associated with the objects of inquiry [Landman 2002:19] I tried to come close to the actors' point of view that is the people of the Butiki village.

The British sociologist Anthony Giddens has developed some interesting perspectives on hermeneutics that are relevant for my study. According to Giddens all social research has a necessarily cultural or ethnographical aspect to it. This is what Giddens has named "the double hermeneutics" which characterizes most qualitative methods in the cultural and social sciences: the sociologist has as a field of study phenomena which are already constituted as meaningful. The condition of 'entry' to this field is getting to know what actors already know, and have to know, to 'go on' in the daily activities of social life. The concepts that sociological observers invent are 'second-order' concepts in so far as they presume certain conceptual capabilities on the part of the actors to whose conduct they refer. But it is in the nature of social science that these can become 'first-order' concepts by being appropriated within social life itself. What is 'hermeneutic' about double hermeneutics? The appropriateness of the term derives from the double process of translation or interpretation which is involved [Giddens 1989:284].

I have, on other words, been interested in finding and analyzing the first-order concepts of the people in the Butiki village. Next, I have tried to interpret these concepts and understandings, developing more "scientific" second-order concepts. But in this case there is no big difference between first-order and second-order concepts.

3.13 ETHICAL CONSIDERATION

When preparing the study I anticipated some ethical challenges and hence when I got into the field I had to inform my respondents of the ethical decisions that were to

guide the study but at the same time, some ethical decision could emerge depending on the situations.

The issues of ethical considerations are of paramount importance to any research and are giving raise to ethical decisions to be made. J. Barnes defines ethical decisions in research as those which arise when we try to decide between one course of action and another not in terms of expediency or efficiency but by response to standards of what is morally right or wrong [May 2001:59].

Since I was conducting research in my home country and there being no demand for research permits, in my first meeting with the people of the Butiki village with ODECO field officer as my contact person, I sought informed consent of the people. Informed consent says Kvale, “entails informing the research subjects about the over all purpose of the investigation and the main features of the design, as well as any possible risks and benefits from participation in the research project [Kvale 1996:112]. I informed my respondents of how the study had the major objective of the award of a Master’s degree of the University of Bergen-Norway, and also that the findings would be put in a public Library. At the same time I informed them of how the study had as one of its objectives to establish knowledge that aimed at influencing development policy and projects not only in Butiki village but also in other parts of the country.

The study being a form of intervention in the human conditions of the Butiki people I promised confidentiality and anonymity to my respondents. Since I also come up with some critical comments when putting together my findings, I was sensitive not to write anything that would negatively impact on the lives of some of the respondents.

Keeping anonymity is always difficult. Even if I keep anonymity, some statements and experiences can directly be linked to the people who narrated them when read by a person who has knowledge and experience about the Butiki people living in the particular place where I conducted my study. But in a few isolated cases, I will mention the names of certain respondents given their social status within the village and their immense contribution to the data collection process. They also agreed that their names could be mentioned.

As I mentioned above that certain situations demanded specific ethical decision, during participant observation it was difficult to seek consent in all situations but I justified my decisions by use of pragmatic ethics¹³

3.14 EXPERIENCES IN THE FIELD

I felt the pressure of time to collect all the data I had to gather since after the two months of data collection, I had to go back to Norway and embark on writing the results of the study in the form of a thesis. This meant that I had no opportunity to follow up of some emerging themes. I should have liked to go deeper into many problems, but there was no time for that.

On a few occasions, the discussions could not begin on time as scheduled. Since this was a time for harvesting maize, beans and other seasonal food, some people were spending much time in the gardens. Again since people in the Butiki village depend on the use of their labor for livelihood, time consciousness was a major concern. Some members wanted to start the meeting at the scheduled time and end at exactly the time we had decided.

As the meetings always started at 2:00pm and often ended at 5:00pm, people wanted to keep the discussion within the time framework such that they could go and attend to other needs. In some cases people really had little time because of the hardships of life. One informant said:

Evening time is time that we not only spend for leisure but also involves a lot of activities. Women have to fetch water, prepare supper, go and get back animals that is goats and cows from grazing, go to sell food in the market and also buy family needs like salt, sugar, rice, cooking oil, meat, buy clothes in Jinja Central market. For the men, evening time is time for carrying out some constructions around the home, sharing political and social ideas with other men, also going to the market to sell and buy home needs

It was interesting for me to hear that some people were guided by the traditional conception of time¹⁴ or being informed about time by other people while the modern conception of time¹⁵ was used by a few people who had watches. Though both

¹³ Ethical consideration basing on the notion of what works the determining value judgment in over coming ethical dilemma.

¹⁴ Conception of time based on natural phenomena and events.

¹⁵ Conception of time based on numerical numbers that using watches.

conceptions could be used, in some situations, even people with watches could be influenced by the traditional conception. Though people who depended on traditional conception of time in some instances did not come at the exact time, they often came within the stipulated time.

In some situation, I found myself helpless to fulfill people's expectations. From the questions people put to me, some of them wanted to know whether my research aimed at understanding their lived experiences in order to turn it into a big project that would bring money in form of loans and also for supporting some of their family needs. This is always a problem when doing research in poor areas: people always hope that they in some way can benefit from the research.

Throughout the period I was in the Butiki village, trying to find out how the Butiki people understand and interpret the meaning of well being, the role of ODECO and the consequences it poses to well being in the village, I was aware that the Butiki people were also trying to understand the meaning of my presence in the village plus what consequences my research would have on their lives. In other words, there was a double hermeneutics [Giddens 1982:14]. As I was trying to understand the people of the Butiki village, they were also trying to understand me.

3.15 LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

First and foremost the study was developed in the language of the academic discipline (English) that is different from the language of the study subjects (Lusoga) which was the main medium of communication in the data collection. Given the language differences, it was often difficult to translate some of the concepts and words from English to the local dialect. When I encountered such difficulty in certain situations, I translated the meanings of the concepts. Some "academic questions" are of course, also difficult to understand for illiterate people. I therefore tried to use everyday language when I posed my questions. Sometimes it has also been difficult to translate from Lusoga to English. But this has been a minor problem.

I could not come across related work done in the Butiki village and at the same time, there was limited written material provided to me about ODECO as they only gave me one evaluation report. This has in a way affected my analysis of written material that relates to the topic of research. With such limitations, I have done out-sourcing¹⁶

¹⁶ Using studies that are related to the topic under investigation.

3.15.1 WHAT COULD NOT WORK

Focus group discussions are normally said to be composed of between 4 to 12 members but in my case the two groups in the first days always had between 12 and 16 members. The reason for such large numbers is that people had organized themselves in that way and it was not easy to tell some informants not to participate in the group discussion. The large numbers was a challenge to me since I had planned to have about 10 people in each of the two groups. The number of people always present could not be controlled as some members could not attend the discussion but we always had a minimum of 10 participants. The reasons for being absent varied from looking after sick family members, going to the market to sell food, spending long hours in the gardens cultivating food, going to attend funerals, going to fetch water, not having clean clothes to put on and other issues that provided challenges for the people to participate.

I had planned to have some separate sessions for women and men and then combined but this did not work since group members told me that having such divisions was in one way a reinforcement of divisions between them and a negation of knowledge generation as a social activity of both women and men. The informants were simply against the idea of gender-divided interviews and discussions. This was one of the reasons why I also used in-depth interviews with individual persons.

3.15.2 CHALLENGES IN WRITING THE RESULTS

Writing the results of the study in the form of a thesis has been a challenging and complex task. Analyzing the data I collected from the field, relating it to the books and material I have encountered in the process of the writing has been a demanding experience.

I have faced a struggle of the different voices I had to listen to. This includes the voices of the Butiki people who are the primary source of my data, the voices from ODECO, voices in the written texts that represent the dominant development paradigm and my own voice as the person writing the thesis.

Given that the major voice of the study ought to be that of the Butiki people, I have tried to establish how they understand and interpret the meaning of development. The

other voices have been significant in offering a supportive role in form of either reinforcing the views of the Butiki people or criticizing those views. In some situations I have found it necessary to make generalizations¹⁷.

The methodological scheme in this chapter was important to the study especially in fulfilling the purpose and objectives for which it set out establish.

Since the study, as I have mentioned elsewhere, is an intervention into the human conditions of the people of Butiki, it is important to present how the people of the area live their lives. I think it is also important to present the social constructions and the meanings they develop based on their lived experiences. The following chapter gives an account of the ethnography of the Butiki village.

¹⁷ Generalizations are used in the study in as far as they help to highlight the contextual meanings of the topics the study addresses. However, I can not rule out the relevance of the contextual meaning to other areas where the local voices are crying out loudly for their voices to be heard as far as development projects are concerned.

CHAPTER FOUR

4 ETHNOGRAPHY OF THE BUTIKI VIALLAGE

4.1 INTRODUCTION

This chapter presents life as lived in the Butiki village. The ethnographic writing I present is a combination of my personal experience of the life situation, Butiki people's views and texts. It does not offer a description of all that goes on in the village but attempts to present some important aspects of the life-form of the inhabitants and important social constructions of the people. It gives a contextual description, serving as an important component of the research process that ought to proceed to other objectives of comparison [Landman 2002:5]. It does not only present aspects that give meaning to people's lives but also those that deny the people of Butiki to lead a good life as they will be discussed in the chapter about findings of the study.

The description offered here is crucial if we are to understand the thriving of the people of Butiki. This has been stressed by for example Amartya Sen:

If we need to know about the thriving of people, we need to know not only about the money they have or do not have, but a great deal about how they are able to conduct their lives...we need to know about their health care and medical services. We need to know about education and not only its availability, but about its nature and quality...we need to know what political and legal privileges the citizens enjoy, what freedoms they have in the conduct of social and personal relations. We need to know how family relations and relations between the sexes are structured, and how these structures foster or impede other aspects of human activity...we seem to need a kind of rich and complex description of what people are able to do and to be [Sen 2001:1-2].

I agree with Sen that it is important to develop a relatively "thick description" [Geertz 1973:7] to use Clifford Geertz' term. This is what I will set out to do now

4.2 LOCATION OF THE BUTIKI VILLAGE

Butiki village is situated five kilometers on the Western side of Jinja town and it is about three kilometers from the river Nile, where lies the Owen falls dam that is the

main electric power generating dam in Uganda. The power generated besides being used for national consumption, is also sold to neighboring countries such as Kenya, Rwanda and Eastern Democratic Republic of Congo. The village is also placed two kilometers from the controversial Bujagali power project. This a project being funded by the World Bank and other major international development agencies to construct another electric power generating dam on the river Nile. Despite the mandatory official assessment carried out by the World Bank on the social and environmental impact of the project, the project received resistance from the local residents of the area whose livelihood was to be disrupted. Some environmentalists including Member of Parliament for Rubaga South, Honorable Kenny Lukyamuzi who is the Vice President of the International Environment Conservation joined the residents. However, the government and its development partners are determined to construct the dam ignoring the ‘cry’ of the local voices.

The village has evergreen vegetation with both tall and short trees. It receives average rainfall throughout the year with short dry periods in June to August and then December and January.

4.3 LIFE IN THE BUTIKI VILLAGE

The Butiki village is a traditional society in the way Melkote defines such a society as “contextually small, mostly a rural community where people almost know each other, where interpersonal relations are close with strong group solidarity and kinship ties” [Melkote et al 2001:81]. People in the Butiki village also have some shared norms and values that give them purpose and a sense of identity. I will describe and analyze these norms and values later.

At the same time, the norms and values play a crucial role in maintaining the social cohesion of the Butiki community. This form of cohesion has been described by the French sociologist Emile Durkheim as ‘mechanical solidarity’. In mechanical solidarity social cohesion is based upon the likeness and similarity among individuals in a society. All members of the society perform the same or nearly the same tasks as all others [Durkheim 1982].

In this village most people have very low levels of education. They do not have formal employment. Almost all the twenty homes I visited are sustained by the food that is cultivated in the gardens.

In the Butiki village, you find people walking freely and comfortably without shoes. Maybe a few men will be putting on slippers or sandals. The children if not working at home, they will be enjoying various games in dusty courtyards, barefooted and at times with torn cloths. It is also common to find children having fetishes around either their arms or wrists as a sign of protection from any evil. In this sense, a belief in magic is found almost everywhere.

Despite the struggles people go through or what any person coming to this village can call 'a struggle for existence', most children do not look malnourished. This is probably explained by a variety of food and fruits within most of the households.

A man and his wife wake up in the morning around 7:00am to go and till the gardens up to 1:00pm, when it becomes very hot. At times a woman comes home to prepare food while the man stays behind working till evening. It is also common to find women staying in the gardens the whole day. During time for planting and harvesting when more labor is needed in the garden, people spend more hours in the gardens than usual. A woman comes from the garden carrying firewood, food and banana fibres. The banana fibres are used for covering food for cooking. Family members are a major source of labor and in school holidays: when the children are not going to school the labor force increases. The people go to the gardens without breakfast. They do not have gumboots and they go bare-footed and are working under difficult conditions.

When a woman gets home, she has to cook food, clean the compound, clean the saucepans and plates, goes to fetch water and in some instances she is assisted by children.

4.4 THE SOCIAL ECONOMY OF THE BUTIKI VILLAGE

The major economic activity in Butiki village is subsistence cultivation. People grow a variety of crops that include maize, beans, ground nuts, sweet potatoes, bananas, vegetables like tomatoes, cabbages, egg plants. Much as people grow these foods for home consumption, they also sell some at their homes and at time in Jinja central market. Some homes have coffee that they planted in the late 1970s and 1980s but today nobody wants to plant because of the low prices offered by the private buyers. There are a variety of fruits like oranges, jackfruit, avocados, paw paws. Traditionally, these fruits were not cultivated but provided by the natural environment. There are some homes that manage to rear a few animals like goats, pigs, traditional hen and ducks.

4.5 INFRASTRUCTURAL SETTING

The infrastructural setting of the Butiki village reveals the physical artifacts that does not only manifest convergence but also co-existence of the traditional and modern feature prevalent in the Butiki village

4.5.1 TRANSPORT

The village has an upgraded feeder road that connects it to the Jinja town. There is no public or private transport in this area. A few homes have bicycles as the basic means of transport. The bicycle has a very important role in the livelihood of people in the village. It is used to take sick people to the hospital in Jinja town or to any other health center, transport food from the gardens, to take food to the market, to visit distant relatives and friends, also to go and fetch water from either the bore hole or the springs.

When I was conducting my research, a middle-aged man had an accident and his bicycle was damaged. It could not be used yet he did not have money to go and buy the spare parts. He told me:

My bicycle is damaged and now I am finished. I do not have money to buy spare parts or even to pay the mechanic. The bicycle acts like my legs. Without it, I cannot move from home, I cannot go to town to buy needs for my home, at this moment my

home is at great risk because when any of my family members gets sick at night, I can take him\her to hospital. Without a bicycle, it's like am tied to a rope to stay in one place. Without it my life is at risk.

This shows how the bicycle is used to ease mobility of people not only in times of sickness but also becomes important in order to get access to vital resources like food and water.

People in homes that do not have bicycles, have to endure the distance of about two kilometers on the dusty roads to get to a place where they can wait for a taxi to take them wherever they want to go in case they have the money to pay. I observed that due to lack of money to pay for a taxi and also incapability to buy personal bicycles, some people have to walk long distances. A man of about 47 years told me that: ‘ *I get my food and put it on the head and walk to Town to sell, or otherwise I will not have money to buy necessities for my home*’. People’s mobility becomes more difficult especially in rainy seasons when they have to walk in the mud to be able to get where they want to go. However, in times of emergency people borrow their neighbors’ bicycle for use.

When going on longer trips, people usually take a taxi¹⁸. But at times the Kamunye takes excess passengers, maybe up to 18 due to a combination of factors that include the limited number of Kamunye that pass near Butiki village and drivers’ need to make more money. The above scenario is also common to other places in Uganda, especially those outlying cities, towns and urban centers. Over loading passengers no wonder has come to be identified among the famous factors that put people’s lives at risk and are consequently among the top causes of road accidents and deaths. In the editorial of *The Monitor* newspaper of 09.04.04, the editor commenting about the Traffic report on road accidents in Kampala during the month of March that revealed 21 people who died, 370 injured in 802 accidents around Kampala city says, “the figure highlights the sad fact that roads have become a common death place of many non-suspecting people”. This picture seems to be all over Uganda.

¹⁸ A taxi in this case is a fourteen seater van commonly known as kamunye.

4.5.2 HEALTH SYSTEMS

The Butiki village does not have any health centers. However, both modern and traditional systems of treating sickness and illness co-exist in the village. By modern system, I mean institutionalized health systems in terms of hospitals and health centers. It ought to be noted that the emergence of ‘hospital medicine’ can be seen as the root of the dominance of the hospital in the modern health care system and the establishment of health professionals, particularly doctors, who work in the hospitals as the shock troops of biomedicine [Graham et al 1995:56]. Traditional medicine is used to refer to non-institutionalized systems that use traditional herbs and indigenous medicine.

In times of sickness and illness, one system may be sought. However, if the cure does not easily come by, people turn to the alternative. Although biomedical ideas continue to determine modern notions of health care [Graham et al 1995:57], a person may begin by seeking medical treatment but if the sickness or illness persists, he or she may seek traditional healing systems and vice versa. In this region there is never an either/or.

4.5.3 MODERN HEALTH SYSTEM

There is one referral government hospital in Jinja town serving the Busoga region, but there are also health centers and dispensaries within the town. In 2001, the government constructed a health center at Mafubira sub-county head quarters, which is one and a half kilometers from Butiki. The center caters for outdoor patients, mostly treating malaria with major cases referred to Jinja main hospital. Mafubira health center may be accessible to people from Butiki, but it does not have a permanent doctor. It has a visiting doctor who may come once a month. A medical practitioner¹⁹ carries out all diagnosis and treatment.

The absence of a health center in Butiki village means that people have to travel outside their village to get attention. They either walk, use bicycle or for those who can afford to pay, they have to walk about two kilometers to the taxi stage where they

¹⁹ A medical practitioner is a personal who has received formal training in carrying out elementary diagnosis and treatment of minor illness and sickness.

can get a *Kamunye* to take them to Jinja hospital or to other private health centers, clinics or dispensaries in Jinja town.

In the government hospital catering for both in-door and out-door patients, treatment is free but the patient has to buy an exercise book for recording the diagnosis made. Besides people must pay for medicines that are not available at the hospital.

4.5.4 THE TRADITIONAL HEALTH SYSTEM

There are some elderly people who have a wealth of knowledge about treating sickness and illness. These elders use herbal medicine to treat physical sickness and social or psychological illness. When people get sick, they often first seek the services of herbal village practitioners. These are not formally established, nor do they have registered working hours, but those seeking their services go to their homes any time they are available. In most cases there are no established charges for their services but the person treated pays in form of gratitude; one can give money of which there is no fixed rate, one can give a cock, a goat, a bunch of matooke or any other foods and at times treatment is free. The knowledge about treating sickness and illness is not acquired through formal training but is passed on to the local specialist either by parents, through interaction with the natural environment and also through friends who already possess that knowledge. This can be regarded as a form of “local knowledge” (Geertz 1987).

The herbal practitioners do not handle all sickness and illness but there are some they specialize in. Some people have trust and confidence in the herbal medicine and that explains why in most cases the services of a herbal practitioner are first enlisted before people go to hospitals especially when they do not have clear diagnostic symptoms. But also the lack of money to pay and inaccessibility to hospitals makes people prefer herbal practitioners who in most cases are neighbors. It is only when a herbal practitioner knows that he\she cannot treat the sickness or illness that a patient is referred to another practitioner and in some cases to the hospital.

4.5.5 HOUSING

The houses people live in are made up of mud and then roofed with iron sheet and in some cases they are circular grass thatched. Apart from a few isolated cases, most of the houses²⁰ are not cemented and do not have electricity despite that the village is near the electric power generating dam.

There is always a main house in each homestead and a small house that acts as a kitchen. The kitchen is not only used for cooking food but also for storage of firewood and shelter for animals at night. It is usually common to find a kitchen without a door.

4.5.6 EDUCATION

Most people in the Butiki village are illiterate despite the fact that the village has a primary school that was started in the 1960s. There is also a boys' secondary school called Kiira College Butiki located at the top of Butiki hill.

4.5.7 PRIMARY EDUCATION

The primary school in Butiki is government funded but it has poor infrastructure and furniture. Some classrooms lack windows and seats. In the absence of enough seats some children sit on the floor. The floor and walls are not well cemented and painted, and some buildings have leaking roofs. The school does not have electricity and water. At the school, water is fetched from a spring that is about half a kilometer away, while at times it is fetched from a bore hole in a radius of quarter a kilometer.

Universal Primary Education (UPE) commonly known as *bona basome* was introduced in Uganda in 1996. The introduction of UPE accounts for the large number of pupil enrollment in primary education. The large number of children coupled with inadequate infrastructure has led to an unfavorable learning and teaching atmosphere. Some classes are conducted outside classrooms with pupils sitting on the grass under tree shades.

²⁰ A moderate house in the Butiki village normally has two bedrooms and a sittingroom. Normally it is occupied by between three to ten people of which two are most in cases the parents.

The pupils from primary three to primary seven have to stay at school from 8:00am to 5:30pm. This means the children need to be given lunch at school but when the parents are requested to make some contributions to cater for the lunch of their children, they keep on saying, “*we do not have money, why should we be asked to make contribution yet education is free*”. One parent of three pupils told me that, “*since we do not have money to pay for the meals of our children at school, the school authorities should allow us to contribute three kilograms of maize²¹ (dhuma) per child for each school term*”. Maize are cereals that are grinded to get maize flour used for making polledge or posho, mostly used as the main food in schools in Uganda.

The resentment the parents express with regard to contributing to school meals is also expressed when it comes to telling them to buy some school material. It was common during the research to find young children at home because parents were struggling to find money to pay for either school meals or buy school uniforms, exercise books, pens, pencils and other school needs.

It is a common phenomenon for children to study from primary one to primary seven without having a chance to read a single textbook for any subject at school. The above situation is aggravated by a small number of teachers who are poorly remunerated. This, of course, prevents the children from getting quality education. Hence, the children who go through these primary schools and other rural primary schools are placed at a disadvantageous position when compared to other children in urban schools that are well facilitated. All children though, are subjected to the same national Primary Leaving Examinations (PLE) at the end of primary seven. Many of the children in the Butiki village fall out of studies after UPE. However, it should be noted that even among the urban schools, there are those that share the same conditions as the rural schools.

4.5.8 SECONDARY EDUCATION

The village has a boys’ secondary school called Kiira College Butiki which is among the first class secondary schools in Uganda in terms of quality education. It is also one

²¹ Maize are cereals that are grinded to get maize flour commonly used for making polledge or mingled to get posho which is common food in schools in Uganda.

of the best performing national secondary schools. The school is enclosed (fenced off) with teachers residing inside the school, though some of them have their homes in Jinja town where they are picked every day by the school van to come to the school.

The students who attend the secondary school are sons of middle class Ugandans paying school fees that are equivalent to 150\$ and 190\$ per school term. Each academic year has three school terms. People of the Butiki Village who struggle to satisfy basic needs cannot afford the above amount of money. It seems that among the 1100 or slightly more students in the secondary school, there might be none or may be one student from within the village.

In other words, the primary school is catering for the rural poor while the secondary school caters for middle class Ugandans. This manifests a poverty curtain that does not only separate the people of the Butiki village from the middle class Ugandans who can afford to bring their children to the secondary school, but also explains why the people cannot afford to take their children to the secondary school that is in their village: The people of Butiki village can simply not afford to send their children to Kiira College Butiki.

4.6 LOCAL POLITICAL DYNAMICS IN THE VILLAGE

The political organization in Butiki village is linked to the national political system of Uganda. It is a decentralized form of local governance.

4.6.1 LOCAL POLITICS IN UGANDA

The National Resistance Movement (NRM) that took political power in Uganda (1986) introduced the Resistance Councils (RC) at district, county, sub-county, parish and village level as the smallest unit. Resistance councils from 1995, with the promulgation of the 1995 Constitution, came to be renamed and called local councils (LC): “The districts are divided into counties, sub-counties, parishes and village councils. The residents of each village make up the village council, which elects a governing village committee. All the committees in the same parish form a parish council and elect the parish committee, which joins together with all other parish

committees in the sub-county to elect its committee. Committee elections are held every four years and one third of the positions in each committee are reserved for women”²²

4.6.2 COMPOSITION OF THE LOCAL COUNCIL AND THE GENDER PERSPECTIVE

Each local council is composed of nine members being headed by a chairman. In most cases it's men who are elected as heads of the council committees. The basis of being elected is individual merit, but because of strong cultural stereotypes and power constructions, women leave the men to take the most important position as heads of councils. However, this is slowly changing as some women have started to compete with men for top political positions. But, men still continue to come up victorious because of what I may call the 'male alliance' to vote fellow men and not women into leadership positions. When a man and a woman stand for the post of chairman, the majority of men vote for the man rather than the woman. Voting for a woman would be culturally degrading and surrendering the male power to the 'Other sex'²³ [Laqueur 1990:20]. At times women are coerced and manipulated by men to vote for candidates of their choice. At least, this is what my informants told me.

In order to give opportunity to women, the NRM government introduced affirmative action especially in politics at all levels and education at higher institutions. In politics, from the village level to all councils each district has a mandatory free seat for a woman. Even parliament has special seats for women. It is these women who are spearheading the women emancipation movement and agitating for gender equality.

Gender equality is called Omwenkanhonkanho²⁴. What should be noted is that the women who are given top position in any area of leadership more often assume a male position of dominating other women and men under their area of jurisdiction. Accordingly, male ideology and values are still very strong in these localities.

²² http://www.worldstates.ws/world_states/Africa/Uganda/Government/local.Government.htm
31.12.03

²³ Other sex is used in reference to establishment of a breakdown from a one sex model to two sex model of sexual difference in which women came to be categorized as belong to the Other sex.

²⁴ Omwenkhanhonkanho is a local term used to connote the struggle for gender equality and more used to refer to the possibility to improve women position in society to overcome the suffering and deprivations that are a result of social, economic, political and cultural structures.

4.7 VALUES CONSIDERED FOR POLITICAL LEADERSHIP

In the Butiki village, there are some values that people consider as very important for any person to possess to be eligible for political leadership. These values are taken as important and necessary, though they may not be absolute. Formal qualification does not have much significance in choosing leaders. After all there are hardly people with formal qualifications and education living on this village. The young men and a few women who have attained formal education and qualification do not live in the village and also do not participate in its local politics.

4.7.1 MARRIAGE

Marriage and having children is given top ranking when choosing any person for political leadership. The family is considered the basic unit for learning leadership qualities. In a home wives at times are in conflict with the husbands, children often fight each other. The fact that a man is able to resolve conflicts in a home amicably gives the confidence that he can resolve any conflicts that may emerge in the community. So a man that knows how to treat his own family will also be competent in the political sphere. This we could call a patriarchal attitude or paternalist ideology.

4.7.2 POSSESSION OF LAND AND PERSONAL HOUSE

Land is a very important resource and when you have a house on it, it signifies permanence in the village. Otherwise people are scared of electing a person who might migrate to another area. It does not matter how much land you have. When you have a permanent home on the village, it means that it is easy for people to trace you in case of any trouble or conflict in the village. Land and a house is therefore a condition for attaining a political position at village level.

Related to the above, you must be present in the village. With urbanization and the search for jobs, some people have homes in the towns where they work, and in some instances they also have houses in the Village. In such a situation, when you come back to the village to be elected for political leadership, people in the village will reject you and claim that you are no longer part of them. They tell you to go to the

town as to where you belong. So people will very seldom vote for migrants. I asked a lady whether they had people from the village who are employed in formal institutions and she told me: *'we have three children who studied and got degrees but they have now established themselves in the city. They belong to the city, they no longer belong here, they only come either to visit their parents or when there are problems in their homes'*. In the town if you stood for leadership, you may be elected but if you meet an opponent who was born in that town, he will use the same argument as that of people in the village. He\she appeals to the electorate not to elect you, telling you to go back to the village where you belong. In this case you are politically alienated. You find yourself belonging nowhere.

Local politics in the Butiki village and other parts of Uganda is too often oriented towards conflict resolution rather than being policy making. Village leaders and residents of the village hardly participate in the formulation of policies that govern them. In most cases the sub-county and district leaders give them instructions on what to do. Local governance is thus, aptly defined by a top down political structure. The most important political decisions are not taken at village level.

AGE

Age plays a crucial role when it comes to electing people to political office and even other types of leadership in the village. A person of mature age to be considered to political leadership ought to be 40 years and above, may be up to 60. At times it is very hard to determine one's age since traditionally in Butiki and the rest of Busoga, time is not measured categorically in numbers, but in terms of events. For example it is common for one to tell you that *'I was born during the great famine, earthquake, during the war of liberation, during the last day of colonialism, during the reign of such a cultural leader and so on'*. It is up to you to find out when those events happened and establish the age. Old age is linked to traditional epistemological conceptions of wisdom. Elderly people have accumulated wisdom. This is one of the reasons why they should have political positions.

A person with wisdom is supposed to possess knowledge about the past events of the village, be foresighted, able to discern issues and settle cases and conflicts of village members. There is a common saying that, *'the black eye liner of an old person is what*

sees', literally translated that the way an old person interprets and judges a situation is how things have happened. In other words, old people are conceived of as not misrepresenting events. This reinforces inequality not only between male and female, but also within sexes as ideas of the young hardly receive attention. Young people thus receive negligible attention. It also perpetuates dictatorial democracy hinged upon the fallacy of Argument Ad Hominem that translates into fallacy against the person (Thomas 1990). In this case, the intelligence and reasonableness of young people comes to be denied in some instances when it comes to decision-making. The old dictate and determine the destiny of events in the village, and they seldom listen to young people.

4.7.3 MORAL UPRIGHTNESS

A person without a good moral record in the village is always scorned and this is a basis for being denied political office. To be morally accepted in the Butiki village means not to be a thief, not to be a witch, 'night dancer'. You should greet people wherever you meet them, have self-respect and also respect for others, attend burials, and not be a drunkard. If you have large chunks of land, you allow other people to graze their animals on it and you also allow others who may wish to cultivate food on it according to agreements among the involved parties, such a person will also permit people to come and get firewood at no cost etc. This is slowly changing since firewood has begun to be sold. In other words, a morally upright person is one who is concerned about the well being of others.

4.8 THE ELECTORAL PROCESS

The electoral process in Uganda of adult suffrage is by secret ballot with regard to the election of members to Local Council Three (LC 11I) and to Local Council Five (LC V) and members of parliament. At the village level the process involves standing behind the agents of the candidate who happens to compete for a particular post. The candidate who emerges with the greatest number of supporter or voters is declared winner.

4.8.1 WOMEN PARTICIPATION IN THE POLITICS

The electoral bill and the 1995 constitution of Uganda allow women to participate in the electoral process, but a number of factors inhibit their full participation. In the Butiki village, the labor burden bestowed on women prevents some women from full participation in electing their leaders.

Elections normally take place from 8:00am to 5:00pm in which people are voted into various leadership positions. The fact that village committees are voted by lining up, makes the process more problematic. This means if your favorite candidate is voted before you arrive at the voting venue, you have no chance to elect him or her. In the morning hours, women are normally in the gardens and when they come home around 2:00pm, they have to cook food for the members of the household, fetch water, clean the compound and take the animals for grazing for those who have them. The animals are normally taken to the grazing place and left there to be picked in the evening since in most cases they are tied on lopes.

Because of the labor burden, women often fail to take part in the electoral processes. On voting days, it is common for men not to go to the garden and spend the whole day at the election venue. For this reason, politics is highly dominated by men.

The process of lining behind agents of candidates hampers free choice especially for women when a man and his wife support different candidates. Women in most cases are full of fear for their husbands and normally line up in the same line as their husbands are lining. These election procedures have often been the cause of domestic violence because traditionally the power and decision of a man ought not to be contested by his wife. If for example a woman contests the power and decisions of her husband, the man may be rebuked and scorned as *not being man enough* not only by fellow men but also by some women who subscribe to such male dominance.

Some women often fear to contest with men for similar posts and even in few isolated cases where they have competed with men, their chances of winning have been minimal.

There are no official campaigns before the election date, however candidates carry out informal (underground) campaigns in which they distribute a few logistics to lure support. The logistics include a bar of soap, a kilogram of sugar, a sacket of salt and at times contribute to the social welfare of the village by offering lanterns and saucepans which are normally used in times of funeral and other social gathering where they are needed.

Political power and decision-making ideally lies with the people but practically, those with economic power more often take political positions. People with economic power determine the destiny of events. In the villages and Butiki that was my case study, political power is not only linked to economics but also possession of other abilities that manifest power.

4.8.2 POWER IN THE SOCIAL REALM

Besides political power, there is a power in the Butiki village that lies in the social realm. Being of old age makes people have power more so if you have grey hair. Being old is likened to having a lot of wisdom that automatically qualifies you to be a consultant on different issues on the past and present, being able to give good advise for a better social organization of the village. This is related to what the French philosopher and sociologist Pierre Bourdieu has called ‘symbolic power’ [Bourdieu 1999]

Other sources of power include having large chunks of land, having children who have graduated, a few people still cherish having many children as a source of pride. A man I visited in his home told me: *“I am very powerful, I have a lot of land, I grow a variety of foods but before I take you to the gardens, the concrete evidence of my being powerful is the many children I have been able to produce and also given that am able to feed them”*

Also having big harvest makes people look at you as being powerful in the community, though this may be linked to physical labor and energy you employ in your gardens. Linked to the above, doing many activities that can bring income also acts as a source of power. For example, there is a young man of about 26 years who is

having a lot of land he inherited from his father. On this land he is growing a variety of crops both for home consumption but largely for the market. He also has a small house where he is rearing chicken (layers mash). His age does not qualify him to enjoy the privileged social position he is accorded, but because of his material resources even old people respect him and this give him a position that he would otherwise not enjoy. There are many youths of his age who do not enjoy the social power he enjoys. This means that his contributions in meetings are respected and taken seriously. Other youths come to him for consultation about farming, and in fact he is able to give some of them casual work on his gardens for a small pay when he has money to pay them. In many ways this is a very untypical care of social and economic power in the village.

The problem with this kind of social structure is that material wealth can most likely lead to domination of others and may breed social inequality reinforcing serious gender inequality in a situation where women's accessibility to resources is difficult.

4.8.3 FAMILY COMPOSITION

There is no clear-cut demarcation between nuclear and extended families. There are also monogamous and polygamous families based on patriarchal ideals. Because of the relational nature of belonging, most families are extended and based on what J.S Mbiti calls a cobweb of relationships (Mbiti 1967). It is common to find parents staying with their grandchildren or other relatives. In old age, parents are given grandchildren to stay with. The reasons may vary, but in most cases it is for the grandchildren to be taught cultural values, assist grandparents to look after the home, avoid boredom since when all the children have matured and moved away, the parents remain lonely.

Grandparents' staying with their grandchildren is crucial for passing on cultural and societal values and norms embedded in stories, riddles, poems and songs. These are transmitted to young generations orally, and grandparents are considered the custodians of these values and norms. People live in an oral culture. This explains why parents staying in towns take their children to their home places in the villages during holidays for the children to obtain those values.

4.8.4 LAND OWNERSHIP

People in the Butiki village depend on subsistence farming where land is a crucial resource. All adults in this village have ownership to land on which they cultivate food. Being adult according to the people of Butiki takes on many dimensions and it is what regulates ownership of land and other property.

If you are above 18 years, you can be allowed to buy land. When a man marries, the father normally gives him land to cultivate food for his home since getting married is a sign of independence from the parents though the links are not completely cut off. For any parent the most cherished resource to give to children is land. When a parent is too old or sick and about to die, he calls his children and distributes land to them.

Land traditionally was in sole possession of the men, though there is a gradual change: women have come to own land and have a right to give it to their children or sell it. Then there is land parents share with their children when the children construct houses around the parents' homestead.

A person becomes an adult when he\she falls in any of the following categories:

Any person above 18 years old is an adult by virtue of age. This is a national procedure encoded in the 1995 Constitution of the Republic of Uganda.

Socially one becomes an adult when one starts the process of marrying (depending on the culturally prescription for the marriage age). This means that even if you are above 18 years but not married, you may not qualify to be called an adult in the social sense. But even if you are married, to be a confirmed adult, you ought to have children. A young person below 18 years can symbolically become an adult if he \she becomes heir, in other words he\she becomes a symbolic representation of the deceased and has a right to inherit and own land.

When a parent or any person wishes to bequeath land to another person, there must be a meeting and agreement between elders called *abataaka*, local council members, and some family members of the one giving and those of the receiver of the land. The one bequeathing pronounces that he\she is giving a particular portion of land to another person. The pronouncement forms a pact that binds the two parties and other people

to respect the new owner and the people present at the act as witness and in case of any dispute arising, they are called upon to settle it. It should however be noted that even if the above custom plays a significant role as regards bequeathing or buying and selling of land in the Butiki Village, written agreements are also accompanied nowadays.

The quantity of land people own varies between 16 hectares and 40 hectares, and in some cases people have even more than that. Not all land is used; there are large chunks that lay unutilized for cultivation purposes. Land in Butiki is not formally measured apart from the written agreements between the concerned parties and this explains why people are having land without land titles. Traditionally, there are two particular types of tree species used for demarcating land. One is called *Luwanyi* and the other *Kilowa*. Another way to demarcate land is by digging a small trench known as *Lusalosalo*. By use of *Luwanyi*, *Kilowa* or *Lusalosalo* people identify land that belongs to them.

Land ownership, management and utilization in the Butiki village is a mixture of both traditional and modern norms and values. Similarly, land tenure rules and practices in sub-Saharan Africa are often a complex and contradictory mixture of customary land rules, Islamic maxims, colonial precedents and post colonial decrees, all simultaneously operating [Maiarosa Dalla Costa et al 1993:27].

4.9 CONCEPTION OF TIME

In general people conceive of time as a composition of events that have already occurred, those that are taking place now and those that are most likely to occur in the near future. The events that are considered are those within the rhythm of natural phenomena like the rising of the sun. This means that the Western linear conception of time is foreign to African traditional thought. Time traditionally is never thought of as a linear sequence that can be measured in mathematical terms. It is concrete and specific purposes in life that are based on events after all. Time is not recorded and indeed numerical calendars did not exist before they were introduced by people from the Western 'world'. Time recorded as noted above, was based on the "phenomena calendar" in which events that made up the time were recorded and considered in relation to one another.

The above conception of time influences people's understanding of themselves, the community, and universe, which universe is conceived hierarchically with God at the top, spirits, man, animals, then phenomena and objects without biological life at the bottom.

Going back to time recording, there is an absence of specific reference to any unit of time, for example it may not be much difference between 6:00am and 7:00am, 1:00pm and 2:00pm. Practical life is influenced by the position of the sun, cockcrow, the shades of buildings and trees in compounds. People talk about early morning, sunrise; *kunkyo eighno*, morning; *kunkyo*, noon; *misana*, afternoon; *misana waghati*; evening; *eighulo*, sunset.

Because of the practical significance of events, it is common to people to have a look at the position of the sun, shades of trees; (*ebinsenze*) and cocks crow to determine when they have to come from the gardens, have meals, send children to school in the morning, go for meetings and when to set off for any journey. Very few people have a watch, or organize their lives according to the clock.

This conception of time can perhaps not work in European countries where some seasons have long days and short nights and even at times having no sunshine at all. But in African traditional settings where days and nights are equal, the significance of natural phenomena in determining time is what gave meaning to life.

4.9.1 CO-EXISTENCE OF TIME CONCEPTION

The people of Butiki do not live in isolation of what happens in other parts of the country and the world. In one way or another, they are influenced by modernization. In this particular aspect, being modern is used to imply conceiving time in a Western perspective based on numerical thinking and using watches. A few people have watches but even then, the traditional conception of time more often takes precedent over the modern in practical life.

CHAPTER FIVE

5 WELL BEING AS DEFINED BY THE PEOPLE OF THE BUTIKI VILLAGE

5.1 INTRODUCTION

The discussion below that forms the gist of the study offers a summary of how the people of Butiki understand and interpret the meaning of well being. Before I went to the field, I wanted to focus my discussions on the notion of development. After engaging in discussions with the people of Butiki, I discovered that the people talked about development only as a process to realize well being in homes. Development was interpreted as the means and well being as the end. Well being and good life were often discussed synonymously, though well being in the Butiki village is seen as a condition of enjoying the good life as the findings will reveal. To keep the anonymity of the informants I have changed their names despite the requests not to change them however in a few cases I use the real names

The chapter discusses the physical, psychological and social notions of well being. In other words, the main points center around physical well being in the form of material well being, social well being and social security

5.2 THE NOTION OF WELL BEING

The notion of well being in the two ODECO groups in the Butiki village is similar to the conceptualization by the five people I interviewed in Mafubira village that do not belong to any NGO. But there seems to be a slight difference in the means to realize well being in these two village. The main focus will be on the conceptualization by the Butiki people but I will give a summary of how the five people who do not belong to ODECO understand and interpret well being.

Well being as a condition of good life to the Butiki people means to have a balance between the physical needs and psychological satisfaction not only within the individual but also among member so the household, other members in the village, or near villages. It encompasses the good conditions of people, animals and the natural

environment upon which people depend for sustenance. From the environment they get food, fruit, herbs and medicine, firewood, grass for thatching (roofing) houses, and at the same time the environment is conceived of as playing a significant role in sustaining the general ecology. This holistic conception of well being is illustrated in the Busoga greeting as one of the respondents, an old man in his late 60s told me:

“For us people of Butiki village and generally the Basoga, we have a strong concern of many things. In our greetings, we inquire about the well being of other people, their animals and how the gardens are flourishing” For he continued, “ besides trying to find out the conditions of life of the person we are greeting, his family members, we extend to inquire about the cows, the goats, chicken, ducks, the sweet potato, ground nuts and other gardens. If it rains where the person is coming from, in case it is harvesting period, we inquire whether they made good harvest”

The aim of the extensive and exhaustive form of greeting and inquiry he told me, ‘is to establish whether any of the things inquired about was not in good condition such that knowledge is exchanged in restoring the good health’.

As I noted earlier that well being for the Butiki people is understood in terms of categorizations, let me present in detail the different categories.

5.2.1 MATERIAL AND PHYSICAL WELL BEING

Material possession and physical conditions of life are the major constituents of well being for the Butiki people. The aspect of well being that is considered fundamental is the availability of food in the homes. Availability of food is closely related to possession of land. Possession of land has already been presented in chapter four in the part where I discuss property ownership in the Butiki village. My main informant who is about 36 years and mother of four children in one of the discussions said: “well being for us means having a lot of food and crops for the present consumption and for the future. If we do not have food, we can not have good conditions in our homes. If for example I do not plant food, my children will not have what to eat and will go in miserable conditions”.

Planting and having food revealed itself as having an instrumental role of generating income for the homes. James Lugolobi, a father of five children, said to me, “cultivating food is crucial for my livelihood. Through cultivation, I am able to grow the food I want. I decide when and how to harvest it, selling some to get money to care for my family. For example from the sale of what I cultivate, I am able to buy basic needs of my home; pay school fees for the children, pay medical bills, buy sugar, cooking oil, salt etc”. Related to what Lugolobi said, Judith Kateme gave a similar perspective by attempting to trace well being in a home. To Kateme having conditions that enhance development is the first step to enjoying well being. To her, development “means having good conditions in a home that begin by cultivating food for the household, not to depend on food that is sold in the market. When you cultivate food, you are able to sell some. The sale of food helps us to get some money to school fees for our children in the event of the demise of profitable cash crops”.

In the groups, there was consensus that possession of land is a basic resource for enjoying well being. Since almost all the people who are involved in the ODECO projects depend on cultivation of food for their livelihood and sustenance, land is seen as a crucial resource in ensuring food security in homes.

High value is attached to being healthy: not being sick, looking fat, that is when one’s bones do not show. Linked to health is having enough money to pay for medical bills and at the same time being able to pay for transport not only in times of sickness but also to be able to have the means of transport to go wherever one wants.

Well being for the Butiki people also means being able to take tea with sugar, buy soap, salt, having cooking oil, being able to eat meat occasionally and vegetable, having access to clean water that is near people’s homes unlike the current situation where some people have to walk about half a kilometer to get to the borehole.

Having a good house that does not leak and a kitchen were highlighted among the most crucial material manifestations of well being. During my visits to the homes, I was fascinated by the way the kitchen dynamics were expressed. I found out that the kitchen is a very important place in the lives of the Butiki people.

I explored the social norms and issues related to food, how they are associated with the kitchen, the gender relations revealed in the kitchen and how these affect well being in homes.

5.2.2 WELL BEING AND THE RIGHT TO FOOD

One part of well being for the Butiki people is the idea of the right to food. The people of the Butiki village in interpreting the meaning of the right to food in most cases focused on the normative assessment of how the implementation could ensure accessibility to food for everybody. This section presents views of the Butiki people and my personal knowledge recounting how things were in the recent past and at the same time co-exist with the new changes in the village.

5.2.3 SOLIDARITY AS GUARANTEE OF THE RIGHT TO FOOD

Social norms of solidarity are crucial for securing the right to food. This was also linked to mechanisms of sharing resources and property. The property that is most significant here is land. Though I have discussed land ownership in the ethnography chapter, let me discuss here how it is relevant to ensuring the right to food and well being.

Land as a social property is a crucial resource for the people of the Butiki village. Its ownership and management plays an important role in ensuring accessibility of food to every member of the village. Individuals, families, relatives shared land to ensure that people cultivate food. In case one needed more land to cultivate food, he/she would request a neighbor, relative or friend who has any land that is not being cultivated. More often there was positive response to such request, given that refusing to allow community members to cultivate land that you do not use is considered anti-social and disrupts social relations within the village. A person who does not allow community members to utilize some of his land is considered too individualistic and not being interested in ensuring the well being of other people.

Land is also significantly important to guaranteeing the right to food as it is taken as the ultimate resource at disposal for people's investment. A respondent told me that "for us people in the Butiki village our only resource for investment is land, unlike people with money who invest their money in the banks. When the rain comes and I

plant food, I am investing my assets. Harvesting hence is a form of getting back what I invested in the soil. This is how we understand our cultural economy and use it for sustaining our families”.

People cultivate a variety of food. There is less specialization in production, reproduction and distribution of any particular food. The people use the hoe as the major tool for tilling and cultivating food though with modernization, they are being encouraged to use modern farming tools like using tractors to plough.

After harvesting people on many occasions share and exchange food. For example if one family is not able to cultivate a particular type of food, then such food is acquired through exchange. At the same time if one visits either a relative or a friend, she/he normally will be given food to carry home and in some cases, a hen is given as a part of an exchange process. During lunch people passing on the road are invited (idha tulghe for one person or mwidhe tulghe for more than one person) since often lunch is served in the courtyard. Many times people respond positively for lunch invitation as it is considered anti-social to turn down an invitation to share food. Sharing food is looked at as a means to foster and enhance the well being of people in the community. In other words, it manifests an underlying ethic of care.

In times of vulnerability, whether due to sickness or poor harvest of any household, neighbors, relatives and friends would give food to those affected. For example, in case a household was faced with death of any of its members, community members would bring food, firewood and at least five litres of water to the bereaved family. Today, money is also accepted from members who cannot afford to bring food items. This is a clear manifestation of the obligation to fulfill the right to food.

In some cases people coming from other parts of Uganda to settle in the Butiki village find themselves not having enough land to cultivate all the food they needed for sustenance. These people mostly provide labor in the garden of other people and are paid in form of food to take home. Paying for labor is slowly assuming new forms. It has to be paid for in monetary terms.

Closely related to the above, in times of old age, children, especially girls of the old parents would after planting food in their distant homes, where they are married, take off some time to go and plant food for their parents and then come back to their homes. During school holidays they would send the children to the grandparents to look after the food in the gardens. This explains why in the Butiki village and other parts of the Busoga region, it is common that a wife goes and plants food for her parents and then comes back to her home. This is the same during harvesting periods. During school terms, labor in the gardens of the old parents is supplemented by the category of people I have talked about above.

Children's right to food had paramount importance and it was a responsibility of every person to ensure the right to food and well being of children. In this regard, the children's right to food had a unique and delicate emphasis among the communities of my scope [in the regions of Central, Eastern and Western Uganda]. Children's food was never a one parent's responsibility; the children belonged to everybody and as a matter of fact, the children ate where food was served. Nobody would allow a child to leave his\her home without eating food. One clear example to note is that any one individual never owned fruit trees; they belonged to the community. Children would collect as much as they wished, and as long as the fruits were still on the trees [Rukooko 2003:6]. To emphasize the communal belonging of fruits, the Basoga have a saying 'gyamelgha gyenhe'. This is an expression used in reference to the perception of the natural providence of fruits, having sprouted by themselves and hence warranting free consumption.

In order to respect and protect the right to food, there was free exchange of knowledge about the systems of production, reproduction, distribution, consumption and sustenance of the social ecology. This was reinforced and sustained by the notion of being that transcends the well being of human beings to include other beings in the community. This exhibits people's capacity to take care of their own means of sustenance.

In times of high demand of labor in the gardens, households joined together to work in each other's gardens from which they coined a term (kulima kampu). It seems

however that the term *kampu* was derived from the English word *company* in which households working together signified working in a company of households.

Despite the strong solidarity mechanisms that ensured the right to food, there were some practices that denied and continue to deny in some situations food entitlements to certain members of household. For example women and girls traditionally are not supposed to eat certain kinds of food like eggs, chicken, pork etc but prepare them for other household members. This is a serious problem that leads often to undernourishment of women and girls as they are denied high protein foods.

5.2.4 DYNAMICS OF CHANGE ON ISSUES RELATED TO FOOD

Today, issues related to food are in most cases assessed in terms of the market value or economic value they have. This is affecting issues of production, reproduction, consumption and distribution of food. With the market nexus where people depend on the sale of their food and fruits, it is a criminal case to eat fruits before you have made payment and it is not common for one to allow a neighbor to go and harvest food from the gardens without payment though in some occasions traditional solidarity norms exist and people exchange food.

With the market economy this has affected issues related to food not only in the Butiki village but everywhere in Busoga and other parts of Uganda. Solidarity norms to some extent exist and co-exist but strongly threatened with new market views. People's accessibility to food is also becoming threatened and consequently their well being.

5.2.5 THE KITCHEN SPACE AND ISSUES RELATED TO FOOD

A moderate homestead in the Butiki village ought to have a kitchen that is often constructed at the front of the main house and also, there ought to be a courtyard. The courtyard is among other purposes used for drying food. It is common to find a courtyard with a big tree under which people sit to eat food, and discuss family, clan or village issues affecting them. During the research period, I observed that in most cases, community meetings and gatherings take place under big trees.

In the kitchen, there are always three cooking stones in which firewood is put and the cooking utensil put on top of the stones. The utensil is normally a steel saucepan or a traditional cooking pot made out of clay.

I was told by Mrs. Abdallah Kigenyi, who is about 68 years, as she took me inside her kitchen that, “ the kitchen besides being a cooking and eating place in some instance, it is where families normally come in the evening to share experiences: a place for passing on social values and norms to the young. It is a place where education of the young takes place. It is also a warming place, a store used for storage of food, firewood and shelter for animals at night”.

In a more elaborate interview with Mrs. Kigenyi about how she manages her kitchen and how it relates to ensuring well being, she told me, “ a good kitchen to the people of the Butiki village is one in which smoke comes out often. The smoke is a sign that people in the home have food to eat and sustain themselves. Where there is smoke there is life and hope”.

The kitchen and gender relations will be taken on further in the section about well being and gender relations, but let me turn to the second category of well being.

5.3 SOCIAL WELL BEING

Because of strong ‘cobweb of relationships’(J Mbiti 1967) and solidarity mechanisms, well being and good life for the Butiki people involve being able to care and help other people in the community. I got the impression that social well being is guided by a strong ethic of care. This shows that norms of solidarity have not disappeared though they struggle to co-exist with notions of modernity.

I observed strong interaction between the individual interests and the social good, for example a successful individual is obliged to help others, which I think is a form of redistribution of wealth. Jude Muyinda of 26 years is paying school fees for three of his young siblings. Muyinda gets the money to cater for himself and his family members from the sale of paw paws, egg plants, cabbage and sugar canes that he cultivates on the large chunks of land left by their deceased father.

Social well being involves mechanisms of sharing land for others to cultivate and having food in the home, sharing and exchange of food during times of sickness, bereavement and old age. It also involves free exchange of knowledge about cultivation and medicinal herbs to ensure good life among community members.

In both the focus groups discussion and in-depth interviews, there was repeated reference to issues of investment in the soil and social security as crucial for guaranteeing well being and good life. These will be taken up in chapter eight in which I present my discussions. Issues of investment and social security of the Butiki people are going to be discussed highlighting the conflicts and the few similarities with standard development views and the views of well being.

Since the study conducted a quick research with people who do not belong to any NGO, let me present a summary of the views of the people of the Mafubira village where the comparative study was conducted.

5.4 INTERVIEWS WITH NON-ODECO MEMBERS IN MAFUBIRA VILLAGE

This section presents the view of the five people who do not belong to any NGO. I interviewed them in the Mafubira village. The aim of these interviews was to get a comparative view of how people who do not belong to any NGO and in a seemingly different environment understand and interpret well being and good life. It should, however, be noted that my focus is not on this group, though their views are important in this study for the normative assessment of how to enhance well being that people have reason to value.

The Mafubira village shares boundaries with Jinja municipality. The village is composed mostly of people who have no formal employment but have different paid jobs in Jinja town. Unlike the Butiki village, most houses in Mafubira are made of bricks, have electricity and they use tap water. The village has a tarmac road that passes through it to Kamuli district with a few people having mobile telephones and personal cars.

This village has approximately 2400 thousand people of which the majority rent the house they stay in. The social economy of the Mafubira village is an informal economy in which people engage themselves in money generating activities like selling food and other basic needs. These are sold in the village market that collects people from the neighboring villages including the Butiki village. It is also common to find people selling commodities from small shops in their homes and along the village paths. There are a few gardens but people who cultivate food in neighboring villages as far as the Butiki village. Those who do not have gardens buy the food from other people. Most of those in working age are men who work in Jinja town where they provide casual labor and also engage in private business.

5.4.1 CONCEPTION OF WELL BEING IN THE MAFUBIRA VILLAGE

Unlike in the Butiki village, well being in the Mafubira village was mostly linked to employment and having money. Money economy thus is very crucial for the people in the Mafubira village and has an instrumental value of ensuring well being and good life.

In the interviews there was emphasis on having money to pay house rent, pay the taxi (kamunye) to go to Jinja town, to buy food, pay water and the electricity bills and also to meet the needs of the family, clan members and relatives.

I found that in some instance, the conception of well being by the people of the Mafubira village was in a way similar to that of the Butiki people, especially the physical and social categorization of well being, though money for the Mafubira people implies a sense of security and freedom to choose a life they value to lead.

In the interviews, James Nakku who has stayed in the Mafubira village for over 45 years, tried to explain the dynamics of the money economy. He said, “in the 1980s there was ‘Entandikwa Scheme’ in which the government used to provide small loans to people as a means to fight poverty. But people would get the money and misuse it.

Most people did not know how to use the money, at times using it for non commercial purposes and they often failed to pay back the loans, consequently leading to the collapse of the scheme”. According to Nakku, however much you give loans to people without teaching them how to use the money, nothing much can be achieved. It emerged in the discussion with Nakku that the instrumental role of money to guarantee well being is when one is not indebted. Being indebted is not having well being since the little money people struggle to earn when used to pay debts constrains the realization of some family needs.

After I have presented the actors’ point of view that involved the discussions on the first theme of the study, let me move on to the second theme of the study that concentrates on the role of ODECO in the Butiki village in relation to improving the conditions of the people.

5.5 THE ROLE OF ODECO IN THE BUTIKI VILLAGE

This section is purely based on the in-depth interviews I had with the director and field officers of ODECO. Since the field officers are the implementers of ODECO projects, when analyzing the interviews I conducted with them I found their views and answers somehow similar to that of the director. Thus I have decided to make their voices silent to avoid repetition.

In the interview I had with the director, she began by giving a synthesis of the ODECO approach to development in the Butiki village. She summed up the approach by saying: “the lens through which people see poverty is not the same for all people. The different homes are at different levels of poverty and have different needs. There are families with a large number of children yet having inadequate income to access basic needs, the illiterate, those who do not have the capacity to take their children to school, those with poor shelter and those who can not afford adequate medical services”. According to the director, all the above issues have to be addressed for development to become realizable in the villages. Thus she came to define development “as the process of helping the poor people in villages to improve their lives in all aspects”. The director told me that ODECO is responding to people’s needs in the projects the organization is carrying out in the villages.

The ODECO organization is having about four different projects in the Butiki village and the interviews I conducted with one director and two field officers attempted to discover the role the organization is playing in the village in trying to enhance development and well being in the village.

The director described the projects the organization carried out. In one project, she said, “we give groups heifers on a rotation basis, When we give a home a heifer, after it has given birth, the home sells the milk, consuming some but the calf is given to another family. With such a cycle, we hope as many people get heifers, the sale and consumption of milk, the conditions in homes will improve since during the period when the heifer is giving milk, money the homes would use to buy it from elsewhere is saved for other home needs”. Here development is seen in terms of milk for family members and also lack of money.

As the majority of people in the Butiki village are not in formal employment, which makes it hard for them to have access to capital to start business from which to get some income, the director said: “ In ODECO we give people loans to start a small business to get money for buying basic needs in homes”.

The director highlighted a problem the organization faces when they give people loans and told me that “when people get the loans, they use some money for non-economic family needs and then borrow from other places to pay back the loan to the organization, which places them in a difficult situation since they have also to pay back to the second source of loan often with high interest, making them more poor”. This I think points to a need to discuss with the people what a loan is. That it must be paid back. The loan is something new to the people, some people do not know how to handle situations when they get the loans.

The director said the organization encourages people to grow types of food like bananas, cassava, potatoes, beans, ground nuts, vegetables that include onions, tomatoes, egg plants and then fruits. These are foods according to the director, “each family ought to have at all times as they are good for the sustenance in homes even in times of famine”.

In responding to the economic need of the people, ODECO the director says, “encourages and is providing its members with new money generating crops like mouringa and vanilla. When people grow and sell the mouringa and the vanilla that are on high demand besides having attractive prices, they will get money to access basic needs”. Again development emerges as a response to the economic needs of the people to fulfill their basic needs.

the organization in helping people to have good conditions in homes, the director says, “is helping people to grow vegetables. Vegetables are considered as food for the poor and animals but we encourage people to grow them highlighting their importance to good health. As vegetables are grown, money would be saved that would otherwise be spent on buying them”. Linked to the notion of savings the director told me, “we teach people how to save food. Some homes cook too much food that ends up being wasted. When people save food, they also save money that would be used in the process of accessing the food. People are learning that you do not need to have a lot of money in order to make savings but you can also make savings from the essential items like food”.

From the discussions with the director, it was clear that ODECO is committed to addressing gender relations as the first step in the projects to improving the conditions of the people

5.6 GENDER RELATIONS AND WELL BEING IN THE BUTIKI VILLAGE

The section presents gender relation in the Butiki village. It starts by showing how ODECO is responding to the gender relations, how the people of Butiki understand gender relations and how gender relations affect well being in homes.

5.6.1 GENDER RELATIONS ACCORDING TO THE ODECO PERSPECTIVE

Gender relations in villages have every intricate patterns. They are difficult to understand as the director says: “If you are to address development in the villages, there is no way you can avoid issues of gender relations since they play a central role in the way people face their daily life realities”. The director says gender relations are embedded in the strong traditional systems of power and control that privilege men at the expense of women.

5.6.2 SYSTEMS OF POWER AND CONTROL ON GENDER RELATIONS

Men possess more power and control in homes and allocation of resources. This is clearly expressed by the director: “men have power over allocation of land with large chunks under their direct control mostly for economic purposes while women are apportioned small pieces often for growing food for home consumption. But you find that when men need more labor on their pieces of land, they enlist the services of women”. According to the director, the above situation places women in a perpetual condition of dependence on men.

The director linked the underprivileged position of women to systems of socialization that elevates boys over girls. This is reinforced by a common saying among women of the Butiki village and other places of Busoga region that says: “what my husband says is what I (wife) also say”. The long run effect of such a system and attitude according to the director is the “dominance of men over women so that in all spheres of life they have to accept control and allocation of resources that often denies women equal opportunity to access resources and hampers collective development”. The director referred to the above situation as a stereotype that ODECO tries to address in the projects to enhance gender equality.

The director in elucidating how ODECO responds to gender relations in the Butiki village said, “we help people realize that the struggle for development requires collective efforts of both men and women” [this gives the basis and mission of ODECO]. That is why “our organization is called Organization for Development and Co-operation, teaching our groups that collective efforts do not mean involvement among other things in the cultivation of food but also having a voice on the output of cultivation”

5.6.3 IMPORTANCE OF GENDER RELATIONS TO WELL BEING

Gender relations across the globe and more specifically in the third world are undergoing tremendous changes. Gender equality and opportunity have become daily concepts that are used and translated into practical change for women in many developing countries where their position has for a long time been downtrodden.

Gender equality being part of the dominant development discourse [Gina et al 1987:23] it has become an important rhetoric of many NGOs. Since ODECO finds itself executing the dominant development discourse, it has the rhetoric of gender equality and opportunity. It is therefore paramount that I present the discussions on the importance of gender relations to ensuring well being and good life in the Butiki village.

In the interviews with the director of ODECO and the discussions I had in both groups and the in-depth interviews with the informants, gender equality known as omwenkhanhonkhanho was discussed in so far as it is important in ensuring well being and good life in homes.

The director pointing to some of the achievements of the organization said: “Women used to look at their husbands for everything from money for medical services and food to other basic needs in the home. We have taught the women to be leaders and managers in the homes. And they are beginning to get involved in decision making and taking care of their own destinies, in some instances not leaving it solely in the hands of men”. For, she continued, “ what is interesting is that the men are gradually accepting the changing positions of women; changing from passive recipients of decision to participants in decision making in homes”. According to the director, the years ODECO has operated in the Butiki village has seen women share responsibility with men.

Traditionally I was told in the discussions, decision making in the household was a male affair in which women were only recipients. In the discussion on the changing gender relations, women told me that ODECO has taught them to be managers and co-decision makers in households. Because of this, women feel their position in the Butiki community is improving.

On the division of labor and having a voice on the produce, a man told me that though often they work in different gardens, at times he helps to provide labor in his wife’s gardens and vice versa. When it comes to selling any of the food from the garden, the woman can sell without waiting to seek the permission of the man. He continued to tell me that often his wife goes to the garden and sells some of the produce to get

money to buy sugar, salt, cooking oil or even get money to pay medical bills in case of any family becomes sick.

Division of labor in the Butiki village overtly oppressed women but I got the impression that women are slowly starting to do those chores that were in the male domain. I visited a home of an informant who took me to their gardens in which they cultivate cabbages, tomatoes, egg plants and other vegetables, the wife told me: “I get the vegetables and take them to the market for sale, bring back the money and we use it for our home needs”

Despite the changes in the division of labor, women in some instances are overburdened. I have presented the woman situation in chapter four in the section: Life in the Butiki village. As I continued to listen to women’s narratives about their situation it emerged that women continue to have a large share of labor and consequently labor burden denies them participation in village politics as I highlight in chapter four: Women participation in the politics of Butiki.

There is however, great optimism that as ODECO continues to provide seminars that involve men and women, women’s position will continue to improve as I also think men will continue to recognize women’s worth and dignity as free persons who desire to live in freedom to fulfill their existential goals and desires.

Property in the Butiki village is traditionally socially owned though the ownership often excluded females as it was supposed to be in the hands of male members of society. From what I was told and observed, property is slowly becoming privately owned and some women are having a possibility to own property in their own right. Some women own land and cultivate food part of which they sell and use the money for improving household conditions in terms of buying sugar, salt, soap, clothes for children and assisting other relatives.

When I visited Watongola’s home, she showed me a heifer that has been given her by ODECO. She told me that much as her husband can help in feeding the heifer, when the heifer gives birth, she will be the one in control of the milk and the money that

will be earned from the sale of the milk. The heifer Watongola said: “is a sign of great hope for me and my family members. It is a sign for a better and improved well being and good life when it begins to give birth”.

Much as gender equality is desired by the Butiki people, the people told me that they desire a kind of omwenkanhonkhanho that does not destroy traditional gender values. For example in the discussions, women could not sit together with men. Men sat on chairs while the women sat on papyrus mats often laid on the grass. When I inquired why there was such division, the women replied, “in our local traditional setting, men are not supposed to sit together with women, but we desire to share efforts when it comes to participating in improving the well being of our homes”.

The kitchen space in the Butiki village is one of the places I discussed at length with regard to gender relations and how it affects well being.

5.6.4 THE KITCHEN SPACE, GENDER RELATIONS AND WELL BEING

The norms about kitchen organization and management are inculcated in people right from childhood. As children become adolescents, the division of labor in the kitchen between girls and boys is not only fostered but also reinforced by discouraging boys to engage in food preparation and cooking. In fact, a man who interferes in the organization and management of the kitchen is challenged in his role as a man and often ridiculed. The involvement can lead to a situation where a man is not respected as a man not only among fellow men but also women in case a wife tells her fellow women that her husband always interferes in running the kitchen space. This discursive practice about the kitchen manifests separation that demarcates the kitchen as women’s space. Men’s participation in the kitchen is looked upon as an interference that threatens women power and authority in organizing and managing that space.

The kitchen is a place that traditionally belonged to the female gender almost exclusively. It is a place whose organization and management was under the control of women. A man was not to interfere in the running of the kitchen. This is aptly

captured in *The Monitor*²⁵, a Ugandan newspaper article titled *Women Want Privacy in the Kitchen*, Angella Kiconco says: *It is a sign of greed for a man to come in the kitchen when am cooking. According to culture, a man should wait till he is called, when the meal is ready.* Much as the people of the Butiki village are not intransigent to change, organization and management of the kitchen, and a few isolated cases includes men but on a minimum level. Women still have to ensure that the kitchen has enough food, firewood and also ensure it is clean and does not leak. The above may explain why it is women who are the main protagonists in kitchen construction. Women hence play a crucial role in ensuring well being and sustaining the household.

As food is an important element to the well being of the people of the Butiki village, I explored how modernization is affection food production. Most importantly how modernization of food production is affecting well being.

5.7 MODERNIZATION OF FOOD PRODUCTION AND WELL BEING

Modernization of food production is defined, understood and interpreted by the people of the Butiki village as a process of growing food based on new knowledge as opposed to traditional forms and systems of cultivation. Justine Namusobye of 36 years and mother of three defined modernization as the “process of change from traditional systems, forms and mechanisms of production, reproduction, consumption and distribution of food to adopting new means based on scientific methods that are being passed on the cultivators by development agents in collaboration with government representative and civil society organizations”.

Namusobya’s conception of modernization I think was very academic and was shared by other people in the village given that people encounter the modernization packages as AN organized order of knowledge through formal seminars and workshops known as *emisomo gya modernization*.

Modernization of issues related to food in the Butiki village and other communities in Uganda is embedded in the Plan for Modernization of Agriculture (PMA) that is derived from the Poverty Eradication Action Plan (PEAP). The plan is disseminated

²⁵ <http://www.monitor.co.ug/wm/wmen.php> 30.01.04

to local communities and villages by government, civil society and NGOs, among which ODECO is part. PEAP aims at the eradication of poverty in Uganda through modernization of traditional systems of cultivation.

PMA encourages specialization, monetization, commercialization and modernization of the systems of production. It urges for a “shift from subsistence to commercial mode of production, or taking agriculture as a business and not a way of life [saying] subsistence mode of farming cannot create wealth” [Odwongo 2003:7]. It is hoped that modernization of agriculture will propel the national economy into economic growth leading to overall reduction in poverty levels in the country.

We have to take caution of the above general assumption and ask whether improvement in economic growth necessarily leads to reduction in poverty levels and improvement in good life. Modernization that erodes people’s values and systems of sustenance can hardly lead to reduction in poverty levels and guarantee good life of the majority of people in subsistence economy. In fact modernization means less for the poor who can not access the necessary instruments due to high costs and the markets.

The modernization discussion both in the groups and in-depth interviews raised controversy as to how it is affecting well being. A few people were in favor of it while others looked at it as a process that is rendering their future insecure and thus, negatively affecting their well being.

In what follows, I present the differing views expressed by the people. I begin with those views that are in favor of modernization, then I proceed to present the dissenting views of those who are skeptical about the benefits of modernization to guaranteeing well being.

Jude Muyinda who is practicing modern farming, having about 30 hectares of exotic paw paws, when asked to give a personal opinion with regard to modernization, he said: “For me, modernization promises better future. For example as I grow the exotic paw paws, I will sell them to earn money to better my conditions. However, I am not certain about the market of the produce when the time of harvesting comes”. Another

informant said, “the modern food varieties are a sign of hope for us as they promise good yields of better quality”. Another informant highlighted the benefits of better quality yields and said, “with better quality yields, we shall be able to compete in the markets with other food products coming from other parts of Uganda”.

James Lugolobi who is also practicing modern farming told me: “I was riding bicycle boda boda²⁶ but used to get little money that could not even sustain my family until I gave up riding boda boda and started growing pineapples, exotic paw paws, motooke and other food stuff using modern practices. During my first harvest, I was able to sell the produce and got money, with cultivation of food I am able to manage to look after my family. My mind is at peace and I hope for an improved better future as I continue to practice modern cultivation”.

Just as Muyinda expressed uncertainty about the market for the produce, Lugolobi expressed the same uncertainty. According to Lugolobi, “ unlike subsistence cultivation in which the traditional crops do not require a lot of capital for investment, modern cultivation requires lot of money to buy the seeds, pesticides and farm equipment”. Inadequate capital is thus a constraint that hampers maximization of the advantages of modernization as in some instances the crops are attacked by pests and diseases and the people do not have money to buy pesticides. This consequently leads to poor yields that attract low prices in the market. When people get low prices for their produce, the well being in homes is negatively affected as the opportunity cost becomes a major determinant in the acquisition of basic needs.

The people who are skeptical about modernization claimed that modernization limits choices and freedom. Jessica Kyazike told me, “ modernization of production systems is taking away our freedom to choose and plant what we want to plant. It is making the traditional seed varieties scarce and rendering them useless as in most cases the NGOs are telling us to plant new modern varieties. For example ODECO is telling and encouraging us to plant vanilla and mouringa”.

²⁶ Riding boda boda is used to refer riding a bicycle transport for a fee.

From the discussions about modernization of food production I got the impression that modernization and its stringent demands of capital, farm equipment, pesticides, and the care for the crops is a big problem. The majority of people are almost becoming despondent about the how modernization process becomes a means to better well being when they do not have the farming requirement that it demands. Some people feel insecure with the new seed varieties provided on the market and by NGOs. These new seeds are only sustainable with pesticides unlike traditional seed varieties whose sustainability is dependent on the natural environment. When modernization of food production threatens sustainability and accessibility to food, this is in itself a threat to well being of the people.

As a bad outcome of modernization, an informant gave a generalized judgment by saying, “the problem people face is that they do not have enough money to purchase the necessary pesticides and farm equipment. When we use the little money we have to purchase pesticides and farm equipment, we often forego some other basic needs of our homes”. This shows that in some situations practicing modern cultivation leads to bad conditions and at the same time brings misery to households. This manifests how modernization from its inception conceived as both theory and practice of development to obliterate misery, especially in developing parts of the world, does not necessarily contribute to well being in homes. At times modernization of food production contributes to decrease well being.

As the NGO is telling people to grow food that is demanded by the market as a means to fight poverty, this is slowly leading to reduction in the cultivation of traditional food that people know how to cultivate, store and replant. This means modernization in some way is leading to the erosion of traditional cultivation values and knowledge.

Modernization as a means to overcome poverty presents a double faceted struggle to attain freedom. The struggle manifests itself in form of negative and positive freedom. Negative freedom in the form of freedom from poverty and positive freedom involving freedom to choose what people want to plant. The NGOs provide a limited number of crops for people to choose what they can plant to free themselves from poverty. This means modernization and market demands limit peoples’ choice to plant what they want since they can not produce what the market does not demand. For the

people of Butiki, modernization as a means to enhance freedom from poverty, often limits peoples' freedom to choose what they want to produce.

CHAPTER SIX

6 APPROACHES TO WELL BEING: CONTRASTS AND CONVERGENCE

6.1 INTRODUCTION

Approaches to well being during the data collection and the period of analysis have provided a useful avenue to show issues of convergence and contrast between the ODECO strategies to foster well being and those of the people of the Butiki village. This chapter attempts to make an analysis of the differing and at the same converging understandings and interpretations of well being as conceptualized by ODECO and those of the Butiki people for whom some of the ODECO projects are directed.

6.2 FORMS OF INVESTMENT AND SOCIAL SECURITY

Investment for the Butiki people has an intrinsic value of securing social security in its various forms and hence, the two are looked at as guaranteeing well being and good life.

6.2.1 FORMS OF INVESTMENT

The basic form of investment for the Butiki people emerged as cultivation of food. Annet Kakyuwa said: “To me, cultivation of food is the basic form of investment. I plant the crops and when they are ready for harvesting, I harvest them for home consumption and selling some to get an income”. James Balondemu expressed a similar view and said, “for us people in the Butiki village who depend on the subsistence cultivation, we invest our crops in the soil and get more produce when we harvest unlike people in cities and towns who invest money in business and often use commercial banks”. This seems contrary to the ODECO notion of investment that mostly centers around giving loans to the people.

In the loan scheme, people are given the loans to engage in small business and ought to start saving the profits with ODECO. It emerged during field work that the notion of investment of the people of the Butiki village in some instances is different compared to that of ODECO. In most situations people who had got loans from

ODECO had not made any significant savings for some time as they had invested some of the money in food, production besides, some people had use the loans for non commercial businesses.

The study found out that the people in the Butiki village do not have adequate knowledge about loan management. One informant told me, “the ODECO staff always complain about the low savings our group makes with the organization but have never endeavored much to teach us about loans”. In fact after of the discussions where one of the ODECO staff was present, the group members requested her to organize for them a workshop about loan management. Since the loan is in a way a new thing to the Butiki people, ODECO should provide its members with adequate knowledge for the scheme to become meaningful.

The people of Butiki practice intercropping on their small gardens. This for them is a source of insurance. Mrs. Zubir Kyakulaga for example said: “We plant many crops on our small gardens as a form of insurance given the uncertainty about rainfall. In the situation when rainfall is not sufficient, some crops survive and at the end of the season we have food to harvest which would not be the case with modern cultivation in case the few crops we are told to specialize in are hit by any slight short dry season or disease as some time it occurs”. If I take Mrs. Kyakulaga’s views as representative of the Butiki people, it shows how people in the village have a strong sense of solidarity to ensure food availability and well being. This sense of insurance ought to be protected given the absence of standard economic insurance schemes for the Butiki people.

6.2.2 SOCIAL SECURITY

Social security is of paramount importance to the people of the Butiki village in securing well being in homes and among community members.

Being able to provide for children, for them to have a future in which they are able to cater for other family members and at the same time care for parents in old age is considered a basic form of social security and investment. Robert Kabushenga a

columnist with *The Sunday Vision*²⁷ expressed a similar view in the article *Do we Pass the Test* when he said, “because we do not have any other social safety nets apart from our immediate families, it falls on the parents to provide such things as education as a way of securing the future of their children”. Looking at children as a sign of social security I got the impression is one of the reasons why some families have many young children. The parents look at children with great hope. However, the challenge the Butiki people have is inadequate means to support their children for a better future. What needs to be done is to that there must be meaningful alternative systems that make people feel a sense of security in the future.

Because of the strong notions of social well being as a means to securing social security, people more often use the loans to pay for medical bills of family, relatives and village members. It is common for people to divert the loans from economic activities to supporting and responding to social needs of other people. In this, social relations are cemented and people feel a sense of security inside the strong social relations.

The social or ‘we’ conception of well being is a primary source of identity for the [Butiki] people and formulates a vision of hope and progress [Hansen 1998:234] Sharing resources and manifestations of solidarity demonstrate an ‘economy of affection’ or rather the economy of sharing that is antithetical to individual achievement and private property ownership.

The underlying value of ensuring social well being involves a strong sense of personhood of the Butiki people. The sense of personhood for the Butiki people is based on a relational thinking in which relationships with others is vital for living in a community. This comes to influence the economic and political choices of the people making the Butiki people make decisions that would seem irrational, especially in the liberal political economy where individual choices becomes a major determinant of decisions. A communal sense of ownership and economic activity would be more appropriate for this cultural setting. This hence becomes crucial to ensure well being for the people.

²⁷ <http://www.newvision.co.ug/D/8/12/318057> 02.11.03

Social security in a clear manner was linked to personal freedom and is closely related to issues of social inclusion and exclusion from community life. Personal security is associated with not having fear of going to gatherings because you look shabby. Not having shoes or slippers is not considered as important but clean clothes emerged as a sign of personal security and confidence. Fear in itself is a form of social exclusion in which the shabby find themselves excluded from participating in the communal life. During the field work period, my key informant told me that not having clean clothes was one of the reasons why some people could not regularly attend the discussion, as I have highlighted in the methodology chapter three.

Despite the above instances that manifest contrasts in the understanding of investment, there are at the same time aspects that show convergence in understanding and interpretation of well being between ODECO and the Butiki people.

People try to start a small business from the loans they get and at the same time, most of the people expressed eagerness to receive and look after the heifers. Given the basic objective of any form of investment is having improved well being, I occasionally heard the Butiki people request ODECO to give heifers to more families and the families often promised to look after the heifers with their meager resources. This means much as although the forms of investment are different, the notion and desire for the people to make investments is present among them. In this case I do not see the difference between ODECO strategies and the Butiki people views. Of course, there is a difference for those who use the loans to invest in “social capital”.

Also, given that the Butiki people have notions of well being shows how there is some convergence although the people of the ODECO may not be able to respond to the holistic conception of well being of the Butiki people. Based on the interviews and observations, ODECO is not able to respond to improving the holistic conceptualization of well being of the Butiki people because ODECO has an economic problem of the meagre resources in terms of funds that they get from donors.

In relation to the above, ODECO is carrying out projects that are based on the aims and objective of the donors. This explains why there is almost no Butiki people's contribution in the formation and design processes of the projects to be carried out in their village. This is typical of the dominant development discourse that mostly is based on a 'top down' execution of development projects. The top down relation consequently introduces a discourse of power that is synonymous with the modernization paradigm of development in which policies are formulated and executed by 'experts' of development knowledge and thus re-affirm the thesis of this research that states:

Development projects that impose the notion of development and well being that are based on the dominant development discourse and paradigm often constrains the enhancement of meaningful development and well being of those affected. The actors' interpretation and understanding of development and well being therefore becomes paramount and ought to be considered in the design of any development intervention.

Because of a top down approach, many development projects many times fail to achieve their objectives. The development projects strive to achieve the objectives of the donors that at times are different from those affected. I came across a case in which the informant told me that ODECO was telling him to grow reeds such that they can give him a heifer. He told ODECO that he instead wanted capital to invest in the cultivation of the food in his gardens. Because of top down politics that sometimes dominates development projects the development experts more often use the language of development that is different for the people were the projects are carried out.

6.3 INSTITUTIONALIZATION OF THE VALUES

Institutionalization of values sometimes referred to as reification according to Illich means the, "hastening of perception of the real need into demand for manufactured products and institutions to take care of the needs" [Valentine 1968:134]. It means people start to see values like health, food production, education and other social values as products that are to be provided by institutions like hospitals, schools, multi-national companies, NGOs etc. Institutionalization of values is evident among the people of the Butiki village. During the research period, the people continued asking

to help them in any way possible to link organizations and institutions to the village to take care of some of the values I mentioned above.

According to me, I think we have to problematize institutionalization of values by asking: isn't it possible to take care of food production without modernization that consequently depends on multi-national seed companies, research centers using NGOs and civil society organizations as agents of change? And most fundamentally isn't it possible to ensure and enhance well being and good life of the Butiki village without depending on institutions? I think there are some values that can be provided by institutions for example health, education, civil security and other values crucial to reinforcing well being of the people. But ensuring well being ought to be a deliberative activity of those concerned.

But, since the discourse of development takes economic development as a set of ends and modernization as the means to these ends, institutionalization of values is seen as crucial to realizing these ends. S.Marglin (1996), a distinguished researcher on development economics in the book *Dominating Knowledge* attempts to show how institutionalization of values is used in the transformation of social processes. Marglin noted that we, “ probably shall not go wrong if we place the following at the core: on the economic side, industrialization and urbanization, as well as the technological transformation of agriculture; on the political side, rationalization of authority and the growth of rationalization bureaucracy; on the social side, the weakening of ascriptive ties and the rise of achievement as the basis for personal advancement; culturally, the ‘disenchantment’ of the world, the growth of science and secularization based on increasing literacy and numeracy” (Marglin 1996).

Institutionalization of values hence involves the institutionalization of doubt about the role of traditional values and norms in fostering economic development since modernization is used in a particular way by its protagonists to mean helping people and communities to realize economic development. This was evident in the interviews with the director who often mentioned ODECO being an organization that is helping the people of the Butiki village to achieve development.

Institutionalization of values and its various kinds of surveillance is becoming a means by which individuals in villages within modern societies are getting controlled. Because people surveyed in the villages are mostly uneducated with limited alternatives, they felt they have 'no choice' in the face of technocrats who glorify the opportunities provided by modernization.

With institutionalization of values in the Butiki village and other places where the discourse of development is being executed, knowledge is no longer a free social good that people can use to freely share and exchange. Knowledge is slowly becoming a private good offered by specialized institutions like NGOs that ensure its protection. Knowledge and values about issues related to food, hygiene in the home, management of the kitchen are now taken over by institutions that impart such knowledge using the experts through workshops and seminars.

The role of institutions should not be down played as evidence shows that they are having significant contributions to improving the living conditions in many villages. For example NGOs and civil society organizations are helping people to ensure food security, teaching basic health issues that has seen a reduction in rural death emanating from poor hygiene and they are giving people small loans that they would otherwise not access in commercial banks and many people have been able to use this money to start small businesses from which they get money to access basic need of their homes.

NGOs are also playing a crucial role in improving gender relations in villages, and more important addressing issues of women deprivation and suffering, for example NGOs are encouraging women participation in family decision, community and political issues in their villages. As a result, the condition of the rural women is slowly improving though a great majority continues to suffer violations and deprivations silently.

However, despite all the benefits that accrue from institutionalization of values, institutionalization of values I think can only foster meaningful development and ensure well being and good life in villages when it aims at enlarging peoples' choices in terms of capabilities as Sen (2001) contends. Otherwise, there is a temptation of

institutions to encourage dependence especially when they provide services without opening up opportunities for people to take care of their own lives.

Similarly enlarging peoples' capabilities has an intrinsic value of realizing the functioning of the people to improve well being. For example, the government as an institution had conceived lack of money as the cause of reduced well being and it provided money as a means to enhance well being and good life. But the reasons Nakku highlighted in elucidating the reasons that consequently led to the collapse of the Entandikwa scheme has much to tell institutions about how giving money to people without enlarging their capabilities hardly improves well being and good life.

Opening up opportunities ought to be reinforced by some of the traditional norms and values that foster well being and the good life of those most affected by the development projects. This means development projects ought to integrate the village people's voices into the projects. Formulation of development projects hence becomes a dialogue between project implementers and those for whom the project is written and opens up a possibility for realization of well being according to the peoples' voice. A strong dialogical rationality should guide the planning and implementation of all so-called development projects.

6.4 ISSUES OF MEANS AND ENDS IN WELL BEING

Economic growth and human development are two concerns of many development projects. Economic growth is preoccupied and mostly concentrates on the overall material success, human development as noted earlier concerns enlarging human capabilities. Thus, as economic growth addresses means to development, human development addresses the ends of development.

When economic growth preoccupies itself with the means to development, this only provides descriptive assessment of means. On the other hand, human development by focusing on ends of development provides a normative assessment of what ought to be ends of development. This hence, gives rise to ethical issues embedded in development as in many ways these issues are hidden within the discourse of development in justification of policies and projects.

Economic growth presents means of what is conceived as the means that can free people from deprivations of poverty. But in order to enhance freedom from poverty, we ought not to constrain peoples' agency: the freedom to choose what they value, otherwise, we shall witness a scenario similar to that of the Jews who, " went to Egypt in search for food and prosperity and their ultimate flight from it in search for freedom [McGrath 1986:27].

If we are to enhance freedom form poverty, then development ought to be defined in terms of fulfillment of the human rights of those affected by development projects. This means poverty then must be defined in terms of human rights and the goals of development be relative to particular conceptions of the good life (Christoplos 2000).

I am not against economic growth, in fact it has an instrumental role in generating resources that can be put together to improve social services but certainly improvement in economic growth does not necessarily mean improvement in good life. What I am arguing is like what the Roman stoic, Cicero who admonished: "the duty to treat humanity with respect requires us to place justice above political and economic expedience and to understand that we form part of a universal humanity whose ends are human well being [Sabine et al 1929:152]. Much as the idea of humanity is universal, well being is understood and interpreted in different ways and its specification as a human activity points to the need to engage in a serious dialogical deliberation.

6.5 ANALYSIS OF THE IMPORTANCE OF GENDER RELATIONS

It is increasingly becoming clear to the Butiki people that ensuring well being of homes requires the active role of women, and women are increasingly seen by men as active agents of change: the dynamic promoters of social transformations that can alter the lives of both women and men [Sen 2001:199].

The active agency of women cannot in any serious way as Sen says ignore the urgency of rectifying many inequalities that blight the well being of women and subject them to unequal treatment; thus the agency role must be much concerned with

women's well being also [Sen 2001:190]. We cannot continue to pay attention to the suffering and deprivation of women without addressing the question of women in families since the limited role of women's active agency seriously afflicts the lives of all people, men as well as women, children as well adults [Sen 2001:191]. More often women play a great role in ensuring the well being of people in families as they take on an important role of being care providers. This was evident in one of the in-depth interviews I had with a lady in chapter five.

Linked to women's agency, the mobility of women for example in terms of working outside the home and earning an independent income tend to have a clear impact on ensuring the social standing of a woman in the household and the society. Her contribution to the prosperity of the family is then more visible, and she also has more voice, because of being less dependent on others [Sen 2001 :191-192]

The impact of great empowerment and the independent agency of women has an instrumental role of improving the well being of entire communities. It is for example noted that even within the family, the lives affected may be those of the children, since there is considerable evidence that women's empowerment within family can reduce child mortality significantly [Sen 2001:193]. Empowerment influences women's decisions for better conditions but perhaps most immediately it works through the importance that mothers attach typically to the welfare of the children, and the opportunity the mothers have, when their agency is respected and empowered to influence family decisions [Sen 2001:195].

Ever since the empowerment of women in its various forms became a political issue, there has been plenty of evidence that whenever social arrangements depart from the standard practice of male ownership, women can seize business and economic initiatives with much success [Sen 2001:201]. The director of ODECO told me that they feel secure to give loans to women. She said women more often use the loans successfully and are able to pay back the loan unlike most men who get the loans. Enormous evidence shows that when men get loans they most likely invest in social capital. In fact, dealing with women has proved a success story for many micro-finance institutions, explaining why most of such institutions prefer to give loans to

women rather than men. But I think women are able to use the loans because women are integrated in the social community differently from men.

However, empowerment of women challenges traditional values and norms. For example empowerment of women with regard to reproductive health rights more especially telling women to have a small number of children is contradictory to the idea of having many children as a way to have social security for the Butiki people. But this does not mean that the idea of empowerment has to be abandoned. It has simply to take into account the African experience. This often revealed itself in the discussions and interviews about gender relations with the Butiki people.

The conclusive argument of this chapter is that development projects should follow human development principles. Projects should also consider some of the traditional values that may deviate from standard development concerns yet are crucial to enhancing well being of those affected by projects. This becomes important to enable people to take care of their own lives.

CHAPTER SEVEN

7 RE-EXAMINATION OF THE SPECIFICATION OF HUMAN RIGHTS AND GOOD LIFE

7.1 INTRODUCTION

This chapter is a synthesis of the thesis. It attempts to provide a normative discussion of aspects crucial for guaranteeing meaningful well being especially in communities in which development projects are carried out. The chapter highlights the value of involving the actor's point of view in the process of formulation of development projects. In other words the chapter points to the need to respond to the specification of well being according to those affected by development projects.

7.2 THE GENERAL IDEA OF HUMAN RIGHTS

Human rights historically understood, as claims either on individuals or social arrangements, were not until 1948 taken seriously and embedded in the United Nations system with the Universal Declaration of Human Rights as a political instrument. Human Rights after the Second World War came to be seen as what could protect people from cruelty, abuse, mistreatment and any form of human degradation. The Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR) have come to function as a normative instrument which various peoples and nations appeal to in any situation they encounter mistreatment.

In this chapter, I will use the article 1 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR) to discuss the need to re-examine the meaning and specification of human rights in development countries.

Article 1 declares: "All human being are born free and equal in dignity and rights. They are endowed with reason and conscience and should act towards one another in a spirit of brotherhood" [Ignatief 2001:xxv]. This is a normative value statement that calls upon people to respect others in all places where human beings exist. This points to the universal dimension of human rights. What is universal about human rights is that they are valid for all people in all contexts of life.

The values are something that apply to all human beings, but how these are values are interpreted, understood and applied depends on people in their historical circumstances. The moral priority of human rights concerns thus gives it a universal acceptability. As Michael Ignatieff succinctly puts it, the meaningful sense in which human rights are universal is that they are morally accepted defensible instruments perhaps especially in the face of oppressors who fail to recognize the human agency or dignity of those whose lives and liberties they are discounting [Ignatieff 2001:xx].

In the discourse of human rights, there is always a claim bearer and another the claim is made upon. One person has the right and the other has the obligation or duty to respect that right. In the case of the moral universality of human rights, the issue of rights and duties gives rise to a challenge concerning the limits of obligation. Ignatieff highlights the same when he says: the rights and responsibilities implied in the discourse of human rights are universal, yet resources of time and money are finite. When moral ends are universal, but means limited, disappointment is inevitable. Human rights activists would be less insatiable, and could appreciate the degree to which rights language itself imposes or ought to impose –limits upon itself [Ignatieff 2001:18]. I will turn to the above challenge later when I discuss issues of human rights and good life or well being as espoused in development interventions. Here I will focus on the question of human dignity, since human dignity has been historically understood in terms of rights and a measure of respect for human rights.

7.3 WESTERN CONCEPTION OF PERSON AND HUMAN RIGHTS

There has been an on going debate on whether human rights as conceived from the Western perspective have any meaning in an African context. The main issue is the question about the way people have interpreted and understood the meaning of human rights and what they are supposed to protect.

Scholars who do not believe in the applicability of human rights as conceived in the West contend that human rights is a Western construct of limited applicability, a 20th century fiction, dependent on the rights traditions of America, France and Britain and therefore inapplicable to cultures that do not share this historical matrix of liberal individualism [Ignatieff 2001:61]. The Western conception of human rights places value on the individual. Placing value on the individual can be traced back to the

Philosophy of Rene´ Descartes who is cherished and acknowledged as the father of modern Philosophy. Descartes came up with a dictum, ‘I think therefore I am’. An individual hence, came to be defined as a thinking, rational person. Descartes made no reference to rights, however, his dictum was reflected in the writing of later philosophers like John Locke who was among the first to theorize about rights, especially understood as individual or natural rights (G Skirbekk et al 2001).

Descartes’ dictum came to be reflected in the civil and political rights which aim to safeguard the interests of the individual as a free rational being capable of making autonomous choices or decision.

We ought to note that even if the liberal interpretations of human rights from John Locke to John Rawls have understood the subject as an atom or isolated individual, there are some scholars like Charles Taylor, McIntyre, and Emile Durkheim in the West who have defended communitarian conceptions of rights (S Avineri et al 1992). Debates still continue to take place between communitarians and liberalists like John Rawls. In other words, not all Philosophers in the West have an atomistic or individualistic understanding of human rights and the subject.

7.4 AFRICAN CONCEPTION OF PERSON AND HUMAN RIGHTS

Africa is not a homogenous continent. It is made up of many countries and peoples who belong to different ethnicities and cultures. In this chapter, the African conception of a person gives a strong link to understanding and interpreting human rights in the African context. The African conception of a person originates from a deep existential awareness of personal identity. The basic philosophical presupposition of this conception of identity is in many ways different from the Cartesian conception.

The African conception of identity is based on the following assumption: ‘I am because we are and we are because I am’. This gives a basis to understanding human rights in Africa. This is a relational conception of personhood that transcends the individual. The individual is not fully human, except as he\she is part of a social order. Whatever happens to the individual happens to the whole community, and whatever happens to the community happens to the individual. People take care of the

community as the community takes care of them. This is similar to the discussion in chapter 6, P.90-91. The individual like the existential philosopher Martin Heidegger put it is therefore always a being-in-the-world.

Personality is realized inside the community in which a person finds rights, obligations and duties. Issa Shivji in the book: *The Concept of Human Rights in Africa*, elucidates on the above and says, as opposed to Western conception of human rights that are based on the autonomous individual, African conception do not know such individualism. In traditional societies, human beings find worth within the community to which they relate in terms of rights, obligations and duties [Shivji 1989:12]. In this sense, human rights in traditional societies take on a communal nature whose intrinsic value is the promotion of the welfare of the community and enhancing social cohesion as the community cares for the people.

Whether human rights are a Western construct that cannot be applied in African societies, or African societies ought to come up with their own human rights, is not the purpose of this chapter. What I focus on is the issue of protecting human dignity as a means to enhancing good life. It is also important that people ought to define what constitutes the good life that should be protected.

7.5 AFRICAN CONCEPTION OF GOOD LIFE

The notion of a good life in Africa is intrinsically linked to well being in a holistic way. Well-being is used to imply physical and mental stability that depends upon a number of factors. It means to have a balance between the physical needs and mental satisfaction not only within the individual but also with regard to members of the household, other community members and the good conditions of the environment upon which they depend. This is a normative notion of well being in which the value of solidarity plays a crucial role as basis for coping with situations.

The above conceptualization of well being leads to a conception of poverty that has less to do with the definition of poverty as absence or lack of economic power propounded by international and development agencies. On the economic aspect, the poor are defined by the World Bank and International Monetary Fund as people living below expenditure of 1 and 2\$ per day. But for example in Butiki village, a household

grows its own food for consumption, have a variety of fruits, they have clean water from springs and when you quantify the amount they would spend a day if they were to buy what they use at home, it would be more than 2\$ yet economically they are categorized as poor simply because they do not spend 2\$ in real value.

From the development agency's perspective, these people are considered poor, but in their own perspective they do not see themselves as poor. We have to be aware that the way poverty is defined by the agencies and is being 'attacked' has to do with the discourse of development discussed in chapter two. The discourse involves forms of knowledge elaborated in theories, concepts and systems of power that regulate the practice and forms of subjectivity through which people come to recognize themselves as either being developed or underdeveloped and poor. I do not negate the importance of economic power to the understanding of poverty and well being, but I want to show that it is just a part of what constitutes a good life.

Poverty in traditional societies is conceived as absence not only of the physical necessities but also disharmony in the level and hierarchy of things. The Philosopher Emmanuel Chuckwudi cogently captures this when he states that the world view of traditional societies, "is grounded in a conception of the self as intrinsically connected with, a part of, both the community and nature. The community is not a collection of fundamentally isolated individuals, but Ontologically primary. The individual develops his sense of self through his relationship within his community. His personal welfare depends fundamentally upon the welfare of the community rather than community welfare depending on the welfare of the individuals who constitute it" [Chukwudi 1989:12]. It is thus important to note the role nature and community play in shaping the relational nature of well being and ultimately a good life. This is something that transcends a 'materialistic' point of view of well being and also include the inter play of nature, feelings, emotions and friendship in conditioning it (Nussbaum 2001).

The challenge is how can we protect an individual's rights if the community always has the last word? Maybe human rights should be ontologically primary and not the community? This again takes us to the debate between the communitarian and liberal conception of rights.

7.6 RE-EXAMINING AND THE SPECIFICATION OF HUMAN RIGHTS IN AFRICA

The affirmation of the foundation or source of human rights is as diverse as the interpretations they have been accorded. Some people, for example John Locke, contended that the foundation lies in natural laws, while others like Thomas Aquinas affirm that the foundation should be sought in the absolute Being-God. Whatever position one supports as to the foundation of human rights, what is central to all is the protection and enhancing of the dignity and well being of people.

In the history of civilizations, cultures and religions, we can find divergent views as to what constitutes the good life. From society-to-society, culture-to-culture, people continue to disagree about what is good, but there are some conducts and forms of behavior they agree on as being bad or wrong. The norms and values that constitute ethics in various societies and cultures vary, and it seems to be easier to agree on what is bad or evil than what is good.

Human rights, according to R.G Densen are the primordial rights necessary for the development and expression of human personality [Dansen 1971:110]. Though this seems to be a very individualistic conception of human rights, human rights therefore, enable a person to live a life in a manner he\she values. It further points to there being an expression of respect for human dignity and their violation is a denial of one's humanity.

I contend that human rights are founded in human nature, but although human rights are founded in human nature, their specification is a human activity. The specification of human rights is not arbitrary, it has to take into account the historical circumstances of a people if the specification is to help people realize their existential goals and desire to enjoy good life. The need to re-examine the specification of human rights in Africa lies in being critical to the contradictions and universal assumptions upon which they are based.

There is need for human rights activists to recognize moral pluralism in fostering respect for human dignity to enhance good life. I agree with Ignatieff when he says: “ A prudential and historical justification of human rights needs not make appeal to any

particular idea human nature. Nor should it seek its ultimate validation in a particular idea of human good. Human rights are an account of what is right, not an account of what is good. People may enjoy full human rights protection and still believe that they lack essential feature of a good life. If this is so, shared belief in human rights ought to be compatible with diverging attitudes concerning what constitutes a good life. In other words, a universal regime of human rights protection ought to be compatible with moral pluralism” [Ignatieff 2001:55]

I re-affirm my position that human rights are founded on human nature. To Ignatieff, human rights justification needs not to make any appeal to any particular idea of human nature. To me, what I think matters is how one defines human nature; whether one defines it descriptively or normatively. This is important because specification of human rights is a human activity and so, the ideas we have about human nature consequently affect the specification.

Take for example a premise like: “children are starving”. This is a descriptive premise, only telling us what ‘is’. It does not tell us whether we ought to help the children to overcome starvation. We need another premise like: “we ought always to help people that are starving”. This is a normative premise that implicitly highlights what we should do as moral being or agents. From the premises, we can then draw a conclusion; we ought to help the starving children.

From a descriptive premise, you cannot derive the normative. You cannot derive the ‘ought’ from the ‘is’. Norms are derived from other norms and values have to be derived from other values. This shows how specification of values is a human activity depending on the ideas we have about human nature.

However, I applaud Ignatieff’s assertion especially when he tells us that shared belief in human rights ought to be compatible with divergent attitudes concerning what constitutes a good life. The above is important for re-examining the specification of human rights. If I may refer again to article 1 of the UDHR, its concern for protecting human dignity with the underlying objective of enhancing good life ought to respect the different constituent ingredients of a good life in different places. As David Hume distinguishes between ‘matters of fact and association of ideas’(Copleston 1962),

good life as a matter of fact is desirable but what is embedded in it depends on the ideas people associate with it depending on historical circumstances and cultures.

Human rights have been accused especially by scholars from developing countries of being a Western construct that aim to universalize Western ideals. What is important to me is to recognize persons as equal beings endowed with agency to determine the what they desire and things they value. Sen propounded the same idea. Ignatieff also says that, “human rights discourse ought to suppose that there are many differing visions of good human life, that the West is only one of them, and that provided agents have a degree of freedom in the choice of that life, they should be left to give it the content that accords their history and traditions” [Ignatieff 2001:74] In the above perspective, human rights discourse will overcome the accusation of universalizing particular ideals and values of human dignity and good life of a Western conception.

7.7 WHAT RE-EXAMINING THE SPECIFICATION OF HUMAN RIGHTS ADDS TO THE CONCEPTION OF GOOD LIFE IN AFRICA

For a long time, the conception of good life has been linked to rational choice of individuals and rationality is used in a particular way as understood in the West whereby anything outside this is considered irrational. Martha Nussbaum (2001) in the book *Fragility of Goodness* argues that the emotions, vulnerability of human life to fortune (luck), and also the nature of friendship besides rationality are sources of insight into the good life.

Human rights are about protecting an essential exercise of human agency. Ignatieff defines human agency as, “the capacity of each individual to achieve rational intentions without let” [Ignatieff 2001:57]. He uses rationality to mean that which reinforces people’s agency to define for themselves what they wish to live and protect.

To protect human agency requires the protection of person’s\individual’s right to choose a life they see fit to be led. Similarly Asuncion St.Claire notes: “...it is not possible to separate conception of human life from conception of a good human life, rights approaches also require an agreement on what are the most important values for a life worth living” [Christoplos 2000:20]. Similarly, the philosopher Thomas Pogge

argues: “the specification of human flourishing in its various dimensions, their relative weights, and their integration into one measure of the comprehensively good life is then, to some extent, to be posited by the person him\herself” [Pogge 2002:30].

Most people in traditional societies like the Butiki village depend on subsistence farming and so to protect their agency for a good life we ought not define for them what good life is. Otherwise, it will be a perpetuation of a dictum as Peter Uvin in the book; *The Development Enterprise in Rwanda* notes, “...the trick permits the maintenance of the conceptual separation between ‘them’ and ‘us, underdeveloped and developed, poor and rich, inside and outside, recipient and donor. In the end, it allows a maintenance of the purity and impermeability of the usual hierarchical binaries in which foreigners stand on top and have superior knowledge” [Uvin 1989:155]. It would be optimistic to say that we can do away with the above dichotomies, but what is important is for them not to stand in our way and be used a lens for judging other people. Using the dichotomies means that a particular category of people determine the moral good for others, which is in a sense negates respect for the dignity of those for whom the moral good is defined.

The above means development agencies should not define what is good for the people in the Butiki village: They have to do it themselves. When they are involved in the process of project design, the different ideals of good life are expressed and it is these that give meaning to the people for the realization of meaningful well being and development.

In propounding human rights, we need to protect human agency without reference to minimum rights because what counts as minimum human rights is contested and varies from society to society, depending on the contextual understanding and interpretation of good human life. Again Ignatieff says, “human rights need to avoid a minimalism so aspiring that its enforcement would leave the most vulnerable people without what is (minimally) necessary to protect their ability to live a minimally decent life by any reasonable standard” [Ignatieff 2001:xii].

7.8 SUMMING UP

For people to determine for themselves what ought to be the constituents of good life means that traditional societies will be able to safeguard their subsistence means of livelihood as well as the negative liberties. This means people enjoy their freedom to choose and freedom from any thing that stands in their way to realize good life.

As people for example of the Butiki village define for themselves what constitutes a good life their agency as free human beings endowed with dignity is protected and promoted. Consequently their conception of well being is enhanced. Similarly to protect human dignity for people to enjoy good life, there is need to re-examine the specification of human rights. The only way to specify human rights is through debating and deliberating.

CONCLUSION

The study has attempted to describe, analyze and defend a particular approach to well being in opposition to various approaches that exist. The concept of development as a means to realize well being has mostly been employed to provide the study with descriptive aspects that development projects address. Largely, the study has been a response to the discourse of development that often propounds a universal conception of development. The development agents often create a boundary of knowledge in which the agents executing the dominant development discourse using the paradigm of modernization look at themselves as the custodians of development knowledge. In this sense, the agents look at themselves as possessing the means that can help the poor realize development and consequently guarantee the well being of the poor people affected by the development projects. On many occasion, development projects in their design and formulation do not involve the views of the actors. In this, you find most projects are addressing those issues of well being as defined by the general development discourse.

But, as long as development projects are concerned with improving the conditions of the poor, there arises moral problems to be addressed in the execution of the projects for the projects to become meaningful processes for people to realize development and guarantee well being. This forms the main objective the study set out to investigate.

The study thus set out to investigate the encounter of development strategies by ODECO and those of the people of the Butiki village. This has been important in analyzing and assessing the general idea of the discourse of development and its dominant paradigms. The encounter is presented in chapter five.

For the study to place itself in a firm position, it has used methodological approaches that succinctly bring up the actors' point of view and at the same time employ ethnographic writings. The ethnographic writings however, comprise both written and unwritten sources. The latter have been important to the study by providing a descriptive basis of the study. At the same time the methodological approaches and

ethnographic writings have provided the study with a rich source of first order knowledge that has been important in my attempt to develop second order concepts.

The study then moved further to make use of a normative approach in the evaluation and analysis of the changes development projects introduce to improve conditions of the poor. I tried to show the importance of paying attention to the actors' point of view in enhancing well being if development in any sense has to become meaningful of those affected. I have focused here on the meaning of well being by the people of the Butiki village, the mechanisms that the people expressed as being the means to guarantee well being. The study presents this in chapter five. In order to be in a position of suggesting any normative prescription, the study presents issues related to well being in which contrasts and convergence emerged between ODECO strategies and those of the people in the Butiki village.

As seen in chapter five ODECO projects have made some attempts to improve the conditions of the people of the Butiki village but despite the convergences of the approaches of well being in the ODECO strategies and those of the Butiki people, the contrasts that emerge as found in chapter six manifest how the actors have not been much involved in the project design process. In this sense, the concept of actor centered design process of projects may explain why some people felt their visions and hopes were not being responded to. Chapter six thus presents the key findings of the study especially as regards investment and social security.

It should however, be noted that ODECO is having inadequate funds to involve the people of the Butiki village in realizing well being as they conceive it at the physical and material, psychological and social levels. What is clear is that much as the implementers of ODECO wish to help the people of the Butiki village realize the well being they envisage, the organization is responding to particular needs of the people according to the projects the donors accept to fund.

The above shows that much as the discourse of development changed especially from the early 1990s as I have elucidated in chapter two, the same discursive practice is still present. Systems of power and control continue to infiltrate into development projects. Top down politics continue to come up in development projects despite the

rhetoric about bottom up and participation. These rarely involve the formulation and design of projects. In this case, development knowledge has to be deconstructed to become a deliberative process in the project design between the actors, the implementers and donors of project. Development in this sense becomes actor centered.

As the study was conducted in a society where traditional gender inequalities continue to persist despite the current changes taking place, gender relations are discussed in detail relating to how they affect well being in homes. The study pays attention to improving the condition of women who most of the times encounter deprivation and suffering. Emphasis is put on how the struggle for gender equality in improving the condition of women ought not to undermine some of the traditional values crucial for social identity as put in the chapter five. Gender equality should be a form of empowerment for women to have a voice in decisions that affect them.

Since development projects are carried out in the villages by organized institutions in the form of NGOs, civil society and political institutions, attention is paid to how institutionalization of values is affecting the general process of development.

Institutionalization of values has been problematized in order to find out what extent certain values should be left to the institutions to take care of them. The study contends that values for example like health, education, civil security and other social values should be left to the institutions but since most of the social values have a major role in supporting well being, the study claims that enhancing well being as noted earlier should become a deliberative process. At the same time institutions have provide people with possibilities of taking care of their own lives.

For development to become a process towards enhancing the well being of those affected by development projects, the study suggests the need to pay attention to human rights. Human rights in the context of this study are taken as a measure that ensures the protection of human dignity. This is found in chapter seven that attempts to give a synthesis of the study. If human rights are to be understood in terms of protecting human dignity, re-examining the specification of human rights compatible

with diverging attitudes of what constitutes a good life is suggested as a means to protect human dignity.

The study hence intends to generate a discussion on development and if it becomes public knowledge, it could provide insight into the current endeavors of enhancing the well being of those affected by development projects.

RECOMMENDATION

The most significant recommendation of the study is for development agents to initiate deliberative process with the actors' in project formulation. Through deliberation people's hopes and aspirations to guarantee well being come to be revealed. Projects hence come to address people's needs like how the people of the Butiki village expressed their desire to have a health center on the village, acquiring means to educate their children in good secondary schools like Kiira College Butiki which is on their village yet they cannot afford school fees: the people hope their social security is guaranteed by educating children as it has been discussed in chapter six. The people expressed the need for homes to have bicycles to ease mobility of both persons and goods and also to have basic knowledge to deal, and at the same time access markets for the people to sale their produce and get money to buy basic needs. Deliberate on how to use the loans; for either social needs of the village or the private needs. With deliberation some of the issues I have discussed in chapter four about the ethnography of the Butiki village could come to be addressed by projects thus fulfilling actor based approach to guaranteeing well being.

FOLLOW UP

As mentioned in chapter three about the limitation in writing the thesis and also in the preface of how the study does not pretend to have exhaustively dealt with the issue of well being the Butiki village, I would wish if time and resources allow follow up studies using a rights approach for example on the right to food and well being or a comparative study people in the Butiki village and the Western conceptions of social security.

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