



FORESTS, TREES AND PEOPLE PROGRAMME  
PROGRAMME PUBLICATIONS

FTPP - ETHIOPIA<sup>1</sup>

# POLICIES INFORMING ADAPTIVE STRATEGIES IN ASALS

Volume 11- No. 4 - 95

Draft/Restricted Report  
Addis Abeba, Nov. 1995

*Centre for*  
**Human Environment**

*and*

LEM, THE ENVIRONMENT AND DEVELOPMENT  
SOCIETY OF ETHIOPIA

---

<sup>1</sup> The publication has been written by BT Costantinos, FTPP National Facilitator. The zero-draft has been presented for peer review and comments.

# Adaptive Strategies of the poor in Arid and Semi-arid Land Use Systems

## Cross-ethno-national policy analysis

Boran, Somali, Afar and Guraghe

### Introduction:

Adaptive strategies are about self-empowerment, the ability of ordinary men and women to make decision issues that affect their livelihoods. In this sense, adaptive strategies have a political goal. It is timely and pertinent issue in “light of the unprecedented dynamics of political transition that were kindled within the framework of global move towards self-determination, self-assertion and self-empowerment and the opportunities for popular participation in governance in Africa”. The challenge for us, however, is to place these dynamics in a coherent perspective and within the context of empowerment emanating from enabling policy environments for adaptive strategies of the poor and determine how, in the implementation of such principles, relevant experiences may be shared between communities, localities, nations, nationalities and human kind.

This then is a task one needs to take seriously. We say this because those communities where the study of adaptive strategies have been completed, like all over Africa, entered the Nineties with

- a rapidly-growing population largely dependent on traditional agriculture;
- social and cultural diversity demanding political attention;
- a partially-destroyed and inadequate infrastructure;
- a history of natural and man-made disasters and an environmental crisis;
- a centralised relief and rehabilitation capacity and a time of new claims on relief and development assistance and donor fatigue.
- a century of colonialism, twenty years of socialism and central planning and the long-lasting effects of a long civil war and lack of democratic choice.<sup>2</sup>

The human crisis has ironically provided development thinkers and practitioners with a unique opportunity to bring legitimate civil society aspirations across national, ethnic, linguistic, social and economic boundaries and denominations to debate on timely and pertinent issues in livelihood security, development paradigms that work. The issue at stake is, however, that the outcome of the process that has been initiated amid global demands for self-empowerment should be seen primarily as creating an agenda for civil society organisations and supportive governmental and non-governmental structures rather than as end in itself.

---

<sup>2</sup> Africa also entered *the decade of the 1990s at the end of the cold war at a time* ; of a world-wide move to self-determination; of an increased role of civil society organizations in development; when participation is the new development paradigm and people’s knowledge, adaptive strategies and endogeneously derived models of development are being given wider currency.

Even more importantly, we deal with regions such as the Greater Horn of Africa, a region that describes hell much better than the frightening childhood stories we were exposed to as a conception of Satan's Empire. This underpins the need for addressing regional conflict management issues such as Somalia and Rwanda, nation states whose borders have been carved out by reckless and inhuman, (ironically `civilised') countries in the aftermath of colonialism; and live today in permanent flux and destitution. The merits of civil society spurred adaptive strategies and the alternative natural resources-based conflict management norms that constitute the lynch pin of adaptive strategies in many of the case study countries, as an agenda for civil society organisations has to be seen with care

1. The common assumption that the proliferation of social organisations, mainly indigenous non-governmental organisations, is in and of itself an index of democratisation. The assumption seems plausible. After all, what is more obvious in projects of democratic transition than the goal of increasing the number of NGOs and other social institutions that will build stronger civil societies that in turn spawns favourable conditions for the growth of democracy in Africa? Nevertheless, the assumption is open to question<sup>3</sup>.
2. Implicitly or explicitly, the Western liberal democratic model is often taken as the acme of democratic governance. The target that most African countries set themselves in the process of democratisation is the attainment of institutions and practices that have been the basic ingredients of the Western democratic tradition. These include above all multi-partyism, independent judiciary, free press, and popular sovereignty expressed through the legislature. But keen observers have not been oblivious to the limits of this declared paragon of democracy, pointing to its formal character and the struggle in recent decades of marginalised groups with an "alternative, participatory vision of democracy" to achieve what has come to be known as the "empowerment" of the common man.<sup>4</sup>

Moreover, a direct and participatory form of democracy is presumed to be the hallmark of the perceived African pre-colonial democratic tradition, more specifically of "village democracy". The pre-colonial past has been portrayed in diametrically opposite fashion: as an age of barbarism and arbitrary rule by colonial rulers, and as one of egalitarianism by African

---

<sup>3</sup> The growing number and diversity of NGOs mean that the organisations have very uneven political and professional capabilities, and differing levels of commitment to processes of democratisation. They provide a range of social, humanitarian and relief services of varying proximity and relevance to the ends and purposes of democratic reform. They do not function simply as instruments to those ends, but have their own inclinations, concerns and motivations, which democratisation of African politics and societies must take into account. Also, it appears that the proliferation of NGOs over the last decade has been more as outcome of funding by external donors than an indigenous "grassroots" phenomenon. Problems such as these constitute significant obstacles to the realisation of the democratic potential of African community groups.

<sup>4</sup> This is brought out forcefully in C. Berhe-Tesfu, (1995) International Responses to Political Transition in Africa. Paper presented to the Wilton Parks Conference on Aid Under fire. Sussex., UK. and Eboe Hutchful, The International Dimensions of the Democratisation Process in Africa, paper presented at the Seventh General Assembly of CODESRIA, Dakar, 10-14 February 1992.

nationalists.<sup>5</sup> Both positions apparently suffer from selective presentation of the facts. **The former position need not detain us here. The latter we have to address.** It is obvious that the idea of a uniform and pan-African egalitarian socio-political system throughout pre-colonial Africa is an untenable position. In the first place, Africa has seen empires and military dictatorships as well as village democracies. Secondly, even the so-called village democracies had either an unmistakable stamp of gerontocracy about them or were quite often disrupted by the intervention of powerful individuals or groups relying on military prowess or invoking spiritual powers.<sup>6</sup>

A direct and participatory form of democracy is presumed to be the hallmark of the perceived African pre-colonial democratic tradition, more specifically of "village democracy". The pre-colonial past has been portrayed in diametrically opposite fashion: as an age of barbarism and arbitrary rule (by colonialists), and as one of egalitarianism (by African nationalists).<sup>7</sup> Both positions apparently suffer from selective presentation of the facts. The former position needs not detain us here. The latter we have to address. It is obvious that the idea of a uniform and Pan-African egalitarian socio-political system throughout pre-colonial Africa is an untenable position. In the first place, Africa has seen empires (Mali, Songhay, Aksum) and military dictatorships (Shaka Zulu, Dahomey) as well as village democracies in pre-colonial times. Secondly, even the so-called village democracies had either an unmistakable stamp of gerontocracy about them or were quite often disrupted by the intervention of powerful individuals or groups relying on military prowess or invoking spiritual powers.<sup>8</sup>

Ultimately, one is also forced to question the relevance of a pre-colonial socio-political organisation to the contemporary African reality. For it is inconceivable that Africa can go back to its past, however idyllic it may be imagined to be. One writer has even gone so far as to say that all attempts to relate the contemporary question of democratisation to pre-colonial African society smacks either of naiveté or of ideological manipulation.<sup>9</sup> At any rate, it is self-evident that Africa in the 1990s is a much different proposition than the Africa of the 1890s or earlier.

So much has changed in territorial configuration, social and economic differentiation and the international alignment of forces. **Contemporary Africa can only build on the cumulative legacy of its pre-colonial, colonial and post-colonial experience.** It is against this background that, following the changes that were ignited by the fall of communism in the east block, governments in Africa have adopted a number of political and economic policies. A number of basic themes and principles are embodied in the macro level policies:

---

<sup>5</sup> Abdoulaye Bathily, Pouvoirs et dynamiques de changement politique en Afrique: de l'Ere pré-colonial aux Indépendances, paper presented at the Seventh General Assembly of CODESRIA, Dakar, 10-14 Feb. 1992, pp. 2-4.

<sup>6</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 4, 7-13; J.-F. Bayart, "La problématique de la démocratie en Afrique noire. `La Baule, et puis après?\"", *Politique africaine*, no. 43 (October, 1991), p. 8.

<sup>7</sup> Abdoulaye Bathily, "Pouvoirs et dynamiques de changement politique en Afrique: de l'Ere pré-colonial aux Indépendances", paper presented at the Seventh General Assembly of CODESRIA, Dakar, 10-14 February 1992, pp. 2-4.

<sup>8</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 4, 7-13; J.-F. Bayart, "La problématique de la démocratie en Afrique noire. `La Baule, et puis après?\"", *Politique africaine*, no. 43 (October, 1991), p. 8.

<sup>9</sup> Bayart, p. 9.

- **regionalization and federalism,**
- **decentralisation of central authority,**
- **popular participation and nationalism and**
- **reduction of the role of the State in the economy.**

In most African countries, the precepts of nationalism, regionalization, participation and decentralisation are means by which to transfer decision-making authority to different locations in the administrative hierarchy - including the community and individual levels<sup>10</sup>. It is within this macro-policy framework that sectoral policies and strategies have been and are presently being drafted, endorsed and ratified. Both legally and operationally all sector strategies must take these major policy tenets into full consideration. The needs for refining and developing existing macro-policies, development of new policies, development of new regional and sectoral policies, promotion and awareness generation of macropolicies, empowerment training, training in community development have indeed been manifested clearly.

From a policy perspective, the policy analysis on adaptive strategies will provide information which will enable policy makers to identify the institutional gaps that inhibit a transition to sustainable livelihoods. They will then face the challenge of identifying ways and means of

- **helping to foster institutions which currently do not exist;**
- **reorienting institutions which have been diverted to non-sustainable ends;**
- **building in-country capacity for adaptive strategies on the basis of local demand and with a minimum of outside expertise.**

Although the analytical exercise itself is concerned with the establishing the political and social base for adaptive strategies, it is recognised that **consolidation and sustainability** are major issues. In this regard it is hoped that increased understanding of the processes, problems and requirements of adaptive strategies might also lead to increased awareness of such concerns as how societal change might be sustained in an enabling environment, what is required to prevent a relapse into old practices, how those principles inherent in traditional societies might be drawn upon, and what socio-economic conditions are necessary to underpin the process of adaptation and transformational development.

This analytical exercise will also discuss other historical, cultural and socio-economic issues of particular relevance. The thesis of the policy analysis is that the prospects, nature and outcomes of transition to sustainable livelihoods depend on the configuration of social institutions (as manifest in rules of the game or organisations) in civil society. The key research question is therefore whether the endowment of local, grassroots level institutions is conducive to the evolution and exercise of adaptive strategies for sustainable livelihood security.<sup>11</sup>

---

<sup>10</sup> Although this process has begun and limited participation has been achieved, there are numerous officials, organisations, communities and people in all parts of Africa who are not yet aware of their responsibilities to implement the policies that impact on adaptive strategies.

<sup>11</sup> It is assumed that the inception of adaptive mechanisms signifies the end of a stable set of institutional rules that characterise the *status quo ante*, and that the completion of adaptation is marked by the establishment of a new rule equilibrium that change development thought, discourse and practice.

## II. Methodological and conceptual issues

Adaptive strategies are about self-empowerment and self-empowerment is a political goal in socio-entity where there are economic, social and cultural relationships between people. The complexities of political liberalisation that we see today in Africa, the assumptions that are made on the basis of perceived necessities or demand are therefore linked to people's self-empowerment in an overwhelming way. At the outset, therefore, one should draw a conceptual distinction between political openness and democracy in discussing policy analysis on adaptive strategies.

Political openness would relate in part to various conditions or developments in government and civil society, only some of which may be necessary for or comparable with democratisation; such as decline or liberalisation of authoritarian regimes and/or ideologies resulting in increased opportunities for political competition and popular participation, transformation of state- society relations.

Democratisation refers to an entire distinctive form of political thought, discourse and practice which underlies popularly elected and controlled government. Political openness may or may not lead to full-fledged democratisation, but the two are better understood as **overlapping, possibly mutually supportive**, processes rather than self - contained transition phases.<sup>12</sup> Political openness and democratic transition are possibly, not necessarily, mutually supportive because a project of democratisation managed by a governing elite may also narrow the political playing field below the level where civil society can freely operate, restricting the dimensions and elements of a broadly enabling environment for political transition. These are generally are marked by several limitations

- 1. a tendency to narrow democratic thought and practice to the terms and categories of immediate, not well considered, political and social action, a naive realism, as it were;**
- 2. inattention to problems of articulation or production of democratic systems and process within neo-patrimonial politics rather than simply as abstract possibilities;**
- 3. ambiguity as to whether civil society is the agent or object of change;**
- 4. a nearly exclusive concern in certain organisational perspectives on development in Africa with generic attributes, characteristics and organisational processes and consequent neglect of analysis in terms of specific strategies and performances of organisations in processes on adaptive strategies; and**
- 5. inadequate treatment of the role of international agencies and of relations between global and indigenous aspects or dimensions of adaptive strategies.**

It follows from this that the question now to ask is how do political liberalisation democratic transitions that would allow adaptive strategies to form the main development core

---

<sup>12</sup> Thus, in the absence of a widely open political space in which opposition parties of various ideological persuasions are allowed to exist legally and to compete freely and peacefully for state power, democratic elections of truly uncertain freely cannot be held. Nor can formal constitution writing and satisfying efforts led by incumbent regimes and their intellectual supporters attain broad and deep legitimacy as democratic activities.

to flourish occur? The design and methodology for the study of political transition in Africa<sup>13</sup> identifies various strands of the literature on political change suggest that democratic development derives from three distinct sets of factors.

- The first set of factors relate to certain "deep structures", which reflect long-term historical developments in society, determine whether there is a conducive environment for adaptive strategies in general and alternative conflict management. Various structures have been proposed as preconditions for political liberalisation and democracy such as the emergence of an independent middle class, the attainment of widespread literacy and education, or a shared sense among citizens of national unity and the an advanced industrial economy which can provide a high average of per capita national income.
- From a contingent perspective, political liberalisation takes place and social conflicts are prevented as a result of the conscious reform initiatives of individual leaders, elite factions and social movements. The trajectory political change and conflict resolution and management is in part driven by the immediate reactions of strategic actors. Outcomes are indeterminate because all these actors have incomplete information, make hurried reactions to unforeseen events, and must struggle against one another. If predictable at all, the prospects for conflict resolution depend on the relative strength and cohesion of a shifting set of reform coalitions within the state and outside of it.
- Finally, adaptive strategies, of which conflict resolution, management of open access and common property resources and government policy evolution constitute a good portion, depend upon the emergence of supportive set of political institutions. Institutions are recurrent and valued patterns of political behaviour that give shape and regularity to the politics dispute resolution. They may be manifest as political rules (either legal or informal) or as political organisations (within the state or civil society). As the building blocks of democracy, certain combinations of political institutions must be extant or emergent if a democratic transition is to occur.

A study of the impact policy on the exercise of adaptive strategies and deploying as instruments of development in Africa, which seeks to employ all of the above perspectives and methods can be neither coherent not manageable. The first order of business is therefore to choose a principal conceptual framework to guide data collection and analysis. Relevant criteria for choosing a framework include: the power of a given set of factors to explain transitions, the susceptibility of concepts to empirical investigation, and the potential of the approach to generate policy recommendations. By these criteria, the study was conducted from the perspective of local and formal institutions.

---

<sup>13</sup> This was developed at a workshop in Arusha organised by the Global Coalition for Africa / Africa Leadership Forum. (1993) Transition To Democracy In Africa: A Cross National Study. Research Design and Methodology. Paper prepared by Michael Bratton and Nicholas van de Walle of Michigan State University and consultants to GCA. Revised version.

Nor would a research approach based on the contingent theory of interactions among individuals be the most fruitful. Certainly, the study should not ignore the fascinating "give and take" between democratisers of African society and communities that will apparently benefit from this process. But there is a danger that a study based on contingent interactions would be too ideographic, that is, that it could dissolve into unconnected series of singular stories about particular community experiences. Moreover, the conceptual building-blocks of the contingency theory are inherently difficult to research. On balance, therefore, the study will adopt an "institutional" approach. The thesis of study is that the prospects, nature and outcomes of political transition depend on configuration of policy generating and making institutions in state and civil society. The key research question becomes: "is the endowment of policy-making institutions conducive to adaptive strategies?". In other words, instead of delving into the analysis of the policies carved already, we need to address processual and strategic elements in the institutions and institutional actors of the policy making establishment.

### III. Historical synopsis, the Pre-independence past

#### The Ethiopian Past.

**Democratic Traditions:** While many countries in Africa, offers few cases of democratic governance in the past, some others showed certain democratic and egalitarian forms of administration and decision-making. Of these institutions, the *Gada* system of the Oromo in Ethiopia is perhaps the most famous. It was an age-grade system whereby the power to administer the community was transferred to the sixth age grade every eight years.<sup>14</sup> The transfer of power was preceded by an energetic election campaign, featuring oratorical skills, traditional wisdom as well as recitations of military prowess. It was marked by the *Butta* ceremony, which combined a military campaign to a new target and a joyous occasion of feasting and singing. Although there were individual officers entrusted with specific responsibilities, power resided principally in the assembly, known as the *chafe*.<sup>15</sup>

But, except in a few areas like the Borena on the Ethio-Kenyan border, the *Gada* system did not survive long after the phenomenal migrations of the Oromo to the northern highlands in the sixteenth century. **The shift from pastoralism to sedentary agriculture intensified and the attendant competitions and quarrels facilitated the emergence of a strong arbitrating force.** Moreover, the increase in agricultural production made possible by the fertile lands of south-western Ethiopia led to the accumulation of wealth and to social stratification.<sup>16</sup>

---

<sup>14</sup> The standard work of reference for this has been: Asmerom Legesse, Gada: Three Approaches to the Study of an African Society (New York, 1973). But see also the more recent Mohammed Hassen, The Oromo of Ethiopia: A History, 1570-1860 (Cambridge, 1990), pp. 10-16.

<sup>15</sup> Mohammed, pp. 10-12, 14.

<sup>16</sup> Guluma Gameda, "Gomma and Limmu: The Process of State Formation among the Oromo in the Gibé region, c. 1750-1889", MA thesis (Addis Ababa University, Dept. of History, 1984), pp. 36, 41-48.

The upshot of this process was the emergence of Oromo monarchies in south-western Ethiopia.<sup>17</sup> This transformation from the egalitarian *Gada* institution to monarchical rule appears to have been completed by the beginning of the nineteenth century. Two external factors that further enhanced the process were the juxtaposition of these Oromo communities with long-standing monarchical forms of government among the Omotic peoples of Southwest Ethiopia (notably Kafa, Janjaro, and Enarya) and the advent of Islam in the nineteenth century.

Unlike the Oromo, some peoples of the Lower Omo have been able to maintain to this day a participatory form of decision-making. A notable example are the Mursi, who have the reputation of debating an issue until a consensus is reached. Like the *Gada* system of the Oromo, only the male members of the community take part in these meetings (known as the *Methe*) which form a testing ground as much for social standing as for oratorical skills. For "... what is at stake in a public meeting is not just the reaching of a decision on some matter of current concern, but also the reaching of a decision on status ranking within the community".<sup>18</sup>

**Authoritarian Traditions:** Africa has an authoritarian tradition that has lasted over millennia. The state, which began to exercise ever tighter control over its subjects under liberators, assumed leviathan proportions under the totalitarian rule of military leaders such as Edi Amin, Said Barre, Mengistu Haile-Mariam etc. At no other time in African history has a government had such *total* control over its subjects as in that period. The peasants were controlled, the urban dwellers were under the tight supervision of the city administration. Neither labour, nor the youth, nor the press - in short no component of what is understood by civil society was allowed even a whiff of autonomy. It was one big exercise in recasting society in the image of the political regime.

In sum, this states brought authoritarianism inherent all along in the African political tradition to its highest pitch. In two other respects could these regimes be said to have been the culmination of the inherent authoritarianism of the Ethiopian state - in its militarism and its pronounced ideological motivation. We shall look at these two aspects in some more detail.

**The Ideological Heritage:** Although Christianity and Islam have co-existed since the turn of the first millennium, in countries such as Ethiopia, they have been customarily known as a Christian countries. This was because, enjoying royal patronage, Christianity became the dominant religion and the dominant culture. As such, it has left an indelible stamp on the history of the country and the psyche of its adherents. The heritage of the Orthodox Church permeates the art, architecture, literature and moral perception of that section of the population which has played the dominant role in the country's history. Church and State existed through the centuries in a symbiotic relationship, the former providing legitimacy, the latter protection and endowments.

---

<sup>17</sup> For a general discussion refer to Bahru Zewde, *A History of Modern Ethiopia* (London, Athens, Addis Abeba: 1992), pp. 18-19.

<sup>18</sup> David Turton, "*The Social Organisation of the Mursi: A Pastoral Tribe of the Lower Omo Valley, South-West Ethiopia*", PhD Thesis (Oxford, 1972), p. 302.

A streak of millenarianism, conjuring apocalyptic visions of a perfect new world rising from the ashes of the old, has thus run through Ethiopian Christianity.<sup>19</sup> After 1991, this tension which had been a recurrent theme of Ethiopian religious history has assumed a radical rift between the Church establishment and the congregations, who find the sermon of a hermit more edifying than the benediction of the patriarch.<sup>20</sup>

If religious orthodoxy was a prime preoccupation in former times, ideological rectitude has been the essence of African political life in more recent times. This began with the adoption at the turn of the 1960s of Marxism-Leninism by the student movement as the panacea for Africa's ills. The parallels with Russia are striking in this regard. Just as in Russia, in Africa too, an almost imperceptible transition was made from religious orthodoxy to ideological dogmatism without the attenuating influence of an intervening period of free liberal thinking. Marxism, in its Leninist, Stalinist and Maoist editions, has been the dominant ideology of first the student movement and then of the left as a whole since the late 1960s.

It began in the mid-60s with the emergence of a small but determined group of students. Its organisational skills as well as its faith in the veracity of the doctrine it has come to espouse, which contrasted sharply with the prevarication of the liberal majority, assured it ideological and organisational ascendancy by the beginning of the 1970s.<sup>21</sup> The swing to the left in the late 1960s was attended by the adoption of a presumably well-nigh infallible recipe for organisation, in its Leninist variant for the urban setting and its Maoist one for the rural. At this time progressive students' movements were formed "in a very narrow way (it) started to grow and develop beyond its scope. But these remained passive and members were promoting different outlooks; therefore, it couldn't fulfil the contemporary political responsibility.

In the case of the Tigryan Liberation movement in Ethiopia, for instance, later, in 1974 as the question of political organisation become an urgent question of the struggle, a few students with Marxist-Leninist outlook called a meeting of Tigrayan students in the university and agreed to establish a strong political organisation which can carry out the heavy burdens of the time. The main task if this organisation became the creation of fertile ground for armed struggle."<sup>22</sup>

A cardinal feature of the recipe was the principle of "democratic centralism" with the accent decidedly on the centralism than on the democracy. This recipe was first tried at the student level. The Dergue discovered its utility and applied it to achieve the highest level of

---

<sup>19</sup> Merid Wolde Aregay explores one dimension of this phenomenon in his Literary Origins of Ethiopian Millenarianism, *Proceedings of the Ninth International Congress of Ethiopian Studies* (Moscow, 1988), pp. 161-72.

<sup>20</sup> The phenomenon of Abba Gabra-Masqal, who mesmerised the Addis Ababa laity with his powerful sermons until he was put behind bars, is a good case in point. The emergence of two rival sects within the Orthodox Church is reported in *Mogad* of Genbot 11 1986 (May 19, 1994), a report strenuously denied two weeks later by the Church authorities (*Mogad*, Genbot 28 1986/ June 2 1994). As a matter of fact, the present Patriarch has come to be viewed with a degree of opprobrium unprecedented in the history of the Church..

<sup>21</sup> Bahru, Modern Ethiopia, pp. 223-226.

<sup>22</sup> Tadesse A.M. (1994) The Second Woyane Movement 1975-1991. Thesis submitted to the History Dept, AAU. as a partial fulfilment for a BA Degree in History.

mobilisation - and regimentation - of society ever recorded in Ethiopia.<sup>23</sup> Utilising the same organisational recipe, the rural guerrilla forces smashed the Dergue's gigantic military machine and seized state power in May 1991. The same ideological baggage has permeated economic policy since 1974. It had to its credit the most revolutionary land reform proclamation ever promulgated in the African continent. On the debit side, however, it ushered in a stifling control of the national economy by the state. In the rural sector, aside from the state control of land, it was characterised by measures ranging from tight control of agricultural marketing to ambitious programmes of collectivisation, villagisation, and resettlement.<sup>24</sup> In the urban setting, it involved the nationalisation of urban land and of financial institutions and state control of wholesale and retail trade through its marketing corporations and the urban dweller associations. The disastrous consequences of such all-pervasive control of the national economy are all too manifest to require elaboration.<sup>25</sup>

But arguably the most potent ingredient of the Marxist-Leninist ideological baggage has been the principle of the right of nations to self-determination up to and including secession.

There is no doubt that, particularly with respect to the oppressed and exploited southern half of the country, the principle addressed a fundamental problem.<sup>26</sup> But in the rush to conform, few asked the crucial questions such as: What are the nationalities and nations of Ethiopia? How did they evolve over time and what was the nature of their mutual interaction? How precisely do they exercise their right of self-determination? In the objective economic circumstances in which Ethiopia found itself, need one push the principle to its extreme limit of secession? In the end, therefore, the principle amounted to little more than a legitimising instrument for any organised national elite that took up arms against the central government.<sup>27</sup>

## **Policies in feudal, 'Socialist' and post-Dergue Ethiopia**

### **Pastoral Land Tenure in Ethiopia an assessment of legal status, policies and policy outcomes**

Official documents and related material provide no legal provision that explicitly regulate the status of pastoral areas prior to the 1955 Revised Constitution of the Empire of Ethiopia. Joanna M. Niecko, who has made a detailed study on the role of land tenure in modern Ethiopia's system of administration, maintains that laws (edicts) regulating land ownership, distribution,

---

<sup>23</sup> One of the major contributions of Christopher Clapham's sober analysis of the Mengistu era Transformation and Continuity in Revolutionary Ethiopia, Cambridge, 1988 is its documentation of the Dergue's achievements in this regard.

<sup>24</sup> The seminal works of Dessalegn Rahmato in this sphere are recapitulated in his Land Tenure and Land Policy in Ethiopia after the Dergue, a paper prepared for the 12th International Conference of Ethiopian Studies to be held in East Lansing (Michigan), 5-10 September 1994; I am grateful for his permission to let me draw on this paper.

<sup>25</sup> But for an expert assessment, see Eshetu Chole

<sup>26</sup> And yet it was the Eritrean insurgency, not the south, that provoked the issue. Ultimately and ironically, the Eritrean problem was resolved outside the framework of national self-determination which Tilahun Takele took so much pains to construct for it.

<sup>27</sup> For the manipulative potentialities of ethnicity, which in Ethiopian parlance is only known in its elevated edition of "the national question", see Doornbos, p. 58.

and system of taxation were issued for the first time in the late 19th and early 20th centuries<sup>28</sup>. The legal status of pastoral area, perhaps for the first time, has been determined by the 1955 Revised Constitution and further elaborated by the Ethiopian Civil Code of 1960. The provision of these documents, and that of the Dergue and the Transitional Government of Ethiopia, relating to pastoral areas, are identified and presented herein-under.

The 1955 revised Constitution of the Empire of Ethiopia, **Art 130 (d)** *All property not held and possessed in the name of any person, natural or juridical, including all land in escheat, and all abandoned properties, whether real or personal, as well as all products of the sub-soil, all forests and all grazing lands, water-courses, lakes and territorial waters, are State Domain.*

The 1960 Civil Code of the Empire of Ethiopia, **Art. 1194:** *Immovable situated in Ethiopia which are vacant and without a master shall be the property of the state.*

**Art. 1168 (a)** *The possessor who has paid for fifteen consecutive years the taxes relating to the ownership of an immovable shall become the owner of such immovable. This can be effected if the following condition is fulfilled:- Provided that no land which is jointly owned by member of one family in accordance with custom may be acquired by usurpation and any member of such family may at any time claim such land.*

The Constitution of the PDRE of September 1987, **Art. 13** (1) *State ownership is public ownership* (2) *... Natural resources, in particular land, minerals, water and forests, are state property.* The Rural Land reform proclamation of March 4, 1975. **Chapter 5, Article 24.** *As of the effective date of this proclamation, nomadic people shall have possessory rights over the lands they customarily use for grazing or other purposes related to agriculture. Nothing in the foregoing shall affect international agreements relating to nomadic lands.*

The Constitution of PDRE of Ethiopia of December 1994. **Article 40 (3)** *The right to ownership of rural and urban land, as well as all natural resources, is exclusively vested in the state and in the people of Ethiopia.* (5) *Ethiopian pastoralists have a right to free land for grazing and cultivation as well as right not to be displaced from their own lands.* (6) *Without prejudice to the right of ... peoples to own land, government may grant use of land to private investors on the basis of payment arrangements established by law.*

All the legal provisions cited above, in one way or another, explicitly or implicitly, make pastoral lands the property of the state. The 1960 Civil Code of the Empire of Ethiopia (Desta, 1973) does not explicitly determine that pastoral areas are considered to be government property. Article 1194 of the Civil Code, at face value, for example, does not answer the question whether pastoral areas are vacant and, thus, they do belong to the government. But what is implied is that pastoralism, unlike sedentary farmers, do not have permanent place of domicile. They rather roam over a disproportionately large area of land which they do not effectively use and occupy. The central argument of the drafters of these legal documents is that pastoral areas are generally "under-utilised" or "under utilised" (Bruce, 1994) and, therefore, fall under State Domain.

---

<sup>28</sup> But she has not given any hint about specific regulation(s) governing pastoral lands, nor the effect of the general regulations on pastoral areas. Desta Asfaw, who implies that his study on pastoral areas is an important basis for further research, has not analysed any legal provision that predates the 1955 Revised Constitution.

Article 1168 (1) of the code has also not regulated to the contrary. The main contention of this article, however, is that pastoralists, unlike their settled farming neighbours in the highlands, pay no land tax except taxes per heads of cattle. In other words, it appears that the position of the central government was that since the pastoralists do not pay land tax, the lands they use and occupy are subjected to the direct control and at the disposal of the government. Moreover, what makes this provision more interesting is the second statement deliberately added to restrict the legal effect of the provision to communal areas in the lowlands. Arguably, the legal implication of the statement is that communal lands elsewhere, presumably in the northern part of the country, are not considered to be government land. In the south, however, individual ownership and annual payment of land tax were considered to be necessary, and areas that do not fall within this category were declared to fall under State Domain. (Imperial Ethiopian Government Constitution, 1955).

Article 130 (3) of the Revised Constitution is important for its being explicit on the issue since the phrase "all grazing lands" leaves no room for doubt that the pastoral areas are not held and possessed individually and hence, belong to government. According to Desta, the absence of the phrase "nomadic areas" does not create any point for doubt since there is no constitutional provision that provides to the contrary, i.e. that excludes pastoral areas from falling under-State Domain (Desta, *op.cit.*).

As a matter of fact, the land policies of the Dergue and that of the Transitional Government of Ethiopia (TGE) have not basically altered the equation as far as pastoral areas are concerned. The military regime's Constitution of September 1987 and its radical rural land reform of March 1975 did not bring about any significant change in the legal ownership status of pastoral lands. The provisions of both documents that are cited above made all rural lands and all natural resources therefor "Public property" under the control of the state or under state controlled Peasant associations, which were empowered to make periodic destruction of land and to undertake villagisation programs. Hence, although pastoralists were guaranteed "possessory right" they in effect were not owners of their customary lands and were confined within 20 "Gashas" (800 hectares) for their movement in search of grazing land and water points for their animals. Moreover, the military government, in the same way as the imperial government, retained the prerogative to control and administer the resources on and beneath the land, and thereby the right to determine the manner of appropriating the resources thereof.

The main debate on adaptive strategy policies is usually dominated by land tenure and land use debate. The issues of land use planning and land tenure are being hotly debated in almost all the case study countries. These are extremely complex issues with a far-reaching impact on the future of Africa. Any change in the land tenure regime will have profound implications for inter alia, land use planning in the country. As such, the uncertainties surrounding land tenure make land use planning somewhat of an academic exercise at the present time. The need for a national land use policy and a strategic land use plan and the related need for a legal frame-work for establishing rights of access, use, transfer, alienation and compensation is recognised. Land-use and land tenure have important linkages to natural resource conservation and protection, the need for which in the context of reducing the vulnerability of rural people to disasters, has been well documented. In addition, the peasants are not motivated to make improvements on their holdings (terraces etc.) to increase productivity as the security of tenure is lacking, further contributing to chronic vulnerability.

The term land tenure covers various forms of rights that are established over an immovable property. These rights range from simple possessory right to ownership or free hold right. In the hierarchies of land rights, ownership or free hold right confers upon the owner a right of enjoyment of his/her property to the exclusion of any other person. However, the Civil Code of Ethiopia has a concept of the social function of ownership, and it is this concept that gives rise to the numerous encumbrances on the exercise of ownership right. The regionalization exercise which has started will take final shape only after the competencies of the centre and the regions are delineated by the new constitution. Economic rationales for privatisation will be taken as inputs for any decisions that the federated units might eventually take regarding tenure changes. The debate on the land tenure issue continues, although any changes in de-facto policy will not be made until the new constitution is ratified (at the earliest.) However, a number of issues can usefully be addressed at the present time, to contribute to the eventual policy that may be enacted in the future.

Future land tenure laws however have to be guided

- 1. by local customary laws that should be enhanced to fuel productivity**
- 2. the need for regional and local diversity**
- 3. the need to base this on strategic land use plans**
- 4. the debate should go beyond intellectual circles**

The agrarian policy in general and policy on pastoral areas in particular seems to be a mixture of the policies of its predecessors. The relevant provisions of the Constitution declare all rural land as state property, confers power upon the government to determine on use of land and all natural resources thereof by private (domestic or foreign) investors, and guarantees only usufruct right to agro-pastoralist. While it seems that the governments are committed to upholding the certain ideologies - driven radical agrarian policy, maintaining the right and power to make land grants to private investors may mean a return to the policy of private large-scale mechanised commercial farming to which they were strongly opposed, save for its lately endorsed "mixed-economy" policy issued in 1990.

A conservation strategy and an action plan to implement the strategy are critical to the success of the natural resources development. The environmental crisis that has already significantly increased people's vulnerability to disaster through degradation of the soil and the vegetation cover is increasingly felt in many areas. National Conservation Strategies are in their final development phase. Tropical Forestry Action Plans have been developed and is under consideration as part of the future conservation strategy. Specific reference in the "Methodology" for the development of the Umbrella National Conservation Strategy to the requirement for consistency with, *inter alia*, the Water and Sanitation, Environment, Disaster Preparedness strategy is made. Conservation activities are to be a central focus of Employment-Based Safety Nets and Employment Generation Schemes at community level, and the need for full integration of development activities in the policy document is paramount.

These are supported by several policy instruments viz.: the National Population Policy of Ethiopia, the National Food and Nutrition Strategy, the draft Agricultural Policy, the National Policy on Disaster Prevention and Management.

The **National Population Policy of Ethiopia** (NPPE) describes the rationale for population programmes in Ethiopia, and prescribes organisational mechanisms in the government for its implementation. It contains (as strategies) a mixture of programme interventions, new laws, studies and recommendations to other line ministries and NGOs on the incorporation of gender and population issues into their programmes and institutions. The programmes prescribed by the strategy are (broadly) promotion-related (IEC), service delivery-related and method availability-related. On every level, the success of the country in meeting the objectives of the population policy (reduction of the total fertility rate with the attendant reduction in the population growth rate) is central to the success of the National Plan for Disaster Management. If the goals of the population policy are not met, the population and the livestock will exceed the carrying capacity of the environment and of the economy. The results will be increased chronic vulnerability, and vulnerability to disasters.

An action plan for implementation of the NPPE has been developed. Between the existing policy statement and programme/project level interventions, an action plan to guide implementation at the programme level is required. This plan should deal with questions such as resource requirements, timetable for implementation, and policy issues such as social marketing (i.e., subsidised contraceptives) Vs free distribution. The absence of an action plan for implementation will likely hinder effectiveness at the programme and output levels with the attendant impact on goal achievement.<sup>29</sup>

The overarching goal of the draft the **National Food and Nutrition Strategy** (NFNS) is to guarantee food security in Ethiopia and to raise the nutritional status of Ethiopians. Generally available information regarding the strategy's content indicates that specific objectives are: nutrition rehabilitation programmes; sustainable development programmes; to increase aggregate food supply and household access; to achieve national food self-sufficiency through production increases; to increase income levels; to maintain national food security reserves; to introduce conservation programmes; infrastructure development in rural areas; improved agricultural and nutrition outreach; and to establish population management programmes.

It is designed to increase the "entitlement basket" of the population, which is that set of all means of access (at a household level) to food - own production, participation in the labour market, participation in the product market, and government transfer payments. It deals with the issue of transitory food insecurity in addition to chronic food insecurity. It is basically consistent with current food-security theory. However the lack of specific recognition of the need to control the population growth rate to achieve food self-sufficiency merits further consideration. The strategy is a set of recommendations that are intended to be incorporated into sector and other government policies, and not government policy as such. The need to develop a plan of action to ensure that the NFNS is implemented (i.e., included and reflected in sectoral planning and projects and replicated in regional food and nutrition policy and programming) has been identified.

---

<sup>29</sup> The policy prescribes the inclusion of IEC materials on population in the "packages of information that are carried to the rural population." This has potential implications for the content of the community contact and training activities of adaptive strategies. Technical training at the community level envisaged will need to include an IEC component to operationalise the cross-linkages specified in the NPPE and to be consistent with the policy prescription.

The **Agricultural Policy** previously published draft strategy (July 1991) is inoperative. The Ministry of Agriculture has developed terms of reference for the development of a new strategy or policy, and the Agricultural Strategy or policy is in the initial development phase. Analysis of the TOR cannot lead to firm conclusions about the ultimate content of the future policy. The de-facto agricultural policy in Ethiopia is to direct resources and inputs to the geographic areas of Ethiopia with the highest marginal return - in terms of gross national agricultural production. There is a window of opportunity for the development of agriculture in Ethiopia. The opportunity is the large amount of resources that will be channelled to community development through disaster management and mitigation activities. (This includes food resources under food-assisted development programmes and financial resources.) These resources can be utilised by the MOA (and other line departments) for the furtherance of sectoral objectives under the future agricultural policy. At a minimum the Agricultural Policy/Strategy must contain a commitment to disaster management as an integral part of the policy. This must include:

- **operationalisation of that commitment throughout the decentralised structure,**
- **acceptance the responsibility for EGS/EBSN activity management or technical input thereto at decentralised levels,**
- **consideration of the needs of nomadic and other drought-prone areas,**
- **"contingency agricultural plans", and**
- **a livestock policy.**

The **National Policy on Disaster Prevention and Management** was adopted by the TGE "...so that relief assistance is provided to the affected population in a manner which ensures that such efforts contribute towards disaster prevention and sustainable growth and development and that disaster prevention activities get due attention in the government's development efforts." The basic principles expressed in the NPDPM are:

- **community determination of interventions;**
- **clear responsibility and empowerment at all levels;**
- **relief shall sub-serve the goals of development.**

These principles are entirely consistent with the basic themes of participation, empowerment and responsibility as detailed in the general macro-policies. The NPDPM also provides guidelines reflecting the reality of limited resources and resource allocation efficiency: prioritisation of interventions will be made on the basis of urgency and relief plans will be approved at central government level. Finally, there are policy prescriptions concerning eligibility for participation and the conditions for participation in DPPM activities - in particular relief activities. (e.g., there will be no free food distributed to the able bodied.)

The Directives are the operational plan for Disaster Management. They prescribe the government management structure, roles and responsibilities at all levels, and activity planning and implementation norms. As the directives are cross-sectoral, operationalisation requires institutionalisation of the directives in the policies and operations of all concerned line departments. It also means that most of those line departments must institutionalise the disaster management components of their policies at regional, zonal, wereda and community levels

through their decentralised structures.<sup>30</sup> Finally, it requires institutionalisation of the directives at central, regional, zonal, wereda and community levels.

NGOs have a history of responding to disaster situations in precisely the way prescribed by the policy. They redirect resources to disaster response activities when things go badly, and when situations improve, they redirect their focus to development cum prevention activities. They move along the relief- rehabilitation-development continuum with relative ease. They are, as such, valuable partners, and have a significant contribution to make, particularly as they are engaged at the community level.<sup>31</sup> It is recognised that NGOs have a valuable contribution to make in development, and in the implementation of the National Programme for Disaster Prevention, Preparedness and Mitigation. It is also recognised that given their diversity and their ability to shift from relief to development as circumstances change, it is difficult to categorise NGOs neatly. A policy on NGOs needs to be formulated to take these issues into account and to empower the NGO community to continue its work, in accordance with established government policy, in Ethiopia.

The **Education Policy** provides for measures to train people in "development" at the objective and programme levels (both formal and non-formal.) No specific mention of disaster management (as a discrete sub-component of "development") appears in the draft Policy. Likewise, no objective- or programme- level mention of the rural-urban access disparity (which has potential impact on urbanisation) appears. Finally, there is no reference to any multiple-use of facilities and teachers at community level that would include specific empowerment training for disaster management or civic education.

On the other hand, the TGE's **Agricultural Development-Led Industrialisation Strategy** (ADLI) starts by outlining the essence of the strategy and justification for the development and evolution of new strategies to match the economic policy that has been promulgated at the beginning of the transitional period. This commentary is an attempt to highlight the salient points the strategy addresses and how it will enhance our programme planning exercise. The aim of the New National Economic Development Strategy is

- **to transform national economic planning from that of a command economy to a market 'oriented' economy;**
- **to create an enabling environment for popular participation through the devolution of power to regions and assessing to their rights to manage their resource on their own;**
- **to alleviate the structural dependence of the economy on external inputs;**

---

<sup>30</sup> To accomplish this, the line departments must incorporate disaster management activities in their work-plans at central and all decentralised levels; deployment of adequately briefed and trained staff for the purpose is needed. RRC, as the secretariat for the NDPPC, has a general oversight responsibility viz.-a-vis other line departments in this regard.

<sup>31</sup> The NPDPM prescribes that all NGOs will be registered through RRC, and that policy guidelines regarding NGO operations will be issued from time to time by RRC. The lack of a clear policy statement provides insufficient guidance to other line departments and decentralised administrations on under what circumstances NGOs should be permitted to operate. It also results in confusion in the NGO community as to if they are desired to have a direct relationship with line departments other than RRC (for development activities.)

- to accord the agricultural sector sufficient emphasis at the commercial production level;
- to promote structural integration of the agricultural and industrial sectors.

ADLI aims at promote continuous/unhampered growth, to bring about this growth based on equity and social justice and to promote self reliance. These three areas can be translated to mean that our industrial development initiatives must base their models on indigenous think and local raw material. The paper specifically underscores this point by quoting verbatim ADLI). Important areas of the new engagement would include the prospect of miming development. The paper goes on to explain why was this specific strategy developed in contrast to other models viz. industrialisation, import substitution and export-led industrialisation? as unilinear roads to development. The ADLI clearly states that all these have been tried and haven't brought the rapid development that they promised. The TGE feels it should learn from the experience of other countries. A worthy goal to undertake. Instead the ADLI model is more amenable to Ethiopia as

- ADLI is based on what people can do with what they already know - indigenous think
- it bring structural changes in the economy and
- it is based on the objectives of achieving self reliance.

**Agricultural development strategy:** the sector major underpinning relates to the development of market oriented commercial farms, particularly in the lowlands. It bases its assumptions in the following changes: it will employ improved cultural practices<sup>32</sup>, small scale irrigation, fertilisers and pest protections means will be employed and offset the population pressure on crop production through the promotion of off-farm employment.<sup>33</sup> *Major strategy underpinning this area should include the reorientation of our extension message, delivery of information, communication channels and the development of training packages to encourage peasant DAs and extension agents at the peasantry level.* The third strategy will be seen with in the context of sustainable development while the first two will be interim strategies.

The agricultural policy (in draft) will need to contain a strategy for the development of the livestock sector. Improved herd management and integration of the sub-sector into the commercial markets has the potential to reduce significantly the marginalisation of the pastoralist population in the low-lying areas. Improved access to markets will improve pastoral incomes and provide a means for controlled stock reduction in disaster situations. Accordingly, such initiatives will need to be taken at regional level. Consideration of the opportunities for and costs of fiscal investment incentives will need to be considered as an integral part of regional development strategies. The policy should focus more on food self sufficiency, integrated area based rural development in drought prone areas and increase productivity in surplus producing areas, raw materials, develop hide and skin production capabilities, improve production of tobacco, beverages, food processing, textiles and fibre production, produce raw materials for agro-industrial establishments.

---

<sup>32</sup> development of training packages to encourage peasant DAs and extension agents at the peasantry level must be based n the dual strategy of education for empowerment and skill acquisition.

<sup>33</sup> this has been integrated in the general direction of development programmes.

The **social development policy** tries to underpin the above claims by stating that

- Social service should be rendered by Government, Private sector, NGOs, POs and the people
- Development plans should address felt deprivation
- National economic efficiency and economy in the utilisation of scarce resources
- Self-reliant development goals
- equitable rural/urban ethnic settlement patterns,
- people's relation should be based on equality freedom justice and willingness to unit,

The social development goals have the professed aim of

- Education is a right of every citizen and is free. Pre-formal school education to be designed to help skills development and education to be made relevant to economic and social development. Continuing education for citizens that did not have the opportunity to learn
- Health service are basic human rights and epidemics are to be dealt with free of charge;
- equitable health delivery system especially to women and children. We need to develop a preventive health care system based on environmental /personal hygiene and malnutrition and promote traditional medicine
- Citizens will have the right to employment and work place happiness in disciplines they want to engage themselves and all ethnic groups will be encouraged to maintain their religion, art, values
- Wages will be determined to guarantee livelihood security and the right to housing and availability of transport services
- Women's equality in the work place
- The right to union and recognise overtime work and non-normative work
- Provide social security and The right of every citizen to pension, disablement
- Marriage a sacred family union and prostitution discouraged
- Generational transfer of material and spiritual culture and encourage archaeological studies

In the low-lying drought prone areas of Ethiopia, the vulnerability of people to the effects of disasters is exacerbated by the dearth of alternative (i.e., other than subsistence farming or pastoralism) employment opportunities and sources of income. These areas have relatively little industry of any kind and limited product and service markets. As such, when drought occurs in these areas, the population lacks alternative sources of livelihood by means of which to cope during those difficult times. The effect of drought on Gross Regional Product is particularly devastating in these areas. Accordingly "risk", as measured by the coefficient of variation or normalised standard deviation of GDP, or as measured by the more intuitive well-known impact of crop-loss on subsistence farmers, is extremely high in these areas.

Reducing risk entails diversifying sources of income and providing alternatives. At present there is little interest manifested in investing in such areas. To stimulate investment, there are only a limited number of tools available to the central and/or regional governments: direct investment through parastatals, development of infrastructure to attract investment, and

tax incentives are the major ones. In accordance with the TEP, new parastatal investment is not envisaged, and development of infrastructure that may or may not attract private investment has a high opportunity cost and is relatively risky. Tax incentives are the most effective means to stimulate investment in these areas, and in accordance with Proclamation 33/1992, are the purview of the regional governments.

From the contents of the various provisions of the policy, it is also possible to gather that the policy thrust mainly concentrates on the highlands while underplaying the role of the low lands covering about 60% of the source area and 10% of the population of the country. On the other hand, National policies on Social Development Women, population, Disaster prevention and Management...etc.. given proper implementation, may increase opportunities for sustainable development of pastoral production systems in an all-rounded manner. However, it would be naive to expect instant and radical transformations in an overall setting characterised by series of constraints of multi-fold nature. Future drives aiming at registering marked improvements of state-of affairs need to transcend the typocritic semblance of limiting endeavours that pay only lip service to lofty approaches as was the practice in the past. Things like popular participation, people-cantered programs, bottom-up approaches, empowerment, etc. should be seriously taken into account as far as concrete conditions could allow.

When designing Pastoral development policies, recognition of pastoralism as economically productive and ecologically appropriate system should be made the point of entry. This could serve as a basis to commit oneself to policy reforms that are commensurate with hierarchy of needs, prioritisation of programs, and feasibility of proposed undertakings. Legal recognition and empowerment of viable pastoral organisations that could harmoniously reinforce official and formal administrative set-ups should be effected. It is worth noting that customary and formal institutions can play complementary roles on the basis of clearly defined division of tasks. Due to the fact that Pastoralist, like any actor engaged in the production of commodities, are price responsive. Contrary to series of misconceptions, they behave and act rationally to ensure procurement of benefits. It is, therefore, necessary to redesign financial institutions that facilitate their integration into the market without forfeiting opportunities favouring their advantages. Tax reforms, credit facilities, prevalence of a peaceful socio political environment, delivery of social services and initiation of benefit-sharing mechanisms , construction of physical infrastructures aimed to avoid market risks.. etc. could pose as incentives for Pastoralist. Thinking and acting in terms of initiating alternative employment for members of pastoral communities should be envisaged as buffer against calamities and mishaps of various kinds experienced in a recurrent manner.

Program interventions should be preceded by a careful consideration of all variables that are detrimental in shaping the nature of outcomes. Studies should be based on authentic data/information relating to felt needs, possible responses and reactions of communities, threats and/or opportunities likely to be encountered by projects and monitoring and evaluation of performance supported by contingencies. Technical areas of undertakings need to be based on appropriate and locally available technologies that could facilitate for integration with the wider production, marketing and distribution framework.

National and local institutions dealing with pastoral issues need to be established and strengthened in a manner that could allow for continuity, flexibility and clarity of purpose. These

should aim at mitigating the progressive deterioration of entitlement, ensuring access to required resources for sustainable livelihood, provide for the training of policy makers, project staff and Pastoralist. Such institutions should be provided with a wide range of mandates that include proposing appropriate policy and legislation and oversee their implementation once they are enacted.

Land use planning should consider mobility of Pastoralist between ecological zones and act accordingly whereas macro-economic policies need to take into account impacts of other sectoral activities on the Pastoral Production system. Co-ordination and Synchronisation of sectoral interventions in pastoral areas by way of avoiding duplication of efforts, antagonisms and squandering of resources must be the responsibility of such institutions. Legislation regulating degree and extent of acceptable encroachment, responsibilities of users of resources, determination of quality and quantity of livestock to be in line with available resources for maintenance should be worked out. In general, policies and regulations must reckon with all dimensions of the economy allowing for the balanced development of all sectors and laying the basis for reciprocal complementarity.

### **Countervailing Influences**

The above picture of classical African society is admittedly grim. With such a background, the prospects for democratisation, and hence the exercise of adaptive strategies in more meaningful ways are bound to appear dim. This then forces us to question

- **What are the redeeming features of African history that can dispel the gloomy picture somewhat?**
- **What are the "bright spots" in this rather unremitting image of authoritarianism and orthodoxy?**

It is easier to ask such questions than to answer them, for the answers precisely lie and are found in the articulation of adaptive strategies: in the retrieval of critical community history, in conflict management practices, in indigenous modes of governance and in people's collective memory. For the counter-currents strike one by their futility or ephemeral character or their not so decisive import on the political instance. Even if and when such counter-currents assume a more durable shape, they do not always dispel the gloom cast by three millennia of African history.

To a continent that has not been able to attain even the formal aspects of democracy, limited as they might be, groping for a deeper edition of it may sound as a bit of a luxury. On the other hand, the strengthening of civil society that underpins the alternative vision of democracy is germane to the discussion of the democratisation process in Africa. For the ultimate hope to salvage the imperilled process seems to lie precisely in such strengthening of civil society.

Eboe Hutchful points out the well-nigh paradoxical concurrence of *the globalisation of the capitalist economy* in the wake of the collapse of the Communist order and the emergence of

ethno-nationalism in Africa.<sup>34</sup> Ethnicity has indeed become a force to be reckoned with and social scientists have increasingly been forced to address it. How much it has deep historical roots and how much it is an ideology of the elite, legitimised on occasions by the very social scientists who presume to investigate it, remains problematic.<sup>35</sup> Historians, looking at the issue from a relatively longer perspective, generally tend to question the permanence of the ethnic factor. As Terence Ranger has argued with reference to pre-colonial Zimbabwe, "People defined themselves *politically* - as subjects of a particular chief - rather than linguistically, or culturally, or ethnically".<sup>36</sup> Elsewhere, too, the picture in pre-colonial times was not so much of compartmentalised ethnic communities as of multi-ethnic societies interdependent and interacting with each other.<sup>37</sup>

On the other hand, although one might be able to perceive nuances in the emphasis given to ethnic identity in British and French colonial policy, it is difficult to attribute the emergence of ethnicity entirely to colonialism. As a matter of fact, one can even argue that colonialism often ended up creating nation-states out of diverse ethnic groups. Conversely, the democratisation process and its attendant political pluralism seem to have the potential of accentuating ethnic identity. The question Africa currently faces, as Doornbos has posed it, is thus whether ethnicity threatens to bring about "a basic restructuring of African state systems, beginning with most ancient of all, Ethiopia" or whether the issues it raises would turn out to be "transient phenomena, likely to disappear soon enough as they get 'satisfied', partly perhaps through their very articulation".<sup>38</sup>

Ethiopia for instance offers a special area of interest. It might be useful to make a few general observations from the outset. First and foremost, the pre-colonial, colonial, and post-colonial categories do not apply in the Ethiopian case. Uninterrupted by these major divides, Ethiopia could be said to have witnessed a linear and organic historical evolution to a degree few other African countries have done.<sup>39</sup> Secondly, as Bayart has remarked, Ethiopia could be said to have belonged to la 'grande tradition étatique' de l'Europe et de l'Asie<sup>40</sup>, with all the essential attributes of a feudal order,<sup>41</sup> rather than to the genre of "village democracies".

---

<sup>34</sup> Hutchful, p. 1.

<sup>35</sup> For an argument on the mass basis of ethnicity, see Eghosa E. Osaghae, "A Re-Examination of the Conception of Ethnicity in Africa as an Ideology of Inter-Elite Competition", *African Study Monographs*, 12 (1) (June 1991), pp. 43- 60. Martin Doornbos calls ethnicity "the resilient paradigm" "Linking the Future to the Past", *Review of African Political Economy*, No. 52, 1991, p. 53), thereby implicitly underlining its epistemological, more than its objective, value.

<sup>36</sup> Terence Ranger, The Invention of Tribalism in Zimbabwe (Gweru, 1985), p. 4.

<sup>37</sup> Bayart, p. 7. For the Ethiopian dimension of this historical process of interaction, see Tadesse Tamrat's articles: "Processes of Ethnic Interaction and Integration in Ethiopian History: The Case of the Agaw", *Journal of African History*, 29 (1988); "Ethnic Interaction and Integration in Ethiopian History: The Case of the Gafat", *Journal of Ethiopian Studies*, 21 (1989); and Donald Crummey, "Society and Ethnicity in the Politics of the Christian Ethiopia during the Zamana Masafent", *International Journal of African Historical Studies*, VIII, 2 (1975), pp. 266-78.

<sup>38</sup> Doornbos, pp. 54-55.

<sup>39</sup> Already alluded to in the CODESRIA workshop. Bahru Zawde. "Military and Militarism in Africa": the papers of that workshop are expected to come out soon.

<sup>40</sup> Bayart, p. 9

<sup>41</sup> See Donald Crummey, "Abyssinian Feudalism", *Past and Present*, No. 89, pp. 115-38.

Our aim here is to facilitate the definition of indigenous knowledge, ideas and systems which embody and institutionalise good governance and political pluralism within the context of civil society's collective institutional heritage and tradition in Africa in particular, and African cultural traditions at large by promoting increased understanding of the process and requirements of democratic transition. While it is of fundamental importance that Africa itself defines approaches to, and processes of, participation, democracy and good governance, it is also necessary that such approaches be synthesised with universal principles of democracy which assure both political contestation and political participation. Without this, political transitions may well result in varying degrees of political liberalisation, but not functioning democracies.

This study on adaptive strategies aims to facilitate the definition of indigenous knowledge, ideas and systems which embody and institutionalise human adaptation to marginal environments within the context of civil society's collective institutional heritage and tradition in African cultural traditions at large by promoting increased understanding of the process and requirements of democratic transition; and within this the exercise of adaptive strategies. This question can only be answered if we broaden the scope of inquiry into the nature of civil societies in African countries, where a capacity to articulate and aggregate political demands must be present as a basis for party formation. We will examine whether such prerequisites in the realm of civil society obtain in African countries so as to allow the creation of mechanisms whereby society interests can be fed into policy process. This fundamentally depends on the emergence of a 'political society'.<sup>42</sup>

## Section II

### **Current policy environment realities for adaptive strategies**

#### **1. People's knowledge and control vs. 'modern enlightenment' and statutory control**

Development efforts in much of Africa over recent decades have been frustrated by the complicated and multifaceted nature of the expected processes of change; and because of a number of inherent contradictions among the various issues and actors and their differing perspectives. In order to understand the specific constraints and opportunities of the natural resource management sector, analysis of the following contradictions can be useful for understanding the context and issues, and for defining opportunities for constructive action.

- **Central control vs. decentralised control,**
- **Statutory rights vs. customary rights,**
- **Few uses and users of natural resources vs. many and diverse uses and users,**

---

<sup>42</sup> a stratum of people professionally engaged in politics who serve as a linkage between citizens and the state by articulating and aggregating interests.

- **Modern knowledge systems vs. endogenous knowledge systems,**
- **formal institutions vs. endogenous institutions.**<sup>43</sup>

There is now an increasing awareness of the necessity to reconcile the contradictions above in order to ensure sustainable natural resource management. This awareness lies behind the current encouraging trend in which institutions at all levels are becoming willing to acknowledge the management potential of endogenous institutions, and that it is necessary to base development efforts on local aspirations, and to use the local potential as a bridge between endogenous and formal institutions.

Africa, in comparison to most other regions is still predominantly characterised by rural production systems and culture. There are still relatively strong endogenous cultures and institutions.<sup>44</sup> The long term exclusion from political power has prevented the accumulation of knowledge and experience in serving as such a link and incapacitating leadership helpless to present viable policy alternatives.<sup>45</sup> Thus an important challenge for Africans concerns the strengthening of civil society, a process requiring a broader approach and time perspective than is prevalent in donor approaches in currency today, is the process of the retrieval of community history and adaptive strategies within that framework that is robust and historically sedimented. These can be structured, aggregated and articulated as follows:

- In the creation of the nation state, independent governments have tended to impose authority on local people. In this they have been supported by international aid organisations which have shared the view that only through central control could sustainable development be achieved. This has resulted in support for the nationalisation of natural resources and policies that take little account of local needs and interests. In the forestry sector this has too often been reflected in the approach to forest management that excludes local people and the utilisation of these for commercial purposes only. This approach has resulted in the undermining of local capacities to manage natural resources sustainably and led to a situation where people are forced to cope as best they can even if this threatens their long-term survival. This has stifled local initiatives, broken down indigenous systems, and created an attitude of resignation among communities, which in turn present a challenge to efforts for revival of local control. Conflict arises because central authority attempts to retain control by imposing official structures and co-opting local leaders.
- Recent attempts to compensate for the shortcomings of centralised management have had equally negative consequences. Privatisation of land tenure, for example, has devolved control away from governments, but not always to the

---

<sup>43</sup> FTTP (1995) Eastern Africa Document 1995-96, Elbourgon, Kenya

<sup>44</sup> Africa is also unique in its ecological and cultural diversity - manifested, for example, by its more than 2,000 languages. Recently, the linkages between biological and cultural diversity have been increasingly acknowledged in the development agenda.

<sup>45</sup> Politicians, like chieftains, are groomed in the neo-patrimonial style of politics, the linkages are fragmentary and on a dyadic basis, the problem with clientelistic exchanges is that they remain highly personal and do not contribute to the creation of forms of trust and reciprocity beyond those narrow relations and finally both cultural structures which allow for the articulation and aggregation of interests in society are rudimentary.

benefit of local communities. The new resource tenure regimes continue to discriminate against customary and traditional resource management cultures however sustainable, favouring instead the modern, formal sector and those having access and connections to the central authorities. Statutory systems of natural resource ownership and management are based on government decrees and statutes that rarely have reference to people's aspirations, hence their alienation from public interest. Very often, people are denied access to or have no knowledge of these statutes until they are legally enforced and take their toll in courts and police actions.

In addition, statutes provide the ground for forestry officials to take control of people's resources, which very often result in the accumulation of power in the hands of one or few officials who can decide the fate of natural resources and people without due regard to environmental considerations. These local officials are only accountable to higher officials and local people no control over their actions. "Enabling" laws and policies on paper are not necessarily enforced; either because they are disregarded by officials or because they are unenforceable.

By comparison, customary systems, rules and procedures (very often unwritten) often establish accountability and link the rights and responsibilities which govern resource management, thus providing a basis for conflict resolution. These systems have been enriched through evolution over many generations (where they have not disintegrated through marginalisation). Individual decisions concerning natural resource management and utilisation are based on a "legal" framework that has reference points to the optimal exploitation of these resources, and transgression is punishable by cultural laws and the regulations that legitimise the latter. Individual and collective accountability to communal and intra-inter generational interests are very high. Communal tenure and management systems are complex and adaptive. The user rights provided by these systems are often strong, and confer a high degree of tenure security to individuals.<sup>46</sup>

- Few uses/users of natural resources versus many and diverse uses/users: The users and uses of forests are diverse. The traditional and modern sectors depend on the environment in different ways. The modern sector sees profit based on the utilisation of a few products and species, while the traditional sector sees subsistence, security, and cultural survival based on a flow of diverse forest benefits.
- Modern knowledge systems versus endogenous knowledge systems: These user groups, coming from different sectors of society, each understand and relate to resources according to their respective knowledge systems; and their management practices reflect these knowledge systems. The power of the modern sector stems, in part from improved communication. The modern

---

<sup>46</sup> Although communal management systems are also susceptible to co-optation by dominant individuals and groups, accountable and transparent management is more likely to be found within decentralised systems.

sector's communication systems have largely excluded the traditional sector. This has been compounded by the difficulty of communication across cultures/knowledge systems, and by ignorance of the very existence of other ways of seeing, understanding and managing natural resources. Language is only the most obvious barrier. As result, the modern (reductionist, objective/determinist) way of understanding resource management has prevailed and dominated, and determined how resources have been managed.

- Formal institutions versus endogenous institutions: Endogenous institutions have functioned as reservoirs of traditional knowledge. They have preserved customary rights and responsibilities within societies, enforced them, transmitted them from generation to generation, and (where not entirely marginalised by the modern sector) they have governed the utilisation and conservation of resources. These institutions have been evolving and continue to adapt to changing conditions and develop new mechanisms. These institutions offer important organisational potential. The formal institutions have come to dominate, marginalise and even eradicate the endogenous institutions. Different bio-cultural realities give rise to different resource management systems. Endogenous resource management systems vary according to their specific contexts, defining the specific uses and users of the various resources within the community.

In order to maintain biological diversity therefore, it is necessary to acknowledge the cultural diversity which contains the knowledge necessary to maintain it. Local technical knowledge is a reflection of the context-specific biodiversity . In order to maintain biodiversity it is necessary to acknowledge the linkages between local knowledge and context- specific management of resources. By maintaining this array of cultural-embedded technical knowledge and the corresponding ecosystems, it becomes possible to sustain healthy and productive local resource management for the benefit of local livelihoods, possibly leading to more sustainable resource management at the national and regional levels.

Throughout much of Africa, governments, donors and other development agents are becoming increasingly aware of customary management, customary rights, endogenous institutions and the existence of different knowledge systems. There is also a growing recognition and understanding of the potential for linking to and supporting these in an effort to realise sustainable resource management and development, and the need to try overcome the constraints described above. In short, endogenous institutions and resource management systems represent a latent resource; providing potential alternatives where modern approaches have not attained expectations, or counterpoints/correctives for mainstream development approaches.

II. Figurative institutional issues:

The following institutional issues have been taken into consideration in undertaking the cross national policy analysis;<sup>47</sup>

1. required regulatory and administrative procedures to facilitate adaptive strategies and mobilisation of local thrift potentials, especially by institutions of civil society and non-governmental organisations; and constitutional reform and legislative requirements, including provisions and legislation to improve the quality of governance and reduce opportunities for corruption;
2. the role of the public sector, civil society, business, and government and how such entities can further or impede such adaptive process; and the role and contribution of specific groups and segments of society, such as the press and media, the private sector, and women, in bringing about and supporting political and social change through adaptive strategies;
3. the role, if any, of external bilateral, multilateral, private sector and non-governmental agencies and organisations in supporting or constraining the process of change; and the potential role of donor agencies and the international community in supporting institutional development conducive to greater participation and responsible governance; and

The role, function, and capacity of existing institutions in mobilising support for change, particularly in regard to enhancing Government accountability, openness and adherence to the rule of law and institutional requirements for enhancing and sustaining adaptive strategies and practices, especially in the areas of accountability, openness, and predictability.<sup>48</sup>

Additional non-institutional issues, which are illustrative of the range of factors which potential influence adaptive strategies in the continent, are included in the study, not as issues integral to the research methodology, but as recommendations for future action. The suggested process of policy analysis includes review, monitoring and reporting, to be undertaken by local policy analysts and civil society institutions that are interested in developing awareness on the impact of policy on adaptive strategies.

While it is the process of measuring policy impacts which is of vital importance, and while each country has to develop the most suitable ways and means to do this, there needs to be some consistency of approach if this is to be reported in any way. The components, principal questions and check-list points provided in this paper suggest possible areas which could be covered. Obviously, the suggested process is neither scientifically rigorous nor very precise. The principal questions and check-list here deals with conjectural generalities<sup>49</sup> breaking down into seven categories of policy and strategic issues. These categories, which focus predominantly on national and local socio-political realities as they relate to economic development are the rule of

---

<sup>47</sup> This based on the GCA's "Suggested Process of Self-Evaluation in the Transition to Democracy in Africa." Unpublished guidelines.

<sup>48</sup> the capacity of existing systems, such as courts, arbitrators, legislatures and election procedures, for negotiation and peaceful resolution of conflicts that are the main stay of adaptive mechanisms.

<sup>49</sup> Thus for example there may be some regulations to control corruption and rent seeking in some sectors, but not all, or some officials who are familiar with regulations governing private sector licensing requirements. However, the intent of the exercise is to obtain a general picture of a dynamic process, which should be supported by more in-depth analytical assessment of specific issues.

law, administrative and bureaucratic consistency, political openness and tolerance, participation and communication, and favourable environment for local level private enterprise.

- Rule of law is essential for a predictable, stable environment in which citizens are informed of their rights and have faith that such rights will be upheld by an independent, functioning legal system. Rule of law is also essential to control private and public sector corruption and rent-seeking behaviour, and to promote a climate conducive to private sector development.
- Financial accountability and transparency is necessary to build public confidence in government, promote sound economic management, limit opportunities for public sector rent-seeking and contribute to a predictable economic climate.<sup>50</sup>
- Political openness and tolerance is necessary if political pluralism, participation in the decision making process, predictability, and governmental accountability are to be promoted. Similarly, participation and communication are essential for interaction between the state and civil society, and to ensure that public concerns are made known to policy makers.
- a favourable environment for private enterprise is required in many African countries if the private sector activity essential for economic growth is to develop.

The main questions and check-list points indicate aspects of these components of sound governance. The principal questions disaggregate each of the components of governance into specific areas which are (relatively) measurable. The check-list points not only further break down each principal question into a limited number of constituent parts, but also indicate possible means of verifying it.<sup>51</sup> Check-list points for this principal question cover issues such as the regularity and time frame of budgets, public availability of sectoral budgets, existence of systems to record public expenditures, and availability of public expenditure records. Neither the principal questions nor the check-list points address issues of effectiveness or the practice of governance, which are much more difficult to assess.

### **III. State vs. civil society: impediments to the evolution of local adaptive strategies.**

In the past twenty years, all organisational life in Africa has been monopolised by the State and autonomous activities were in most cases forbidden by law. There are few, if any independent functionary civic organisations with the requisite skills to interact and interface with the political establishment. The middle class comprising the intellectuals, the

---

<sup>50</sup> Attention to budgetary policies and priorities is important to ascertain how public funds are managed and also the degree of central government discretionary use of such funds. Administrative and bureaucratic consistency, along with rule of law, contributes to stability and predictability, as well as to the development of regulatory and institutional procedures which guard against arbitrary governmental behaviour.

<sup>51</sup> for example, one of the principal questions relating to financial accountability and transparency attempts to ascertain how far budgets and public expenditures are made public.

entrepreneurs and others who could be materially independent, politically organised and ideologically assertive in playing a prominent role in the founding and leadership of civic organisations and in articulating shared universal values are distinctly absent in the continent.

For the lack of opportunities for self organised and civil associations, whose functions are to preserve basic rights of its constituents and the society at large, educate the citizens and advocate popular claims, build a consensus and promote political and moral ethical values and disseminate them among the populace, it has become difficult to nurture a sense of civil society. The reality of our country is that the state is too powerful and too controlling in the face of an embryonic and weak civil society. The result has been a complete absence of space for effective civic participation of the citizenry in national life.

It is clear that for the current democratic movement experiments to survive, a balance should be created between the state and civil society which function as an effective counterweight to the power of the state and its bureaucratic machinery and can check the excesses of the heavy handed bureaucratic rule and bring about change in the institutional arbitrariness and the illegal actions of the local agents of the state. A major problem inherent in the political transition of Africa is the extreme weakness of the social movements and their failure to develop coherent strategies for promoting broad based and well organised citizenry. Some of the salient features that underlie the socio-economic and class formation of our society make it difficult to preserve and consolidate democracy.

Since its emergence in the early 20th century, the modern state has been typified by autocratic leaders and primarily existed for the benefit of the powerful elite of the centre. The overwhelming majority of the people had no role in governance and are unfamiliar with their rights and obligations as citizens. The system of rule was authoritarian top-down style of governance, with an urban-based power structure and authority radiating from the centre. Various efforts to devolve authority and involve people been unsuccessful. As a result there was little popular participation in the political process and the populace has become distrustful and critical of the state and wary of having any contact with it.

Whatever the technical construction chosen to express political conditions necessary for the enhancement of adaptive strategies, the sustainability of the system will depend on the understanding of the people and social groups and institutions of the rights and obligations of citizenship and the respect for political openness and determination on behalf of all actors to democracy. Africa has very little, if any, experience in open democratic discourse and is unfamiliar with the critical values and practices that anchor democratic culture and tradition. Three decades after the removal of the colonial and feudal regimes, the political culture remains that of passive subordination and neo-patrimonial personalised rule.

The political tradition preached by the aristocratic associates the well-being of the individual with the presence of personalised leadership inducing loyalty and does not encourage active competition, questioning of authority or dissent. And these have turned out to be old habits that die hard and which linger on until the present day, despite the tumultuous political experience of the continent in the past quarter of the century. Furthermore, while many African countries, experienced some form of democratic organisation and function in the colonial setting and their liberation struggle, our populace is paradoxically unfamiliar with the mechanics of democratic governance or its rudimentary principles. Practices such as free

elections, the formatting of political parties, free and open discourse on public issues are all foreign concepts that need to be installed in the majority of the populace.<sup>52</sup>

There is a widespread perception that the political movements and contesting groups are preoccupied with petty internal bickering and have failed to involve and execute the populace. Most of the more militant opposition leaders tend to personify power and broadly exercise democratic principles within the meaning and context internal structures of their organisations. They seem to be more interested in taking political power rather than to effect genuine democratic changes. The key to building enduring democracy is the existence of strong, viable and assertive civil society. Organisations of civil society operate between the state and the citizenry and give structure to the representation of interests of a diverse body of the populace. It is an essential prerequisite as it facilitates the opportunity for participation in the political life for the citizens at large.

Power is concentrated in the hands of the state at the expense of other institutions in society. Many of these civic organisations in the country did not arise on voluntary basis or based on shared political value but are state sponsored. In defining the problems of the transition to democracy and proposing solutions for them, i.e. in setting goals, and tasks for itself in attempting to solve the problems, leading political parties have done so largely within a particular tradition of political thought, argument and struggle. The tradition has origins in the radical student movement, in ideas of "national liberation", "class struggle", "national democratic revolution" and "socialism" spawned by that movement, in international Marxist-Leninist thought, and in the revolutionary experiences of former and existing communist countries, notably the Soviet Union, China and Albania.<sup>53</sup>

As such, they are subject to limitations interest in the structural model of that tradition of political thought, discourse and practice. Among these structural limitations that impinge upon the manager are:

- ◆ **the tendency to reduce broad-based and complex categories, like national tradition, the people and democracy of autonomous content, and the plenitude of meaning implicated in these categories to a set of signification tied to particular class interests or political projects;**
- ◆ **the inclination to saturate historically specific and localised problems of socio-economic and political change with global issues,**

---

<sup>52</sup> The lack of democratic culture is also clearly manifest in the disarray and inability of the managers to achieve internal unity. While there are many of educated, they have been unable to unite or put together a coherent political alternative to the existing leadership. Rather to a considerable degree, they have become a vehicle for ambitious and power hungry politicians.

<sup>53</sup> With its successes and failures, and its recent global deflation, that **tradition of political thought, discourse and action** has been a decisive influence over leading organisations in the struggle for power. It was formative of the ways in which the struggle for liberation and democratisation has been thought up and initiated political projects, and has continued to guide much of the subsequent revolutionary experience. And at a time when the revolutionary democratic tradition seems a spent force in much of the former communist world, a toned down and somewhat reconstructed version of it seems to have gained a new lease on life. This means that various aspects of ideological and organisational activities are marked by specific features of the socialist tradition.

- ◆ **the imposition of ground themes and formulae onto concrete situations faced by particular communities and nations;**
- ◆ **a habit of discourse and argument whereby a vanguard party exerts ideological effort in the making or remaking of the "national" selves and identities of the people over whom the party exercises political control while at the same time taking them unproblematically as given in advance (whether historically or culturally or naturally) rather than produced in the vanguard party's own ideology; in the process of socialist or nationalist ideology as a construct of an explicit political conceptualisation produced by a vanguard organisation or front is conflated into ideas and values of "the nationality" into the consciousness of "the people".** <sup>54</sup>

These limitations of the structural model of revolutionary socialist political thought and practice, within which or a version of which the bureaucracy operates in large part, are manifested in the ways in which it has defined the problems of democratic change in Africa and proposed solutions for them, and in aspects of its management of the Ethiopian transition. Let us take problem definition and goal setting first. Consequently, where the leadership has not sufficiently assimilated the value system of the rule of law, checks and balances or power sharing-basic to democratic governance and polity-the tendency to be corrupt, undemocratic and abuse human rights is rife.

#### Corrupt and bankrupt bureaucracy

One major obstacle to efforts to install and consolidate democratic system in Africa is the **all powerful, highly centralised and hierarchical bureaucratic structure**. Built over the last fifty years, the organisational imperative of the massive bureaucratic machine is to command and control and is preoccupied with its own survival and enrichment. It is unlikely that the powerful bureaucracy will abandon its privileged position and control of the state apparatus to democratically elected political leaders or respect the institutional restraints of democratic rule without struggle.

- **The state has proved to be the main channel for personal wealth accumulation and securing privileged position in society.** As the result of the socialisation of the means of production, there was no, at least on paper, patrimonial class differentiation and the state power was appropriated to the political elite or bureaucratic bourgeoisie, that mainly constituted well-educated top officials, organisation leaders, and some high ranking officers or liberation front leaders. It was characteristic of this group that it did not exert control over means of production but utilised its position in the state apparatus to provide itself with an economic basis by indulging in corruption and nepotism.
- **The economic rewards of the public sector are so much greater than those of the private sector** for the majority of people that politics has become a much more brutal struggle. Because the state has often been the only available vehicle for the personal

---

<sup>54</sup> This tendency often leads the organisation in question to regard opposition to its partisan views and perspectives as opposition to popular opinion, as the work of "anti-people" elements, with all that this implies for democracy and democratisation.

accumulation of wealth and for the formation of social classes, there is too much at stake in the competition for power and position in the bureaucracy that political groups and individuals feel compelled to win at any cost even if that results in the socio-economic deterioration of the society or demands the cost of many lives.

- As the winner takes all and the loser is consigned to the political and economic wilderness, all the **brutality and corruption** of bitter fights ensure in every political competition. It is simply a **zero-sum game** where the loser has no refuge or alternative. Consequently, the bureaucracy will no doubt fight aggressively in order to obtain its patrons in positions of political power by any means possible.
- **The bureaucratic set-up is characterised by a complicated network of patron client relations**, with a patron giving a decent position in the government in exchange for a client's political support. **Clientelism** in this form is extremely widespread and spreads out in waves from the centennial figure of the system. Relatives are among the first to be privileged followed by fellow villagers and members of the ethnic group and lastly those from other ethnic groups but who should prove life-long loyalty.

**The ruling elite makes every effort to maintain control over the state apparatus** and government job is regarded as collateral for political support or at least for not opposing it. Hence, professional experts in the state apparatus for lack of opportunity to exit out of the system, remain mute and indifferent. The effort of the elite to establish its hegemony over the state and the society at large has led to resisting of the growth of autonomous mass organisations among the civil society, thus perennial attempts have been made to restrict the freedom of the press and to incorporate such organisations as trade unions, women's, youth and professional associations into the state party system.

- As political position has become the only competing alternative for professional salary level income generating business, the number of people who want to go into that business is very large. Individuals who couldn't be capable of gaining sufficient education for a decent white collar job have made it a way of success in life and the result is too many people are being diverted from material production to political service giving sector of the economy. As more and more people regard politics the easy way out for satisfactory income generation they are willing to do anything **including sabotaging a true democratic process by being the mouthpiece of an authoritarian regime.**
- The legitimacy of the democratic process underway in Africa will depend in important ways on it being perceived as reasonably honest, predictable, transparent and accountable in the execution of the state's responsibility. Public sector corruption and inefficiencies undermine political, economic and social stability by undermining citizens' faith in the democratic process.

In situations where public officials are seen to be using their positions to advance parochial interest and self-aggrandisement, a general loss of respect for authority and the law occurs and despondency in the general population develops. It is apparent that as the continent enters this new era of political pluralism and democratic governance there is a need to overhaul the administrative machinery and develop institutional alternatives to the centralised, bureaucratic and hierarchical organisational structure.

The paradox of the African situation is that, at the same time, the authoritarian power of the state is based in part upon appearance. The state is weak by any conventional measure of institutional capacity and has little or no control over peripheral regions and rural areas. As the most able party leaders and expert advisers become involved in central administration and policy, regional and local party organisations as well as the local government apparatus are manned by less qualified personnel or they simply cease to function. Vigilant and obsessed by preservation of power, local level officials are pre-occupied by administrative and to an even greater extent by political tasks than ensuring the rights of people or implementing the democratic mandates. Again if public confidence is to be instilled, it is necessary to extend the reach of the state to the remote areas of the country and carefully monitor conducts of the agents of political groups.

In the above review, the attempt has been to identify some of the impediment for the consolidation and preservation of democracy. Economically, socially, politically there exist almost insurmountable obstacles to the flourishing of democratic governance. However, other societies with identical features have managed to install and maintain multi-party democratic system. While it is too early to decide how the system of governance will evolve, there is **no reason to believe that democracy is doomed in Africa**. A skilled and committed leadership can mitigate conditions that are hostile to democracy.

We face pressing issues and problems of peace making, conflict management, democratisation and development to be settled. But there are alternative ways of weighing up and framing the issues and of charting the course of action which may be embarked upon towards their settlement. There is no simple or immediate identification of democratisation problems as they actually are; there is only a definition of them from a certain perspective and towards a certain "resolution". What is important in the politics of democratisation is not so much the problems of transition themselves as what various, competing organisations and groups conceive them to be and how the organisations "settle" their conceptual differences.

The issues of democratisation of management and development that is articulated today in this context can therefore be seen in part as whatever it states within its ideological problematic, whether its formulation of the issues have anything to do or not with the democratisation of Africa. Indeed, for the transition period and its architects, may be little more than a setting for exploring or experimenting with the global themes and preoccupation of revolutionary democracy, that bears within its wombs the traditions of socialism, such as the abolition of class oppression and national and gender inequalities, and of state boundaries created against the interests and wishes of peoples.

The points made above regarding the identification of problems of democratic change in Africa apply to the setting of goals and tasks for Governments' problem-solving activities. The "solutions", like the "problems", can be seen in large part as elements, features and effects of its revolutionary socialist-democratic ideology. They have taken shape and come into play as the articulation and operation of a particular doctrine. This means that the objectives of African transition do not represent purely or primarily its idiosyncratic ethnic agendas. They are conditioned

- **by a set of formulae and conventions belonging to the revolutionary democratic tradition. In large measure, they represent aims and purposes constituted by that tradition according to an internal rationality of its own. It is in this light that the preoccupation of the architects of the democratisation with the theme or concept of "national self-determination including and up to secession" should be seen.**
- **by the important particularities of deeply felt wrongs and of political projects aimed at righting them.** <sup>55</sup>

Yet this intensive process of largely socialist ideological mediation has allowed transitional Governments to transpose unique projects of self-determination into concepts, goals and methods of political work, of democratisation, ostensibly applicable *carte blanche*. In addition, many transition projects have yet to settle ideological accounts with its leftist legacy openly and unequivocally.

This legacy continues to hold sway in African political transition below the level of declaratory goals and ideas, where it makes itself felt as ideology "in operation", as taken-for-granted assumptions and habits of thought and action, as "common sense" rather than "theory".

This is manifested in the mutualising of the goals, objectives and discourse of transition to the extent where they gain currency less as constitutive elements of an open public arena for democratic debate and discussion and more as ingredients of a political recipe pre-cooked by a particular organisation or coalition of organisations. It shows up in **the tendency to offer solutions in tight, formulaic terms, for the most part avoiding the uncertainty of their pluralism, negotiated framing, and to resist the opening up of its reform aims and purposes for alternative formulations.** Under these circumstances, interpretative possibilities within concepts and goals of democracy are pre-emptively "frozen" or short-cut, turning immediately into the actualities of revolutionary democracy formulae.

The influence of decades of Marxist-Leninist legacy over African transition politics is also manifested in an activist impulse of organisations self-assertion which calls for Governments to be **highly polemical and combative in their mode of 'communication' with 'opposition' groups,** to be sensitive but not particularly responsive to criticism of democratisation goals and strategies. The upshot is undue partisan closure on the formulation of the ends of transition in Africa, which, potentially, are marked by greater openness and variability, belong to a more complex universe of democratic thought than the transition's particular representation.

In terms of the articulation of strategy and process in the African transition, a major problem is that there is too much readiness on the part of the "democratising" forces for

---

<sup>55</sup> But these are so mediated and "processed" by revolutionary rhetoric, doctrine and organisational practice that they signify less spontaneous particulars than ideologically loaded and rehearsed elements. Often, they betray little in the contingencies of the lived experiences of ethnic and cultural groups in Ethiopia, but manifest the more or less explicit general forms of the ideology the transition works, the mechanisms which the leaders uses in operating the ideology, and the character of the operation itself.

unilateral action without meaningful and adequate understanding, let alone agreement, on critical issues with organisations and constituencies outside the government. The rather intrusive manner in which the Governments promote positions on vital issues of reform contravenes the ideals, standards and rules of democracy which seemingly they uphold. This detracts from the openness, credibility and effectiveness of the African democratisation process. It also encourages individuals and groups in the opposition to alienate themselves from the process, rather participate in it and work to improve it.

Recognition of this problem would constitute a significant development of its democratic practice if management as an art is to grow flourish and the manager to find his/her identity. It would be a major opening for the mutual incorporation of uncertain state strategies and process in a more dynamic and complex articulation of democratic transition in Africa.

## Discussions and Conclusion

### Policy making, adaptive strategies and conflict resolution in ASALs

All hitherto initiatives in formal conflict resolution and the ends-means approach have failed in Africa. Somalia is a vivid example where the United Nations has sort of given up hope that any thing will work. All these initiative external to the African culture and tradition were bound to fail in the first place. Lurking behind these failures is the question why hasn't anybody taken the time to think of some endogenous mechanisms of conflict prevention and resolution? There are several vexing issues here the fact that we can base conflict resolution on indigenous method and mechanisms

- Ali A Mazrui Africa's "short memory of hate" That limited memory of animosity," Mazrui has written, "is and important cultural resource, a valuable tradition more, for future conflict resolution."<sup>56</sup>
- the existence of deep-seated national or regional conflicts, local effort often still need to be complemented.
- formal negotiations among elite are unlikely to provide the basis for long-term transformation of a conflict or a number of inter-related conflicts.
- two-track diplomacy, the use of both official and unofficial initiatives, can provide a basis for other moves to be made and a framework can develop in which the parties to a conflict carry on discreet communications, work at problem-solving or explore areas of possible co-operation beyond the conflict.<sup>57</sup>

The recognition that individuals seek as individuals: 'the chief psychological imperative underling democracy is the desire for universal and equal recognition', which 'is a completely non-economic source of motivation. It is the desire for recognition that can provide the missing link between economic development and democracy.'<sup>58</sup> In this context free, fair and fully contested elections<sup>59</sup> at periodic intervals and multi-party system are believed to strengthen

---

<sup>56</sup> Rupishange, Kumar. Conflict resolution. Paper presented in a conference on conflict resolution in Africa.

<sup>57</sup> This will help develop a constituency for peace, spanning all communities through community-based development, citizen-based peace groups, the media and entrepreneurs. Mediation and other activities such as the building of peace constituencies and conflict resolution training have their own inherent design, logic and momentum implying development of fora, systems and networks, analysis of the root causes of conflicts, identification of principal actors and conflict dynamics, identification of "windows of opportunity" for intervention, the determination of which actors are best suited to intervene effectively, and a process for the appropriate division of labour so that duplication of effort is avoided. It fosters "sustainable reconciliation" through the development of mechanisms, institutions and attitudes that are rooted in accountability to citizens and which maintain the momentum of peace.

<sup>58</sup> Fukuyama, F. (1993) **Capitalism and Democracy. The Missing Link.** in Dialogue. Reprinted from Journal of Democracy, July 1992. ©1992 by the National Endowment for Democracy.

<sup>59</sup> The UNDP Human Development Report argues that 'Democracy demands an effective and open political system, not just within governments but within political parties so that people have a real choice when nominating candidates for election. And if governments are to be kept free from undue influence from vested interests, democracy also demands strong institutions of civil society (such as a free press) and a diversity of non-governmental organisations'. It is further argued by Fukuyama that economic development is neither a necessary nor a sufficient condition for stable democracy -- agrarian societies have managed to sustain stable democracies.

people's wishes; although one can argue that multi-partyism is desirable but not a necessary condition for peoples empowerment and economic development. 'The quest for popular participation is as old as hierarchical power structures. The two have always been in opposition. Popular participation is an effort at redistributing power among the different stakeholders in a community, in a socioentity where there are production relationships between people'<sup>60</sup>. This leads us to the conclusion that we need to be engaged in

- **empowering people to recapture or secure the democratic space necessary to prevent or transform violent internal conflict. In this area, conflict resolution training and the training of local trainers which draws on multi-cultural expertise can be invaluable.**
- **Conflict resolution training in itself can be part of the peace building process, in so much as it brings together actors in a given conflict to begin to explore possible areas of accommodation.**

RESOLVE has developed the theory and practice of alternative conflict management -- a multidisciplinary and highly participatory field of research and action that seeks to address better decisions making particularly on difficult, contentious issues. The techniques have been used as means to address natural resources and over land and water use. It refers to a variety of collaborative approaches that seek to reach a mutually acceptable resolution of issues in a conflict developed as alternatives to adversarial or non-consensual strategies, unilaterally initiated public information campaigns, or partisan political action.<sup>61</sup>

Choosing the correct strategy through which to address a particular conflict is in itself a strategic choice. Parties to a dispute must first decide whether to seek resolution to a conflict through a non-consensual process or through a more collaborative means. Once the decision has been made to use alternative conflict management processes, the parties must decide on which specific approach to employ. No single approach is effective in all cases. The circumstances of conflict and therefore the obstacles to agreement vary from one case to another. Disputes may involve many or few parties, the problem may be more or less urgent, emotional investment of the stakeholders may vary, the public interest may or may not be at stake, and the factors involved may be well understood or more uncertain. Gaining expertise in conflict management includes learning about the specific advantages and disadvantages of the various strategies, and assessing which one is best in addressing a particular conflict situation.

Many traditional means that we have come across in the study of adaptive strategies in alternative natural resources-based conflict management employ **conciliation, negotiation and mediation**, are found in traditional as well as modern community dispute resolution systems; are often combined with each other in practice. Thus, an effort originally focused on conciliation

---

<sup>60</sup> UNDP (1993) Human Development Report.

<sup>61</sup> All of these latter strategies might also be appropriate and legitimate means of addressing disputes, depending upon the context. Alternative conflict management approaches complement these more adversarial strategies, and broaden the range of tools available to communities and interest groups who are involved in conflict.

may develop into a negotiation, which may in turn be enhanced by mediation. Similarly, individuals may play more than one role in addressing a dispute<sup>62</sup>.

In the process, a body of information is being developed about what works best in managing various types of contemporary conflicts through collaborative rather than adversarial means. The goal of research in the area of environmental dispute resolution is neither to impose a model of alternative conflict management nor to define a process, rather it is to anticipate ways in which specific existing systems of dispute resolution or conflict management can be adapted to other cultural contexts.

Alternative conflict management approaches derive from several basic premises about the nature of conflict, change and power. **Conflict is a normal process in society.** Conflict, in itself, is not the core problem to be dealt with as in many societies conflict is seen as a normal element of social interaction; because individuals and groups are naturally seen as having different needs and interests, valued because it is realised that conflict often serves as an important impetus for positive change.<sup>63</sup> The societal infirmities we need to address are how conflicts are managed. Successful alternative conflict management relies on the participation of all legitimate parties or "stakeholders" in a dispute. Problems that result from negotiating in situations of unequal power may seriously undermine efforts at reaching a lasting accord. However intransigent a more powerful party might appear, it is useful for weaker parties to realise that opposing stakeholders are neither monolithic nor uniformly adversarial.

### **Naive realism.**

The notion of naive realism in the rhetorical over-simplification of the articulation of the policy consensus building, policy formulation and policy making process has been invoked earlier as the first mark of transition to democracies to point to certain conceptual shortcomings in current perspectives on democratic reforms in Africa. These shortcomings can be seen as outcomes of more or less conscious attempts of indigenous governments and their international backers to quickly get their hands on "urgent" or "practical" matters of democratisation of politics without worrying much about "abstract" theory. One manifestation of naive realism is the pre-emptive "Socialisation" of democratic ideas and practices, as demonstrated, for example, by the dimensions and the implications of these dimensions of popular participation in the regional and local elections.

A process which often spawns an attendant rhetorical over simplification of difficult concepts, this socialisation is disabling as a method of both grasping democratic ideas and rules in all their openness and complexity, and making the ideas tractable to transparent and sustainable institutional practice.

---

<sup>62</sup> A conciliator, for example, may be asked to act as mediator at some stage of a dispute resolution process. Dispute resolution professionals nonetheless find it useful to describe the processes separately, because each also has its own dynamics and can call for different analysis and skills.

<sup>63</sup> However, there are also extremely complex, highly literate societies, for example in some contemporary Southeast Asian countries, whose cultures similarly eschew public conflict even though these societies are in fact conflict-ridden. This is particularly evident in the areas of land use and natural resource management .

Another manifestation of the naive realist approach in the professed aims of popular participation, as described in the papers of democratisers of African society, is the simple equation of partisan or government elaboration of democratic ideology (for example, the concept of "national self-determination, including and up to secession" espoused by current thinking in the transition process in Africa with the production of ideas, values and goals in civil society. Here, our attention and thought are diverted from the critical destination between, on the one hand, a system of abstract categories as a construct of an explicit rationalisation, a formal conceptualisation and design, and, broad and diverse domains of ideology and purposefulness in the plenitude of social experience, on the other. We are discouraged from acknowledging the distance and tension between these two spheres of democratisation.

Instead, one is led to believe that ideological construction in one sphere is reducible to ideological construction in the other. As the statements: "the new [African] constitution must be a creation of the citizenry ..." and "... law should come from the populace rather than palace"<sup>64</sup> suggest, the reduction, for example, assumes the form of a putative attribution of authorial agency in the making of a democratic constitution to an organisationally underdeveloped, democratically inexperienced and largely, to a civil society that has been deliberately rendered illiterate.

Yet another point that features prominently in the discussion of the democratisation process in Africa is the relative weight of external and internal factors. To the former belong the collapse of the Communist order in Eastern Europe, the Structural Adjustment Programme (SAP) and the Human Rights conditionality of Western governments, notably the US, and some donor organisations. The latter pertain to the strength of the mass and popular movements for democratic reforms inside Africa itself. The ripple effect of the collapse of the Eastern Bloc on Africa is bound to vary from country to country, with the maximum effect probably on countries like Africa which were so closely tied with that bloc.

The sponsors of SAPs were not particularly worried about the guaranteeing of democratic rights; as a matter of fact, initially, they tended to favour authoritarian regimes. It may be necessary to the weight on the strength of the domestic forces, notably the vitality of the popular movements in countries like Mali and Togo. SAPs, which antedated the democratisation process by almost a decade, incidentally rather than deliberately abetted the democratic struggle by undermining the legitimacy of the regimes that adopted it and whittling away the post-independence gains in social welfare.<sup>65</sup> It is difficult to give much weight to the human rights conditionality argument, given in particular the cynical manipulation of that issue by the self-appointed defender of those rights.

In sum, naive realism within existing perspectives and projects of democratisation emphasises the **immediacies of institutional and political activity to the neglect of the constitutive and regulative concepts and norms that define, structure and validate democratic institutions and democratic practices**. It attempts to establish a direct relation to social

---

<sup>64</sup> Summary of the minutes of the Symposium on the Making of the New Ethiopian Constitution, Inter-Africa Group, 17-21 May 1993.

<sup>65</sup> Thandika Mkandawire, "Adjustment, Political Conditionality and Democratisation in Africa", paper presented at the Seventh General Assembly of CODESRIA, Dakar, 10-14 February, 1992, pp. 5-8, 12. Cf. Bathily, p. 17, who also sees the East European factor as "un facteur favorable et non le facteur initial déterminant".

experience, largely by passing the intangible yet no less significant terrain of critical political thought. Its immediate turn to the practical tasks of inducing people to participate in ostensibly democratic activities such as elections, the full meaning of which is often beyond the grasp of the participants, tends to become a substitute for the making of transparent and open rules of political engagement.

Such a stratified set-up was scarcely conducive to the generation or fostering of democratic traditions. Innovations and initiatives have therefore tended to come from above rather than to emanate from below. The current democratisation process is no exception.

### **Adaptive strategies and the Human Capital**

The concept of capital as used here signifies economic property of rendering future services of some value. Within the percept of the adaptive strategy studies and indigenous socio-economy systems, a dichotomy needs to be separated at the outset between:

- **human capital and non-human capital,**
- **human capital and human made capital**
- **all forms of human capital and soial and natural cpaital.**

We shall deal with the human capital aspect first. The distinctive mark of human capital is that it is a part of man. It is human as it is embodied in man, and it is capital as it has a reproductive power and therefore acts as a source of future satisfaction of basic needs or of future earnings, or of both. A resulting unique property of human capital, particularly when human beings are free agents is that it is not an asset that can be sold. On the other hand, it can be acquired not as an asset through purchase in a market place but by means of investing in oneself. It follows therefore that no one can separate self from the human capital they possess. One must carry and apply human capital whether it serves one in production or consumption. This means that the economic behaviour pertaining to the formation, accumulation and utilisation of human and non-human capital should be treated differently, viz.

- Essence of the human capital model is that those who have retained institutional memories in adaptive strategies have incurred a foregone earnings cost;
- Secondly, their productivity will have increased also which would enable them to earn more;
- The amount that productivity and earnings must increase will be determined by the foregone earnings cost of human capital accumulation. Since this cost is regarded as an investment, the extra effort or cost should be just enough to secure the same return on investment as on a comparably risky physical capital investment. A word of caution at this stage may suffice: there are many factors other than education and training which determine individuals, and differences in their collective adaptive strategies, which constitute social capital. All of these would need to be taken into account when modelling human capital formation and accumulation.

Given these, particularly the last reason, the theory of human capital becomes useful to the human-power investigators in three ways. First, it would give a better understanding of

individual long-run labour demand/supply decisions and thus allow better relate the need for human capital investment to the achievement of labour equilibrium during the debate for scarce natural resources. Secondly, it provides a useful guide for governmental decisions concerning society's allocation of scarce resources to the formation and accumulation of productive human capacity. Finally, the theory provides an explanation for income differentials among individuals by providing a clearer analysis of wealth and power.

For our purpose, we would treat the theory of human capital as a measure for considering long-run sustainable livelihood security decisions. The quality and quantity of labour and long-run community and individual labour supply decision are made on the basis of choices on present and future consumption. Long-run adaptive strategy-skilled labour supply decisions on this are important determinants of economic welfare and its distribution among individuals and communities in society.<sup>66</sup> Human capital formation during human adaptation to marginal environments is hence affected by social investment in sectors that impact the environmental, physiological, psychological, sociological and emotive variables within the human beings. Specifically, it is affected by investment in nutrition, human-power mobility, human-power rehabilitation and environmental consideration.

The approaches used in analysing human capital formation vary. The approach used would on whether one's interest is more directly related to problems associated with economic growth and development, or allocative efficiency of investment in human capital, or human-power and educational planning. We shall consider each of these alternative approaches within the framework of the basic human capital model later whose understanding would better equip ourselves in advancing the argument.

Regarding the basic model, we need to highlight a few issues that are of interest to the making of adaptive strategies. First, anyone who is interested in the fundamental determinants of wealth, its distribution, and government efforts to improve the well being of the lower income group must understand the process of investment in human capital. Clearly, the analysed in terms of the distribution of economic benefits among individuals can largely be analysed in terms of the distribution of investments in human capital and the returns obtained from them. Secondly, the argument has been advanced that it may be morally wrong or incorrect to speak of human beings as though they merely machines. For this, there are strong arguments on both sides.

Theoretical issues that need to be mastered by the Human Capital Model are first how do we estimate human value? Basically, two methods have been used to estimate the value of human beings in the development process; (i) the cost of production and (ii) the capitalised-earnings procedure. The former method consists of estimating the real costs (net of maintenance) incurred in producing a human resource; while the latter consists of estimating

---

<sup>66</sup> In a market driven economy, Long-run labour supply decisions involve changes in all conditions affecting the quantity and quality of labour offered to the market. In order to obtain maximum economic well-being, individuals choose whether to incur opportunity costs say in the form of tuition, lower current earnings, moving expenses, the cost and inconvenience of looking for a new job etc., in order to reap future benefits. This means that, long-run labour supply adjustments involve current costs and future returns. In this sense, the process can be seen as a process of investment, hence, the theory of long-run labour supply is a theory of decisions to invest in human capital. We shall take a closer look at these issues later.

the present value of an individual's future income stream (either gross or net of maintenance). The cost-of-production method is the less useful, since there is no simple and necessary relationship between the cost of producing an item and its economic value. The inseparability of consumption and investment and the difficulty of treating depreciation and maintenance make any cost-of-production value dubious. The capitalised-earnings method is commonly in use for evaluating the work of human beings. The use of this approach avoids the depreciation difficulty, since, everything being equal, a young person is expected to be productive over a longer period than an older one, and therefore making his/her capital value greater.

Who we use these methods we have several motives for treating human beings as capital and valuing them in money terms. They would like to:

- (i) demonstrate the power of a certain adaptive strategy as in Ethiopia where the highland of the Guraghe-Kembabta-Wolyta nations have adaptive strategies that are sustaining 12`Million people;
- (ii) determine the economic effects of human resources development programmes such as education, health investment, and migration;
- (iii) propose tax schemes believed to be more equitable than existing ones;
- (iv) determine the total cost of war;
- (v) awaken the public to the economic life of an individual to his family and country; and (vi) aid courts and compensation boards in making fair decisions in cases dealing with compensation for personal injury and death.

**Alternative Approaches to Human Capital Analysis:** Let us now come to the alternative approaches used in analysing human capital formation. It was said that the adopted approach depended on whether one's interests are more directly related to the problems association with economic growth and development, allocative efficiency of investment in human capital, of human-power and employment planning briefly, let us see what is involved I each of these three areas.

**Human Capital Stock and Economic Growth:** Estimates of the value of the stock of human capital at different points in time constitute one approach to human-power and economic growth analysis. Generally, the present value of future earnings is used to estimate human capital stocks. Derivation of the present value (PV) of a human capital asset is a function of the summed incremental life time earnings and other benefits (Bt) associated with different levels of human capital formation (i.e. education) discounted by the asset.<sup>67</sup>

**Allocative Efficiency of Investment:** Analysis of costs, benefits, or returns to investment in human capital is a widely use method of studying human capital formation. The central purpose of benefit-cost analysis is to determine the relative efficiency of

---

<sup>67</sup> Care ought to be taken in using the discounted earnings approach since it raises a number of unsettled questions related to changes in future mortality, the validity of earnings and other readily measured economic variables. What is important is that the approach gives an index which says something about human capital stocks. This allows one to delineate the form and magnitude of quantitative relationships between inputs (labour and capital), outputs (national income), and whatever unexplained growth in output.

alternative expenditure programmes. The discounted ratio of benefits to cost over the life of the asset is one way of reflecting the extent to which investment alternatives are preferable. Rate-of-return studies are similar to benefit-cost analysis in that the present value of life time returns is equated to cost outlays to derive a percentage return on investment. The internal rate of return is that rate of discount which just equates the present value of prospective returns and costs. All these are methods to evaluate investment returns as a basis for decision making. We shall take a closer look at these later on in this Handbook. However, let us note some analytical difficulties posed by this approach particularly, if the task is one of measuring social benefits and costs. For example, raised are issues such as

- the extent to which earnings reflect marginal productivity in contrast to market imperfections;
- non-monetary returns including consumption returns;
- benefits that possess external or spill over qualities and
- the selection of an appropriate discount rate (in benefit-cost analysis) or comparative rates of return (if internal rates of returns are derived). These notwithstanding, investment returns analysis has made a major contribution by redirecting the attention of economic development. Secondly, this approach may help planning efforts focus more sharply on rationalising alternative patterns of resource allocation with the public sector.

Human-power and Employment Planning: Within this context, inter-temporal correlation may be used in an attempt to relate growth in human capital or expenditures on education, health, nutrition to stages of economic development. Besides, understanding future development needs and prospects is acute all the more we use of the lengthy lead-time period required in the production of a unit of human capital. Analysis of human-power demand characteristics industry, constitutes a complementary human-power planning approach. Many people have argued for better analysis of human-power requirements on the basis of skill-level characteristics and have placed less emphasis on rate-of-return studies and human-power planning by aggregative occupation profiles. Though the human capital theory can be used to translate human-power requirements into educational planning and human-power development, some problems exist in the use of this approach. Among these are:

- the uncertain extend of human capital substitution;
- the skill-level impact of changing technology;
- the specificity or generality of training required;
- difficulties associated with the accuracy of long-rum projections;
- the production lag in human capital formation;
- issues related to educated to educational goals, means and structure.

The **Question** is how each of the above listed problem areas could become a problem in such a case. A major conclusion to be drawn from what has been said so far is that one of the major areas of economic inquiry concerning human-power economics is the formation and accumulation of human capital - a process of further developing the productive capacity of human resources though investment.

## I. State, civil society, democracy and popular participation

In the current drive for democracy and development, civil society and institutions within it are "foregrounded" as the arena, agents and instruments of the movement. Internal and external demands for good governance and democratisation and the need to reform the indigenous state into a system of transparent practices have placed a heavy emphasis on social institutions as autonomous actors within democratic projects. This is particularly the case regarding NGOs, but it also applies to other voluntary agencies in society. While the co-operation of governments or would-be governments must be secured for transitions to democracy, it cannot be expected that pressure for regime transformation will come from above.

The most likely and most effective initiative will come from below, outside the decrepit, authoritarian state, in civil society. Society yields the spontaneous interests, demands and institutional mechanisms of democratic transition.

- **A transition to democracy is most likely to happen when initiatives for democratisation emanate from civil society rather than other organisational sectors i.e. the state or international sectors. Political interests in civil society must become formally organised if they are to prevent the disruption or reversal of initial liberalisation reforms or push through a democratic transition.**
- **The effectiveness of organisations in civil society at promoting democratic reforms and local conflict management depends on their autonomy, capacity, complexity and coherence.** The organisation which displays the greatest strength on these dimensions is likely to become the lead organisation in civil society in promoting democratic reform.
- **Different civic organisations take the lead in different phases of the democratisation process**<sup>68</sup>

In addition to partisan organisations, transition to democracy also requires neutral organisations that can arbitrate between contending actors when the transition reaches an impasse. Within civil society, religious organisations are best equipped to play this role. From this perspective, the state has only a limited role to play. Its function will not be to manage society's democratic

aspirations and activities, but to create the enabling conditions for their free play. Institution's and groups in civil society must be allowed to form and run themselves. When they begin to address

**THE PURSUIT OF POPULAR PARTICIPATION IN CITIZENSHIP IS AS OLD AS HIERARCHICAL SOCIAL STRUCTURES. THESE HAVE ALWAYS BEEN IN CONFLICT. THE ENDEAVOUR AT SHARING POWER AMONG THE MANIFOLD STAKEHOLDERS IN A SOCIOENTITY WHERE THERE ARE PRODUCTION RELATIONS, BREEDS THE ARENA FOR STRUGGLE AND CONVERGENCE.** <sup>69</sup>

---

<sup>68</sup> This is to imply that cultural and educational organisations often initiate the critique of the old regime. At this point traditional and religious organisations provide an interim organisational base while political parties are banned. Armed movements and occupational groups (especially mass organisations such teachers associations) provide the strongest foundation for the formation of political parties.

<sup>69</sup> Forss, K. (1989) **Participatory Evaluation, Questions and Issues.** UNDP

longer socio-economic and political issues beyond their limited sectional concerns, or to cooperate with the state on certain matters, they should be able to do so in terms of their specific interests and competence, not as mere instruments or extensions of governments.

Alternatively, the underdevelopment of civil society in Africa and the incapacities of institutions within it are seen as major barriers to democratisation. The activities of some social institutions may have the salutary effect of bringing into transparency the work of government, and of opening up state institutions and practices to public suiting. But the overall weakness of African civil societies is often cited as a fundamental structural constraint on democratic transformation in Africa. Rather than offering agents and arenas of transitions to democracy, *African civil societies are generally seen as objects and problems of reform. Indicators of their weakness include low levels of economic, technological, professional and cultural development and high levels of illiteracy.*

On account of this view, the state assumes a large role in democratisation. It is assigned the task of nothing less than "**cultivating civil society**" itself through political education and mobilisation. Government is not pushed to the background as **society activates itself and leads the struggle for reform**. Rather, the former acts on the latter, promotes and manages the participation of individuals and groups in democratisation. We have here, then, two divergent representations of civil society accompanied by somewhat conflicting conceptions of the role of the state in the African passage to democracy.

- **The perception of society as producer of the spontaneous interests, demands and institutional resources of democratic change to some degree conflicts with the view of civil societies in Africa as weakly developed social and institutional structures in need of cultivation and support by the state.**
- **The conception of the state as creator of the enabling environment for the free democratic activities of individuals and groups diverges from the view of government as political educator, mobiliser and democratiser of civil society.**

Moreover, these conflicting perspectives commonly tend to confuse representations of "civil society" and "the state" as conceptual or ideal categories with actual communities and regime fuelling the transition. The categories are often conflicted into the immediate stuff of African political and social experience. This is not to deny that there are representations of civil society and the state in current perspectives on democratisation in Africa where the elements categorised are more evidently those of really existing African social formations. It is to note a disabling analytical tendency in which the actualities of African politics (tribalism, the government of individuals and groups rather than the rule of laws and so on) tend to be pre-empted and displaced by the very conceptual categories used to describe them otherwise.

#### **IV. Discussion leading to an actionable agenda on enhancing the role of civil society**

Much of the criticism directed at the state seems to turn on the assumption that the task of leading the struggle for reform is not to pursue its own aims and implementation its strategy, but to pave the way for the transition as such, to channel the activities that constitute Africa's

passage to democracy; to develop endogenous models of democracy for which the populace can understand the rules of the game and is ready to take to task the culturally accepted norms of democracy. This question can only be answered if we broaden the scope of inquiry into the nature of civil societies in our country, where **a capacity to articulate and aggregate political demands** must be present as a basis for party formation. We will examine whether such prerequisites in the realm of civil society obtain in our country so as to allow the creation of mechanisms whereby society interests can be fed into policy process. On the other hand important institutional choices are to be made on the road to democracy with respect to **constitutional rules and electoral system** that have been carved out recently.

Thus an important challenge for democratisation concerns the strengthening of civil society, a process requiring a broader approach and time perspective than is prevalent in donor approaches. The strengthening of civil society by definition cannot be achieved 'from above' by policy interventions of governments or donors. It needs fundamental and structural changes in the social engineering norms created under communism. It is necessary to undertake the following two changes;

1. **Economic:** It will result from a long process which is also dependent on the advancement of the material conditions of the majority of the populace. The continuation of aid as a mechanism for stabilising populations then becomes a necessary condition for sustainable peace.
2. **Political space:** the responsibility of the transitional government in the creating the space for a strong civil society must be underlined. Attention should be paid to the gender dimension with respect to participation in civil society: in practice, women in African countries suffer severe juridical, cultural and practical constraints to enhance their roll in civil society and politics.

The concept of 'civil society' requires some clarification here. Civil society encompasses more than the existence of voluntary associations in society. Pluralistic political theory dominant in capitalist states takes the state as a fair judge which balances all the public and private interests. Classical neo-Marxist theory, on the contrary defines states as the executive committee of the bourgeoisie. **Gramsci's neo-Marxist (cultural Marxist) theory** claims that the state controls the society through **coercion** and through **consent** by developing a dominant ideology (hegemony) with the support of the ideological state apparatus; the church, the mass-media, educational institutions, and currently -- many conservative NGOs.

In reality a rich associational life characterises African civil society. But the richness of such forms of associational life does not imply the presence of a strong civil society as concealed here. The kind of associations prevalent in the context of authoritarian or hegemonic regimes tend to reflect the weak character of the state. While the official state-sanctioned organisations characterised by their Unitarian philosophy became hollow, informal association were characterised precisely by fragmentation and disengagement from the state. In these sense, civil society in many African countries is weak.

While associations exist , they have not developed more formal structures and not openly presented themselves in the public area. The weakness of the state meant that few

incentives existed to from autonomous organisations to engage with the state rather the 'exit' option prevailed as individuals preferred to remain outside the reach of the state<sup>70</sup>.

## References

- AGENDA 21: The Global Programme of Action on Environmental and Development UNCED chap 12.
- AKATCH S.O., MUTISO S.K, KIPURIN and O. OWIRO (1992): Land use and land tenure in the Arid and Semi-Arid areas of Kenya. ( World Bank )
- ANDERSON DAVID (Edit)(1989) : Conservation in Africa. People, policies and practices. University of Cambridge press, Britain.
- Arright, G.1967, The Political Economy of Rhodesia, Mouton, The Hague.
- AWORI A, AND ODHIAMBO O.(1993) Resources: A Journal for Sustainable Development in Africa Vol. 4. No. 2.
- AWORI, A AND ODHIAMBO O. (1993) Resource Journal for Sustainable Development in Africa.
- Beach, D. 1977, The Shona Economy: Branches of Production, in R. Palmer and N. Parsons (eds.), The Roots of Rural Poverty in Central and Southern Africa, Heinemann, London
- Behnke, R.H. & Scoones, I. 1991. *Rethinking Range Ecology: Implications for Rangelands Management In Africa*. London: Commonwealth Secretariat.
- Beutel, F. K. (1995): Experimental Jurisprendence and systems Engineering in Determining Policy.
- Bofinglioli, Angelo, M. 1992. "*Pastoralist At The Cross-Roads: Survival and Development Issues i Africa Pastoralism*". Nairobi: UNICEF/UNSO Project.
- Bromley, Daniel, W. 1991. *Environment and Economy: Property Rights and Public Policy*. Oxford: Basil Blackwell.
- BROWNSTEIN L, (1972):Education and development in rural Kenya: a study of primary school graduates. Prager publishers.
- Brucke, John, W. 1994. "*After The Derg: An Assessment of Rural Land Tenure In Ethiopia*" (Unpublished Mimeo.\_.
- CFU 1991, "Proposals for Land Reform for Zimbabwe", Commercial Farmers Union, Harare
- CHEMONICS 1977 " Livestock and Meat Industry development study: Final Report. Ministry f Agriculture. Nairobi.
- CHEMONICS, (1977) Livestock and Meat Industry Development Study Final Report. Min. of Agriculture Nairobi.
- Child B. A. 1988, "The role of Wildlife Utilisation in the Sustainable Economic Development of Semi-Arid Rangelands in Zimbabwe", Unpublished D. Phil, Theso, University of Oxford, Oxford
- COLLECT DAVID (1989) Pastoralists and wildlife: Image and reality in Kenya Masaai land. pp. 129-148 in David Anderson and Richard Grove (Ed) Conservation in Africa, people, policies and Practice Cambridge University Press.

---

70 Ibid

- COLLET D. (1989) Pastoralists and wildlife: Image and reality in Anderson D. (1989) Edit. Conservation in Africa: Peoples, Policies and Practices
- COURT D., AND KABIRU K., (1978) Development Policy and Education a experience of Kenya and Tanzania. Occasional No. 33. IDS University of Nairobi.
- Cousins, B. (ed) 1989, People Land and Livestock, Centre for Applied Sciences (CASS), University of Zimbabwe, Harare.
- Cumming D.H.M. 1980, The Management of Elephants and other Large Mammals in Zimbabwe" in R. J. Hudson, K. R. Drew and L. M. Baskin (eds.), Wildlife Production Systems: Economic Utilisation of Wildlife, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge.
- Cumming D.H.M. and Murphree, 1991, Savanna Land Use: Policy Practice in Zimbabwe, CASS/WWF Paper No. 1
- Cumming, D. H. M. 1991, "Wildlife and the Market Place: A View from Southern Africa" in L.A. Renecker and R.J. Hudson (eds), Wildlife Profuction: Conservation and Sustainable Development, AFES, University of Alaska, Fairbanks, Alaska.
- D'SOUZA H (1975) : The progress of African Education in Kenya: The colonial Period. Pragger publishers
- Derman, I.N. 1990, The unsettling of the Zambezi Valley: An examination of the Mid-Zambezi Rural Development Project", Centre for Applied Social Science Working Paper, University of Zimbabwe, Harare.
- Desta Asfaw. 1973. "Study on Selected Nomadic Areas: A Report To The Ministry of Land Reform and Administration of the Government of Ethiopia", Addis Ababa,
- EVANS BROTHERS LIMITED. World Bank (1989): Structural adjustment and poverty. A conceptual empherical and policy framework.
- Fasil Gebrekiros. 1993. *The Subsistence Crisis in Africa: The Case of Ethiopia*. Nairobi: (ICIPE Press.
- Fecadu Gedamu, et.al. 1983 "A Study on Nomadic Areas of Ethiopia" (Unpublished Mimeo).
- GOVERNMENT OF KENYA (1992): The Environmental Action plan for Arid and Semi-Arid lands in Kenya, Ministry of Land Reclamation and Development of Arid and Semi-Arid areas and wastelands.
- Grant, P. 1981, "The Fertilization of Sandy Soils in Peasant Agriculture" in Zimbabwe Agriculture Journal, No. 78
- Harris, P.S. 1974, Black Industrial Workers in Rhodesia, mambo Press Gwelo.
- Hughes, J. 1974, Development in Rhodesia Tribal Areas: An Overview, Tribal Areas of Rhodesia Research Foundation, Salisbury.
- Imperial Government of ETHIOPIA. 1955. *The Revised Constitution of the Empire of Ethiopia*. Addis Ababa: Berhanena Selam Printing Press.
- Jansen D.J. 1982, Agricultural Prices and Subsidies in Zimbabwe: Benefits Costs and Trade-offs, Unpublished Consultancy Report.
- KARINGE, P KANGETHE, L. MAINA, J. AND LIGUNYA , A. (1995) In Search of Sustainable Livelihoods, Adaptive Strategies of the Poor in the Arid and Semi-Arid Lands (KENGO, Nairobi).
- Kay, G. 1970, Rhodesia: A Human Geography, University of London Press, London.
- Kebede Yimam. 1994 " *Afar Nationalism In The Horn of Africa*". B.A. Thesis, Addis Ababa University.

- KELLY K.(1993): Taking Stock: Ox farms Experience of re  
stocking in Kenya, (Ox farm, Nairobi.
- Kinsey, B. 1984, "The Strategy and Tactics of Agrarian Reform: Resettlement and Land Use Policy in Zimbabwe", Discussion paper No. 136, Schools of Development Studies, University of East Anglia, Norwich.
- MAEDOWS, S.J AND WHITE J.M (1979) Structure of the Herd
- Martin, R.B. 1986, Communal Areas Management Programme for Indigenous Resources (CAPMFIRES), Department of National Parks and Wildlife Management, Harare.
- MEADOWS S.J. AND WHITE J.M. (1979) "Structure of the herd and determination of offtake rates in Kajiado district in Kenya 1962-1977" ODI Pastoral Network Papers 7d.
- MIN. ENVIRONMENT AND NATURAL RESOURCES (1994) The Kenya National Environment Action Plan (NEAP) Report, Nairobi.
- Murombedzi J. 1987, An Outline of the Historical Trajectory of Local Government Institutions and Community Development", Centre for Applied Social Sciences (CASS), University of Zimbabwe, Harare.
- N AND TITI V, (1995): Participatory Research for Sustainable Livelihoods in Arid and Semi Arid Lands: A guide Book for Field Projects on Adaptive Strategies.
- NESDA (1994) Proceedings of the NESDA Workshop on Indicators of Sustainable Development in Africa, Banjul, The GAMBIA May, 16-18, 1994).
- NTIMAMA OLE WILLIAM (1994) "Their Lives threatened by greedy speculators, pastoralists are saying" in SUNDAY NATION, October 1 1995 Pg 8.
- OBA GUFU (1990) " Application of Patented Resource Paradigm in Protected area management "Arid and Semi-Arid Ecosystems". Paper Presented at the Regional Training Workshop on protected management at the college of Africa wildlife management, Mweka Tanzania.
- OBA, G. (1990) Application of Patented Resource Paradigm
- OCHIENG R.W (1989): A Modern History of Kenya 1895-1980
- OTIENDE J.E. (1990) Education since the early times pp. 145-154 in Willian R. Ochieng (Ed) Themes in Kenya History. Heinmann, Kenya.
- Palmer, R.H. 1986, Aspects of Rhodesian Land Policy 1890-1936, The Central African Historical Association, Local Services, No. 22, Salisbury.
- Pausewang, Siegfried, *et.al.*, (eds.) 1990, *Ethiopia: Rural Development Options*, London: Zed Books Ltd.
- Phimister, I. 1986, "Discourse and the Discipline of Historical Contest: Conservationism and Ideas About Development in Southern Rhodesia", *Journal of Southern African Studies*, No. 12.
- Provisional Military Administrative Council, *Rural Land Reform Proclamation of March 1975*.
- RENE, J.K; SINGH,
- Salih, Mohammed. 1987. "Livestock Development or Pastoral Development" In *When the Grass Is Gone: Development Interventions In African Arid-lands*, edited by P. Baxter. Uppsala: Scandinavian Institute of African Studies.
- Schoffeleers, J.M. 1978, *Guardians of the Land*, Mambo Press, Gwelo.
- SIMANOWITZ, A (1994): The Development Implications of Micro-economic Policy and Structural adjustment in Kyuso, Kenya. (A study For Action Aid - Kenya).

- SINDIGA, I (1990) Health and Disease in Ochieng, R.W (1990) Ed: Themes in Kenyan History.
- Stocking, M.A. and Elwell, H.A. 1973, Soil Erosion Hazard in Rhodesia", Rhodesia Agricultural Journal, No. 70.
- Swift, Jeremy & Toulmin, Camilla, 1992. "Guidelines and Strategies for Pastoral Development In Africa". Prepared for UNICEF/UNSO Project.
- Swift, Jeremy, 1988. "Major Issues In Pastoral Development With Special Emphasis on Selected African Countries". Rome: FAO.
- TITI AND SINGH (1994) Adaptive Strategies of the Poor in Arid and Semi- Arid Lands: In Search of Sustainable Livelihoods.
- UNEP. United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification in those countries Experiencing Serious Drought and/or Desertification Particularly in Africa
- UNITED NATIONS (1992) United Nations Conference on Environment and Development (UNCED), Rio de Janeiro, Brazil.
- UNITED NATIONS SUDANO - SAHELIAN OFFICE UNSO (1992) Alternative and Sustainable systems of Production and Livelihoods in Marginal Lands, UNSO/UNDP (N.Y).
- VAN R. AND KING A. (1971) : A Modern History of Kenya 1895-1980.
- Vayda, A.P. 1969, Environment and Cultural Behaviour, Natural History Press, New York.
- Vincent, V. and Thomas, R. G. 1961, An Agricultural Survey of Southern Rhodesia, Part I: Agro-Ecological Survey, Government Printers, Salisbury.
- WESTERN DAVID (1982) " Amboseli" in Swara Vol. (4) pp. 4-8, Nairobi.
- WESTERN, D. (1982) ` Amboseli in Swara Vol. 5. (4) pp. 4-8 Nairobi
- Whitlow, R. 1988, Deforestation in Zimbabwe: Problems and Prospects, Supplement to Zambezi, University of Zimbabwe, Harare.
- Wortman, P. N (1995) "Programming, Planning and Evaluation: A system for Assessing Social Policy in Nagel, s.s (1995) (ed) Policy studies and Social Sciences (Lexington Books, Toronto, London)
- Yudelman, M. 1964, Africans on the Land, Harvard Univesity Press, Cambridge.
- Zimbabwe, Republic of, 1982, Transitional National Development Plan, Government Printers, Harare.
- Zimbabwe, Republic of, 1986, First Five-Year National Development Plan, 1986 - 1990, Government Printer, Harare.