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Social Capital and Community Participation in Development

**The Case of the Direct Community Financing Programme
in Post-Conflict Sierra Leone**

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the requirements for the degree of
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Abstract

Community participation seemingly appeals to a number of development agencies and institutions. Participation is seen as a means through which project outcomes can be improved. Nonetheless, "participation" as a concept is perceived, understood and defined differently. Therefore, different objectives are identified for undertaking participation. Some believe that pursuit of economic objectives has come to dominate development practice, and others believe that development practice has neglected its human or social aspects. Despite the rhetoric, past community development practice has either made little improvement in people's lives, or resulted in excluding some members of target communities. With the new institutional focus, and community empowerment as the objective of participation, the problem for development intervention is how to enhance community participation.

Using a case study in post-conflict Sierra Leone, this research examines the Direct Community Financing programme, an externally funded development programme in ten communities in the Pujehun Port Loko districts. The study sought to investigate the extent to which social capital, as a community asset, facilitates community participation in development given the institutional environment and the objectives of the development intervention.

The study finds that community participation is directly related to community level social capital, with high social capital communities recording high participation in the programme. The study also finds that community control, ownership and decisions over project activities, as well as the extent to which the projects meet community needs, also affect participation. Similarly, the institutional rules and the (designated) roles of stakeholders are equally important for enhancing participation. In contrast, a community's historical experience, discrimination and exclusion, selective participation and communal conflicts, among other factors, can negatively affect community participation.

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Contents

Abstract.....	i
Acknowledgements.....	ii
Contents.....	iii
List of Tables and Figures.....	vii
Glossary.....	vii
Acronyms.....	viii
Chapter 1: Introduction.....	1
1.0 Background.....	1
1.1 Research Justification.....	3
1.2 Statement of the Problem.....	3
1.3 Research Questions.....	4
1.4 Research Objectives.....	4
1.5 Research Location.....	4
1.6 Research Outline.....	5
Chapter 2: Community Participation and Social Capital.....	7
2.0 Introduction.....	7
2.1 Community Participation.....	8
2.1.1 Participation: Historical Antecedents, Definitions and Meanings.....	8
2.1.2 Objectives of Participation.....	11
2.1.3 Community Development Practice.....	12
2.1.4 Types of Participation.....	16
2.1.5 Development Practice in the 1990s.....	18
2.1.6 Community Participation Debates and Controversies.....	20
2.1.7 Civil Society and Participation.....	24
2.1.8 Participation and Social Capital: The Missing Link in Development.....	25
2.2 Social Capital.....	26
2.2.1 Origins and Overview of Definitions.....	26
2.2.2 Forms of Social Capital.....	30
2.2.3 Is it a Form of Capital?.....	32
2.2.4 Social Capital Mechanisms.....	33
2.3 Participation and Social Capital Measurement Challenges.....	35
2.3.1 Measuring Community Participation.....	36
2.3.2 Social Capital Measurement Challenges.....	36
2.3.3 Measurement Framework.....	37
2.3.3.1 Groups and Networks.....	41
2.3.3.1 Groups and Networks.....	41
2.3.3.2 Trust and Trustworthiness.....	41
2.3.3.3 Institutional Trust.....	42
2.3.3.4 Collective Action and Cooperation.....	43
2.3.3.5 Sense of Efficacy.....	44
2.3.3.6 Information and Communication.....	45
2.3.3.7 Social Cohesion and Inclusion.....	45

2.3.3.8 Norms of Reciprocity and Solidarity	46
2.3.3.9 Community Sanctions.....	46
2.4 Conclusion.....	47
Chapter 3: Case Study of Sierra Leone	49
3.0 Introduction.....	49
3.1 Sierra Leone.....	50
3.1.1 Geography	50
3.1.2 Demographics.....	50
3.1.3 The Economy.....	51
3.1.4 The Civil War	52
3.2 <i>The Post-Conflict Development Challenge</i>	53
3.2.1 The Community-Driven Programme	53
3.2.2 The Direct Community Financing Approach.....	54
3.2.3 The Programme Institutional Arrangements.....	55
3.2.3.1 National Commission for Social Action (NaCSA)	55
3.2.3.2 The Community	57
3.2.3.3 Line Ministries	58
3.2.3.4 The District Councils.....	59
3.2.3.5 The Private Sector.....	59
3.2.3.6 Others: Development Intermediaries.....	59
3.2.4 Project Initiation Process.....	60
3.2.6 Project Implementation	62
3.3 <i>Communities and Social Institutions</i>	63
3.3.1 Families and Chiefs	63
3.3.2 Sodalities (Secret Societies)	65
3.3.3 The Civil Defence Force.....	66
3.3.4 Community Obligatory Labour	66
3.3.5 Labour Groups	66
3.3.6 Rotational Savings and Credit Associations.....	68
3.4 Conclusion.....	69
Chapter 4: Research Methodology	70
4.0 Introduction.....	70
4.1 <i>Research Approach</i>	71
4.2 <i>Research Methodology</i>	72
4.2.1 Quantitative Methods	72
4.2.2 Qualitative Methods	73
4.2.3 Data Requirement.....	73
4.3 <i>Research Fieldwork</i>	73
4.3.1 Pilot Survey	74
4.3.2 Survey Administration	74
4.3.3 Survey Sampling.....	75
4.3.3.1 Quantitative Survey Sampling	75
4.3.3.2 Qualitative Survey Sampling	76
4.3.3.3 Research Questionnaires	76
4.3.3.4 Research Communities	77
4.4 <i>Research Analysis</i>	78
4.4.1 Quantitative Analysis	78
4.4.2 Qualitative Analysis.....	78

4.5 Ethical Considerations.....	79
4.6 Conclusion.....	79
Chapter 5: Research Findings and Analysis	80
5.0 Introduction.....	80
5.1 Research Findings.....	80
5.1.1 Group and Network Size	81
5.1.1.1 Density of Membership.....	81
5.1.1.2 Institutional Functioning of Groups and Associations	82
5.1.1.3 Community Network Sizes and Support Perceptions	84
5.1.1.4 Organisational Connections	84
5.1.2 Generalised and Institutional Trust	85
5.1.3 Norms of Solidarity and Reciprocity	87
5.1.4 Collective Action and Cooperation, and Sense of Efficacy	89
5.1.5 Information and Communication	91
5.1.6 Social Cohesion and Community Sanctions	93
5.2 DCF Institutional Processes and Objectives.....	95
5.2.1 Community Needs	96
5.2.2 Project Ownership and Control	97
5.2.3 Community Empowerment and Capacity for Development.....	98
5.2.4 Stakeholder Roles.....	100
5.2.4.1 The Communities	100
5.2.4.2 The Project Management Committees	101
5.2.4.3 Line Ministries, District Councils, Contractors, and Traditional Authorities	102
5.2.4.4 National Commission for Social Action.....	103
5.3 Conclusion.....	104
Chapter 6: Discussion of Research Findings	105
6.0 Introduction.....	105
6.1 The Evidence: Social Capital and Community Participation	106
6.1.1 The General Evidence	106
6.1.2 Community Trust and Participation	110
6.1.3 Community Cohesion and Inclusiveness	111
6.2 Institutional and Projects Characteristics.....	113
6.2.1 Community Need Identification	113
6.2.2 Project Ownership and Control	114
6.3 Conclusion.....	115
Chapter 7: Conclusions and Recommendations	117
7.1 Conclusion.....	117
7.2 Research Implications and Recommendations.....	118
7.2.1 Community Needs	118
7.2.2 Community Ownership and Control	119
7.2.3 Social Cohesion	119
7.2.4 Project Procedures and Rules	119
7.2.5 Need for Investment in Social Capital.	120
7.2.6 Future Research	120
Appendix A: Research Questionnaire	121
Appendix B: Selected Social Capital Scores by Community	136

Appendix C: Research Districts and Population Characteristics	137
References.....	139

List of Tables and Figures

Table 1: Typology of participation	17
Figure 1: Simplified measurement framework.....	40
Figure 2: Trustworthiness and institutional trust.....	86
Figure 3: Levels of trust and solidarity.....	88

Glossary

<i>Kombi</i>	rotating labour group (in Mende)
<i>Kabotho</i>	rotating labour group (in Temne)
<i>Osusu</i>	rotating savings scheme
<i>Poro</i>	secret society for men
<i>Sande</i>	secret society for women
<i>Wunde</i>	male dominated secret society in Southern Sierra Leone

Acronyms

ABS	Australian Bureau of Statistics
AfDB	African Development Bank
CBO	Community Development Organization
CDF	Civil Defence Force
CDO	Community Development Officer
CDP	Community-Driven Programme
DC	District Council
DCF	Direct Community Financing
DFID	Department for International Development
FGD	Focus Group Discussion
GoSL	Government of Sierra Leone
HIPC	Highly Indebted Poor Country
IDA	International Development Assistance
IEC	Information, Education & Communication
M&E	Monitoring and Evaluation
MUHEC	Massey University Human Ethics Committee
NaCSA	National Commission for Social Action
NPAC	National Project Approval Committee
NSAP	National Social Action Project
PMC	Project Management Committee
PO	Project Officer
PPA	Participatory Poverty Assessment
PRI	The Canadian Policy Research Initiative
PRSP	Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper
RC	Regional Co-ordinator
RPAC	Regional Project Approval Committee
SAP	Structural Adjustment Programme
SCAT	Social Capital Assessment Tools
SSL	Statistics Sierra Leone

Chapter 1: Introduction

1.0 Background

In the face of decreasing confidence in externally prescribed patterns of development, new forms of engaging people to take control of their development and decision-making processes are gradually emerging as potentially viable alternatives (Pretty and Hine, 1999). This shift in development practice came about against the background of development that has neglected the needs and concerns of those whose development was in the first instance sought (Chambers, 1997). In general, development must seek to improve the lives and well being of people (Edwards, 1989). Such development intervention must not only be conducted within people's diverse historical and cultural contexts (Friedmann, 1992), but must be informed by the lived experiences of people at the 'grass roots' and most importantly lead to equitable income distributions, provisions for basic needs and popular participation by all (Brohman, 1996).

The emerging new approach focuses on participation and effective engagement of people in development processes (Pretty and Hine, 1999). For many, what is crucial for those who were formerly excluded is full participation in all aspects of the development interventions that target them. Rahneman (1992:120) defines popular participation as "the organised efforts to increase the control over resources and movements of those hitherto excluded from such control". Local communities and target beneficiaries must be involved in all the stages of the project including its design, implementation and evaluation and monitoring. Local participation guarantees that policies and projects are designed within the local context, which enhances community support and creates necessary local ownership for the sustainability of such projects.

Community participation in development is undermined by a number of problems. For example, Rahneman (1992) raises the question of who represents the communities, and doubts the ability of some communities to adequately articulate their problems, needs and priorities. Without doubt,

communities are neither homogenous, nor are they always harmonious. On the contrary, communities are heterogeneous and characterised by family feuds, tribal differences and individualism. Social inequalities and exclusion, and unequal power relations characterises many communities (Mohan and Stokke, 2000). These features partly explain why efforts at community involvement in development have not largely been successful. Others believe that failure to successfully involve communities in development is principally because concerted efforts have not been made to assess these communities in order to ascertain their strengths and weakness, and available assets that can be pooled for development, in addition to their needs and concerns.

With the apparent limitations of conventional approaches to development, the late 1980s onwards witnessed a shift in development approaches which led to a search for concepts that capture the social and institutional dimension of development. The concept of social capital has gained prominence as providing a means through which non-economic dimensions of development can be better appreciated (Francis, 2002). Social capital is seen by many as the missing link in development (Grootaert, 2004; Halpern, 2005; Field, 2003). The World Bank (1999) saw social capital as not only the sum of institutions that characterised a society, but as the glue that holds these diverse institutions together. The concept is considered to refer to the assets that facilitate collective action, a prerequisite condition for community participation (Field, 2003; Franke, 2005; Halpern, 2005; Stone, 2001; Stone and Hughes, 2002).

Sierra Leone provides a perfect example of the scenario described above. Development interventions in Sierra Leone have benefited some of the poor, but a large proportion of its population have been neglected for too long (Richards, Bah and Vincent, 2004). Richards et al. believe that the neglect of rural communities and the aristocratic rule of paramount chiefs in the countryside may have provided a fertile ground for the recruitment of rebels during the civil conflict. The conflict and the consequent suffering and mayhem led to the disintegration of communal institutions, norms and networks that had previously held people together in the face of neglect and mass poverty (Vision 2025, Government of Sierra Leone, 2004).

1.1 Research Justification

While support for participatory approaches to development is abundant, empirical studies with respect to community participation in development are lacking. Empirical research conducted in this area has also been limited to examining the costs and benefits of participation. Little empirical research has been undertaken to examine the process of participation, or in other words, how to participate. In particular, and perhaps more importantly, the social context of participation has long been overlooked. It is very important to examine how the social context affects communities' ability or inclination to participate in development if development is to make a difference in people's lives, particularly the poor. This will help us understand whether a given context enhances or inhibits participation at community level. Using a case in which stakeholders include the World Bank, national government, NGOs and local communities, the local context of participatory programmes is investigated. In addition, it is imperative for a study of this nature to be undertaken in a post-conflict country such as Sierra Leone, because we must be determined to avoid the previous mistakes that cost its people so much and usher in development for all.

1.2 Statement of the Problem

In post-conflict Sierra Leone, the authorities have embarked on ambitious post-conflict recovery programmes. One such programme is the Direct Community Financing (DCF) programme. The DCF aims to empower communities through their participation in the development process by facilitating community ownership of the projects and helping communities take responsibility for maintaining and sustaining the facilities created through such projects (NaCSA, 2003). There is often a gap between the participation rhetoric as indicated by project objectives and processes, and the actual participation achieved in practice. This gap between rhetoric and practice is the focus of this research. Further, Richards et al. (2004) observe that post-conflict communities in Sierra Leone are still divided between leading and weak family lineages and warn that there still exist pre-war attitudes, behaviours and practices that undermine community trust, self help and collective action. How this affects achievement

of community empowerment through effective participation, as desired in the DCF programme, is another concern in this study.

1.3 Research Questions

Certain pertinent questions readily come to mind in examining community participation in any context. These include questions relating to the objectives of the proposed participation, the level of community participation and who participates. But perhaps more controversial are the questions about communities' capacity to take control of their own development and within what context or approach. With its focus on the social dimension, the central question in this study is to ascertain if social capital enhances or inhibits community participation in post-conflict Sierra Leone.

1.4 Research Objectives

Against the above, this study therefore sought to:

- ❖ Investigate the levels of social capital in selected DCF project communities;
- ❖ Examine the process and strategies adopted by the supervising agency of the programme;
- ❖ Assess the extent of community participation in the DCF projects; and
- ❖ Ascertain the factors that enhance or inhibit community participation in these projects.

1.5 Research Location

The case study was undertaken in the Pujehun and Port Loko districts, in southern and northern Sierra Leone respectively, in order to highlight differences between the two regions. Pujehun district is about 200 miles from the capital Freetown. Like other parts of the country, the majority of the Pujehun population rely on subsistence farming, while a small but growing number are engaged in mining. The district is reportedly the second most affected by the 11 years of civil war experienced in Sierra Leone. This was largely due to the fact that it lies just across the border with Liberia, and was the point through which rebels invaded the country from Liberia at the start of the

rebel war in 1991. Undoubtedly, it suffered the greatest internal and external displacement of its people.

The Port Loko district borders the Western Area of Sierra Leone, where the capital city is situated. The majority of the population of Port Loko engages in farming. While Port Loko town itself is about 45 miles from the capital, other research communities in the district are much closer to the capital. Due to its proximity to the government administrative headquarters, the district was not only the last district to be affected by the war, but is reported to be one of the least affected districts in terms of internal and external displacement.

It is believed that civil conflict leads to the dissolution of institutions that play significant roles in mobilising communities to engage in beneficial collective action. Furthermore, Richards et al (2004) observe that as a consequence of the civil conflict in Sierra Leone, some community members and institutions attained new status and thus assume new importance. Others witnessed the erosion of the powers and statuses they enjoyed before the war. Richards et al., (2004) note that this poses a serious threat to communities' abilities to come together and undertake collective engagement as required by the DCF programme. The research districts, Port Loko and Pujehun, not only differ in terms of ethnicity, but also in terms of the effects of the conflict. The two districts were therefore selected to ascertain whether these differences can account for or explain differences (if any) in existing stocks of social capital.

1.6 Research Outline

Chapter 2 presents a review of the relevant literature. Participation in general and the concept community participation in particular are examined. Definitions, objectives and typologies of participation are also considered. The historical antecedents and definitions of participatory community development practice are also outlined. The link between participation and social capital is reviewed. The measurement challenges posed here were identified. Chapter 3 then provides detailed background information about the case study and the DCF programme. Chapter 4 presents the research methodologies utilised in

undertaking the case study, including the approach and methods used, and their limitations, as well as fieldwork and ethical considerations. How research data are analysed in this study is also presented in this chapter. Chapter 5 presents the research fieldwork data. Discussions of the research findings are presented in Chapter 6. Finally, the conclusions and recommendations of the study are presented in Chapter 7.

Chapter 2: Community Participation and Social Capital

We all depend on collective good for our independence; and all our lives are enriched - or impoverished – by the communities to which we belong... (Blair, 1998 cited by Ledwith, 2005).

2.0 Introduction

It is clear that development in the last six decades has brought considerable economic progress to many in the developing world. During this period, life expectancy, literacy rates and other economic and social indicators have improved significantly (Midgley, Hall, Hardiman and Narine, 1986). There is however increased poverty, unemployment, marginalisation and inequality. For some, these are manifestations of the failure of development in general (Friedman, 1992). This is largely the result of the neglect and non-participation of those whose development was sought through development programmes (Chambers, 1997).

Since the 1980s, participation has become a slogan in contemporary development practice. It can be observed that “we today live in the age of participation” (Oakley et al., 1991: vii). The concept has undoubtedly become criticised and is today more questioned in the new global context than ever before (Craig and Mayo, 1995). While the importance of participation in development in general cannot be over emphasised, it is today shrouded in controversies in a broader context (Ledwith, 2005; Craig and Mayo, 1995; Oakley et al, 1991; Kothari and Minogue, 2002). While some called for development to be transformative, today’s complex globalisation process that characterises the world economy, and which defines new and changing relationships and partnerships in its practice, policy framework and environment has no such objectives. Therefore, the impacts of participation on development, amongst other things, will continue to fuel the on-going debates.

Similarly, debates about community participation have come to be dominated by arguments about the preferred objectives of participation with little consideration about the human aspects (Hickey and Mohan, 2004). For others, the human or

social aspects (Francis, 2002) are the most crucial. For example, Green (2002) believes that social conditions provide greater insights into how effectively the poor participate in development, but that this has been overlooked in development practice in the past. For Grootaert (2004:1) how “economic actors interact and organise themselves to generate development has been overlooked in the new institutional focus in development”. Thus, these informal features and circumstances (social capital) must be viewed as assets that explain the differential results of development in the developing world.

This chapter reviews the community participation and social capital debates. In particular, it provides an overview of the varying definitions of participation and social capital, and the inherent link between these two elusive concepts. In the first section, different definitions and historical antecedent of participation are reviewed. The theoretical debates and controversies that have come to characterised the concept are then examined. This is followed by an outline of the new focus on enhancing effective community participation in development. The role of social capital in this new focus is then brought to light. An overview of the definitions of the concept follows. The theoretical debates inherent here are reviewed with a view to isolating the relevant dimensions for measurement or assessment of the two related concepts. The final section briefly identifies the relevant dimensions or measures of social capital for use in assessing participation through the lens of social capital.

2.1 Community Participation

The concept of community participation has a long and arduous history. Despite its moral appeal, community participation has generated more debate and controversy than most concepts today. The concept has also undergone significant transition from the colonial era to the twenty-first century.

2.1.1 Participation: Historical Antecedents, Definitions and Meanings

Participation as a concept pre-dates post-independence development practice. For Midgley (1986:1) participation is ancient and expressions of participation are found in “cultural traditions and practices of preliterate societies and the

writings of ancient sages and philosophers". Others, on the contrary, believe that community development as a theoretical phenomenon began in colonial Nigeria between 1927 and 1949. Colonial administrations used community development in a guise to encourage pseudo participation while perpetuating colonial domination (Apple cited in Ledwith, 2005:9). In recent times, community participation is largely influenced by Western ideology, and had its roots in western social work and community radicalisms of 1968 in Europe, the United States and the United Kingdom (Ledwith, 2005).

Despite its long history, widespread acceptance and popularity in development practice, few agree on the precise definition of participation, and community participation in particular. Though in theory popular participation and community participation are often distinguished, in practice both terms have come to be used interchangeably (Midgley et al, 1986). However, "popular participation" is a precursor to community development and its origin, like the latter, can be traced to the work of the United Nations. Of particular relevance have been efforts to produce ground work for the creation of opportunities for political involvement of the poor as well as the adoption of measures that facilitate the effective involvement of these people in the development process (ibid: 21). Not surprisingly, one of the earliest definitions of community participation was that provided by the UN, which defined it as:

The creation of opportunities to enable all members of a community and the larger society to actively contribute to and influence the development process and to share equitably in the fruits of development (United Nations, 1981, as cited in Midgley et al, 1986).

Although participation seemingly defies simple attempts at interpretation, given the enormity of the literature on the concept, (Oakley et al, 1991), other definitions which are provided in the literature, usually from individual and perhaps ideological perspectives, reinforce the fact that participation is understood and conceptualised differently (Kumar, 2002). Kumar (ibid) categorises five definitions given by a broad range of experts and institutions ranging from Cohen and Uphoff to the United Nations Food and Agricultural Organisation (FAO). Cohen and Uphoff (1977) believe that participation

involves and includes people's involvement in decision-making process, in implementing programmes, their sharing in the benefits of development programmes and their involvement in the efforts to evaluate such programmes (Cohen and Uphoff, 1977 as cited by Kumar, 2002:24). Emphasising the need for participation in both economic and political process, the FAO is of the view that participation "is not just a matter of involvement in project activities but rather the process by which rural people are able to organise themselves and, through their organisation, are able to identify their own needs, share in design, implement and evaluate participatory action" (FAO, 1982, as cited by Kumar, 2002:24).

For Paul (1987), community participation is an active process by which beneficiary or client groups influence the direction and execution of a development project with a view to enhancing their well-being in terms of income, personal growth, self-reliance, or other values they cherish. A more recent addition to the list of definitions of participation is that provided by the World Bank Participatory Learning Group (McGee, 2002), which is not significantly different from earlier definitions (see Midgley et al., 1986; Craig and Mayo, 1995). The Group defined participation as "a process through which stakeholders influence and share control over development initiatives, decision and resources which affects them" (McGee, 2002:96).

Participation has also been seen within organisational context, as the definition of Pearse and Stiefel (1979) suggests. These authors believe that "participation is concerned with the organised efforts to increase control over resources and regulative institutions in a given social situations on the part of groups and movements of those hitherto excluded from such control (Pearse and Stiefel, 1979 as cited by Oakley et al, 1991). Despite the varying contexts in which these definitions are made, it is obvious that the definitions are not distinct from each other. Nor are they mutually exclusive. What is clear though is that the apparent differences between definitions, such as in the objectives they each connote, may suggest they relate to different forms of participation (Oakley, 1991).

2.1.2 Objectives of Participation

The various definitions of participation point to apparent objectives of participatory processes either at the national or community level. What is also clear from the above is that various stages in participatory practice can be identified, which can be interpreted as development objectives pursued in the past. These stages and processes include decision-making, implementation, benefits and evaluation (ibid). However, two broad objectives of participation can be identified in the literature – transformation and empowerment. Transformation, according to Hickey and Mohan (2004:13), is perhaps the appropriate objective of participation and must ensure the radical change of existing development practice and more radically the social relations, institutional practices and capacity gaps which cause social exclusion. On the other hand, empowerment is increasingly gaining support as an objective, and broad acceptance as the main goal of participatory development, particularly at the rural or community level (Oakley et al; Craig and Mayo, 1995).

There is a problem, however, of precise definition of the concept of empowerment and competing interpretations of the term. While the acquisition of skills and knowledge are considered by many to be forms of empowerment, the term also connotes the transfer of power. If power is conceptualised as a zero sum, the achievement of empowerment becomes debatable as a transfer of power in this sense, because it means the disempowerment of others (Craig and Mayo, 1995). On the contrary, if power is seen as a variable sum, it makes it possible to increase power in a society as that society engages in collective undertakings for the common good. This view could lead to the empowerment of the powerless within transforming social orders with little negative effect on existing power structures. The powerless in this way also share in the benefits of development and surely become agents of their own development (Thomas, 1992 as cited by Craig and Mayo, 1995).

As Oakley argues, irrespective of contextual disagreement, power relationships in participatory development are now well recognised. Furthermore, and despite the opposing conceptual views, participation at the rural community level in particular must enable communities to identify and decide on their own

priority needs for intervention, to implement and evaluate their projects, which would facilitate the development and acquisition of skills, knowledge and individual and collective abilities. Undoubtedly, this, if achieved, will lead to effective management of community projects, self-confidence and self-reliance. It must be admitted though that, while generally these objectives remain central to growing body of thought on participatory development, in practice many development agencies including the multinational institutions have not fully taken these objectives on board. This explains in part why development has made little impact in the lives of the majority of the poor and formerly excluded. But with no seeming consensus on what constitutes transformative development practice, the search for and debates on appropriate participatory methodologies will continue for the foreseeable future.

2.1.3 Community Development Practice

Some critics argue that community development has been highly contentious. Many believe that community development practice has continued to neglect the marginalized and the poor (Friedman, 1992; Chambers, 1983, 1997; Rahnema, 1992; Brohman, 1996; and Edward, 1989). Clearly, past approaches have failed to reduce poverty, which has been the main goal of development for decades (Krishna, 2002). What is critical though is the extent to which the changing global political and economic spheres, as well as conflicting donor geopolitical interests, have impacted on development practice. For instance, in the pre-World War Two period, community development was conducted solely in accordance with colonial interests, and was seemingly exploitative (McMichael, 1996). During this period, poor communities were targeted but participation was pursued as obligation of citizenship. The overall development objective was to produce stable rural communities and counteract the emerging radical nationalism and leftist movements (Hickey and Mohan, 2004) thereby maintaining colonial hegemony as well as continuous flows of raw materials to industrial Europe (McMichael, 1996). The practice of community development continued along these objectives until the independence era in the 1950s and 1960s. Post-colonial development practice in general was limited to selective interventions and participation was also limited to cost sharing and self-help.

As Hickey and Mohan (2004) note, post-colonial community development maintained the status-quo but in the place of colonial hegemony, development was pursued in order to establish state hegemony. Though there are obviously claims to the contrary, there were no conscious efforts to effectively engage poor and marginalized communities. The focus was the general state of the economy. This was the period of the dominance of modernisation theory, underpinned by neo-liberal ideology, which saw development solely within an economic context, and the replication of Western ideologies and ways of life (McMichael, 1996). McMichael calls this period one in which development was restricted to modernity and progress. This period also witnessed the establishment of huge externally funded programmes in the developing world. An important fact here is that in no way were these projects directed at the poor and marginalized or aimed at ensuring effective community participation. Development was conducted in strict accordance with Western conceptions of what constituted a 'good society', thereby underscoring the neo-colonialist hold on the former colonies. Benefits from such projects were less tangible and indirect. But in cases where the projects involved big capital and demanded contributions by communities, participation was limited to inducement of the "people to undertake the responsibilities demanded" (Oakley, 1991:23).

Development practice so conducted attracted criticisms from academics and development practitioners alike. There were consequently demands from these circles for development to be transformative of societal and power structures that perpetuate oppression and exclusion of the poor and the marginalized from sharing in its benefits (Ledwith, 2005). Nevertheless, community development practice came to be restricted to skills acquisition and some less contentious challenges, and development in general continued to be dominated by economic objectives (McMichael, 1996). However, in the 1970s and 80s there were concerted efforts by scholars and development professionals to formulate an alternative development to what was then practiced. The development practice during this time, which witnessed the re-emergence of neo-liberal economic and development theory and the beginning of the Third World debt crisis (Friedmann, 1992) is particularly important for participation in development. The legacy of this period continues to characterise and influence

development assistance and practice with serious implications for the people of the developing world.

The search for alternative development or a third way, though with a broader focus, started with the Stockholm Conference of 1972. This was followed in 1974 by the Cocoyoc (Mexico) meeting of experts. The Cocoyoc Declaration highlighted global challenges, from the environment to poverty, but warned against consequently despairing of the human enterprise (*ibid.*). The following year saw a direct challenge to mainstream development models when the Dag Hammarskjold Foundation campaigned for a humanist approach to development and observed that:

Development geared to the satisfaction of needs beginning with basic needs of the poor who constitute the world's majority; at the same time development to ensure the humanisation of man by the satisfaction of his needs for expression creativity, conviviality and for deciding his own destiny (1975:7 as cited by Friedmann, 1992).

The report of the experts meetings in 1976, while recognising the different scales at which development occurs, regarded the "local space" as vital for the demonstration of people's creativity (*ibid.*).

Perhaps the most destabilising effects on participatory community development were the closely related debt crisis and the subsequent Structural Adjustment Programmes (SAP) in the late 1980s and early 1990s. Though not directly targeted, the free market dominated reform strategies were expected to bring long term benefits that would trickle down to the poor and marginalized (Mayo and Craig, 1995; Friedmann, 1992; McMichael, 1996; Kothari and Minogue, 2002). The reform measures however failed to benefit the poorest and the most marginalized people in developing countries (Lipton, 1991 cited by Craig and Mayo, 1995). For the poor and their communities, the overall effects of these programmes, either within the context of community participation or individualism, were undeniably severely negative (SAPRI report, 2004), with serious implications for development itself. Reforming countries found

themselves to be restricted in meeting social obligations and this led to declining social conditions and institutions.

Perhaps crucially important here is the issue of participation at community and individual levels. The SAP programmes as they were designed and implemented had no role for anyone or anything else other than the market. People were expected to participate in the process through the market by getting involved in some level of production (Kothari and Minogue, 2002). But as the literature on this issue clearly shows, the means by which this pseudo-participation was to be achieved by the prescribed conditionality demonstrated a lack of insight. Meaningful community participation was nonexistent during this period. The cost sharing participation strategy pursued in the previous decade continued during this period (Kothari and Minogue, 2002).

Perhaps as a direct result of the mass suffering of their people, and the subsequent outcry from certain circles in the West, developing countries began to commit themselves to a search for alternative approaches to their development challenges from outside international institutions. This gave birth in 1984 to the annual "The Other Economic Summit" at which issues such as "the international disorder", "putting people first", "in search of self-reliance", and "local economic regeneration" are discussed (Elkins, 1986 cited by Friedmann, 1992). These efforts had impacts on the policies of international development institutions as well as development practice itself. On the academic and professional front, this period also saw the emergence of participatory development approaches, which were people centred, promoted by development practitioners who had practical experience and knowledge of development practice in the developing world. The works of two important personalities here were to have fundamental effects on development practice. These works were those of Robert Chambers with *Rural Development: Putting the people first* (1983), and Cernea with *Putting People First: Sociology Variables in Rural Development* (1985). Robert Chambers (1983, 1997) is perhaps the one individual whose work has had the greatest impact on the practice of development. In the book *Rural Development: Putting the people first* (1983), Chambers argues that rural development interventions have been

characterised by ignorance and arrogance on the part of the external agents and professionals, who assumed rural people to be ignorant. He strongly argues that local people are experts in their own way and in their everyday life. He asserts that the neglect of local knowledge was partially responsible for the failure of development practice to bring recognisable benefits to the poor. He therefore challenges the professionals to “unlearn much of their training in order to put the last the poor, physically weak, rural , isolated, vulnerable, powerless people first” (McGee, 2002:94). Cernea (1986:3 as cited in McGee, 2002) believes that development theory and practice has neglected what he called ‘sociological perspectives’ in development planning. He therefore suggests the need for identifying and making use of sociological variables in development projects and methods. The central ideas of these authors have long found their way into mainstream development. It must be acknowledged though that these ideas are quite different in many respects. However, both have provoked new thinking in old theoretical debates, which in itself is something good if we are to have development practice that is theoretically informed. All these developments notwithstanding, and as Friedmann (1992) rightly observed, the neo-liberal doctrine, sometimes in modified form or disguised in other forms, nonetheless continued into the 1990s.

2.1.4 Types of Participation

As the arguments above suggest, participation means different things to different people (Kumar, 2002). Therefore, how participation is operationalised is determined by the context in which it is conceptualised and defined, and by the objective of the proposed participation. In this respect, the ways people are called on to participate also vary significantly (ibid.). Consequently, it is difficult to agree on participation’s definite typology. However, different typologies have been attempted in the literature. Six different types of participation are generally identifiable (Pretty and Hine, 1999; Pretty et al., 1995 cited in Kumar, 2002). These types range from passive participation, in which people are only informed about what is being done, to self-mobilisation, where people without external involvement or initiation can initiate development programmes on their own. Table 1 below provides brief descriptions of the types of participation identifiable in development practice.

Table 1: Typology of participation

Typology	Characteristics of Types
1. <i>Passive Participation</i>	People are just informed about what is going to happen in their community or region, and in most cases by external professionals or government officials. The intended recipients have absolute little or no say or influence in the proposed project.
2. <i>Participation by Consultation</i>	People's participation is here limited to consultation. The external professionals identify problems and define solutions. The people are then consulted for their views, which may or may not lead to modifications of the proposed project. Decision-making process pertaining to the proposed undertaking is completely monopolised by professionals.
3. <i>Participation for Material Incentive</i>	People are given material incentives such as food, seed or seedlings, planting materials and even money to encourage participate in proposed projects or provide labour. Obviously, the people have no stake in the project, and therefore are not obliged to continue with the programme as the material incentives are no longer forthcoming. This has serious implications for sustainability of such project.
4. <i>Functional Participation</i>	People are here expected to form groups in order to participate in predetermined objectives of the project. Such projects are predetermined by external professionals and may include community level development programmes or social organisations. Here, the involvement of the people takes place after decisions about the project have been taken. In other words, there is decision making process with regard the project at this level.
5. <i>Interactive Participation</i>	People are here expected to form groups in order to participate in predetermined objectives of the project. Such projects are predetermined by external professionals and may include community level development programmes or social organisations. Here, the involvement of the people takes place after decisions about the project have been taken. In other words, there is decision making process with regard the project at this level.
6. <i>Self-mobilisation</i>	People are not called to participate but instead take their own initiatives independent of external professionals to change systems or improve their lots. In this case, they then make contacts with relevant stakeholders for resources and technical expertise. Here, they maintain control and decision-making process about the proposed project.

Sources: Pretty and Hine, 1999; Pretty et al., 1995 cited in Kumar, 2002.

As one moves from passive participation to self-mobilisation the absolute control over the development process by external professionals recedes. In other words, as we move from passive participation, where people are at best manipulated, to self-mobilisation, the empowerment of the people gradually increases (Kumar, 2002). In practice, different types of participation can be associated with past development interventions. For example, the 'development project' can be rightly associated with passive development.

2.1.5 Development Practice in the 1990s

Development practice from the 1960s to the 1980s was largely informed by mainstream modernisation theories in an atmosphere characterised by quests for ideological supremacy. For a brief period in the 1970s, various strands of Marxist ideology seemed to have won the ideological war, particularly in Latin America. However, the emergence of conservative liberals and the New Right in the political arena in the United States and the United Kingdom respectively in the 1980s, coupled with the collapse of communism in Eastern Europe, saw the emergence and dominance of neo-liberal doctrines in development practice (Friedmann, 1992; Kothari and Minogue, 2002; and Mayo and Craig, 1995). Though the neo-liberal free market policies were set to extend into the 1990s, this period was without doubt the start of a defining period of change in development practice. It witnessed major changes within the context of development cooperation between donor agencies and developing countries. The ensuing changes were not only closely interrelated but went far beyond participatory development debates, while remaining significant with regard to how community participation was to be pursued (McGee, 2002). The changes included "reduced reliance on projects as the sole vehicle for development cooperation; the refocusing of aid programmes on poverty-reduction goals, a new emphasis on governance, human rights and partnership; and the ascendance to prominence of 'civil society'" (McGee, 2002:101).

The 1990s also saw the emergence of concerted efforts by the donor community, multilateral institutions and governments in the developing world directed at poverty reduction. After a decade of implementation of structural adjustment programmes in the developing world, the incidence of poverty

increased to levels higher than before their initiation. SAP policies not only led to mass poverty but also increased the external debt burden of implementing countries (SAPRI report, 2004). But perhaps more importantly, this period coincided with the World Bank's *World Development Report 1990* which in the face of criticism for increased world poverty focused on poverty reduction (McGee, 2002). At the wider international level, the period also witnessed a renewed commitment by the United Nations toward poverty reduction and the satisfaction of the basic needs of the poor. These developments culminated in the setting of the International Development Targets, which were endorsed by the United Nations General Assembly as the Millennium Development Goals (MDG), and were set to guide all development interventions and practice. In addition, and within the context of bilateral and multilateral aid, aid budgets during this period were decreasing. These circumstances necessitated focusing aid money on activities that would create the greatest impact. Thus, poverty reduction became the principal focus of development cooperation.

Also in the 1990s, governance became the sole precondition that guides North and South development cooperation and aid assistance to the developing world. The shift to governance arose from the need to strengthen the institutions of civil society with the objective of making them more accountable, open and transparent, and democratic. Governance, as observed by many, is one of those fluid concepts that have "too many meanings to be useful" (Rhodes, 1997 cited by Minogue, 2002:7). However, within the context of the new development cooperation, governance is used to mean "both broad reform strategy, and a particular set of initiatives for societal organisational needs. This would in turn enable communities to engage in collective actions, while at the same time bringing out the needs and concerns of the marginalized, poor and the voiceless in such communities, thereby minimising their exposure to economic and other shocks (DFID, cited by McGee, 2002). The focus on governance was closely linked to and necessitated by the need to take into account the human factor in development (Francis, 2002). The focus on people is not seen in development practice, however, despite long having been advocated for by many Northern NGOs.

The apparent objective of the new focus on governance was to ensure the empowerment of the marginalized and the formally excluded through effective participation by civil society. Civil society is defined as “those organisations in society which fall outside government and which are not primarily motivated by profit” (DFID, cited by McGee, 2002:103). These groups were expected to be the medium through which good governance was to be transformed into better lives for, and the empowerment of, the poor. The underlying assumption of the new development cooperation is that the empowerment of poor people will make civil society and governments more sensitive and responsive to their diverse needs.

A defining characteristic of development cooperation in the 1990s is the expectation of closer partnership between Northern governments and institutions and Southern governments. Previously partnerships between the two groups have been seen as vertical and largely dictated by the geopolitical interests of the former. However, the 1990s and the emergence of the new development cooperation saw the emergence of horizontal as opposed to vertical partnerships between Northern and Southern governments, and between Third World governments and civil society.

These new found relationships and partnerships, though promising, may have serious connotations for participation in development at the community level, for as Maxwell and Riddell (19987) argue, it will be a difficult process to put the governments and peoples of the developing world in the drivers’ seat in practice. Despite its inherent potential for ensuring community participation, it remains to be seen what the new approach underscored by the new partnerships will bring for the poor and the excluded.

2.1.6 Community Participation Debates and Controversies

The objectives of community participation in development are obvious. For some, community participation lowers the costs of delivery of social services at this level, as well as facilitating and making implementation easier. More importantly, participation encourages community integration and sense of belonging. In effective participatory process, local communities are given the

opportunity to contribute meaningfully to national development (Midgley et al., 1986). However, many believe that, in the fast-changing political context of aid and development cooperation, the mechanisms through which the objectives of participation are achieved are unclear and lack explicit direction (Ledwith, 2005). Others believe that the arguments for participation are characterised by moral sentiments that are low on theoretical foundation (Midgley et al., 1986). They therefore maintain that if participation is to be effective, it warrants critical assessment.

The most contentious issues in debates about participation concern the concept of community itself. Many advocates of community participation perceive communities as small entities that are cohesive and harmonious but have been oppressed for so long by external forces and are therefore collective units fighting against these powerful forces (Midgley et al., 1986). Many critics hold strong contrasting views about this perception of community. These critics believe that communities are far from being cohesive and harmonious. On the contrary, communities are seen as characterised by internal conflicts, family feuds and individualism (Midgley et al., 1986; Mohan and Stoke 2001; Ledwith, 2005). These authors argue that rural or deprived communities are characterised by varying economic, social and political statuses.

In particular, Midgley et al. (1986) argue that that the local people do not usually act in the best interest of their communities. They assert that in these communities, there are usually the “small fish” who exploit others, and who are in turn also exploited by the “bigger fish”. For Ledwith (2005) exploitation and discrimination characterise rural or deprived communities. She argues that if this fact is not recognised then strategies to enable communities to play a meaningful role in development will surely fail. For others, community participation must be geared toward thorough understanding and assessment of the conflicts, rivalries and factionalism that almost always characterise communities. These ideas, these authors believe, would then better prepare external agents to meaningfully engage communities in development. The arguments against a peaceful, cohesive and harmonious community are summarised best by Robson (2000 cited by Ledwith, 2005:23) when he

observes that “the community today is a complex matrix of intense competition between contesting groups, often class-based, struggling for a slice of the social and national cake”.

One fact that stands out clearly in the community participation literature is that advocates of community participation share a communitarian ideology. While the main assertions are seemingly the same as those general perceptions of the community as examined in the preceding paragraph, other key arguments and assumptions of this view also attract very strong criticism. For example, the notion that once individuals meet their needs, they have a responsibility to meet the needs of others through civil society institutions such as family, school and community organisations, with common or shared values and based on mutuality and reciprocity has also attracted criticism. Some argue that in the modern world, it is impossible to have both freedom and autonomy (Ledwith, 2005). As Ledwith argues, unlike the communitarian ideology that sees civil society as a courageous collective entity through which rights and responsibilities are amicably negotiated, Gramsci’s perspective sees civil society as the medium through which state domination of ideologies penetrates to people through most often co-option rather than coercion.

Another debate in the literature pertains to the issue of self-help. Proponents of participation have in the past called for self-help as a means of creating self-reliance, independence and autonomy, and as such criticise the top-down approach as lacking the potential to achieving this goal. Midgley et al. (1986) believe that the new approaches advocated are nothing but externally imposed programmes, despite claims of respect for the rights of communities to decide their affairs. For others, the focus on self-help has clouded the need for redistribution of resources (Ledwith, 2005; Berner and Philips, 2005). These authors believe that participation itself has been hijacked, and linked by neo-liberals to other populist concepts such as decentralisation and empowerment. They therefore warn that the characteristic features of communities must be recognised if participation is to be transformative. They do not as such believe in redistribution of resources and see it as demeaning to the poor. They believe

that the idea of self-sufficiency will only lead to retrogression and not development.

Proponents of community participation had also assumed a continuous, never-ending involvement of the people in such projects. But as Midgley et al. (1986) argue, it is wrong to assume that poor people have excess of free time. They point out that, on the contrary, people have many other and equally important commitments, some for survival and others as community obligations. Thus, an endless commitment or involvement with projects can not be assured. Similarly, it was also assumed that direct community participation would improve people's lots by real improvement in service delivery at this level. But many believe that the preconditions for successful participation are such that they are unlikely to be met. For others, participation is nothing but "mere excessive pretensions of improving poor people's life given the insignificance of the project in their lives and the extent and complexity of the deprivations and structural discriminations they face" (McGhee, 2002:105).

In examining community participation in development, Botes and Rensburg (2000) believe that there are obstacles that inhibit the promotion of participatory development, often leading to non-participatory approaches. They identify these obstacles as external, internal and combinations of both, and range from institutional, socio-cultural and technical, to logistical and spreading over a wider spectrum. The internal factors include conflicting interest groups, lack of public interests in involvement, gate-keeping behaviour of local elites and bias; while the external factors include the role of external professionals, orientation of government to popular participation, the use of selective participation, and what they call techno-financial bias.

In echoing some of the issues raised above, Botes and Rensburg (2000) believe that development projects are not usually initiated by the communities but by outsiders. As such, participation as it has been conducted is far from a conscious attempt to empower communities to choose freely. They argue that participation is limited to gaining acceptance and thus legitimising such undertakings rather than addressing the priorities of the people. In particular,

they believe that in the past community participation in practice has neglected the political dimension of participation with severe consequences for the poor. They also believe that there has been what they call “hard-issue bias” as development agencies have in the past preferred huge physical, technical and financial projects, which involved over-reporting progress often with exaggerated success, to projects that targeted issues such as capacity building, meaningful empowerment and social transformations. Like Midgley (1986), Botes and Rensburg (2000) believe that there are usually conflicting interests in beneficiary communities and thus participation as an exercise of choice and decision making in resource-scarce environments is itself divisive.

The debates presented in this section show how differently “community” is perceived as a key stakeholder in the development literature. While one school of thought sees the community as the ideal entity for ensuring participation, the other does not. The arguments in these schools may not be necessarily wrong. But what has been neglected in practice is the environment in which development takes place. The link between the social aspect of development and participation is brought into better perspective from the communitarian perspective of the functioning of the community. The main postulate of this perspective is that trust, cooperation and mutuality do not only define normal human relationships, but the latter can only flourish in the presence of the former. The second postulate maintains that the first conditions, once realised, would facilitate social cohesion, a prerequisite condition for democratic society (Etzion, 1995 cited by Francis, 2002). Recognition of the important role the social aspect of development explains the shift in development cooperation in the 1990s.

2.1.7 Civil Society and Participation

The new focus on civil society within the broader institutional shift towards governance and human rights concerns is designed to make civil societies more vibrant through capacity building of its institutions (Francis, 2002). It is hoped that this will create “confidence, critical consciousness and collectivity” (Ledwith, 2005:2), which are incidentally some of the goals of effective community development. Ledwith further asserts that when people’s confidence grows,

they start to critically examine and question their conditions and reality. This in turn forces them to act together and demand change. The ensuing collective action is consolidated when people start to organise groups that then identify the issues around which projects are initiated. These groups provide a forum for creating alliances that could possibly result in development of social movements. The process of creating and nurturing connections based on shared interests, values, trust, mutuality and reciprocity will eventually result in cooperation and collective action.

2.1.8 Participation and Social Capital: The Missing Link in Development

The arguments in the preceding section build the case for examining alternative concepts that could explain what Francis calls the “missing dimension of development – its ‘human’ or ‘social side” (Francis, 2002:71). He identifies social capital as one of the concepts that have gained importance in the search for ways in which the social and institutional dimensions of development could be better appreciated. Grootaert (2004:1) for his part argued that “the way economic actors interact and organise themselves to generate growth and development” has been neglected in the past. He identified this as social capital.

Furthermore, social capital has been used to describe norms, social trust and networks that further cooperation, coordination and collective action for the common good of the community as a whole (Simpson and Cala, 2001). Simpson and Cala further argue that the level of participation that is achievable in a community is indicated by and linked to the social capital level in that community. They therefore argue that it is only through participatory processes that networks are built and norms, trust and values are consequently developed. They believe that participation will not only lead to a sense of community and cooperation, but will also result in increased self-awareness and political knowledge and therefore better understanding of citizenship and its inherent rights and obligations.

2.2 Social Capital

Social capital is one of the most controversial concepts in academic, political and development discourse today. Despite its rapid rise to widespread use, particularly in development practice, it remains generally unknown and unfamiliar to the wider public (Halpern, 2005). For some, the appeal of the concept of social capital, especially to scholars, may not be unconnected with its strategic location between the borders of economic and non-economic social sciences (Francis, 2002:77). For others, the concept's wide acceptance could be as a result of the recognition and renewed focus on social dimensions of the policy environment in the 1990s (Halpern, 2005).

Social capital is perceived differently by different people. Some believe that social capital is what holds people, communities and societies together (Narayan, 1999, Francis, 2002). For others, it is the missing link in development practice that could explain the differences in the level of (economic) development observed today among communities, societies, regions and states (Grootaert, 1997; Grootaert and Bastelaer, 2002). Consequently, the concept is today embedded in confusion and controversy about what it is and what it is not (Halpern, 2005; Prakash and Selle, 2004). This has in turn thrown it into debates about its precise definition, meaning and measurements.

2.2.1 Origins and Overview of Definitions

Like other concepts, social capital has a long theoretical history. Halpern (2005) argues that theoretical history of the concept can be traced as far back as the writings of Adam Smith, Alexis de Tocqueville and Emile Durkheim, while others credit Hanifan and others for using the term first (Woolcock, 1998; Halpern, 2005; Francis, 2002). However, Bourdieu and Coleman are credited for the current interest in the concept. Bourdieu argues in his 1986 work that the discipline of economics not only dominates policy thinking but also other human sciences, and thus the interactions between the economic and social life are neglected. He argues that some aspects considered as economic are not, and that the preoccupation with economic capital has led to the neglect of the

cultural and social capital dimensions (Halpern, 2005). Bourdieu suggests how networks and connections, as assets possessed by individuals in society, can be made complementary resources (Francis, 2002).

In social capital literature today, the works of two authors, Coleman and Putnam, stand out prominently. But as argued below, both authors, like other authors and institutions, have varying perceptions of the scope of analysis of social capital. For Coleman,

Social capital is defined by its functions. It is not a single entity but a variety of different entities, with two elements in common: they all consist of some aspect of social structures, and they facilitate certain actions of actors – whether persons or corporate actors – within that structure. Like other forms of capital, social capital is productive, making possible the achievement of certain ends that in its absence would not be possible (Coleman, 1988:96 cited by Halpern, 2005).

Putnam (1993:167 cited by Francis, 2002) defines social capital as “features of social organisation, such as trust, norms and networks that can improve the efficiency of society by facilitating coordinated action”. In a similar perspective, Stone and Hughes (2000:20) define the concept as “the network of social relation characterised by norms of trust and reciprocity”. Social capital is seen as a way of arresting the apparent decline in the notion of community (Tayler, Farrell and Tennent, 2004).

Since the emergence of the concept of social capital, it has unsurprisingly generated unprecedented interest in international development institutions such as the World Bank and the United Kingdom’s DFID. The World Bank, which now leads in social capital research and operationalisation in the developing world, defines the concept as:

The institutions, relationships, and norms that shape the quality and quantity of a society’s social interactions. Increasing evidence shows that social cohesion is critical for societies to prosper economically and for development to be sustainable. Social capital is not just the sum of the

institutions (that) underpin a society – it is the glue that holds them together (World Bank, 1999 cited by Halpern, 2005).

At the same time as the World Bank proposed the above definition, DFID, perhaps from a quite dissimilar perspective defined the concept as “the social resources upon which people draw in pursuit of their livelihood objectives, and these may include networks and ‘connectedness’, membership of more formalised groups and relationships of trust, reciprocity and exchange (DFID, 1999: Section 2.3.2 cited by Francis, 2002).

From the selected definitions above, a number of distinctive features can be observed. Firstly, and as indicated earlier, Putnam’s definition, like those of Stone and Hughes (2000), is micro-focused in scope. In particular, and as some of his later works suggests, Putnam focuses mainly on the horizontal associations that exist between and among people or networks of civic engagement, and the associated norms which facilitate coordination, cooperation and collective action for common beneficial undertakings in a community. For Putnam, social capital is not just an individual but a society-wide asset (Francis, 2002; Grootaert, 1997). Putnam’s definition has been the target of much criticism. Some question his work on historical and methodological grounds (Goldberg, 1996; Skocpol, 1996; Prakash and Selle, 2004). Others believe that his work on the concept lacks a strong conceptual foundation, and they question his dependence on horizontal relations as the main source for distinguishing the benefits of social capital (Francis, 2002; Prakash and Selle, 2004). These criticisms notwithstanding, Putnam’s definition is relevant for the examination of civil society’s capacity for ensuring development at the community level (Francis, 2002).

Coleman’s definition is broader in scope than that of Putnam. It brings into the unit of analysis of the concept both vertical and horizontal associations, with the main focus placed on the relationships between groups rather individuals (Grootaert and Bastelaer, 2002, Grootaert, 1997). This broader focus makes it possible to include in the analysis the often unequal power relations that characterise vertical associations. While Coleman’s definition can easily be

extended to include macro-level social capital, his functional definition makes the concept so broad that any idea could easily be included, blurring the limits of its scope (Halpern, 2005).

The works of Coleman and Putnam are particularly important in examining participation at the community level. Development practice involves interactions at different levels. Putnam's definition of the concept of social capital facilitates understanding of the relationships that exist between and amongst people and groups that may or may not inhibit civic engagement and cooperation. Coleman's inclusion of the vertical relationships permits examination of the unequal power relationships that characterise development practice.

The World Bank's definition of social capital is by far the most encompassing and comprehensive view of the concept, in that it recognises the formal institutional relationships and structures including the political and court systems, civil liberties and government among others. In other words, the institutional view, which draws largely on the works of North and Olson, advocates the role of institutions in economic development (Francis, 2002; Grootaert and Bastelaer, 2002), and draws the focus away from the informal, local horizontal and vertical relationships to the social and political environment that would allow norms to foster and therefore build the wider social structures (Grootaert, 1997). Grootaert and Bastelaer (2002) strongly believe that horizontal or vertical relationships combine well with macro institutions for achieving maximum development and social outcomes. They argue that macro institutions can ensure the prerequisite environment for local associations to grow, which in turn leads to the sustainability and stability of both regional national institutions.

This view of social capital is also not without its critics. Halpern called this definition "big tent" and considered it a step too far. From both a conceptual and practical perspective, he believes that including the institutional dimension, as the Grootaert and Bastelaer definition posits, would make it not only less clear but would in the end draw away attention to what he called "the area of greatest neglect – the importance of informal networks and norms" (Halpern, 2005:17).

As argued by Francis (2002), there is obviously little ground for consensus on a single definition of the concept of social capital (Narayan and Pritchett, 1997). However, Francis (2002) rightly reveals that there is a common feature that underscores the varying definitions of the concept. He identifies this as common concern with how the social environment and institutions such as groups, organisations, networks and trust among others impact the economic and development aspect of life. This feature of social capital as argued in the sections above is largely consistent with the communitarian perspective of development.

2.2.2 Forms of Social Capital

It can be seen from the preceding section that social capital is a fluid concept, as indicated by the variability and breadth of its definitions. This characteristic has therefore led to the need for social capital literature to categorise the varying forms of the concept that may exist in a community (ibid). Like its definition, there is little agreement on the classification of its forms. For Halpern (2005), most forms of social capital, whether interest, kinship or work based, have three main components. He identifies these components as including a network - a cluster of norms, values and expectation which members share in common, and "sanctions – punishment and rewards, that help maintain the norms and networks" (ibid.:11). Halpern identifies the neighbourhood as the common relationship in the case of community networks. These relationships are characterised by greetings, recognition of the neighbourhood members, exchange of material and emotional support and sometimes visit to each others' homes. However, he admits that these relationship are not always positive but are sometimes characterised by rivalries and conflicts. While these communities and their constituent networks are in most instances defined in geographical terms, he observes that in some instances they are often ill-defined. On the other hand, he asserts that norms are basically the rules, expectations and values that typify the community or network members. He argues that all relationships are guided by social norms, most of which are unwritten, implicit and undeclared. In this regard, while some of the norms demand behavioural conformity, others are affective and thus limited to how one feels about other

members of the network. Sanctions are usually informal and subtle, but nevertheless are effective in ensuring adherence to the norms and demands of the network.

Another major classification of the forms of social capital, as its widely accepted definitions suggest, is usually made on the basis of the relationships within and without groups, institutions and the like. These forms include bonding and bridging social capital. Bonding social capital are those relationships that characterise horizontal relationships, and are either by necessity or choice inward looking and tend to reinforce exclusive identities and homogenous groups. Examples of such relationships include ethnic fraternal groups, church-based women's groups and fashionable groups (Putnam, 2000:22-3 cited in Halpern, 2005). For Bebbington and Carroll (2002), bonding relationships not only encourage and invigorate the links between and among people, but will also bring about intense interactions within groups thereby furthering collective action. Bridging social capital is the relationship that may exist between and among people belonging to the wider society and beyond one's immediate family, community or social setting. Examples of bridging social capital include civil rights movements and youth service groups (Putnam, 2000:22-3 cited in Halpern, 2005). Bridging social capital invigorates the links between groups or people and other groups or actors and organisations (Bebbington and Carroll, 2002). The bonding/bridging distinction in social capital literature is widely used today. This is mainly because it enables the assessment of network features and the peculiarities that underpin the social institutions (Halpern, 2005).

Another classification often made of social capital forms pertains to the ties that exist among people, groups and institutions. This classification is attributed to the work of Granovetter, who identified two types of ties – weak and strong ties – both of which manifest different levels of advantages and benefits. Weak ties are those ties one would have outside his/her immediate family and with colleague or contacts which are crucially important in getting opportunities, information or job. On the other hand, strong ties are those ties that exist among family members and close friends. These ties are the source of support in emotional situations in particular (Halpern, 2005; Francis, 2002). These

classifications, it must be noted, are consistent and synonymous with the bridging and bonding distinction.

For many, the potential contribution of social capital to (economic) development is better appreciated and brought about through the interactions of two types of social capital – cognitive and structural (Grootaert and Bastelaer, 2002; Krishna, 1999). Cognitive social capital is the less obvious or manifest aspect of the concept, which refers to values, beliefs, norms and other predispositions that characterise community life and that ensure the enabling environment for communities to work collectively together for their common good (Krishna, 1999). Structural social capital, on the other hand, consists of social institutions and practices which serve as tools for development (ibid.). For Grootaert and Bastelaer (2002), this type of social capital ensures democratic decision-making process, collective action and the free flow of information through well-defined roles, procedures and precedents. Though not necessarily always, both types of social capital complement each other.

2.2.3 Is it a Form of Capital?

Arising from its wide and varied definitions and the equally different ways different people have come to perceive the concept of social capital is widespread scepticism about the appropriateness of the use of the word 'capital' to describe what are largely social interactions and attitudes. Social capital manifests features that are firstly unique to it, and secondly that differentiate it from other forms of capital (Grootaert and Bastelaer, 2002). As many argue, social capital is an input and at the same time an output (Francis, 2002, Grootaert et al, 2004; Grootaert and Bastelaer, 2002; Grootaert, 1997; Halpern, 2005), a feature incidentally shared with human capital. Social capital quantity and quality can increase with use. Unlike other forms of capital, the production of social capital requires the cooperation of at least two people, a feature that reinforces its public good characteristic and remains unproduced if potential beneficiaries are not incorporated in its production (Grootaert, 1998).

These facts notwithstanding, social capital also shares a number of features with other forms of capital. Firstly, and like other forms of capital, social capital

requires the investment of time and concerted efforts for its production (ibid). For his part, Putnam (1995, 2000) pointed out that while it takes generations to build effective social capital, it is easily destroyed. On the question of social capital as an asset, a key feature of forms of capital, many argue that it is more than just about social values and organisations. As an input it requires deliberate investment to creating the assets. As an output, it is capable of producing flow of benefits (Grootaert and Bastelaer, 2002). For Collier (2002), this function is better facilitated through bringing about investment in physical and other forms of capital. For example, if a community comes together to buy a bus or construct a school, there will be obvious economic and human capital benefits arising from these actions. The social interactions that in the first place led to these undertakings have subsequently given rise persistent flow of benefits to the community.

2.2.4 Social Capital Mechanisms

As suggested by aspects of the above arguments, there are now high expectations about the potential contribution of social capital to development. However, the lack of conceptually agreed mechanisms through which social capital is expected to contribute to (economic) development is a target of sustained criticism (Torsvik, 2004). This notwithstanding, Grootaert and Bastelaer (2002) argue that, like any form of capital, social capital produces a stream of benefits. The authors consequently identify a number of channels or mechanisms through which social capital affects development. These include “information sharing, mutually beneficial collective action, and decision making” processes (Grootaert and Bastelaer, 2002:4). They elaborate further that these benefits in turn ensure increased income levels and welfare of individuals, groups and institutions. These observations are consistent with dimensions of social capital identified by the World Bank (Grootaert et al., 2004). In addition to these dimensions, they identify networks and groups, trust and solidarity, social cohesion and inclusion, and empowerment and political action as the other mechanisms via which social capital is created and maintained.

Portes and Sensenbrenner (1992) believe that social capital manifests itself through four mechanisms. Firstly, the authors assert that when people socialise

or interact with each other, this makes them behave in ways largely dictated by the group values and in the general interests of the group rather than entirely for selfish reasons. Secondly, they assert that norms of reciprocity characterise the multitude of favours; exchanges of goods and information that underpin social life. Closely related to this is the norm of solidarity, which they define as the common support obtainable from the recognition of similar interest, which also underpins social life. The last mechanism in this process is identified as trust. They believe that as people would usually expect to gain long term advantages that come with trustworthiness, and more importantly to avoid potential sanctions that accompany distrust and default, people are more like or encouraged to adhere to these norms. These mechanisms are consistent with the observations referred to earlier by Grootaert and Bastelaer (2002), who believe that in addition to enhancing information sharing, networks and associations facilitate collective action and transparent decision making processes. They argue further that this process is enhanced through increasing the benefits one derives from conformity with the norms and values while at the same time making the cost of non-conformity high.

The preceding sections in this chapter have examined the origins, overview of definitions of both community participation and social capital. It has been demonstrated that participation has come a long way, yet it is still shrouded in debate and controversy. While its objectives remain quite clear, few agree on how to achieve them. The review so far has shown that social capital is also perceived and therefore defined differently. The concept is however used to describe social organisations and norms of trust and solidarity that give rise to cooperation and collective action. The concept exists in three forms, namely bonding, bridging and linking social capital. Social capital contributes to development through a number of mechanisms. These include the development of trust through interactions and information sharing, common values and interests, and collective action.

The review clearly demonstrates how closely related the concepts of community participation and social capital are. The question then arises as to how to

assess or measure these concepts together. This is the subject of the next sections of this chapter.

2.3 Participation and Social Capital Measurement Challenges

The arguments in the preceding section show that social capital is an asset that requires the participation of more than one person in its production. But the question arises as to how to measure participation in this and in a wider context. As argued earlier, (community) participation is one of those concepts in the development literature that means different things to different people (McGee, 2001). Similarly, there are different objectives for undertaking participatory development activities. These features make attempts at measuring community participation challenging. The challenge emanates from knowing exactly “what to measure, when to measure and how to measure this multi-dimensional, complex and fluid concept” (Simpson and Cala, 2001:19). Despite such challenges, attempts have been made to evaluate community participation. Like participation, the concept of social capital poses similar measurement problems. Many believe that the practical problem of measuring social capital explains the controversies that surround the concept (Halpern, 2005). Consequently, different measures of social capital have been used by different researchers (Field, 2003; Halpern, 2005; and Schuller, Baron and Field, 2000).

As implied in the above argument, community participation and social capital are intrinsically related. It is not just the case that each is the outcome or product of the other, but the two operate within the same domains. For instance, the principal dimensions of social capital necessary for facilitating cooperation and collective action such as trust, norms of reciprocity, solidarity, and sense of efficacy, are only manifested in social networks, while these networks are themselves products of the existence of not only a comprehensive but inclusive participation by all in a community (Simpson and Cala, 2001). Therefore, the two concepts are examined together here due to the fact that they complement one another.

2.3.1 Measuring Community Participation

The difficulty in measuring community participation stems from the fact that project initiators and planners often fail to recognise the heterogeneity of communities. Consequently, projects' expected outcomes are often ill-defined, thereby making them difficult to measure or evaluate accurately. Wilson and Wilde (2003) argue that attempting to measure community participation must start with the recognition of the heterogeneity of communities. They therefore argue for the need to view community participation both as a process and an outcome, which facilitates meeting the diverse needs and priorities of participants. Participation as a process continues throughout the life of a project (Simpson and Cala, 2001). Therefore, a critical part to evaluating or measuring participation must involve examining how people were initially involved in the process so as to achieve the desired outcomes. In this vein, and for efficient evaluation of participation, Wilson and Wilde (2003) express the necessity for qualitative analysis that measures progress from different perspectives, while other methodologies suggest the use of both qualitative and quantitative methods for thorough understanding of the outcomes of participation (Simpson and Cala, 2001).

Furthermore, participation literature suggests that the focus, type and level of intended participation for undertaking a community development initiative are crucial for the community. There is evidence to suggest that if a community is made to participate effectively in a community project, this will lead to the empowerment of that community through the facilitation of collective decision-making process, project initiation, ownership and control (McGee, 2002), awareness and capacity building and sense of efficacy (Simpson and Cala, 2001).

2.3.2 Social Capital Measurement Challenges

It is widely accepted that social capital is difficult to measure (Grootaert and Bastelaer, 2002; Francis, 2002; Grootaert, 1998; Halpern, 2005; Prakash and Selle, 2004). There are a number of reasons for this, and prominent among these include the fact that the concept has been defined quite differently. This gives rise to the possibility of potentially crowding out its causes and effects

(Prakash and Selle, 2004). Others perceive the concept so differently that it is almost impossible to agree on a single precise definition of the concept. Thus, if precise definition must precede measurement (Francis, 2002), then this variance of definitions of social capital makes it difficult to suggest a consensus list of indicators of the concept to be measured (Grootaert, 1998) even though for empirical objectives, the use of proxy measures is often recommended. However, different measures and indicators have been identified as measures of social capital in different conceptual frameworks (Grootaert et al., 2004; ABS, 2004; Stone and Hughes, 2002), indicating the gap that seems to persist between social capital theory and empirical research (Stone and Hughes, 2002). As the use and identification of indicators in social capital studies must be within a conceptual framework, to make for an effective examination of the state of affairs as determined by the objectives at hand (Grootaert, 1998), the relevant measures are briefly reviewed here.

2.3.3 Measurement Framework

Notwithstanding the above measurement challenges, a simplified measurement framework, informed by the literature reviewed above and the research objectives, is constructed here. As the review suggests, the definitions of Putnam and Coleman make it possible for the assessment of both the horizontal and vertical associations and relationships that exist amongst individuals and groups, as well as other institutions at the community level. The World Bank's definition of social capital as including formal institutional relationships and structures including political systems, civil liberties and systems of government, remains particularly important in assessing institutional environment in community participation is pursued. The literature also suggests that the institutional context and environment in which participation takes place determine to a large extent the outcome of development interventions (Francis, 2002).

From a social capital perspective, the literature shows that the mechanisms through which the beneficial aspects of social capital are created and shared as public goods start with interactions through groups and networks (Putnam, 1993; Grootaert and Bastelaer, 2002). The intra and inter group and network

interactions lead to the sharing of information and provision of support to group and network members. This will allow trust to develop amongst the members of these groups (ABS, 2004, Putnam, 1993). Communities with high social interactions and trust are more likely to cooperate and undertake collective action (Simpson and Cala, 2001). A high sense of community is created and it is characterised by norms of solidarity and reciprocity, social cohesion and inclusion (Portes and Sensenbrenner, 1992). For Ledwith (2005) such a community will undertake development programmes that create a community sense of efficacy. From the perspective of participation, the literature suggests that community empowerment will ensue through decision-making process, initiation, control and ownership of projects. Participation as a process can also be directly linked to capacity domains such as increased awareness, knowledge and skills, which will in turn increase both vertical and horizontal networks (Simpson and Cala, 2001). Participation literature also suggests that broad and effective participation can also increase community sense of efficacy and social interactions (Checkoway, 1991). The institutional environment and relationships facilitate the achievements of these outcomes.

Thus, a simplified framework as shown below is constructed to guide the research methodology and data analysis. The framework brings together dimensions of social capital, as community assets, and participation as a process. These are mediated through the institutional environment, characterised by rules, roles, interests, and functions to produce the desired outcomes of broad and inclusive participation as identified above.

What is observed in the framework presented in Figure 1 below is that the desired outcomes of participation are similar to the dimensions of social capital. This is because most of the measures and indicators of social capital can be defined as both inputs or determinants and outcomes of the concept (Grootaert et al., 2004; Narayan and Cassidy, 2001). Secondly, the two concepts are so closely related that they give rise to one another (Simpson and Cala, 2001). The measurement framework is highly simplified. For example, the causal relationships suggested here in the transmission mechanisms of social capital may not hold true in many observable instances. Further, the relationships

could even be contrary to what are suggested here (Ledwith, 2005). Nor are the dimensions of social capital and participation processes presented exhaustive.

However, the framework is designed to assist in assessing whether social capital, as community level assets mediated through an ideal institutional environment in a participatory process, can enhance community participation in development. In other words, it is aimed at ascertaining if such a process can lead to the empowerment of a community undertaking a development project. Community empowerment, the literature suggests, remains the overriding objective of participation. Simpson and Cala note that:

An empowered community is one which individuals and organisations apply their skills and resources in collective efforts to meet their respective needs. Through such participation individuals and organisations within an empowered provide enhanced support for each other, address conflicts within the community and gain increased influence and control over the quality of life in their community (Simpson and Cala, 2001:4).

The relevant dimensions of social capital as well as the outcomes of participation identified in the above framework and in available literature are briefly examined in the subsequent sub-sections.

Figure 1: Simplified measurement framework



2.3.3.1 Groups and Networks

Like other measures of social capital, controversy still surrounds the appropriateness of these variables as measure of social capital. For example, while Narayan and Pritchett (1997) found the presence of associations to be a significant measure of social capital, Knack and Keefer (1999) found that group or association membership was statistically insignificant as a measure of social capital. However, Grootaert et al. (2004) believe that the basic functions of social capital in disseminating information, facilitating collective undertakings and minimising individualism are best realised through these aspects of structural social capital. For the Australian Social Capital Measurement Framework (ABS, 2004), networks are not only integral to social capital, but are often equated to it on the argument that assessment of networks' qualities, transactions, and structures reveals different dimensions of the concept.

Stone and Hughes (2002) assert that social capital is not confined to particular networks, but may range from family and household ties to community based or national relationships. The extent to which indicators of social capital perform their functions is dependant on the varying features of the groups and networks. Grootaert et al. (2004) suggest that the density and diversity of memberships, extent of democratic functioning and decision-making, and connections to other groups should be investigated.

2.3.3.2 Trust and Trustworthiness

Trust has been consistently used in empirical research as a measure of social capital (Halpern, 2005; Balamoune-Lutz, 2005; Knack and Keefer, 1997). It is regarded by some as a 'quick' measure of social capital (Halpern, 2005; Balamoune-Lutz, 2005). For some, trust seems to be a good indicator of social capital stock in a community, manifesting itself through the positive aspects of network relations, interactions and prevailing norms (Balamoune-Lutz, 2005). Trust as a measure of social capital can better be understood from a rational perspective. Fukuyama (1995:26) defines trust as "the expectation that arises within a community of regular, honest and cooperative behaviour based on commonly shared norms on the part of other members of that community". This definition of trust is in accordance with Wollebaek and Selle (2002) who believe

that for people to achieve a common goal through collective action they must trust one another and be convinced that no one among them will act contrary to the common goal or shared objective (Wollebaek and Selle, 2002). For some the way in which community development programmes have been conducted in the past has eroded trust in state institutions. This undermines, for instance, a community's ability to engage in collective action (Gupta, Grandvoinnet and Romani, 2004).

Stone (2001) and Stone and Hughes (2002) identify three types of trust. These include personalised or particularised trust that exists within an established relationship (Stone, 2001) or informal trust with families and familiars (Stone and Hughes, 2002); generalised trust that is extended to strangers based on common values or expectations of behaviour; and institutional trust in formal institutions to ensure fairness in resource allocation, conflict resolution and provision of public services. Falk and Guenther (1999), based on the motives for trusting, identify four types of trust, all of which except in nomenclature are seemingly the same as those identified by Stone (2001) and Stone and Hughes (2002). For Putnam (1993) people learn to trust one another through interactions and more importantly through civic engagement. In other words, trust underscores network interactions and civic cooperation.

The fact that people perceive trust differently perhaps explains why Grootaert et al. (2004) believe trust to be abstract and therefore difficult to measure. Notwithstanding this, an increasing number of social capital measurement frameworks and tools see trust as an important measure of social capital. Grootaert et al. (2004), viewing trust within the context of specific transactions, identify generalised trust as the main focus of investigation. The ABS framework identifies five indicators of trust – generalised trust, informal trust, institutional trust, trustworthiness and feelings of safety (ABS, 2004), showing that the appropriateness of trust as a measure of social capital is in little doubt.

2.3.3.3 Institutional Trust

Also critical in the assessment of social capital at the community level are the ties the community has with institutions such as government ministries and

agencies, NGOs and others. These ties depend on the people the community know within organisations and the contact they have with these institutions (ABS, 2004). On the whole, these ties define the resulting relationships and interactions between the community and these institutions. These ties are also predicated on institutional trust in formal institutions to ensure fairness in resource allocation, conflict resolution and provision of public services identified by Stone and Hughes (2002). In developing countries, where personal contacts and relationships underpin everyday life, ties with institutions are crucial for community development, because a significant number of projects are alleged to have been undertaken in communities based on personal contacts, political affiliations and lineages (Richards et al., 2004). Thus, institutional trust, in addition to generalised trust, is important in social capital assessment at the community level in agrarian economies. Unlike other studies and suggestions of measurement frameworks to combine institutional trust with generalised trust (Stone and Hughes, 2002; ABS, 2004; Grootaert et al, 2004), it is also sometimes treated as a stand alone variable in order to see clearly its impact on social capital from a governance perspective.

2.3.3.4 Collective Action and Cooperation

It is usually part of the daily life of people in communities in the developing world to cooperate and undertake collective action, irrespective of the diversity of purpose of such cooperation and collective action. In particular, in most developing countries, communities usually cooperate together to undertake activities such as the construction and maintenance of markets, roads, bridges and organisation of social activities in the face of the neglect of their (rural) communities. It is likely that if generalised trust exists in a community, the people are more likely to come together to undertake common beneficial programmes, and such programmes are more likely to succeed there than in communities with a history of mistrust and conflict.

In measurement frameworks, this dimension of social capital has been treated in various ways. For instance, the World Bank Social Capital Assessment Tool treats collective action and cooperation separately. The SOCAT examines collective action under structural social capital while questions on trust are

examined together with questions on past and potential cooperation and are jointly examined as a single variable (Krishna and Shrader, 1999). For Grootaert et al. (2004), collective action is considered to be a proxy measure of social capital, and is usually present in a community where there is a significant level of social capital measured by the level of trust in the community. However, collective action and cooperation is treated as a single dimension of social capital. For the Australian framework and indicators, even though collective action is not treated as a stand alone dimension of social capital, common action is treated as a sub-unit of sharing support in network transactions (ABS, 2004). The framework is based on the idea that networks and cooperation facilitate teamwork, which would bring about efficiency, the free flow of information and the acquisition of knowledge and skills. In the framework cooperation is treated as an investment in the community that will ensure economic growth and social improvement.

2.3.3.5 Sense of Efficacy

Perhaps one of the most important issues in the assessment of social capital at the community level is the perception of the people about their willingness and capacity to work together. This is referred to in the social capital literature as a sense of efficacy (ABS, 2004). The ABS framework (2004:33) defines sense of efficacy as “the belief that an individual, group or community has it in their capacity to produce desired outcomes by their own actions”. This is critical as it indicates a community’s ability to initiate and successfully implement projects. This dimension of social capital is believed to affect people’s tendency to participate in social and civic activities. Sense of personal efficacy also has close bearing with a personal sense of empowerment. For instance, when someone has that self-efficacy or belief that he or she can do something, self-confidence, a necessary step to handling societal changes, is developed. This in turn leads to a personal sense of empowerment (ABS, 2004).

Most emerging empirical studies have not, however, examined this dimension of social capital. Similarly, suggested social capital measurement frameworks with the notable exception of the Australian framework (ibid) have not directly focused on this dimension of social capital. Those that have examined this

dimension have only done so as a sub component of various other measures of the concept.

2.3.3.6 Information and Communication

Free flow of information is seen by many as perhaps the most crucial outcome of social capital as it reduces transaction costs (Halpern, 2004). Information is also seen today as ensuring a stronger voice for poor communities on issues affecting their welfare (Grootaert et al., 2004). In the past, control over information has been used as a means of maintaining political control over the poor, weak and the marginalized. As argued in the previous chapter, communities that encourage free flow of information are more likely to mobilise their citizenry for community development than those whose leaders use information as their exclusive property. Such communities are seen to be less transparent and therefore have less bridging social capital.

2.3.3.7 Social Cohesion and Inclusion

Social cohesion is one of the dimensions of social capital yet to have a common consensus as to its exact meaning. The ABS framework (2004) admits that there are yet to be universally accepted concepts of social cohesion as its features remain wide and sometimes controversial. However, there seems to be an emerging common ground as to what needs to constitute social cohesion. This suggests that social cohesion must be underscored by an increased level of participation and inclusion (OECD, 2001 as quoted in ABS, 2004), and must therefore consist of a balance between bonding and bringing social capital.

On the other hand, social inclusion is said to exist in a community with a record of harmonious network of social relationships and interactions, and people are not deliberately discriminated against but have equal opportunity to participate fully in the community's socio-economic life. Grouped together, social cohesion and inclusion are the most important product and evidence of the existence of social capital in a community (Grootaert et al, 2004). Therefore, if there is a history of conflict in a community, then this could be an indication of the inability of that community to resolve conflict arising among themselves, and the

absence of adequate trust and therefore low social capital (ABS, 2004; Grootaert et al., 2004).

2.3.3.8 Norms of Reciprocity and Solidarity

The Australian social capital measurement framework (ABS, 2004:30) sees reciprocity as “any relationship between two parties or things where there is a mutual action, giving and taking”. Such an action is usually in response to either an action that has taken place in the past or in expectation of a similar action in the future and in time of need. This dimension of social capital is perhaps singularly important if the expected group and network supports are to be fully appreciated. In a community of high and strong reciprocity, there is often strong care for one another, which in turn brings effective solidarity to bear simultaneously on existing relationships. The prevalence of the two closely related community characteristics gives rise to community unity based on shared values and interest (ibid.)

Like trust, norms of reciprocity and solidarity were the main measures of social capital in early empirical studies on the concept (Stone, 2001; Stone and Hughes, 2002; Halpern, 2005; ABS, 2004). This dimension of social capital continues to feature prominently in all emerging social capital measurement framework and indicators. Therefore, to provide deep insight into shared values and interests of rural communities with respect to their aspiration for effective participation in development, a number of social capital measurement frameworks recommend the investigation of this dimension of social capital (Grootaert et al., 2004; ABS, 2004; Narayan and Cassidy, 2004; Krishna and Shrader, 1999).

2.3.3.9 Community Sanctions

Social capital research has focused mainly on the beneficial aspects of the concept. But social capital has its ‘dark side’ too (Halpern, 2004). This includes the free-riding of community members who choose not to cooperate, exclusive clubs that benefit only their members, tribal laws that are selective and discriminate in some instances against strangers, and cartels that exploit non-members for the benefit of their members. Due to the potential presence of

these negative factors, a component of social capital that can be crucially important for communities and community development in agrarian societies is sanctions. Sanctions can be both formal and informal, and can be powerful in enforcing norms (Luzzati, 2000; Halpern, 2005). Most often however, these sanctions are harsh and can negatively affect community cohesion and development. Richards et al. (2004), for example, found in Sierra Leone that harsh and controversial sanctions in the form of fines of various kinds, punitive local laws and banishment caused many young men to abandon their villages and even some to join the Revolutionary United Front rebels in the country's 11 year civil conflict. Thus, sanctions need to be examined if the exact role of social capital at the community is to be clearly understood.

2.4 Conclusion

The arguments in this chapter suggest that community participation has been pursued for different objectives and has therefore sought different level of participation. The above arguments have also shown that development practice itself was characterised by a number of factors and circumstances. Its impacts in the past were mixed. It must however be admitted that while some of the community development programmes have not targeted the needs of beneficiary communities, others have in practice done so. But even in this instance, these projects have changed very little in the lives of the poor. This explains the controversies and debates that surround community participation in development theory and practice. The negligible impacts of development programmes for some people are due to the neglect of the social or human factor in development (Francis, 2002).

Therefore, the concept of social capital, generally regarded by many to better explain the social dimensions of development, has been briefly examined in the face of shifts in development approaches. This new focus and the application of social capital to underscore interventions have broadened the community development agenda beyond the economic aspects of life. More importantly, the World Bank's modes of social intervention in development that underscore its social funds programme for poor countries (Grootaert, 1998) provides for

better understanding of local conditions, aspirations and knowledge. Therefore examining community participation through a social capital lens provides a framework for crucially important issues that have been neglected in past practice. These include the communities' social interactions, cohesiveness and discriminatory practices, ability to resolve internal conflicts, extent of collective decision making process and the ability of the communities themselves to successfully undertake and implement development projects.

In conclusion, three main issues that underscore the outcome of community participation can be discerned from the above arguments. These include objectives of participation, the social or human dimension of development, and the institutional arrangements or environment in which participation is undertaken. The objective of participation is obvious. Participation is believed to bring about self-confidence, self-reliance, empowerment and sustainability of project, amongst other things. The social dimension of development has been largely recognised and taken on board in development interventions in recent times. A framework that guides this research within this context has been constructed in this chapter. Consequently the relevant measures of the social dimension that ensure in-depth assessment of community participation in this study have been identified. But the question then arises as to how the institutional arrangements or the policy environment impact on participation. Does the environment affect the outcome of participatory development objectives? The following chapter examines the policy environment and the institutional arrangements of this case study and as identified in the measurement framework.

Chapter 3: Case Study of Sierra Leone and the Community-Driven Programme

3.0 Introduction

Like other developing countries in sub-Saharan Africa, Sierra Leone implemented a number of externally prescribed development programmes in the late 1980s and early 1990s with the aim of arresting the decline in economic conditions. The impacts of some of these externally prescribed interventions, such as the infamous Structural Adjustment Programmes (SAP), left much to be desired. With the new focus on poverty reduction, the externally prescribed development interventions have been carried out with the Highly Indebted Poor Country (HIPC) initiatives and the Poverty Reduction Strategy Papers (PRSP) frameworks. Like their predecessors, the PRSP were designed with little or no consideration of existing conditions in the implementing countries. Consequently, these prescriptions almost always turn out to be not only inappropriate but often unworkable, largely due to their insensitivity to the local conditions. Furthermore, and as argued in the previous chapter, the environment in which development intervention takes place and the accompanying institutional arrangement, in addition to the objectives of the intervention are crucial for the success of such interventions. It is therefore imperative that a brief examination of the intervention environment and the accompanying institutional arrangement of the case study is undertaken here so as to put these contentious issues in better perspective.

Thus, this chapter briefly examines the existing conditions in Sierra Leone where the Community-Driven Programme (CDP) is implemented. Section one briefly examines the country's geography and economy, the war and its effects, and its institutional policy background. This is followed by an examination of the CDP's Direct Community Financing (DCF) initiative. In particular, Section 2 examines the operational arrangement of the approach, stakeholders and their roles and responsibilities, and other relevant issues in the approach. The chapter ends by examining the social institutions and organisations that may impact on the

communities' potential for collective action and thus the successful implantation of the DCF approach.

3.1 Sierra Leone

Sierra Leone has had it ups and downs in both political and economic contexts. Within a political context, with the exception of two unsuccessful indigenous led revolts against British rule during colonial era, the country was peaceful for most of the twentieth century. Unlike most countries in sub-Saharan Africa, Sierra Leone gained independence from Britain in 1961 without violence. However, for eleven years at the end of the century the country suffered from a barbaric civil war. In an economic context, the country's short history depicts similar mixed results. At independence, the country's per capita income was higher than that of Singapore at the time and the highest in the West Africa sub-region. But by the 1990s, the country not only had one of the lowest per capita incomes, it was ranked by the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) Human Development Index (HDI) as the poorest country in the world, a position Sierra Leone has occupied for most of the time since then.

3.1.1 Geography

Sierra Leone is located on the west coast of Africa, and lies between latitudes 7 and 10 degrees north and longitudes 10.5 and 13 degrees west. It is bordered on the north and northeast by the Republic of Guinea, on the east and southeast by Liberia, and on the west and south by the Atlantic Ocean. It has 300 miles of coastline, most of which consisting of mangrove swamps. It covers an area of 71,740 square kilometres. While the coastline is lowland, the interior is largely plateau. The climate is tropical with two seasons - the rainy (May to December) and the dry (December to April).

3.1.2 Demographics

Sierra Leone has a population 5,216,890 (2006 projection), which is expected to grow by at 2.3 per cent. Of the total population, 44.8 per cent are aged 0 – 14 years, 52 per cent are aged 15 – 64 years, and 3.2 per cent are aged 65 years and over. The country has a population density of 72.7/km². Life expectancy for

the total population is estimated at 40.22 years – 38.05 years for men and 42.46 years for women. There are about 16 indigenous ethnic groups, with Mende 30 per cent, Temne 30 per cent, others 30 per cent, and Krios or Creoles (descendants of freed slaves) 10 per cent.

3.1.3 The Economy

Though rich in natural resources such as bauxite, iron ore, rutile, diamonds and gold, and agricultural and marine resources, Sierra Leone remains an extremely poor country. With 68 percent of the population living below the poverty line, Sierra Leone has one of the most skewed income distributions in the world with a Gini Index of 66. The economy is largely agriculture-based with about 70 percent of the population engaged in subsistence agriculture. It is not surprising therefore that the sector's contribution to the Gross Domestic Product (GDP) is estimated at 46.1 percent, while the manufacturing and services sectors' contribution has doubled since 1995 to 29.5 percent. Despite its significant endowment of resources, the fisheries sector contributes an insignificant amount to total GDP. In contrast, the mining sector accounts for more than 50 percent of the foreign exchange earnings of the country.

Sierra Leone's economic performance can be categorised into three main periods: three decades of spiral decline, a decade of devastating war, and a period of transition from emergence and recovery to sustainable development. After independence, the economy grew at an average rate of 4 percent for a decade, with the real GDP growth rate at its highest ever at 11.3 percent in 1970. Thereafter, the economy went into spiral decline for three consecutive decades. Real GDP per capita dropped by 37 percent between 1971 and 1989, and there were high inflation rates and a severe external payments imbalance. This period was followed by a decade of devastating civil conflict. The war led to intermittent hostilities and political instabilities, and inflicted severe damage on overall economic performance. Almost all major economic activities were disrupted.

This led to the near collapse of all sectors of the economy. Provision of social services outside the capital city came to a complete halt. However, overall economic growth performance was mixed. After a drop of about 10 percent, real

GDP grew by 5 percent, the budget deficit dropped from 12 to 6.3 percent, and inflation also dropped from 115 percent in 1991 to 6 percent in 1996. The exchange rate during this period remained relatively stable. Following the end of the war in 2002, government had its first opportunity to formulate policies to transform the country from relief and recovery to sustainable development. This is the subject of the next two sub-sections.

3.1.4 The Civil War

Extremely poor governance and gross economic mismanagement over a period of three decades characterise the post-independence history of Sierra Leone. Many observers believed that institutionalised and rampant corruption, massive state interventions, dismantling of local government institutions, overspending on the non-poor, and over-taxation of the agricultural sector and the rural poor gave rise to decades of appalling and deteriorating economic conditions. In addition, the neglect, exclusion and marginalisation of the majority of the population, particularly the rural population, from sharing in the benefits of state and development, coupled with increased mass poverty in the interior of the country set the conditions of the civil war (Sierra Leone PRSP, 2005).

It must be noted that when the civil war started on 21st March, 1991; about 82 per cent of the population lived below the poverty line, and in complete abject poverty, the majority of whom lived in the rural areas. As Richards et al. (2004) observe, in the midst of all this, the often despotic and aristocratic rule of traditional chiefs was largely characterised by expulsion of young men and exorbitant fines levied on young men for very minor offences. These factors forced young men to join the Revolutionary United Front (RUF) rebels with, in many instances, the aim of avenging the wrongs that have been meted out to them. The ensuing conflict saw members of the same families, social organisations and institutions on opposing sides, families settling old scores and so on. Consequently, and in addition to the devastating impacts on the general population, the economy, infrastructure, development aspirations of the country, the war led to the dissolution of crucial social institutions, new animosities between and among families, villages, towns, cities, districts and regions. The strands that had held the civil society together for generations were in most

cases broken, and the majority of Sierra Leone's communities were far from being cohesive and peaceful entities.

3.2 The Post-Conflict Development Challenge

The preceding sub-section provided a brief but vivid account of the environment within which Sierra Leone had to devise post-conflict development policy. Given the level of damage to the economy and the physical infrastructure, the obvious first policy goal and objective was the rebuilding of the economy and the restoration of damaged infrastructure. However, given the conduct of the war and the harsh experience gained, it was imperative that government mainstreamed issues such as conflict resolution, good governance, war-victims and ex-combatants into its policy a necessary first step towards sustainable development.

Like most developing countries, Sierra Leone had largely depended on external funds for development. This situation became more serious during and after the war. In the face of almost non-existent or functional revenue sources as a direct consequence of the war, the country had come to rely almost entirely on external sources of funding for development. The World Bank and other multinational institutions such as the African Development Bank (AfDB) and the Islamic Development Bank continue to come to the country's aid. On the country's successful formulation of the Interim-PRSP in 2001, the Bank provided credit support to the country's transition efforts from post-conflict reconstruction to sustainable development. The Bank facilitated credit of US\$35 million through the International Development Association (IDA) to the National Social Action Project (NSAP). The Community-Driven Programme (CDP) is a component of the NSAP, and aims to assist war-affected communities to restore damaged infrastructure and build local capacity for collective action.

3.2.1 The Community-Driven Programme

As indicated above, after the end of the war Sierra Leone saw the need to transform the development process from being emergency-focused to creating medium and long-term development. This transformation was however founded

on the need to have effective social protection mechanisms in place alongside the other pressing development priorities. In this process, there was the obvious need for supporting the overall reconstruction and rehabilitation of social services and community infrastructure as well as helping communities to rebuild their lives and livelihood systems (Sierra Leone IPRSP, 2003). The Community Driven Programme (CDP) was one of the main programmes through which these objectives were expected to be achieved (NaCSA, 2003)

During the war and immediately after it ended, it was the policy of Sierra Leone's government to deliver a wide range of support services to communities through implementing intermediaries such as local and international NGOs, government agencies and Community-Based Organisations (CBO). However, experience with this approach showed that it did not lead to enhanced community participation in the various stages of the project cycle. Thus, the CDP was devised as a strategy that would transfer project implementation responsibility to communities themselves while the oversight government agency and intermediaries would serve only as facilitators. The aim of this approach was to strengthen community ownership of the projects and to help communities take responsibility for maintaining and sustaining the facilities created through such projects (NaCSA, 2003). The CDP process used for implementing community projects was an approach called the Direct Community Financing (DCF).

3.2.2 The Direct Community Financing Approach

The Direct Community Financing (DCF) programme involves a process where funds are provided by NaCSA directly to communities to manage and fully implement community level projects or sub-projects which the communities themselves have identified as their priority needs. In this regard, the communities take over responsibility for supervision of projects and their related works, banking transactions and disbursements, procuring materials, hiring of contractors and consultants, employing skilled and unskilled labour and reporting on the utilisation of the financial resources provided to them. Thus, the overall goal of the DCF approach was to "increase the opportunities for rural communities to be able to direct the process of re-establishing themselves in

terms of restoring basic social services, rural infrastructure and their capacity for collective action" (NaCSA, 2003).

In particular, the DCF was designed to achieve a number of objectives, most of which are closely related. Firstly, the approach was designed to ensure the empowerment of targeted communities through training, the provision of financial resources and technical assistance by NaCSA and intermediaries in order to initiate, manage and sustain community projects, and in so doing take control of their own development initiatives. In addition, the approach sought to promote community interactions and relationships, and through this process strengthen existing community social capital through encouragement for communities to engage in village and inter-village level sub-projects. But perhaps more importantly, the approach was particularly aimed at strengthening the confidence of communities through facilitating forward and backward contacts and linkages with the central and local government agencies as well as the private sector such as contractors and banks. Other indirect objectives of the approach are to enhance the utilisation of public services while at the same time creating a culture of maintenance of public infrastructure.

3.2.3 The Programme Institutional Arrangements

As noted earlier, the institutional arrangement within which community development intervention is made is very important for its eventual outcome. Among other things, it gives an indication of the objectives and level of community participation, central issues in participatory development (Oakley, 1991). To achieve the direct and indirect objectives and thus the goal of the approach briefly outlined above, various roles and functions were devised for a number of players and stakeholders. The players and stakeholders include the proposed project community, line ministries, district councils, the private sector and NaCSA.

3.2.3.1 National Commission for Social Action (NaCSA)

The National Commission for Social Action (NaCSA) was established by an Act of Parliament on 15th November 2001. The Commission is a corporate body that has perpetual succession and is capable of acquiring, holding and

disposing of any property, whether movable or immovable, suing and being sued in its corporate name and, subject to the Act, of performing all such acts as bodies may by law perform (Sierra Leone Government Gazette Vol. CXXXIII No.5, 2002). The Commission's objective is to promote community based, demand driven and sustainable development activities leading to the alleviation of poverty and improvement in the speed, quality and impact of development initiatives in co-operation with non-governmental organisations, community based organisations, relevant line ministries, private sector partners and other interested parties. It is governed by a seven-man Board of Directors taken from two line ministries, two donors (DFID/United Kingdom and the European Union), and three members drawn from civil society, which include the Chairman of the Board.

NaCSA maintains adequate field-level representation to ensure a strong interface with communities. There are four Regional Offices in the Northern, Eastern, Southern and Western Regions each with a Regional Coordinator who is supported by a core technical team of M&E, civil works, finance, administrative, IEC and project officers. There are also twelve District Offices in the provinces and one in the Western Rural Area. Each District Office has a District Coordinator supported by a Project Officer (PO) and Community Development Officers (CDO).

The Commission, as the implementing government agency, is responsible for the achievement of the goals and objectives of the CDP. Thus, the regional offices serve as the focal point for all communication to and from the communities for NaCSA headquarters, line ministries and other stakeholders. In addition, the regional offices are responsible for supervising the district offices and contracted agencies, supervising project implementation, ensuring monitoring and evaluation of sub-project implementation, maintaining efficient and effective coordination with UN agencies, sectoral line ministries, NGOs and the district councils at the regional and district levels and informing the public and stakeholders about the activities of the DCF programme.

The District offices in the operational arrangement serves as the link between headquarter offices and the project communities. Thus, these offices receive applications for DCF funding, and with line ministry representatives conduct desk appraisals of the applications, undertake follow up activities for community mobilisation and facilitation agencies, direct day to day monitoring and supervision of the community projects, answer inquiries about the programme from stakeholders, and any other activities that ensure smooth and transparent implementation of the projects.

3.2.3.2 The Community

Under the DCF approach, as well as under other government programmes, a community is defined “as a well-organised group of individuals living in close proximity to each other and/or social groups able to identify a need and express it in the form of a project request that meets the selection criteria of the CDP” (NaCSA, 2003:6). The size of a community requesting financial assistance from the programme is considered to include those who will directly or indirectly benefit from that project. For example, the project community of a health unit that is expected to serve five surrounding villages will constitute those five villages. In contrast, a larger village may have more than one community project. In other words, project community is not defined in terms of numbers alone. While the definition of project community is flexible, the said community must manifest their willingness and ability to come together for a common purpose.

The DCF requires communities seeking funding to provide evidence that community members have been consulted, given adequate information about the project, and above all share a commitment to the project. The communities must therefore ensure that all members of the community have the opportunity to fully participate at all stages of the project’s development, implementation, monitoring and maintenance of project facilities. As projects are expected to be generated by and belong to the communities, communities are responsible for a number of things. These include the identification and prioritising of their need to be translated into a project, election of the Project Management Committee (PMC) to oversee the management of the entire project cycle, outlining the

various activities of the project, preparation of the project activity plan and budget, and determining the community contribution to the project. In addition, they are responsible for ensuring that community members participate in the identification, planning, appraisal, supervision and management of the project, putting together effective maintenance plans for the project, monitoring of the procurement of goods, services and works, and reporting to NaCSA on the progress of the implementation of the project.

3.2.3.3 Line Ministries

Line ministries are basically those ministries under whose purview a project falls. For example, a health project will have as line ministries the Ministries of Health and Social Welfare. Representatives of line ministries are expected to provide policy guidelines with respect to norms, standards and other requirements for the intended area of project intervention. The line ministries are also required to provide confirmation of government's commitment to the long term sustainability of the facility to be provided. In addition to these roles, line ministries are also expected to carry out the following responsibilities:

Information, Education and Communication: Representatives of line ministries can engage in information, education and communication sessions with or without NaCSA in the project communities to keep community members abreast of government's current development and other policies.

Desk Appraisal: Line ministries are required to review the sub-project applications for the DCF programme, and provide technical advice on the sub-project.

Field Appraisal: Where possible, line ministry officers are expected to participate in the field appraisal of projects together with NaCSA field staff, in order to ascertain the level of community participation in the identification and prioritisation of community needs, and their commitment to the project, and where necessary help finalise the project design.

Project Monitoring: Line ministry representatives are also required to monitor progress of the project implementation process through visits facilitated by the district staff of NaCSA. In an instant where line ministry representative conducts such monitoring without NaCSA staff; he/she is required to provide a report to the latter.

Other Activities: Line ministry representatives are also required to attend the monthly inter-agency meeting in support of on-going development programmes in the district.

3.2.3.4 The District Councils

The District Councils, after their inception in 2002, assumed roles and responsibilities in the DCF programme. They are involved in activities such as field appraisals and launching and commissioning of projects. They are also represented on the district and regional project approval committees and are fully informed about project maintenance plans, because they are charged with the responsibility of ensuring the maintenance and sustainability of these projects in their respective districts and wards.

3.2.3.5 The Private Sector

The DCF operational arrangements provide for private sector participation in the implementation of the community projects. The private sector is expected to provide technical skills for project works, and supply goods and specialised services to assist the implementation of these projects. Usually, the communities enter into legal contracts for specialised project works and the supply of goods and specialised services. The ensuing contracts make it obligatory for the private sector service providers involved to fulfil the contract obligations to the communities. In the instant of default, NaCSA is usually a witness to the contract transactions and will come to the aid of the community to take legal action against the said defaulter.

3.2.3.6 Others: Development Intermediaries

The DCF approach also provides for the participation of other service providers or development partners. These largely include development intermediaries,

such as government extension service workers, local and international NGOs, CBOs, and auditors. However, the expected role of these groups is limited to facilitation. Within the DCF operational context, “facilitation is the process where individuals or institutions assist communities with information and technical know-how required to accomplish sub-project objectives” (NaCSA, 2003:9). Such facilitators are required to recognise the authority of the community and the decision making powers of the community-elected PMC, and are advised to avoid any actions that will undermine this authority.

3.2.4 Project Initiation Process

The project initiation process at the community level is preceded by sensitisation of the community in order to raise community awareness of the DCF procedures, so that such communities can access and participate in the programme. This is undertaken by NaCSA field staff through community meetings, radio programmes, poster distribution and so on. This leads to possible interest of communities to participate in the programme. This is expressed in a *Letter of Interest* by the community to the District Coordinator, manifesting interest to participate in the programme. This then leads to a meeting with the said community in order to start the social mobilisation and facilitation processes by the players indicated above. Like facilitation defined above, social mobilisation is the process of bringing beneficiaries together in an organised way and thus preparing them for collective action. This is the first point of involvement of the programme officers with the proposed project communities. The activities here are designed to ascertain the capacities and preparedness of such communities to undertake community level development in general, and to obtain baseline community information and data.

The facilitation process that follows basically involves the election of the Project Management Committee (PMC), whose membership should not include village headmen and other community authorities in order to avoid political interference. The PMC will oversee the day-to-day management of the proposed project, conduct training workshops in relevant skills pertaining to the project such as opening a bank account and budgeting of planned project activities; assist communities to complete the project application form; and

provide technical advice where necessary. For some communities, facilitation will include Participatory Poverty Assessment (PPA) to help identify a priority community need within the programme threshold.

3.2.5 Project Approval Process

The DCF project approval process starts with desk and field appraisals of the community project application, which are undertaken by the district staff with inputs from the relevant line ministries officials. These exercises are designed to determine firstly if the DCF guidelines have been followed, and secondly if the proposed project is the prioritised need of the community. These exercises also provide opportunity to ascertain if the success indicators provided by the community are realistic, if there is a community commitment in the form of community's mandatory 10 percent contribution to the costs of the project, and other requirements. The field appraisal in particular involves technical assessment of the projects works, and the confirmation or otherwise the information provided in the project application.

When these exercises are completed and the information in the applications are found to conform with the DCF requirements, and the project cost is within the US\$25,000 regional threshold, then the Regional Coordinator (RC) will convene the Regional Project Approval Committee (RPAC) to approve such project at this level. If the project cost is above the regional threshold, then the application is forwarded to headquarter offices to be approved by the National Project Approval Committee (NPAC). The NPAC, comprising of representatives from relevant line ministries, civil society, NGOs and staff of NaCSA will re-examine the application, and if the information provided is found to conform to the DCF requirements and other conditions, will endorse and approve the application. A letter of notification is then sent to the community, informing them about the approval of their application. Projects that cost above the maximum programme threshold of US\$75,000 are referred to the World Bank country representative for approval.

3.2.6 Project Implementation

The community project implementation following project approval and community notification is preceded by a series of training workshops to educate the PMC and other committees on issues such as operating bank accounts, procurement procedures, planning activities and so on. The facilitation process at this stage includes assisting communities to enter into contracts with contractors for the project technical works. After these exercises the project is launched. During the launching ceremony, attended by field and district officers and line ministry representatives, a memorandum of understanding is signed between the community and the overseeing government agency (NaCSA) detailing each other's obligations with regard to funding and successful implementation of the project.

Four payments are made to the community during the implementation period of the project. These payments are made on the basis of the stages of work completed on the project. First payment is made during the launching ceremony of the project, which amounts to just over a third of the costs of the project. A second payment is made after a third of the project work is completed. A third payment is made when two-thirds of the work is completed. A final payment is made when about 70 percent of the work is completed. However, payments are made subject to work verification by NaCSA, and expenditure justification by the community. As such, communities are required to keep up to date records of financial transactions and procurement details open to the public at any time. Finally, community projects are considered complete if the agreed targets have been completed satisfactorily and all the disbursed funds have been accounted for in full.

The preceding sections have provided brief background of Sierra Leone and an outline of the roles of key players and stakeholders in the DCF programme. The objective in this section was particularly to reveal the institutional arrangements of the DCF programme to provide a clear background about the expected objectives and level and extent of local participation the programme seeks to achieve. It is however imperative that the social institutions that underscore people's everyday life and which influence their ability to carry out

the expected roles defined in these arrangements be examined. This assessment is the focus of the following section.

3.3 Communities and Social Institutions

Like most countries in sub-Saharan Africa, in Sierra Leone there are a number of social institutions that are not only crucial in the lives of the people, but have in the past served to hold communities together in times of adversity. Today, it is widely accepted that in the developing world the abilities of some communities to effectively participate in development processes are partly determined by the existing social institutions. The rebel war in Sierra Leone has impacted quite variably on these social institutions. Some observers have contended that some of the causes of the conflict may not have been unrelated to the existing social institutions and practices. A brief overview of these institutions will ensure better understanding of the current policy environment. The relevant social institutions are briefly examined below.

3.3.1 Families and Chiefs

Families and lineages are the most important social institutions in sub-Saharan Africa (Richards et al., 2004). The institutions of family and lineages in pre-colonial Sierra Leone were based on the acquisitions of land by first occupiers, and the attendant ability to defend against war and land grabbing warriors. As Richards et al. (ibid.) describe it, a hunter would establish a territory, then hire professional warriors to defend it as well as to conquer other areas. The villages in the occupied area either accepted his authority or were thrown out. The hunter's kinsmen and their dependants would then join him in the new base. A chiefdom farming community would then be established, with the descendents and relations of the hunter and founder of the base as the ruling family. Strangers and other craftsmen would be allowed to settle in the chiefdom and purchase land from the first-comers. The ruling family would then provide section chiefs, all of whom would be related through marriage alliances. Family connections therefore were and remain very important in Sierra Leone. In the past, those who could not defend themselves were taken as domestic slaves. This system continued up to the late 1930s when it was in theory

abolished by the colonial administration. However, a lack of family connections and important lineages still amounts to the absence of a safety net and serious vulnerability. Thus, land inheritance remains an important feature of Sierra Leone society. As a patriarchal society, land is only inherited by female descendants if there is no male relative. Similarly, women cannot succeed their fathers as chiefs.

At the start of colonial rule, the British, in an effort not to disturb existing social institutions, recognised these ruling families and forced them to sign treaties. The ruling families that refused to sign these treaties were not recognised by the British and forced into exile. Deeply rooted grievances came to exist between the recognised and the unrecognised ruling families. This resurfaced in the rebel conflict, as unrecognised families saw war as an opportunity to settle old scores.

Within the institutions of families and chiefs, marriage remained both strategic and controversial. It was through marriage that strategic alliances between and among families were established and the respective security of the families assured. Tradition demands a man to remain committed to the family from which he has married. Thus a chief would marry off his daughter to a ruling family or a merchant. For the poor, marrying into a higher class meant a source of protection, security and welfare. In this process however, the roles of young men and women are crucial and controversial. The average age of marriage for girls is 15.5 years (Richards et al., 2002 cited in Richards et al., 2004). As the authors argue, this among other things indicates a lack of educational opportunities for young girls who are only seen as a means of bringing wealth to the family through marriage. While young men are not forced into marriage, they are only allowed to marry either within the village communities or families that ensure the bride-wealth system. This also suggests a lack of freedom of choice for young men who do not seem to want to continue to live in rural communities, and some have rebelled against the system by migrating to the cities or mining areas.

Another important feature of the institution of chiefs in Sierra Leone is the use of sanctions and fines, which the colonial administration allowed and has continued today. Chiefs continue to arbitrarily institute sanctions and fines. Minor offences by young men, particularly if they pertained to *women damage* (adultery) have attracted and continue to attract stiff and incommensurate fines and sanctions. This practice in the past led to mass exodus of young men from rural communities, and this group were reported to have swelled the ranks of the RUF. Today, the continuing practice undermines community potential for collective engagement.

3.3.2 Sodalities (Secret Societies)

Like most other countries in sub-Saharan Africa, the institution of sodalities (secret societies) has a long history in Sierra Leone. Sodalities are “gendered sacred associations organised around rituals of initiations and the maintenance of secrets” (Richards et al., 2004:8). As Richards et al. rightly notes, the *Poro* (secret society for men) and *Sande* (secret society for women) serve both as occupational units and a system of worship. The underlining purpose of these associations is to create closed and coherent social groups. They are sources of collective action beyond the family, and continue to play an important role in community defence. The rituals of initiation create particularly strong bonds amongst initiates and general members. These institutions are without doubt indispensable in the social life of the rural people in Sierra Leone. For example, girls are viewed as unmarriageable if they have not been initiated into the *Sande*. Likewise, a man cannot become a chief if he is not a member of the *Poro*.

These sodalities are practiced by all except one of the 17 indigenous tribes of the country. There are also in addition to these, other strands of sodalities with the same form of initiations, sacrifice and worship. These include *Wunde* and *Gbangbani*. These sodalities use sanctions to ensure adherence to the norms of the associations but more importantly to prevent divulging of their secrets. The sanctions can be severely very punitive. Sodalities therefore played a crucial role in the civil conflict.

3.3.3 The Civil Defence Force

During the war, a large number of young men saw the need to mobilise and defend their respective communities from attacks by the RUF rebels. Thus young men nationwide, including university students, teachers and drivers were mobilised and initiated, a process closely related to that of the sodalities, into the Civil Defence Force (CDF). The CDF became a counter-insurgency force against the rebels. The group favourably changed the course of the war, and was partly credited for restoring the overthrown democratically elected government. However, members of the group today feel empowered and do not seem to give up without a fight the power they were used to wielding during the war. Chiefs and community leaders also will not accept the seeming demise of the traditional authority and powers they have.

3.3.4 Community Obligatory Labour

It is obligatory under the customary laws of Sierra Leone for male adults to provide labour for activities such as the construction and repair of government houses, houses of paramount chiefs, emergency works, communal services such as the protection of water supply and sanitation, and construction of feeder roads, bridges and main paths. In addition, chiefdom subjects are required to provide voluntary labour at the discretion of paramount chiefs. However, this provision in law has often been abused by some chiefs. Despite their inconsistencies and sometimes direct contraventions of international conventions and protocols, to which the country is a signatory, these laws still run parallel with state laws, and thus rural communities are still required to maintain rural infrastructures and provide communal services without remuneration.

3.3.5 Labour Groups

Labour sharing has a long history among the people of the Guinea forest region in West Africa, including in Sierra Leone. The multitude of tasks involved in upland farming in the face of reduced household numbers today necessitate labour sharing more than ever before. As Richards et al. (2004) note, while labour gangs largely comprised dependent members of slave-based households in the past, it has now come to comprise male members of smaller

households who arrange to rotate labour. Women also organise to rotate labour for female designated farm activities.

Three main types of labour sharing can be identified. The first and simplest is informal agreement among relatives, kin, neighbours and friends to work together in the cultivation of their farms. While no financial transaction is involved, the owner of the farm is required to provide food for the group on the day the group works on his farm. The men's group will undertake activities such as brushing and felling of trees. The women similarly organise themselves for farm activities such as weeding.

The second type of labour sharing group undertakes specialised tasks on a farm such as ploughing or hoeing and covering of broadcast rice. Thus, one has to be young and fit in order to join such a group. These types of labour sharing groups are usually formed at the beginning of a farming season and are dissolved thereafter. The group decides at the start of the farming periods how many times or days they will work on each member's farms, and this depends on the hands (men and women) provided by the farming household or family. The group may sell their services for cash to non-members, and individual members may also sell their allotted time for cash. These serve as source of income for the group and its members. Strict disciplinary codes of conduct guide the group. Defaulters are given severe penalties and sanctions. Though different strands of this type of group are identifiable throughout the country, they remain largely the same in terms of operational methods and codes of conduct.

The third type of the labour sharing group is the more formal organisation *kombi* ('company' in Mende). This type of group is guided by rules and regulations. Some have constitutions and are required to be registered either with chieftdom authorities or as cooperatives. Unlike the preceding groups, membership of *kombis* is not free. Farmers are required to pay a fee before they are allowed to join. While this group engages in rotational farm labour, they also serve as savings and welfare organisations. Officers are appointed to manage the group, handle group disciplinary matters and liase with other villages or

organisations. The groups meet weekly, usually on Fridays to collect subscriptions and rotational individual savings.

As indicated above, and unlike the other types of labour sharing associations which are gendered groups, membership of *kombis* include both men and women, with gender specific duties. Sometimes reinforcing their importance, membership of *kombis* usually exceeds 100 people and comprises neighbouring villages. An interesting emerging feature of the *kombi* and perhaps a consequence of the war is that women can now join as individuals, whereas in the past they could only join through their husbands or male household members. Increasingly, independent and well to do women can join the group in their own right, and can appoint a male descendant or relative to act on their behalf in male specific farm activities. In recent times, *kombis* have taken on different functions such as sporting activities, entertainment or religious. These notwithstanding, they remain throughout the country as primarily cooperative labour-mobilisation institutions.

3.3.6 Rotational Savings and Credit Associations

In addition to the formal *kombi* discussed above, there are a number of mainly rotational savings and credit associations present in Sierra Leone. Some of these are formal associations such as the government-encouraged micro-savings schemes. The majority of these are informal and are basically agreements among families, relatives, friends, neighbours and acquaintances to pool funds together for important undertakings. Membership usually comprises 10-15 people, who contribute an agreed weekly amount to be given rotationally to a member for that week. This process continues until all members have received a contribution. Sometimes, the group would dissolve itself after every member of the group has received contribution, and other times, it will continue for a long period.

These sources of funding are crucially important in the lives of the rural poor who have little or no credit facilities or opportunities. These funds are notably used for funeral services, payment of school fees and other emergencies. In such times, a member who is far away on the list to be contributed for can

request for his/her name to be brought forward so that they can receive their contribution to attend to the emergency. Almost all the time such understanding is reached by the members.

3.4 Conclusion

The new institutional focus in the participation debate underscores the importance of the policy environment as well as the institutional arrangements that accompany development interventions and programmes in the developing world. The purpose of this chapter was firstly to bring to light the environment in which the DCF programme was undertaken, and secondly to detail the arrangements in place for key stakeholders in the programme. The chapter shows that like other countries in sub-Saharan Africa, the Sierra Leone economic environment is largely agrarian and as such characterised by over-dependence on the agricultural sector. The social institutions depicted above on the whole reflect this nature of the economy. The chiefs and principal lineage systems dominate the social institutions which perpetuate power differentials, social divisions and seclusions that could potentially undermine communities' ability to work together (Richards et al., 2004). Notwithstanding this, there is a history in Sierra Leone of institutions for undertaking collective activities, the existence of which are a prerequisite condition for community participation.

As noted above, and in the research framework in Section 2.3.3 of Chapter 2, the institutional arrangements that underpin the DCF projects defined roles for key players in this process in order to achieve participation as an end in itself, in which communities were to eventually take control of the process for their development and thus their empowerment as a community (McGee, 2002). Were these objectives achieved? What was actually achieved by these arrangements in such and an environment? These are some of the questions one would be prompted to ask. The following chapter details the methodology used in this study in attempting to answer the objectives and questions apparent in this study.

Chapter 4: Research Methodology

4.0 Introduction

Research methods, as argued by Walsh (2005), are nothing but the means by which researchers investigate phenomena in the world. Irrespective of the methods used, research remains largely a personal experience. It is also an oscillating process of moving from one's personal perspective and those of others (Ezz, 2002) in efforts to gain deeper insights and knowledge to assist uncovering facts. As such, research is never completely free from personal perspective and bias, while at the same it is also dependent on the good will of those whose perspectives or views have been sought. The investigation of largely social dimensions in this study further complicates the task at hand. This inherent complexity places potential limitations on both methodology used and outcome achievable.

The challenge for my research approach was how to assess community participation through the lens of social capital when community members often do not trust and socialise with each other, or when communities are characterised by individualism, segregation, exclusion and conflicts, and are unable to undertake collective action. As shown in the measurement framework in Section 2.3.3, if full assessment of communities' ability to participate fully in development were to be made, it is important to investigate social capital dimensions or aspects such as community groups and networks, trust, collective action and social cohesion and inclusion,. Other aspects also seen as worthy of investigation include information and communication flows, norms of reciprocity and solidarity, sense of efficacy, and community sanctions. These dimensions or measures give indications of the extent communities are able to act together and undertake common beneficial projects. Also central in the participation debate, and as argued in Chapter 2, are issues of control and empowerment. These issues were also identified in the framework.

This chapter details the research approach and methods as well as the techniques of data analysis used in this study to answer the research questions.

Section 1 briefly outlines the research approach while Section 2 examines the methodological approach, which includes quantitative and qualitative methods, and the data requirements for the study. Section 3 details the fieldwork exercises, including the pilot survey, the questionnaire and its administration, and brief descriptions of the research communities. Section 4 examines the data analysis techniques employed in the study. Section 5 examines ethical considerations

4.1 Research Approach

Like other social science research, one of the common features of social capital research is the difficulty in deciding the appropriate methodology to employ in investigating the complex issues at stake. However, a number of empirical studies of the concept have employed a combination of quantitative and qualitative techniques, principally because a single methodology cannot capture the varying dimensions of social capital. While quantitative methodology can establish, for example, the levels of the various dimensions of the concept, it cannot reveal the dynamics of these dimensions. It is therefore not surprising that an increasing number of social capital measurement frameworks now recommend a combination of qualitative and quantitative methods to investigate social capital (Franke, 2005; ABS, 2004; Grootaert et al., 2004). This method has in itself a number of advantages including allowing triangulation among the different methods, and achieving deeper analysis and broader detail (Krishna and Shrader, 1999).

Therefore, the approach used here was to combine both qualitative and quantitative methods in order for these methods to complement one another. The quantitative method was supposed to identify the dimensions of the concepts existing in these research communities. While personal perceptions and experience can essentially influence the interpretation of facts (Habermas, 1978), the qualitative method was expected to bring to light the dynamics of the issues being investigated, and to provide deeper insights (Franke, 2005) so as to ensure and inform better interpretation of the facts.

As the institutional arrangements for the DCF projects (as described in Chapter 3) clearly require intense interactions among key players in the programme, the approach sought to involve all these players in order to provide opportunities for these players to assess each other, thereby enriching the analysis. Given the fact that “participation” is the focus of this study, it was imperative that interactive and participatory methodology was used in addition to limited forms of extractive methods.

4.2 Research Methodology

As indicated in the preceding section, both quantitative and qualitative methods are used to complement each other in this study. While an increasing number of empirical studies on social capital are now using quantitative methods to establish relationships, many believe that there are still no strong hypothetical relationships given the complex conceptual dimensions and characteristics (Field, 2003; Halpern, 2005; Stone and Hughes, 2002). Others also believe that there is much to gain from using qualitative methods. For example, Franke (2005) argues that social capital empirical investigations can benefit more from studies that employ qualitative methodology. But perhaps more importantly for evaluating participation, Wilson and Wilde (2003) argue for qualitative analysis of community participation that measures progress from different perspectives. As for social capital, and since the concept is better understood in its local context (Field, 2003 and Halpern, 2005), this method will help provide a better understanding of the research communities.

4.2.1 Quantitative Methods

As suggested by the research question, an important focus of this study is the quantitative measurement of the various dimensions of social capital existing in these communities. The likert scaling technique was employed to achieve this measurement. This technique allows the quantification of attitudinal variables and perceptive options to questions in the questionnaire (Appendix A) in order to facilitate comparison and establish statistical relationships where they exist. The technique is widely used in social science research concerned with attitudes, behaviours and perceptions. It has also been widely used in social

capital research (Narayan, 1998; Narayan and Cassidy, 2001; World Bank, 1999; Falk and Guenther, 2000; Grootaert et al., 2004). Other quantitative methods, as described below, were employed in addition to this technique for data analysis and other aspects of the study.

4.2.2 Qualitative Methods

The appeal of the use of qualitative methods in social capital empirical studies lies in the fact that it leads to better appreciation of the various dimensions of the concept, which enhances and leads to clearer interpretation of quantitative data and information (Franke, 2005). Thus, qualitative methods used in this study include focus group discussions, in-depth interviews and life histories (Krishna and Shrader, 1999).

4.2.3 Data Requirement

To answer the research question in this study fully, a wide range of data or information was required. Yin (1994) suggests documentation, archival records and interviews as some sources for collecting data. However, due to the lack of proper documentation and records in the developing world, and the limited study undertaken in this area, data for this research was obtained directly from the fieldwork through the methods and techniques discussed here. In addition to these sources, other selected data and information were collected from Statistics Sierra Leone, (SSL), the National Commission for Social Action (NaCSA) and other sources.

4.3 Research Fieldwork.

The fieldwork for this research was undertaken between 24 April and 12 June 2006, a period of six weeks. The choice of this period was necessitated by the fact that it coincided with the period by which major seasonal farming activities have been completed, in order to not interrupt the daily activities more than necessary of those who had consented to participate in the research. This period also coincided with the time of the year when communities engage collective community activities. Thus, the period also provided the unique opportunity for direct observation of people engaged in collective community

undertakings and other social activities. The survey administration and data collection exercises were preceded by a pilot survey.

4.3.1 Pilot Survey

Piloting of the survey questionnaires and instruments were undertaken between 25 April and 6 May 2006. The aim of the exercise was to test if the interview questions, questionnaires and other survey instruments were clear and easy to understand and administer. The survey was also aimed to test whether the methods chosen for the research would bring out the data and information needed to answer the research questions. A simple random sample was used during the conduct of the pilot survey. A sample of four interviewees was selected from each stratified pilot sample in five communities which were similar in characteristics, history and socio-cultural backgrounds to the research communities. People in these communities were interviewed, observed and questionnaires administered to.

Following the completion of this exercise, which lasted for about a week, a quick analysis of the results was immediately undertaken. This analysis showed the need for serious modification of not only the questions but the general research methodology. For example, questions on groups and associations seemed to be too direct and sensitive and therefore needed to be rephrased. Further, it became apparent that if reliable information was to be obtained, then community members needed to play a central role, for example, as facilitators of the focus group discussions.

4.3.2 Survey Administration

The administration of the questionnaire and interviews, following modification after the pilot survey, were undertaken in the Pujehun district from 8 to 21 May, a period of two weeks. The questionnaires were administered by the researcher and two research assistants, but the semi-structured and in-depth interviews and focus group discussions were undertaken by the researcher, since these techniques require special research skills. However, facilitation roles were assigned to members of the communities who had been selected by them to undertake this role. Tape recorders, flip-charts and special notebooks

were used in these exercises to record responses, information, identify consensus issues and so on.

The same processes, procedures and techniques were used in Port Loko, the second of the two districts involved in this study, between 22 May and 4 June. But unlike in Pujehun district where there was no need for an interpreter, as the researcher and the two assistants were from the same local ethnic group, in Port Loko there was a language barrier and therefore the need for an interpreter to be used.

Immediately after the completion of the field research, the questionnaire data were compiled and collated, and then transferred to appropriate computer software (Excel spreadsheet) for data analysis. Tape recorded information was transcribed and coded and then transferred to the overall research database. The instruments used in the research, including the recorded cassettes, notes books and flip charts in particular, were then securely stored in a safe building. Duplicate copies of these materials and instruments were similarly stored but in a different premise to guard against complete loss in the event of an emergency.

4.3.3 Survey Sampling

The research covered four cluster sample project communities and one non-project community in the Pujehun district. In the Port Loko district, it covered a cluster sample of five project communities. These communities included the districts headquarter towns of Pujehun and Port Loko.

4.3.3.1 Quantitative Survey Sampling

The sampling techniques used in this study were dictated by the intended quantitative analysis. Therefore, a simple random sampling was employed for smaller communities in both districts. For the larger communities, particularly in the district headquarter towns and their immediate environs, the survey sampling involved the division of the research population into groups of similar units or strata, and then a simple random sample of these units or strata was made. The rationale for this strategy was that as units in the same stratum are

characteristically similar, a simple random sampling of the strata would produce more exact information than would a simple sample of the same population (More and McCabe, 1993). Respondents were interviewed or questionnaires administered from a sample frame of the stratified sample units until the sample quota was achieved (Broughton and Hampshire, 1997).

4.3.3.2 Qualitative Survey Sampling

For the qualitative survey, the same random sampling strategy guided the process to a limited extent. However, in this case the strategy was deliberately modified and made more flexible in order to ensure its detail and reliability. This seemingly minor change was deemed necessary because a simple random sampling of the target population could have eliminated a large number of key informants, such as chiefs, community elders, youth and women, whose opinions and views were not only crucial in either confirming or refuting contestable issues, but sometimes their roles, particularly in the initial stage of the fieldwork, were considered invaluable (Berg, 2005). These groups were therefore carefully selected to participate in the interview sessions and focus group discussions in all the research communities.

4.3.3.3 Research Questionnaires

The questionnaires and interview questions are adapted and in some instances modified from the relevant parts of the World Bank's *Social Capital Assessment Tools* (SCAT) (Krishna and Shrader, 1999), the Australian Social Capital Measurement Framework (ABS, 2004), *Measuring Social Capital: An Integrated Questionnaire* (Grootaert et al., 2004) and other empirical studies such as those by Krishna (1992), Narayan and Pritchett (1997) and Narayan and Cassidy (2001). These measurement tools and framework, despite criticism, remain credible measurement tools that provide for an in-depth investigation of social capital within the context of community participation or otherwise (Franke, 2005).

The questions and instruments here are designed to elicit both qualitative information on the dynamics and other aspects of community participation and social capital, and quantitative data on the dimensions of the concepts of

interest (see Sections 2.3.2.1 to 2.3.2.9 of Chapter 2). Even though some aspects of the research require thorough investigation through well-structured interviews, the questionnaires here for the first phase of the fieldwork combined to achieve this objective. This strategy is specifically employed to provide the required quantitative information while at the same time indicating the nature of the prerequisite questions to be asked in the qualitative investigation that followed during the second phase of the fieldwork.

4.3.3.4 Research Communities

The data for this research was collected by the above methods in ten communities in the Pujehun and Port Loko districts in southern and northern Sierra Leone respectively. Port Loko district, as indicated in Chapter 1, is about 45 miles away from the capital, with some communities surveyed even closer to the city. Pujehun district, on the other hand, is about 200 miles away from the capital. The farthest community surveyed was about 15 miles further away from the district headquarter town. The total population of Port Loko district was estimated at 444,531 by the Population and Housing Census of 2004, while that of Pujehun was estimated by the same census at 275,130 (Statistics Sierra Leone, 2005). With the exception of the district headquarter towns, the population of the communities studied ranges from about 250 to 700 people. On the contrary, the population of the towns from 1500 in Gobaru in Pujehun district, to about 3000 people in Port Loko town. These headquarter town communities are generally semi-urban communities with facilities such as hospitals, schools, colleges (teachers training college in Port Loko), pipe borne water supply systems and recreational centres which most of the other communities lack.

All except one community, Mallen in the Pujehun district, were involved in the DCF programme. These communities exhibit the district level characteristics, which are detailed in Appendix C. Like most parts of the country, the principal occupations of the majority of the population remain self-employed subsistence farming, unpaid farm work and household work. In Pujehun district, a small proportion of members in all the communities engage in mining activities to complement their farm income.

4.4 Research Analysis

As this study combines both qualitative and quantitative methods to complement each other, the analytical tools employed incorporated both quantitative and qualitative tools and techniques. These tools and techniques are examined briefly below.

4.4.1 Quantitative Analysis

As indicated above, the data analysis used in this study was as suggested by the various measurement frameworks as adopted and modified in the questionnaires. These included the World Bank's *Social Capital Assessment Tools* (SCAT) (Krishna and Shrader, 1999; Grootaert et al., 2004), the Australian Social Measurement Framework (ABS, 2004), and the Canadian Policy Research Initiative (PRI) (Franke, 2005).

The first step was therefore in the form of tables and based on the main indicators of social capital. For Grootaert et al. (2004:9), "tabular analysis is a simple and convenient way to organise data and to extract the basic messages that the data contain". To present a visual picture of the various dimensions of social capital in the research communities so as to ensure comparative analyses, histograms, line graphs and other methods of data presentation, as suggested by Krishna and Shrader (1999), were used.

4.4.2 Qualitative Analysis

The qualitative information was primarily used to support in terms of context the quantitative data, relationships and findings that required corroboration for validity or otherwise, and more importantly for better understanding of complex conceptual dynamics. Therefore, thematic and content analyses were undertaken to ensure the reliability of this strategy. Beyond these and the classification into appropriate categories, there was limited further analysis.

4.5 Ethical Considerations

The overall research methodology was considered by the Massey University Human Ethics Committee (MUHEC) to be low risk. The Massey University ethics guidelines were strictly followed throughout the survey and interview process. In particular, the following were stressed before interviews and questionnaire administration:

1. *Research Objectives*: Participants were truthfully informed about the objectives of the research to enable them decide whether to participate.
2. *Informed Consent*: Participants were advised that participation in the survey was voluntary, and that participants could refuse to answer questions, withdraw from the process at any time, ask questions and request a summary of the study findings.
3. *Confidentiality and Anonymity*: Participants were informed that participation in the research was confidential to the research. Those who insisted on their names being recorded were told that their names would still remain confidential.

4.6 Conclusion

Due to the definitional complexities of social capital, there is as yet little agreement on the core indicators or measures of the concept (Dekker, 2004; Stone and Hughes, 2001; ABS, 2004; Franke, 2005; Narayan and Cassidy, 2004). Despite this, attempts were made to investigate the various dimensions of social capital as identified in the framework that are important to the research questions. Experience in working directly with communities in the past had led the researcher to believe that investigating social issues such as those in this study was not only complex but depended largely on the goodwill of the interviewees. The quality of the research data and information was dependent to a large extent on the relationship between the researcher and the research community. The various methods and techniques discussed in this chapter are the means through which data and information were collected, analysed and interpreted so as to lead to answering the central research questions. The subject of the next chapter is the analysis of the data as were collected by these methods and techniques.

Chapter 5: Research Findings and Analysis

5.0 Introduction

In assessing community participation in development within the social context, certain questions become apparent. Is there any link between community social capital and participation levels? Can differences in community social capital levels explain the differences in participation and performance of community development projects? On the whole, is social capital enhancing or debarring community participation in development projects? What effects will the institutional environment in which participation is pursued have on people's ability or willingness to participate? What are the other factors that can affect community participation? This chapter seeks to answer these and other questions through analysis of the data collected from the fieldwork in the ten communities in Pujehun and Port Loko districts in Sierra Leone.

Relevant to the analysis here is the institutional environment examined in Chapter 3, which detailed the roles and functions of key stakeholders as well as the processes, procedures and strategies of the case study. Section 1 of this chapter presents and analyses the findings of the fieldwork as they pertain to social capital. These are analysed according to relevant dimensions of social capital as identified in the framework and discussed in the review of literature in Chapter 2. This is followed by presentation of institutional processes and roles. As indicated in the framework, some of the issues are so closely related that they could be analysed under either of these two broad categories. They are however analysed where they are considered most important.

5.1 Research Findings

Grootaert et al. (2004) suggest that the first step and objective in social capital empirical studies is to take stock of existing social capital so that its distribution across various communities can become apparent. They believed this would provide for capturing a broader understanding of its various dimensions. Based on the approach of Grootaert et al. (2004), my analysis of the research findings

started with an examination of the existing social capital data in the surveyed communities in both research districts.

5.1.1 Group and Network Size

As argued in the preceding chapters, dimensions of social capital such as trust, solidarity, and collective action are most effective when put to work in groups and networks of associations (Grootaert et al., 2004). Networks and groups are not only integral to social capital but their qualities, transactions, structure and types provide insights into how efficiently they function (ABS, 2004) as well as how these community features are transformed into assets for collective action. Networks and groups function within units ranging from the family to the larger community, which over time and space define shared values, interests and other norms that guide expected community behaviour and actions, as well as the ensuing relationships and interactions that exist between and among people in these units (Stone and Hughes, 2001).

These relationships and interactions are particularly important in the lives of village communities. But perhaps more importantly for both individual and collective welfare are the types of groups and networks that the people can call upon, as well as their respective contributions to these groups and networks (Grootaert et al., 2004). Therefore, these relational trust, solidarity and support dimensions of social capital were investigated. In particular, questions were asked on participants' density of membership in associations, the institutional functions of these associations and network sizes, connections and perceptions of the support available in these associations and networks of relationships.

5.1.1.1 Density of Membership

The density of membership of organisations is measured as the number of organisations on average of which each person in the community was a member. These included both the formal and informal organisations, but particularly the social groups. Research participants were asked to indicate the number of both formal and informal organisations of which they were members in the survey questionnaire in all the survey communities. On average each respondent was a member of at least five associations or groups. These

ranged from associations of a few to a large number of people, and also from strictly formal organisations to informal groupings such as the seasonal labour-sharing organisations. Smaller communities had on average fewer organisations in which respondents were members than the larger and district headquarter communities. Another important feature of the findings is that communities of almost similar size but closer to the capital or other cities scored higher in the number of organisations of which residents were members.

Respondents identified the seasonal labour-sharing clubs (*kombi* or *kabotho*) and *osusu* (the local rotational savings schemes) as the most important associations in terms of economic welfare and enhancing trust and cooperation in the communities. They revealed that these were the institutions they turned to in times of need when other options were unavailable. Labour-sharing groups were credited with enabling the physically disabled or single women who could not do some aspects of farm work to have their own farms, while the *Osusu* provided credits and loans to members in times of need such as school fees and medical emergencies. While this was the case in all the communities, it was particularly evident in smaller communities.

Also of increasing significance were religious groups. It was revealed in personal interviews and focus group discussions that membership in these groups had increased by over fifty percent since the end of the war in all the communities. This increase in membership was attributed to the support usually provided by these associations to its members as well as the wider communities. In some instances, they were credited with providing volunteer teachers for some schools. Over the past three years, the number of associations and groups in these communities had increased, thereby increasing associational density in the past three years.

5.1.1.2 Institutional Functioning of Groups and Associations

An important component of this dimension of social capital is the extent to which these groups and associations function institutionally. This is critical if these relational assets are to be transformed into beneficial outcomes for collective action for the common good (Grootaert et al., 2004). Most often decision-

making processes in groups in rural settings are monopolised by a few. These include the rural elites and community leaders. This serves as an obstacle to the full participation of all in the activities of such groups, thereby denying such communities the opportunity to appropriate the potential benefits of these associations.

Therefore, investigating the institutional functioning of these groups becomes central in examining this dimension of social capital. Survey participants were asked about the extent of their participation in the decision-making processes of their associations and groups, how group or association leaders are selected and consequently the extent of their participation in the group activities. In all the communities with the exception of the district headquarter or semi-urban communities, 78 per cent of respondents believed that they participated to a very large extent in the activities of the groups and associations, including decision-making processes, while 12 per cent and 10 per cent participated to a small and a very small extent. In the district headquarter communities, only 55 per cent participated to a very large extent in group activities with 20 per cent and 25 per cent percent participating to a small and very small extent. However, to the question on how group leaders were elected, on average 56 per cent of respondents indicated that leaders were voted for by members. For the larger communities, 75 per cent said that group leaders were directly voted for. In both cases, 40 per cent and 24 per cent believed that leaders were selected by influential community members.

When the scores for all the questions in this dimension of social capital were averaged, it showed that the institutional functioning of organisations in all the communities was above average. The larger district headquarters or semi-urban communities scored higher than those of the smaller rural communities. This was attributed in all the communities to the existence of greater awareness levels of what was going on in terms of post-conflict development amongst the people in the semi-urban communities than was the case in the smaller rural communities. Similarly, and as the case with organisational density, rural communities closer to the city on average scored slightly higher than those farther away from the capital or other cities.

5.1.1.3 Community Network Sizes and Support Perceptions

Survival for many in poor communities depends to a large extent on the circle of close friends, in addition to family members, that one can turn to in times of need. To ascertain community networks, questions were designed to investigate network size and the extent these networks would provide assistance to the people in times of need. The term 'network' was used here to mean the group of close friends outside one's immediate family that one could turn to for assistance or feel free to talk to about private matters (Grootaert et al., 2004). Network size and support ties well with common aphorism that "it is not what you know, it is who you know" (Woolcock and Narayan, 2000:225).

On questions related to the number of friends respondents have, about 65 per cent revealed that they had lots of friends, while 25 per cent had few friends and about 10 per cent had not more than two friends. However, over 80 per cent of these were from the same streets or communities. Religion did not count much in terms of friends respondents had. But larger community members had more networks of close friends than the smaller communities (85 per cent and 77 per cent respectively). In contrast, in terms of support in times of need, family support remains critical. Only 45 per cent believed that they could turn to close friends for support, while the majority (55 per cent) got support from their immediate family members. The survey data corroborated information from interviews and focus group discussion that on average, residents in these communities had between 4 and 6 friends outside their immediate families, some of whom lived outside their communities and were quite important to them.

5.1.1.4 Organisational Connections

As argued earlier, organisational connections and individual relationships are very important in assessing social capital (Halpern, 2005; ABS, 2004; Grootaert et al., 2004). As argued by Halpern (2005), relationships and connections either at the individual or group level that are inward looking may result in strong exclusiveness or homogeneity, as they are limited to people of the same background or interests and may fail to open wide access to its membership.

On the contrary, relationships that are outward looking and involve people outside one's immediate family, tribe, community or culture may bring about many benefits to its members. Such relationships or connections become more beneficial when they involve people in different social layers (ABS, 2004).

Most of these groups and organisations by character, function and purpose can be described as bonding social capital. Some of these organisations and groups are not only strongly bonded but some have been founded on the principle of exclusiveness in terms of gender and/or religion. As detailed in the preceding sub-section, in Sierra Leone these include the sodalities (secret societies) and the religious groups. As such, a large proportion of these organisations (about 70 per cent) have no contacts outside their village communities. However, there is a small percentage (about 15 per cent) that has maintained linkages with other groups outside their communities. Some of these are the federated groups of larger chiefdoms and national groups or associations. These include the farmers associations and micro credit organisations. On the other hand, there are some organisations that have bridging social capital characteristics. These include sport groups, labour-sharing groups, and farmers and chiefdom development committees.

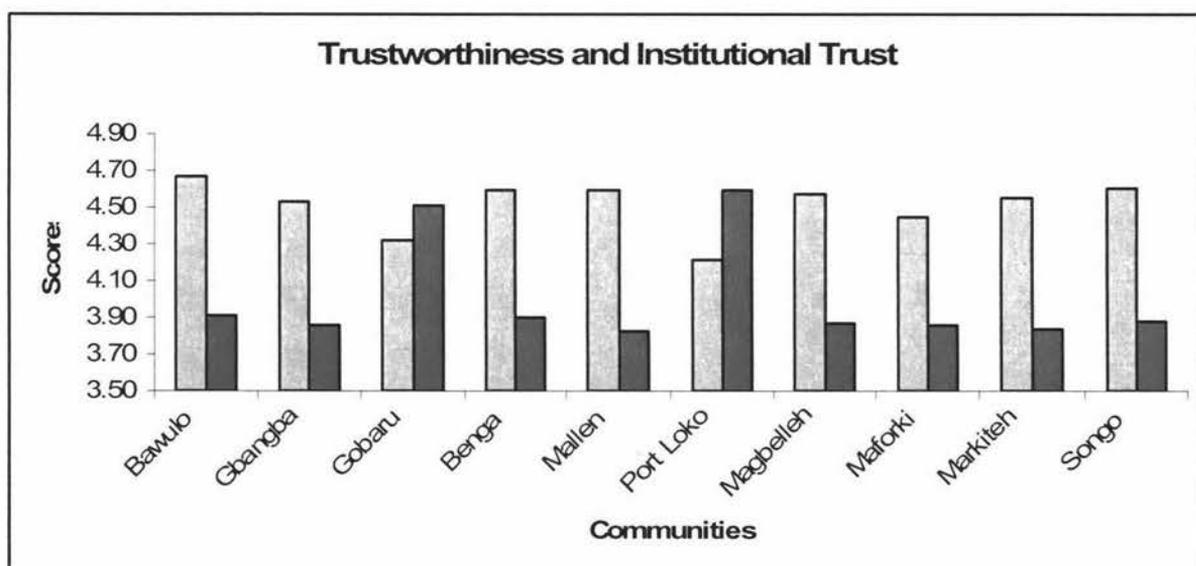
5.1.2 Generalised and Institutional Trust

This dimension of social capital was severely undermined during the 11 year civil conflict. People who had lived together peacefully became enemies during the war, some by deliberate choice and others by coincidence, because they found themselves on the opposing sides of the conflict (Richards et al., 2004). Furthermore, post-independence economic mismanagement, poor governance and institutionalised corruption had eroded people's trust in government and other public institutions (Government of Sierra Leone, 2005; 2003). Against this backdrop, this study sought to investigate communities' expectations and experiences in the manifestation of this dimension of social capital. In particular, respondents were asked about their trust in various groups of people, community leaders and government institutions, as well as presented with hypothetical instances of trust relationships and behaviour. Measured on a

scale of 1 to 5, the average scores of the survey communities are as shown in Figure 2 below.

As Figure 2 shows, there were high levels of both types of trust, ranging from 3.86 or 77 per cent for institutional trust in Maforki and Gbangba communities to 4.60 for trustworthiness and institutional trust in Mallen and Port Loko communities respectively. However, generalised trust or trustworthiness was higher in all the small village communities than in the larger semi-cosmopolitan communities. On the contrary, the larger communities scored far higher marks in institutional trust levels than the small rural communities.

Figure 2: Trustworthiness and institutional trust



To the question of the underlying reasons for the comparatively low levels of institutional trust in the small rural communities, respondents were unanimous in pointing to one particular reason. This reason was summed up vividly by a female respondent in an interview:

We trust one another in our community because we know each other well. But for government officers, despite moderate changing behaviour many remain corrupt and can not be trusted (Interview: 22/04/06).

However, the overall institutional score was particularly skewed by the variation in the answers between smaller rural communities and the larger semi-cosmopolitan communities to the question as to whether respondents would get a response if they as individuals or community were to make a petition or contact with government or government officials. About 90 per cent of respondents of smaller communities believed that as individuals, they would be ignored, while 10 per cent believed they would receive an overdue response. As a community, 60 per cent believed that they would receive an overdue response, while 40 per cent believed that they would surely receive a response. For the larger communities, 60 per cent believed that as individuals they would receive an overdue response, while 40 per cent were confident that they would surely receive a response. As a community, 90 per cent believed that they would surely receive a timely response. However, a small proportion (10 per cent) was very doubtful and believed that they would be ignored. For the semi-cosmopolitan communities a non-response from government or its representative would invite a visit from the community members and this would surely bring forth a response. For smaller communities, there was very little they could do in the event of non-response as they were far away from the seats of government and could probably ill-afford the resources to chase up a response except if the reasons for such petition were very important.

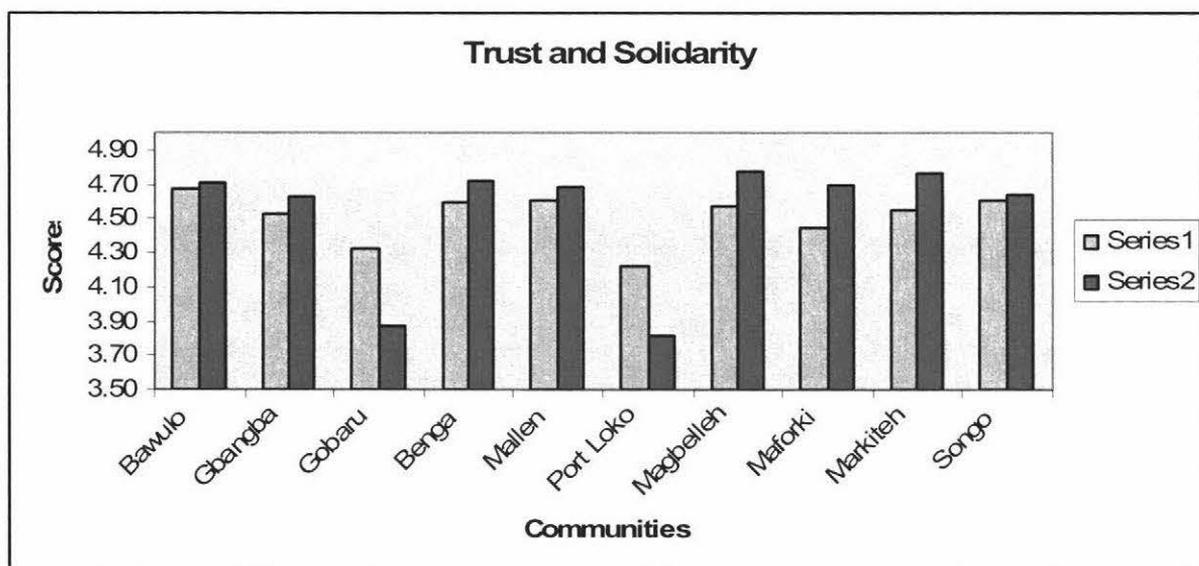
5.1.3 Norms of Solidarity and Reciprocity

The immediate preceding sub-section has detailed existing generalised and institutional trust in the study communities. But for analytical purposes, it is fitting to bring together the measures of the “structures of cooperation” (Caulkins, 2004) that not only underpin community interactions and relationships but which are also necessary for the smooth cohesion and existence of communities. For these dimensions of social capital, the transmission mechanism as argued by Putnam (1993, 2000) is relatively straightforward. Putnam (2000) posits that membership of multiple organisations would expose members to a larger network of people, and consequently cross-cutting relationships and ties would surely ensue. In this instance, when people develop trust and solidarity with one another in one group or organisation, this would extend to non-members of this organisation as

a result of membership of multiple groups or associations in the community. In the end, this would lead to the prevalence of trust and solidarity in such a community. This community would have common interests and values, and would be better placed to engage in collective action dictated by these acquired values and interests.

Like most measures of social capital, trust and solidarity are closely linked (Grootaert et al., 2004). However, solidarity resonates well with reciprocity as the two dimensions are in broad terms examining the same issues (Narayan and Cassidy, 2001). Therefore, to gauge the extent of existing norms of solidarity and reciprocity in these communities, respondents were presented with hypothetical statements to respond to, in addition to direct questions on acts of solidarity and reciprocity from individual and community perspectives.

Figure 3: Levels of trust and solidarity



Norms of solidarity and reciprocity are important features that underscore rural lives and livelihoods. The scores on these dimensions of social capital were high in all the communities. As in the case of trust, smaller rural communities scored higher on solidarity and reciprocity, with the Magbelleh community registering the highest scores of about 95 per cent. Like most of the other dimensions of social capital, these dimensions also reveal the broad differences between the rural and semi-urban communities. While all of the eight rural

communities had a score of 94 per cent, the two semi urban communities had an average score of 77 per cent. In particular while over 80 per cent of the residents in the rural communities strongly agreed with the need to assist those who had assisted them in the past, the majority of the respondents in the semi-urban communities did not see it as obligatory to do so. Similarly, the same proportion of rural respondents who believed in helping one another in times of need, were also willing to contribute money, time and labour to community projects that did not directly benefit them. One respondent summed up the strong belief in solidarity and reciprocity and the feeling of community when she observed that:

This is our way of life. One man cannot live alone. We need to help each other, and our community. If we do not, no one will do so for us
(Interview: 23/04/06).

For the semi-urban communities, they believed in sometimes helping one another in times of need. However, the majority said they would contribute money, time or labour to community projects to a small extent and this would depend on the benefits they hoped to derive directly or indirectly from such a project.

5.1.4 Collective Action and Cooperation, and Sense of Efficacy

One of the defining features of development in some parts of the developing world is the fact that most of the essential services are provided through community cooperation and common action or self-help (Friedmann, 1992; Oakley et al, 1991; Grootaert et al., 2004). Against this background, this study sought to investigate the extent of the willingness of communities to cooperate together and participate in common action for the development of their respective communities. Therefore, to indicate potential for community collective activities and cooperation, respondents were queried about past instances of collective action and cooperation in common beneficial programmes, support for community activities and so on. The results of these, measured on a common scale for comparative purposes are discussed here.

Closely related to the high regard for the norms of solidarity and reciprocity in these communities, was the need to cooperate and engage in collective action. All the communities believed strongly that they could only develop in their own way if they cooperated and therefore were involved in collective action. The need for collective action in order to bring about community development was clearly emphasised by an interviewee in the Marforki community when he asserted that:

One person is not development. We have to come together and work as a unit if we are to bring development to our communities (Interview: 25/04/06).

In particular, on questions about their willingness to contribute money, time and other resources to undertake community development projects such as the construction of schools, health, clinics or post, or maintain feeder roads, about 85 per cent in all communities were likely to do so. The same percentage of respondents also was always ready to support community undertakings of such nature, as well as other activities the community saw fit to engage in.

Like the other measures of social capital, the emerging differences in the manifestations of indicators of willingness to contribute again characterised this dimension. Measured on a common scale, the semi-urban communities again scored lower than all the remote rural communities. The two semi-urban communities scored on average 87 per cent while the small rural communities had an average score of 95 per cent on the questions on these measures.

As argued in Chapter 2, central in community development literature and debate is the question of the capacity of rural communities to produce desired outcomes and results by themselves. Therefore, in addition to investigating the willingness to cooperate and work together, this research investigated communities' beliefs in their abilities to undertake aided development in their respective settings involving a significant outlay of funds. The results indicated a high degree of confidence and belief in communities' ability to undertake community development programmes. But many respondents admitted that in the past they had little confidence their abilities as they had never been given

the opportunity to do so. On the related question on their ability to resolve conflicts among themselves, all the community perception scores were higher than 75 per cent.

The new found optimism and high perceived sense of efficacy was a direct result of the implementation of the DCF program. Communities believed that they now had the capacity to undertake projects on their own perhaps with little or no external assistance because in their own words:

NaCSA has trained us in how to manage everything pertaining to a project on our own. We are now trained in different fields such as masonry, carpentry, bookkeeping etc. (Focus group discussions: 28/05/06).

Despite the overall optimism about community sense of efficacy, the aggregate score on the questions on this dimension of social capital again showed differences between semi-urban and rural communities. Unlike the other measures examined above in which rural communities scored higher than the semi-urban communities, the results of this question showed that there is a greater sense of efficacy in the semi-urban communities than the rural communities. On average the semi-urban communities had a score of 94 per cent against 88 per cent for the smaller rural communities. But the striking feature of this measure is that the score seemingly varied according to the sizes of the communities in the district. For example, the smallest community, Bawulo in the Pujehun district, had a score of 4.42 on a scale of 5, while Songo, the smallest community in the Port Loko district, had a score of 4.40.

5.1.5 Information and Communication

Perhaps one of the most effective ways of not only maintaining but enhancing social capital depends on the ability of the members of the community to be in constant communication with other community members, with other communities, and with members of networks outside their immediate communities (ABS, 2004, Grootaert et al., 2004; Stone and Hughes, 2001). In developing countries, the lack of a free flow of information between rural communities and the state apparatus has often been cited as one of the causes of the lack of development in the former. This study therefore investigated the

sources of information available to community members, the extent of communication between and among community members, with members of their networks outside their communities, and the extent to which information is easily accessed. In particular, communities were asked about the extent to which they were informed about development programmes in and outside their communities and about the DCF projects.

In the rural communities, members seemed to be well informed about what was going on in their communities. Respondents indicated that information on development was made available to them by the district level development officers through community elders. In these instances, meetings were called by the elders and the community were then apprised of the information. But however, 30 per cent of respondents indicated that they received such information either through neighbours, friends or household members. This group nevertheless admitted that conscientious efforts were made on the parts of the elders to inform all the community members. With respect to the DCF programme, over 80 per cent said that they were well informed about all its activities.

Respondents believed that the provincial/regional radio network had played significant role in informing rural communities about proposed developments in their communities and other parts of the country long before these developments actually took place. They believed that this had enabled communities to prepare themselves well for such projects. Not surprising therefore, about 80 per cent of respondents indicated radio as the main source of information on whatever that was going on. Only 5 per cent of respondents cited newspaper as a source of information in these communities. This was not surprising given the illiteracy rate estimated at 65 per cent in these parts of the country, and the fact that some of these communities are far removed from towns and cities where newspapers are sold or available to the public. However, in the semi-urban communities, about 35 per cent of respondents cited newspaper as a major source of information.

5.1.6 Social Cohesion and Community Sanctions

The fundamental outcome of social capital at the community level is indicated by the degree of prevailing social cohesion of the community members. The existence of social cohesion in most instances is indicated by feelings of togetherness, absence of the feeling of exclusion from services and participation in creating aspects of everyday community life, and equitable access to services based on wealth, income and social status. More importantly, if there are differences that can lead to violence then feelings of safety, absence of fear, and above all, the prevalence of peace in that community are significant factors against social cohesion (ABS, 2004). These issues seriously impact on a community's ability to function as a unified institution and therefore undertake collective actions. These various aspects were investigated in this study. Questions were asked about feelings of togetherness and safety, differences in terms of wealth, income and social status and whether these subsequently lead to violence, and whether people have been excluded from the use of, for example, public services or deliberate exclusion on the grounds of culture, tribes, or other reasons.

On the whole there was generally a high degree of social cohesion in all the surveyed communities as measured by the various aspects mentioned here. However, the aggregate scores for the communities again re-enforced the emerging differences between the rural communities and the semi-urban communities. Though the scores were also high for these communities (about 85 per cent), the semi-urban communities scored lower than all the rural communities. In particular, there were high levels of feelings of togetherness in all the rural communities. This was largely due to the fact that in these communities, people were almost of equal status in terms of wealth, economic, social status and education. The average number of years of school is about 4.5 years. On the contrary, in the semi-urban communities, even though there was the new determination to work together as a community, there was not a high feeling of togetherness. This may not be surprising as these communities were characterised by differences in wealth, income, education and thus social status. In addition, these are communities that could best be described as multi

ethnic settings. However, these differences or diversities have not led to violence since the end of the civil conflict five years ago.

To maintain the prevailing peaceful tranquillity, the communities revealed that they were now involved in progressive activities, as well as festivities and entertainment with the goal of maintaining the current social cohesion amongst them. On questions of their communities' ability to resolve differences amongst themselves, the respondents believed this was perhaps their most important preoccupation following the end of the war. This belief was clearly captured by an elderly female interviewee who observed that:

We have learned to resolve our differences in the hard way. We shall never allow our differences to lead to violence as we did in before the war. We now know the value of promptly resolving differences amongst ourselves (Interview: 27/05/06).

Community sanctions are nothing but means or rules that ensure adherence to the norms and values of society (Luzzati, 2000; Halpern, 2005). As argued above, in Sierra Leone, sanctions such as incommensurate punishments for offences by young men have been indiscriminately applied and consequently negatively affected community cohesion and potential for collective action. Richards et al., for example, found that harsh and controversial sanctions in the form of fines in various kinds, punitive local laws and banishment caused many young men to abandon their villages and join the Revolutionary United Front (RUF) rebels during the civil conflict (Richards et al., 2004). Respondents were therefore queried about their perception of the community by-laws, and whether monetary fines had been imposed.

On the whole, communities believed in these by-laws and rules and accepted the use of these and some form of punishments to maintain order and correct incompatible behaviours of certain individuals. All the communities had instituted one form of punishment or the other, either in the form of financial or material fines. The interviews and discussions revealed that all communities used these laws along side state laws and legislations to maintain order. On the

question of conflict between the two sources of law, the communities admitted the supremacy of state laws and legislation.

Respondents indicated that community sanctions were now being used more fairly. Chiefs and community elders had been accused of abusing this institution of maintaining law and order and keeping community networks together, which had driven young men to run away from these communities (Richards et al., 2004). In contrast, community elders now believed that these fines were only applied in selective instances and usually as a last resort. The general opinion was that fines were now small and often affordable. While these practices characterised the everyday life of rural communities, indications were that they were becoming less significant in the semi-urban and urban communities, where increasing numbers of people (about 75 per cent) did not see the significance of them along side state legislations.

5.2 DCF Institutional Processes and Objectives

The preceding section has presented analysis of community survey and interview data on the various dimensions or indicative measures of social capital deemed relevant to the research questions. But, as argued in the review of literature in Chapter 2, the institutional context in which participation is pursued either as a transformative process or an end in itself remains crucially important for the level of participation eventually achieved (Kothari and Minogue, 2002). Therefore the institutional processes roles and procedures that governed the case study were examined in Chapter 3. The DCF was based on a community driven development strategy that aimed to ensure full community participation in development through empowerment that would enable such communities assume full responsibilities for planning, implementation and the maintenance of community level projects (NaCSA, 2003). In other words, the DCF programme pursued participation as an end in itself. The following section presents analysis of findings as they relate to relevant issues of these processes and procedures, as perceived by the DCF stakeholders themselves as well as key informants in the communities.

5.2.1 Community Needs

Perhaps the main criticism of the practice of development is that most often the voices of those whose development was pursued were largely ignored, and therefore development projects undertaken did not reflect their needs (Chambers, 1997). In searching for alternative strategies that have a chance of ensuring effective participation and putting the people in the driver's seat in development (Maxwell and Riddell, 1987), it was not surprising that the objective of the DCF programme was to facilitate a process through which communities can initiate, manage and sustain community projects (NaCSA, 2003). Therefore respondents were asked to ascertain how these projects were identified and selected, and how participative individuals and communities were in the identification and selection process. Respondents were also asked to indicate the extent to which the selected projects met the community needs.

On the question of the selection and identification of the projects, about 55 per cent of respondents believed that project identification and selection were done through community consensus while 32 per cent said the process was done by direct community votes. However, about 6 per cent believed that the projects had already been identified and selected by NaCSA and local councils respectively. On individual participation in this process, 70 per cent described it as very participative. About 10 per cent indicated no participation in the process. The rest indicated some level of participation.

Community participation in the process was overwhelming with 92 per cent of respondents describing it as very participative, while only 2 per cent believed that the communities had no participation in the process. On the question of whether the projects selected reflected the priority needs of the communities (considering the multitude of needs in post-conflict situation), the majority of the respondents (about 60 per cent) believed that to a very large extent the projects reflected the needs of the communities, with 20 per cent indicating that to a large extent they met the needs of the communities. In all the surveyed communities, about 4 per cent stated that the projects did not meet the needs of these communities. However about 23 per cent of the respondents in the Gobaru community, which selected a court house as its project, did not believe

that this project reflected the community's priority need. In focus group discussions, communities admitted that at the end of the war, it was difficult to agree on a single priority need of the community as there were a lot of challenges that confronted them. They however believed that they were able to do so after the post-DCF Participatory Poverty Assessment (PPA) training conducted by NaCSA.

5.2.2 Project Ownership and Control

Project ownership and control in participation literature are undeniably the main issues of participation debates. In a limited sense, the levels of respect for local decisions in project planning and implementation and local control over project resources are indicative of the degree of ownership and control. This study therefore queried participants about the extent of their ownership and control over these projects with respect to questions on freedom to decide project activities and control its resources. The majority of respondents believed strongly that communities had complete ownership and control over the projects. On the whole, in focus group discussions, respondents revealed that their involvement at the initial stage of the project cycle, in project identification and selection, and the planning process as a whole reassured them that unlike in the past, these projects were indeed *their own*. But more importantly, the participation in community contribution was significant in removing whatever suspicion and doubt was present with regards these issues.

Key manifestations of this fact were the establishment of maintenance accounts for these projects and the special arrangements put in place to ensure that these projects are effectively maintained so that they can serve the communities for very long time. Accounts were opened with local bank branches for project maintenance. These accounts were often funded by community initiatives such as household contributions or the proceeds from social events or the other means. Sometimes the funds were provided for by agreements between the community and the local authorities. In other instances, for example where there was a medical facility, the communities agreed to pay minimal fees for cost recovery for medicines provided and maintenance of the facility. For communities with schools, members agreed to

take maintenance funds from school subsidies or from fees. In communities with markets, members agreed that 33 per cent of market dues went to the fund. These arrangements, along with the organisation of schedules of facility use, show a generally high level of ownership and potential sustainability of the majority of the projects.

5.2.3 Community Empowerment and Capacity for Development

As the arguments in the literature review chapter suggested, empowerment is the ultimate and undisputed goal of participation irrespective of the level or type of participation pursued (Oakley et al., 1991). Communities in the developing world are characterised by power differentials (Midgley et al., 1986; Mohan and Stoke, 2001), which determine who participates or not in development programmes and other aspects of community life. Pursuit of community empowerment objectives in post conflict situations can be challenging. As Richards et al. (2004) found in post-conflict Sierra Leone, power structures had changed following the war. Many of the power structures that had existed for generations before the war changed dramatically during and after the war. In a war situation and in times of change people undertake roles and positions of responsibility or deference that they otherwise would not. Perhaps as a consequence of the war, many people felt today that their sense of importance has been eroded while others felt and assumed a new sense of importance. Pursuing empowerment as a participatory goal, such as was the case with the DCF programme, can be very difficult. The aim therefore in this section was to investigate how empowered people currently felt, particularly as a community undertaking development programmes. As the issues in this section are closely related to those in the preceding section, questions were limited to looking at how happy people felt and how much control they felt they have over their lives, and how they felt about the role they were playing in the community.

The overall majority of respondents felt happy, with 38 per cent saying they were very happy, while 30 per cent felt happy. In general respondents felt that they had control over decision making in their everyday lives, with 29.7 per cent indicating that they had control over all decisions, 29.9 per cent over most decisions and 24.3 per cent over some decisions. More than three quarters

(78.5 per cent) of respondents said that they feel they had the power to make important decisions that could change the course of their lives. In all, 43.1 per cent said they were mostly able to change their lives and 35.4 per cent said they were totally able to change their lives. More than two fifths (46.7 per cent) of respondents said they felt they made a big impact in making their neighbourhood a better place. The majority (84.7 per cent) of respondents said they very much felt valued by their immediate society. This would indicate that generally respondents felt empowered and capable of influencing decisions to work to their benefit through participation in community activities and issues.

In all the communities, exactly the same proportion of respondents felt their concerns were taken into consideration a lot and a little. The majority (67.6 per cent) of respondents felt the NaCSA process had a lot of influence over local government and leaders to take community concerns into account when making decisions. In all, the DCF process was credited by the majority to have enabled people to achieve a sense of empowerment as well as confidence in community leaders and decision making processes.

With respect to community capacity, communities were queried about areas they believed might have led to improvement in their capacity to undertake such programmes in the future. Communities cited that the learning of both generally applicable skills such as masonry, carpentry, as well as project oriented skills such as needs analysis, designing of budgets and schedules, and record keeping were some of the areas that have helped their capacity as communities to undertake similar projects in the future. As an objective of the DCF programme, there was little doubt as the communities intimated in focus group discussions that:

NaCSA has trained us in everything that pertains to a project and its management (FGD in Magbelleh village, 17/05/06).

The DCF process was also cited as having uncovered the benefits of collective action to the majority of these communities. In all the survey communities,

efforts were being made to secure other projects of common interest and benefits to the communities.

The foregoing section has examined the results of objectives of the DCF programmes, with respect to community needs, ownership and control of project decision-making processes, empowerment and community capacity for undertaking future development. The following section briefly examines the roles of the stakeholders and key players as detailed in the programme institutional arrangements in Chapter 3 and as seen by respondents in the study communities. This was felt to be imperative in order to put the issues in perspective and to bring out the institutional aspect of the participation debates.

5.2.4 Stakeholder Roles

This section examines the role of different stakeholders in the DCF project management. This includes the community, the PMC as the supervising unit of implementation representing the community, line ministries, district councils (local government) and traditional authorities, and NaCSA as the overseeing government agency.

5.2.4.1 The Communities

The goal of the programme was to involve the wider community in the project process from identification to planning and full implementation. Evidence supports that in general communities were involved throughout the whole project process, from the initial selection of the project and election of the PMC to monitoring and supervision of the implementation processes. Community respondents believed that there was a general upward increase in the level of participation from the project initiation to completion time. Focus group discussions in these communities revealed that there was a high level of community interest in the outcome and other possibilities of these projects. This was clearly manifested in the high community support and interest in the initial move to contact NaCSA through the letter of interest as the programme required. However, in some communities participation only began after the pre-project participatory poverty assessment (PPA) process that preceded the

identification of priority needs. As indicated earlier, this played a contributing factor in creating the sense of project ownership.

In addition to the full implementation of the projects, a project community was required to form and elect members to various project committees and make 10 per cent contributions to the project costs, mostly in kind. In other words, a project community was responsible for the provision of building materials such as sand, stones and sticks, the supply of unskilled labour, and provision of storage facilities and land for the projects. Key informants in these communities intimated that participation in these processes was generally high in all the communities. There was however a lower level of participation by communities that were far away from the project site. This was attributed not to the unwillingness to participate, but to factors such as distance, demands of farm work and bad weather. Unlike past encounters with development interventions where it was generally seen as a hindrance to participation in project process, the community contribution was revealed here to have led to an increase the community sense of ownership of the projects and willingness to participate in the process.

5.2.4.2 The Project Management Committees

The roles and functions of the Project Management Committee (PMC) included oversight of the management of the entire project cycle, outlining the various activities of the project, preparation of the project activity plan and budget and determining the community contribution to the project. The committee was also responsible for ensuring that community members participated in the identification, planning, appraisal, supervision and management of the project, putting together an effective maintenance plans for the project, monitoring of the procurement of goods, services and works, and reporting to NaCSA on the progress of the implementation of the project.

To a large extent, the PMCs were reported to have distinguished themselves well in all the communities surveyed in the discharge and conduct of the above responsibilities. However, there were some community members who were unhappy with the PMCs. They complained that the PMCs were not holding

meetings frequently enough to inform the communities of projects' progress and status. They suggested that the PMCs needed to hold meetings more regularly and inform them perhaps more fully about costs. Others were more concerned over the disbursement and payment of contractors. They believed that these needed to be done by community consensus. In fact in many communities, this was exactly the case. For the PMC members, some were not happy with the degree of scrutiny they had to go through. But in all cases, the level of participation was a function of the performance of the committee. Communities where the PMC were highly rated also recorded high community participation.

5.2.4.3 Line Ministries, District Councils, Contractors, and Traditional Authorities

As indicated in Chapter 3, the functions of the line ministries and District Councils (DC) include project approval, monitoring and supervision amongst others. Depending on the sector for intervention, the line ministries, in addition, were expected to provide a number of support functions in the project process. These included confirmation of government commitment to the projects, and provision of personnel, logistical and other supports including teachers, textbooks, school materials, nurses, drugs, solar panels, water treatment equipments. The line ministries were reported to have in general satisfactorily performed these roles and functions.

The interviews revealed that the District Councils were fully involved in the project planning. They participated fully in the identification of the project, its location and type so as to ascertain if it conformed to the long term plan of their respective areas. Though their roles by definition were restricted largely to monitoring and supervision, the DCs in fact played a supporting role in the entire implementation process. Focus group discussions revealed that they were active in the selection of contractors, mobilising materials and mobilising community labour for the projects.

The private sector contractors in general commendably discharged their functions and obligations as defined in the project process and contracts with the communities. However, in communities where the contractors were not resident members, delays in project completion time were observed.

Consequently, tension built up between the community members and these contractors. However, these were amicably resolved through the intervention and mediation of NaCSA.

Unlike past projects, the DCF programme did not define separate roles for the traditional authorities besides as members of their communities. Initially, communities feared that this move would undermine the process. However, traditional authorities provided active support to the project process. Their prestige in the communities was put fully behind the project process. They were reported to have been involved in every aspect of the process including participation in the election of PMCs, sensitisation and mobilisation of communities and community contributions, and encouraging community members to attend meetings.

5.2.4.4 National Commission for Social Action

The interviews and focus group discussions revealed that as the programme's supervising agency, the relationship between project communities and NaCSA were generally seen as cordial and very supportive. The communities cited the technical support and the transparency that characterised the whole process as contributing to this relationship. The communities not surprisingly though were particularly impressed by and valued the project need identification, PMC election and contract awarding processes. Consequently, community trust in the agency was the highest amongst all government agencies and formal institutions. Previously, these communities spoke of trusting NGOs more than any government institutions or agency. Now, however, they trust NaCSA more than any other development organisation. A respondent observed that "NaCSA hid nothing from us. They dealt with us transparently, and treated us as equals". The communities were particularly impressed by the frequent monitoring and supervision visits, information sharing and teaching of conflict resolution skills.

5.3 Conclusion

While there were in general high scores of social capital in all the communities, there were observed differences in some dimensions between the large semi-urban and the remote rural communities. While the semi-urban communities had larger networks and were more informed, the small rural communities were more trusting and more likely to feel more solidarity with each other. As such, these communities were socially more cohesive than the semi-urban communities. These differences also accounted for the differences in inclination to participate in collective action.

Factors influencing trust, norms of solidarity and reciprocity and social cohesion included family lineages, neighbourhood connections, past dealings with each other, and ability and willingness to resolve conflicts amongst themselves. These factors facilitated communities to come together with the determination to bring progress to their communities, and this desire to take control of their own development influenced their participation in the DCF programme, which has resulted in high sense of efficacy in the communities.

Besides these, a number of project features and characteristics also affected community participation. These included the extent to which the projects addressed community needs, community control and ownership of projects, and the degree of transparency that characterised the relationship between the development agency and the community. Non-participation by some communities was due largely to distance from project location and demand for seasonal farm work.

Chapter 6: Discussion of Research Findings

But increasingly, it is also social capital that matters too – the capacity to get things done, to co-operate, is the magic ingredient that makes all the difference.

(Tony Blair's keynote speech, NCVO Annual Conference 1999,
as cited by Halpern, 2005:284).

6.0 Introduction

In reviewing the literature on participation in Chapter 2, definitions, typologies, historical antecedents, and debates and controversies about the concept of participation were presented. The social dimensions or the human aspects of development in general were particularly emphasized. The concept of social capital as a framework approach that provides for in-depth assessment of the social dimensions of development and its practice with respect to local participation was also examined. What was apparent in the argument and as development is conducted is the fact that the institutional focus in development assistance since the late 1990s has serious implications for the type and level of participation at the community level in particular. This aspect of the practice of development was particularly emphasised in the measurement framework adopted for this research. In this regard, the institutional arrangements of the research case study of Sierra Leone were detailed in Chapter 3.

It is discernable in the participation literature that while problems, inconsistencies and pitfalls are explored, little is said about factors that enhance participation. Nor have there been studies to determine what enhances participation. Thus, Chapter 5 presented the findings of the study as they relate to the relevant dimensions of social capital and the institutional context identified in the framework as key in ascertaining or assessing if participation was facilitated or inhibited by social factors and/or institutional aspects.

This chapter presents discussion on the findings of this study by comparing and contrasting the literature with the findings of the fieldwork. Section 1 presents the general evidence in the literature linking social capital and participation in

development. Section 2 examines and contrasts key areas of concern in the literature with respect to the findings. As indicated in the preceding chapter, the issues here are inextricably related and therefore can not be definitively delimited into exact categories. However, the importance of each of these issues as they relate to literature and past research will be emphasised.

6.1 The Evidence: Social Capital and Community Participation

The main task in this study was to assess the effects on participation outcomes of the social dimension of development and the institutional environment that characterise participation. In other words, the task was to ascertain if the social and institutional environment enhances or inhibits effective participation. In the measurement framework constructed in Chapter 2 it was argued in short that if an ideal institutional environment in terms of roles, rules, interest and political space exists, social capital, as community assets, can be employed in a participatory process to ensure the overall achievement of the ideal participation objective – the empowerment of communities. In this context, this section discusses the general and specific linkages between the concepts of participation and social capital in the literature and my empirical research.

6.1.1 The General Evidence

The role and importance of social capital in development is quite evident in the literature (Woolcock and Narayan, 2000; Grootaert et al., 2004; Grootaert and Bastelaer, 2002; Grootaert, 2004; Krishna and Uphoff, 2002; Krishna and Shrader, 1999). Social capital is widely believed to give rise to beneficial outcomes (Stone and Hughes, 2001; Woolcock and Narayan, 2000). With respect to participation in development, Krishna and Uphoff (2000) found in a study in India that people with higher social capital were more inclined to engage in community activities. Isham and Kahkonen (2002) concluded that villages with high levels of social capital were more likely to participate in designing and monitoring mechanisms of projects. Pargal, Galligan and Huq (2002:204) found that in Bangladesh organisation of voluntary solid waste management was a function of social capital. This study also supports the importance and role in general of social capital as reported in these studies.

The case of the southern and northern provinces studied in Sierra Leone found that communities with higher community social capital were more inclined to participate in development projects than those with a lower stock of the asset. As they are more trusting and operate as a unit, they were able to establish contacts, engage and relate well with outside agencies and contractors.

Isham (1999, cited in Woolcock and Narayan, 2000) observes that social capital enables communities to take advantage of new opportunities. Social capital is also believed to provide benefits to individuals or communities in terms of the bonding, bridging and linking ties within and outside their social entity (Halpern, 2005; Grootaert, 2004). This study supports these observations. By the design of the DCF programme, communities were required to make the initial move and contact with NaCSA. Communities with higher social capital assets were able to organize themselves earliest and use their bridging and linking social capital to gain advantage in a competitive national programme. This further corroborated the findings of Krishna and Uphoff (2000), Pargal, Galligan and Huq (2002:204) and Pargal et al. (2002:204) in terms of taking advantage of new opportunities and facilitating collective action.

As the participation literature suggests, community interests and needs are important in ensuring cooperation and therefore participation. It is without doubt that communities have different and sometimes conflicting interests (Midgley, 1986; Botes and Rensburg, 2000). However, social capital proponents and communitarians believe that it is not impossible for cohesive communities characterised by norms of trust, solidarity and reciprocity to share common values and interest (Portes and Sensenbrenner, 1992). In this respect, Pargal et al. (2002:204) find that homogeneity of interests and points of view appear important in explaining levels of social capital, which in turn determines participation. This research largely supports this finding. In the face of varying and conflicting interests and needs, the studied communities were able to identify, agree on and prioritise interests that were to be addressed by the DCF projects. As it is not uncommon for people in communities with high social capital stock to have common interests, this important stage of the project

process was facilitated by the existence of high stocks of social capital in these communities.

As argued in Chapter 2, the institutional view of social capital not only advocates the role of institutions in development (Francis, 2002), but is believed to enable the assessment of unequal power relations that may exist between communities and development institutions and agencies (Grootaert, 1997; Grootaert and Bastelaer, 2002). Krishna and Uphoff (2002:117-118) conclude that institutional processes, particularly with respect to decision-making process, can contribute to social capital, which by extension can lead to higher community participation in development. The conclusion of my research is in conformity with these conclusions. The DCF rules and procedures facilitated a process through which communities put to use the social capital assets they had. Increased community dealings and interactions within and outside their communities, and perhaps more importantly, the decision-making facilitated by the process, further increased this asset. Communities now desire to participate further in collective community projects. In addition to this, Narayan and Pritchett (1999:891) intimate that recognition of the role of citizens' voices further increases the efficacy of projects. Likewise the DCF projects are reported to be more efficient than previous projects.

An important feature of development practice in developing countries is the dominance of the neo-liberal policies in World Bank funded development projects (McMichael, 1996; Brohman, 1992). The World Bank continues to insist on public-private roles in development practice. This case study shows distinct roles for the private sector too. Pargal et al. (2002:204) with respect to the private/public sector interplay also concluded that this interplay is more likely to be successful in communities with high social capital. This conclusion was not surprising at all. Such dealings and interactions in developing countries with inadequate contractual enforcement require high levels of trust on both sides. My research also supports this conclusion. Communities with higher trust scores were more successful in dealings with the contractors, and their relationships were characterised by unprecedented cooperation. Consequently these communities were able to complete their projects in shorter period.

Unlike Narayan (1995:49) who found that the only successful projects were those that utilized existing traditional organizations, the case study of Sierra Leone finds that the deliberate exclusion of these organizations as main implementation units enhanced the participation of the wider communities. The formation of various project committees and the election of community members to serve therein provided opportunities for trustworthy and formerly excluded community members to prove themselves and contribute to the development of community. From personal experience and given the potential for local elites to dominate community activities including the development process (Chambers, 1997; Brohman, 1992), this strategy was one of the few that stood a chance of ensuring the full participation of the wider community.

One of the features of social capital is that it enhances a community's ability to resolve conflicts arising amongst themselves (Krishna, 2002; Krishna and Shrader, 1999; Grootaert et al., 2004; Grootaert and Bastelaer, 2002). This case study shows that communities in post-conflict times acquired new determination to resolve conflicts amongst themselves. The study reveals that during the implementation of the DCF projects, communities had to promptly resolve conflicts arising amongst themselves. If these conflicts were not promptly dealt with and were allowed to persist, they would have had serious implications for the DCF programme itself and the wider community as unit for future development.

As the literature suggests, social capital also has both a positive upside and a negative downside (Woolcock and Narayan, 2000; Halpern, 2005; Grootaert et al., 2004). The negative downside includes free-riding attitudes and overuse of sanctions in the form of punishments such as discrimination or ostracism for actions that disregard a set of generally agreed upon social rules (ABS, 2004:101). This discourages participation in wider community activities including participation in projects. In pre-war Sierra Leone, Richards et al. (2004) note that excessive use of sanctions created the environment for the recruitment of young men into the rebel movement. The study found that communities are now very careful in the use of sanctions. They are now used

as a last resort and limited to ensuring observance of community rules to maintain social cohesion. This finding supports Krishna and Uphoff (2002:181) who found that participation is reinforced by the existence of clear and fairly implemented rules.

6.1.2 Community Trust and Participation

Participation literature recognizes the role and importance of trust in facilitating participation in development (Narayan and Cassidy, 2001; Krishna, 2002; Grootaert et al., 2004). Unwillingness to participate in social and community activities, including community projects according to Bush Baum (2001 as cited by ABS, 2004) is in some instances indicative of a lack of trust. Botes and van Rosenberg (2001) note that development practice has come to be characterised by selective targeting of community elites and the wealthy as partners with little efforts to include the majority. Chambers (1997:211) calls this practice the upper-to-upper class bias in pre-project consultation. Empirical research further indicates that governments in the developing world have not only pursued top-down non-participatory approaches, but have also used development projects as a means of political control (Rahman, 1993; Gaventa, 1998; Khan and Begum, 1997). In the past Sierra Leone has not been an exception to this. Not surprisingly therefore the case study corroborated the observations of Williams (1997:51) and Uphoff (1991) that communities are unwilling to trust development organizations or agencies as a result of their encounters with or exposure to previous projects.

This strong linkage between peoples' willingness to participate in development projects and historical experiences was particularly crucial here as Williams (1997) found. As a result of past encounters, there was little trust in any external development organizations. Except those who stood to gain immediate and direct financial or material benefits, people had little motive or enthusiasm to participate in development projects of any kind. At the initial stages of the DCF programme, communities were undoubtedly suspicious of the programme largely due to these experiences. Participation at this stage as indicated by attendance of meetings and willingness to make the mandatory household contributions was very low. Communities came to fully participate however

when they were convinced that this programme was different from past development interventions.

6.1.3 Community Cohesion and Inclusiveness

The concept of community is perhaps the most contentious issue in participation literature. Grootaert et al. (2004) believe that 'communities' are not single entities but rather are characterised by various forms of division and difference that can lead to conflict. This view is largely shared in literature. For example, Ledwith (2005) and Mohan and Stokke (2001) see communities as anything but cohesive and harmonious. This may not be generally untrue in post-conflict situations where differences and animosities created during the conflict would still be fresh in people's minds. However, this study indicates a high sense of community, characterised by well-nurtured harmony, social cohesion and the absence of divisive conflicts, features which facilitate an increasing level of social capital. The literature suggests that the extent of social cohesion that characterizes a community will depend on the ties that exist in such community. The Australian Social Capital Framework maintained that:

Social cohesion is characterised by the strength of trust and norms of reciprocity that bond groups, individuals; the abundance of bridging (ties) that transgress social divisions; and the mechanisms of conflict management that enables just links to exist between unequal groups including governments and communities (ABS, 2004:103).

In other words, a cohesive community is one in which members are well-integrated, have familial relationships and dealings within and outside the community, and the prevalence of just laws in a democratic environment. More importantly no one is deliberately excluded from such institutions and the benefits they provide. This study showed that, to a large extent, communities were bonded by family relationships and lineages, with ties to the outside. In the new democratic dispensation, laws are just and do not discriminate or exclude anyone for whatever reason. The high level of trust reported in these communities may have further cemented the close bonds among people, which gave rise to the high social harmony and cohesion.

The impact of factionalism and conflict on people's participation in development project is quite evident (Mohan and Stokke, 2001). While Njoh (2002) found in Cameroon that internal conflict led to the inability of native to work together with non-native, Narayan (1995) notes that conflicts and factionalism impact negatively on community solidarity, trust and therefore community ability to successfully implement development projects. Similarly, historical differences other than conflict could also have serious implications for participation (Gow and VanSant, 1983). While there were some historical differences among community members in this study with respect to family and tribal lineages, these were not found to be significant enough to affect community or individual participation. As discussed in the previous section, the communities are determined to prevent serious internal conflicts that could undermine their stability. Besides, these communities since the end of the war and through other programmes acquired conflict resolution skills.

The level and type of participation a project seeks to achieve also has implications for the inclusiveness achievable in a project community. As Young (1993:148) notes, selective participation has been pursued in practice where projects targeted the involvement and participation the articulate and wealthy members of project communities. These practices in the past, as a respondent put it to the researcher, had led to some members either by choice or otherwise removing themselves from community activities.

In particular, women have been largely excluded from participation in projects either by the project design or its roles assigned to them. For this reason, Mayoux (1995) believes that efforts directed at enhancing women's participation have failed the women as well as the expectation of development itself. Research also suggest that in the past, women's participation has either been undermined by the longer work hours they bear or limited to prescribed (gender) roles and activities (Haidari and Wright, 2001; Oakley et al., 1991). In contrast, this study found that through the design of the level and type of participation sought, women were not only targeted but were allowed to participate fully in the entire project process.

6.2 Institutional and Projects Characteristics

This section examines the project features with respect to the institutional processes that facilitate and underscore those features. In particular, the section will examine, with respect to community inclination to participate, the identification and targeting of community needs, and the community control and ownership.

6.2.1 Community Need Identification

The participation literature and empirical research seem to suggest that successful projects are those that genuinely seek to address the felt needs of the community, and that people are more inclined to participate fully in such projects (Uphoff, 1991; Watt et al., 2000; Williams, 1997). Thus meeting felt needs is recognized as a prerequisite for communities who wish to participate in development projects (Oakley, 1991). In the past and in order to ensure people's participation, some development organizations and agencies have provided incentives or 'handouts' while others have limited participation to cash and labour contribution to project costs (Williams, 1997 and Oakley, 1991). The findings in this study reveal that in general the projects targeted the prioritised felt needs of the communities and this was reported to account for the high community enthusiasm and participation. However, in one community where the project target was not considered by many as the prioritised community need, participation was not as high as the other communities. Also, lower levels of participation were observed in project communities which were some distance away from the project location. The case concurs with the observation of Cohen and Uphoff (1977) that the distance between a resident and the project affect the level of participation and by extension who participate.

More importantly, this study shows that community participation was not limited to cash or labour contributions. Communities were fully involved and took charge of the whole process. In addition, the fact that communities' felt needs were addressed in general by these projects might have given rise to the high participation level observed. This supports the findings of Narayan (1995) that people participated more readily in project activities that targeted their needs.

6.2.2 Project Ownership and Control

The participation literature indicates that in addition to the neglect of community needs, lack of local ownership and control of projects are the most contentious issues (Chambers, 1997; Brohman, 1996; Oakley et al., 1991). In this regard, Watt et al. (2000:121) recommend early consultation with project communities as they are the most knowledgeable of their conditions and needs, and believe that this is critical in creating the feelings of community ownership of such projects. The findings of this case study are generally in line with this recommendation. Communities were not only consulted but were encouraged to initiate and implement these projects. The case study reveals that external control or role in these projects was limited to technical assistance, provision of funds and supervision.

Community contribution irrespective of its past application in practice remains equally important in project process as well as relevant to the discussions here. Bunch (1982:23) contends that people generally do not value things for which they have not had to work for, and may become dependant. In a similar vein, Gow and VanSant (1983:433) find that participation is encouraged where communities are required to make a commitment of resources. For Oakley et al. (1991), in order to ensure the success of projects through enhancing community participation, there is the need for such communities to have a stake in such projects. Unlike examples given in the literature where community participation had been limited to labour and other contributions (Williams, 1997; Oakley, 1991), the case study here indicates that community commitments in terms of various contributions to the cost of the project not only encouraged participation (Gow and VanSant, 1983:431) but created unprecedented feelings of ownership. This has consequently been manifested in innovative measures undertaken in these communities to ensure the maintenance and therefore sustainability of these projects.

The importance of local control of projects designed to achieve effective local control is well acknowledged (ibid.). However, the available literature provides no definitive indicators of what constitutes local control. However, my personal

experience in development work would lead me to suggest that freedom to make decisions with respect to project activities as well as control over project funds constitute important indicators of local control. My research indicates that the study communities did have complete decision-making control of projects' activities and funds. In fact this was cited as the clear indicator of their control of the project process. In addition to other factors, Gow and VanSant (ibid) believe these to be critical in ensuring people's effective participation. This study also confirms correlation between the availability of project funding and level of participation as there were lower levels of participation in communities that encountered delays in the disbursement of project funds.

6.3 Conclusion

What is clearly discerned from the arguments presented in the review of participation literature and the empirical research is that many issues relevant to participation practice remain largely unresolved. While the literature sometimes suggests how participation in practice is achieved or sometimes criticises its practice within the context of case studies, it offers little with respect to other issues that remain equally important. For example, what process can lead or assist communities identify or prioritise their needs in the face of declining external development assistance remain unexplained. Nor does the literature explain the observable differences in level of participation achievable in communities of similar characteristics and historical background. Little is also offered on the potential social implications of development interventions on these communities.

From a social perspective the task in this study was therefore to unveil the social dimensions that could explain why some communities are more inclined to participate readily in development programmes. In other words the case study sought to investigate if the concept of social capital, believed by many to account for the social dimension of development (Francis, 2002) could account for community inclination to participate in development.

The World Bank sees participation “as a process through which primary stakeholders influence and share control of their own development initiatives, decisions and resources which affects them (World Bank, 1994:1). This research has shown that communities as primary stakeholders were able to influence and share control over decisions, resources and development initiatives that affected their lives and well-being. However, there were observable differences in the quantity or amount and the quality or motives for participation. These differences were explained by existing community social capital stocks. The wider institutional arrangements were also found to be very important in ensuring community participation. In general, there is much agreement between these conclusions of my research and other research on participation and social capital, and it provides evidence that support previous research findings and theory. In other words, the framework employed in this study was able to account for and explain the differences in participation achievable in communities. Unsurprising though, this case shows a number of obstacles to strategies for enhancing community participation.

Chapter 7: Conclusions and Recommendations

A key challenge of progressive politics is to use the state as an enabling force, protecting effective community communities and voluntary organisations and encouraging their growth to tackle new needs, in partnership, as appropriate (Blair, 1998:4 cited by Ledwith, 2005).

7.1 Conclusion

The central task in this study was to ascertain if social capital enhances or inhibits community participation in development in a post-conflict situation. The case study examined nine project-communities and one non-project community in the Pujehun and Port Loko districts in southern and northern Sierra Leone respectively. The objectives of the study were to investigate community social capital, examine the processes and strategies adopted by the DCF programme, and determine the extent of community participation in the process so as to ascertain if social capital enhances or inhibits participation

As the findings demonstrate, in general community social capital and the institutional environment in which development takes place influence the levels of and motivation for participation. In particular, communities possessing high amounts of social capital in the form of social cohesion and norms of trust, solidarity and reciprocity were more likely to cooperate and undertake programmes of common interests and benefits. They were therefore more inclined to participate than communities that lacked or possessed less of this asset.

Within the institutional context the rules that guide codes of conduct in project communities, combined with procedures and roles that underscored the project implementation process, equally affected participation. Communities with transparent and non-discriminatory by-laws and communal codes of conduct achieved higher and better quality participation. Similarly (but unlike past projects), the high level of participation achieved in general in all the community projects was as a result of the fair and clear procedures and rules that governed the implementation of the projects in case study communities.

There were however other aspects of the project process that had significant bearing on community participation in addition and related to the social dimensions. These included the identification process of community needs, the extent to which the projects met felt needs, and the ownership and control of the project process itself.

The DCF process at the earliest possible time dispelled any doubt about the ownership of the projects by entrusting communities with absolute control of the decision-making process. The facilitation of the process by NaCSA led to communities' ability to prioritise their needs and further enhanced effective participation. The degree of transparency exhibited at the earliest time, and that came to characterise the entire process, further enhanced participation and ensured success of the programme. In a post-conflict situation, and given the historical records and people's experience with previous development interventions as reported by Williams (1997), this was no small achievement.

7.2 Research Implications and Recommendations

The research case here has identified issues that are imperative for development organisations, agencies or governments that seek to enhance community participation. These issues as outlined below are particularly important if participation is to be transformative and empowering and result in people having the opportunity, in the words of the World Bank, "to influence and share control of their own development initiatives, decisions and resources that affect them" (World Bank, 1994:1).

7.2.1 Community Needs

Project processes that target and fully meet community needs are more likely to ensure and enhance participation. They are also more likely to be successful and sustainable. Communities must therefore be made or assisted to identify their own needs. This will ensure that the needs identified reflect community aspirations and circumstances. Such processes must precede the implementation phase of the project.

7.2.2 Community Ownership and Control

A project process that ensures genuine community consultation at the start of the project cycle and facilitates the identification of community felt needs will result in the design of projects that assure success. In addition, local ownership is ensured when communities are seen as partners and have crucial roles in project implementation. To this end, they must be required to demonstrate commitment to it through meeting project costs as their circumstances and conditions will allow. Equally, the communities as partners must be entrusted with decision-making powers and control over project resources and activities. Over time, the gradual assumption of such control will increase the sense of community ownership and commitment to the project. This enhances the potential for the project's sustainability.

7.2.3 Social Cohesion

Communities characterised by strong social bonds, relationships, interactions and low levels of conflict are more likely to be inclined to participate fully in development projects. Such communities will also be characterised by high trust and norms of solidarity and reciprocity as indicated in this study. In this instance, they could be easily identified with common interests and needs. Consequently, people and institutions are generally more effective in implementing development programmes as they can readily relate to one another. With quality leadership or motivation to engage in a project, high community participation will be assured. It is imperative therefore that development intervention recognises this, and do not allow project design, aims or approaches to undermines the community's social cohesion.

7.2.4 Project Procedures and Rules

Development interventions in the developing world are characterised by procedural rules and regulations that are often complex and confusing, and sometimes discriminatory. Further, the majority of the potential targets or beneficiaries of projects cannot read or write. In most cases, this majority is thus excluded from participation by these stringent procures, laws and regulations. In contrast, and as demonstrated in this study, projects characterised by simple, clear and fair rules procedures and obligations are

more likely to ensure high community participation. Given the circumstances and characteristics of most communities, projects must be characterised by simple, clear and fair rules and procedures if they are to elicit community participation.

7.2.5 Need for Investment in Social Capital.

The importance of social capital in development lies in the fact that it examines the human or social dimensions of development practice. Despite similarities in historical and cultural background, research shows differences in participation achievable in developing world communities. This is largely explained by the differences in the endowment of social capital as found by Krishna and Uphoff (2002:122) and supported by the finding of this study. Not surprising therefore, “the building of social capital has been broached as a significant new road to development” (Knack and Keefer, 1997:286). Despite earlier formulation of social capital as historically derived (Putnam, 1993), recent empirical studies showing its stock as increasing largely contradict this assertion. Given the beneficial outcomes of social capital, the concept and its ability to explain social dimensions of development, it is imperative that development organisations, agencies and government invest in this asset. This will help communities with little culture of cooperation and common action to successfully undertake programmes that lead to their development.

7.2.6 Future Research

There is a need for further research into social capital in order to contribute to the understanding of social issues that explain observable differences in community participation in development. Such research will assist development organisations and governments to design and undertake development programmes that enhance community participation and therefore empower the people and communities of the developing world.

Appendix A: Research Questionnaire

Part One: General

Name of Community & Region [] 224
[] 334

Identification of Community Characteristics

Q1.1) How many years has this community been in existence?

- Few than 10 years []
- Between 10 and 20 years []
- More than 20 years []

Q1.2) How many households are in this community?

- Fewer than 25 []
- Between 25 and 49 []
- Between 50 and 99 []
- More than 1000 []

Q1.3) In the last three years the number of people living in this community has:

- Increased []
- Remained the same []
- Decreased []

Part Two: Historicity

Evidence suggests that this community has implemented projects in the past two years.

Q2.1) How did this project originate?

- It was after a needs assessment survey []
- It was after a representation was made to the Authorities []

- It was designed and brought to us by one of our learned Descendants []

Q2.2) Did this project address the priority need(s) of the community?

- Yes []
- No []

If NO skip in Q2.2 skip to Q 2.4

Q2.3) If YES in Q2.2 whose priority needs did it address?

- Youths []
- Adults []
- Aged []
- All of the above []

Q2.4) If No in Q2.2) what was not addressed?

- The project was imposed on us []
- The Project was poorly implemented (of poor quality) []
- It did not expand the local economy (workers imported) []

Q2.5) Were the community people actively involved in all the stages of the project?

- Yes []
- No []

Part three: Groups and Networks

Note: This section is preceded by question as to either respondent belong to any groups or organisation.

Q3.1) How many groups or organisation do you belong to?

- None []
- One group or organisation []
- Less than three groups []

- More than five groups []
- Above seven organisations or groups []

Source: Adapted but modified from Narayan and Cassidy, 2001.

Q3.2) How are leaders in your group selected?

- By an outside person or entity []
- Each leader chooses his/her successor []
- The leader asks members what they think and then decides []
- By decision/vote of all members []

Source: Adapted but modified from Grootaert, Narayan, Jones and Wollcock, 2004.

Q3.3) If you are member of a labour group, do you often work with the same group, sharing the work either on your own fields, on some public work, or for some private employer?

- Never []
- Once []
- A few times []
- Very often []

Q3.4) How often as a group do you participate directly in community work?

- Never []
- Once []
- A few times []
- Very often []

Q3.5) How often has your group refused or failed to contribute labour or other resources to a community project?

- Never []
- Once []
- A few times []
- Very often []

Q3.6) If a common beneficial project is undertaken in this community today, would your group contribute labour or other resources if requested by the community?

- Unlikely to do so []
- Less likely to do so []
- More likely to do so []
- Will certainly do so []

Q3.7) How often on average do you participate in the activities of the groups to which you belong?

- Never []
- Once []
- A few times []
- Very often []

Source: Adapted but modified from Narayan and Cassidy, 2001.

Q3.8) To what extent do you participate in the group(s)'(s) decision-making?

- To a very small extent []
- To a small extent []
- To a large extent []
- To a very large extent []

Source: Adapted but modified from Narayan and Cassidy, 2001.

Q3.9) Do groups or associations interact with other groups with similar or different goals?

- Never interact with others []
- Rarely interact with others []
- Sometimes interact with others []
- Most of the time interact with others []
- Always interact with others []

Source: Adapted but modified from Grootaert, Narayan, Jones and Wollcock, 2004.

Networks

Q3.10) If you suddenly needed some money, how many people beyond your immediate family could you turn to who will be willing to provide the money?

- No one []

- One or two people []
- Three or four people []
- Five or more people []

Source: Adapted but modified from Grootaert, Narayan, Jones and Wollcock, 2004.

Q3.11) If you suddenly had to go away for a day or two, could you count on your neighbours to take care of your children or property?

- Definitely I do []
- Probably I do []
- Probably I do not []
- Definitely I do not []

Q3.12) If you are suddenly faced with a long term emergency such as the death of a breadwinner or harvest failure, how many people beyond your immediate household or family could you turn to who will be willing to assist you?

- No one []
- One or two people []
- Three or four people []
- Five or more people []

Source: Adapted but modified from Grootaert, Narayan, Jones and Wollcock, 2004.

Part Four: Trust and trustworthiness

Q4.1) How much do you trust each of the following people using a scale of 1 – 5
(1= cannot be trusted at all, and 5= can be completely trusted)

- Your immediate family members []
- Your wider family members []
- Friends []
- People in your neighbourhood []
- Work/schoolmates []

Source: As adapted by ABS, 2004 from the General Social Survey: Survey on Social Engagement in Canada 2003, Statistic Canada.

Q4.2) To what extent do you trust the following people to act on your behalf?

(Scale Responses from 0 = not at all, and 5 = completely)

- Relatives []
- Friends []
- Workmates/Mates []
- Neighbours []
- Local people []
- People in general []

Source: Adapted from Stone and Hughes, 2002

Q4.3) In most circumstances people may need to lend or borrow money. How much do you think people in this community trust each other in lending and borrowing money?

- Absolutely not []
- To some limited extent []
- To a greater extent []
- Completely trust the people []

Q4.4) Suppose someone from this community have to go away for a while with his/her family, in whose care would this person leave his house and/or farm(s)?

- Someone from his/her immediate family []
- Someone from his/her extended family []
- Someone from the neighbourhood []
- Could trust anyone from the community []

Q4.5) In the past when you have associated with others to do something about some common (community) objective, do you think working along with others has increased or decreased your trust in them?

- Trust has increased []
- Trust has stayed the same []
- Trust has decreased []

Part Five: Institutional Trust

Q5.1) To what extent do you trust the community leaders to act in the best interest of this community? (Responses scale from 0 = *not at all*, and 5 = *completely*)

- Response []

Q5.2) If you were to make contact with a government official as an individual would you get a response or will you be ignored?

- Will be definitely ignored []
- Will be highly likely to be ignored []
- Will probably be ignored []
- Will get overdue response []
- Will surely get a response []

Q5.3) As a community if you were to make contact with a representative of a Government Ministry/Department/Agency would you get a response?

- Will be definitely ignored []
- Will be highly likely to be ignored []
- Will probably be ignored []
- Will get overdue response []
- Will surely get a response []

Q5.4) How much trust do you have in government institutions responsible for community development to act in the best interest for the development of this community? (Adapted from Krishna, 2002)

- Just about always []
- Most of the time []
- Only some of the time []
- Never []

Part Five: Norms of reciprocity and solidarity

Q5.1) How far do you agree with the statement that *“one is obliged to help those who had helped him/her in the past”*?

- Strongly disagree []
- Disagree []
- Agree []
- Strongly agree []

Q5.2) How well do people in this community help each other in times of need?

- Never help []
- Rarely help []
- Help sometimes []
- Help most of the time []
- Always do help []

Source: Adapted from "Measuring social capital: An Integrated Questionnaire", World Bank, 2004

Part Six: Sense of Efficacy

Q6.1) How do you agree with this statement *“if there was a serious problem in this community, people would get together and solve it”*.

- Strongly disagree []
- Disagree []
- Agree []
- Strongly agree []

Source: Adapted from *Measuring Social Capital: An Australian Framework and indicators*.

Q6.2) How much influence do you think you wield over events, activities and decisions in this community?

- Strong influence []
- Moderate influence []
- Little influence []

- No influence at all []

Q6.3) How far do you agree with the statement that *this community has the capacity to achieve whatever it sets out to undertake?*

- Strongly disagree []
- Disagree []
- Agree []
- Strongly agree []

Part Seven: Collective Action and Cooperation

Q00) In the past year, have you worked with other members of your community for the benefit of the community?

- Yes
- No

Q7.1) Would most people in this community be willing to contribute money, time and other resources to community projects such as health clinic, community centre or school?

Source: Social Capital Household Measurement Survey, Krishna & Shrader, 1999, as adapted by ABS, 2004

a) Money

- Would contribute fully and willingly []
- Partially and grudgingly []
- Would only contribute fear of community fines or exclusion) []
- Would not contribute at all []

b) Time

- Would contribute fully and willingly []
- Partially and grudgingly []
- Would only contribute fear of community fines or exclusion) []
- Would not contribute at all []

c) Other Resources

- Would contribute fully and willingly []
- Partially and grudgingly []
- Would only contribute fear of community fines or exclusion) []
- Would not contribute at all []

Q7.2) In particular, during the (completed) project, how many times did you contribute labour, resources or otherwise?

a. Labour

- Never []
- Once []
- A few times []
- Very often []

b. Other resources

- Never []
- Once []
- A few times []
- Very often []

Q7.3) Assuming that as a result of the lack of rainfall, the community decides to restrict the use of the village water-well in the dry season, how likely is it that the people would cooperate?

- Very likely []
- Likely []
- Unlikely []
- Very unlikely []

Source: Modified from Measuring Social Capital: An Australian Framework and indicators.

Q7.4) Is there a usually strong local support for community events or activities?

- Strongly disagree []
- Disagree []
- Agree []
- Strongly agree []

Source: Adapted from Measuring Social Capital: An Australian Framework and indicators.

Part Nine: Information and Communication

Q9.1) How do you usually get information about development in this community?

- Only through community gossip []
- Through household members []
- Through friends and neighbours []
- Meetings called to inform the community []

Q9.2) Which among the following sources do you consult regularly for news and information in this community?

- Household members only []
- Neighbours []
- Community elders []
- Radio []
- Newspaper []

Q9.3) A project has been (successfully) implemented in this community. How well were you acquainted with it?

- Personally involved []
- Knew from friends []
- Knew little about []
- Not at all aware []

Q9.4) If some decision is taken in the village relating to some common development work, then how do all village residents share this information and meet in order to contribute to the decision?

- No one gives them this information []
- They get to know about it through village gossip []
- A means is devised to inform some members of the community []

- Everyone is informed and encouraged to attend the meeting when the decision is taken []

Q9.5) If you are interested about knowing some technique /skill/ or generally learn some thing that is important in your life, or about the community, whom do you consult.

- Peers []
- Teacher in the community []
- Elders []
- No one []

Part Ten: Social Cohesion and Inclusion

Q10.1) How strong is the feeling of togetherness in this community?

- Very distant []
- Somewhat distant []
- Neither distant nor close []
- Somewhat close []
- Very close []

Source: Adapted but modified from Grootaert, Narayan, Jones and Wollcock

Q10.2) There are often differences in terms of wealth, income, social status, ethnic background, tribe, age or sex. To what extent do any such differences characterise this community?

- To a very great extent []
- To a great extent []
- Neither great nor small extent []
- To a small extent []
- To a very small extent []

Source: Adapted but modified from Grootaert, Narayan, Jones and Wollcock

Q10.3) Do any of these differences cause any problems for this community?

- They never cause problems []
- They rarely cause problems []

- They sometimes cause problems []
- They most of the time cause problems []
- They always cause problems []

Source: Adapted but modified from Grootaert, Narayan, Jones and Wollcock, 2004.

Q10.4) Have these problems ever led to violence?

- They never led to violence []
- They rarely led to violence []
- They sometimes led to violence []
- They most of the times led to violence []
- They always led to violence []

Source: Adapted but modified from Grootaert, Narayan, Jones and Wollcock, 2004.

Q10.5) Are people ever prevented from the use of public services such as health, education and recreational services?

- They never are []
- They rarely are []
- They sometimes are []
- They most of the times are []
- They always are []

Q10.6) Are people discriminated against in this community on the basis of their ethnicity, sex, race or economic status?

- They are always discriminated against []
- They are most of the times []
- They are sometimes []
- They are rarely []
- They are never discriminated against []

Q10.7) In your opinion, can this community be described as generally peaceful or marked by violence?

- Very peaceful []
- Moderately peaceful []

- Neither peaceful nor violent []
- Moderately violent []
- Very violent []

Source: Adapted but modified from Grootaert, Narayan, Jones and Wollcock, 2004.

Q10.8) How safe do you feel at home and in this community?

- Very safe []
- Moderately safe []
- Neither safe nor unsafe []
- Moderately unsafe []
- Very unsafe []

Source: Adapted but modified from Grootaert, Narayan, Jones and Wollcock,

Q10.9) Does this community usually meet to organise social activities such as games, dances and other traditional festivities?

- Never does []
- Rarely does []
- Sometimes does []
- Most of the times does []
- Always does []

Q10.10) Assuming there is a disputes between two people or families in this community, who do you think will help resolve that dispute?

- Any member of the family []
- Community elders only []
- Neighbours []
- Family/household members only []
- No one []

Source: World Bank Social Capital Assessment Tool, 1999.

Part Eleven: Community Sanctions

Q 11.1) Every community has rules and bye-laws specific to that community.

How do you rate the rules and bye laws of this community?

- Extremely unfair, harsh and discriminatory []
- Harsh but non- discriminatory []
- Appear fair, non-discriminatory but unclear to many []
- Absolutely fair, non-discriminatory and clear to all []

Q 11.2) How often have monetary and other fines or forms of banishment been instituted as ways of correcting behaviour in this community?

- All of the times []
- Most of the times []
- May be once a year []
- Rarely – once every two years []

THANKS FOR YOUR TIME AND ATTENTION

Appendix B: Selected Social Capital Scores by Community

A: Groups and Network size, support and connections

Community	Size & Support Perception		
	Size	Support	Connection
Bowula	2.60	4.57	3.20
Gbangba	2.70	4.50	3.17
Gobaru	4.80	2.83	4.77
Benga	2.67	4.47	3.13
Mallen	2.60	4.53	3.33
Magbelle	2.83	4.63	3.20
Port Loko	4.70	2.80	4.67
Marfoki	2.63	4.57	3.23
Makiteh	2.63	4.60	3.17
Songo	2.63	4.53	3.13

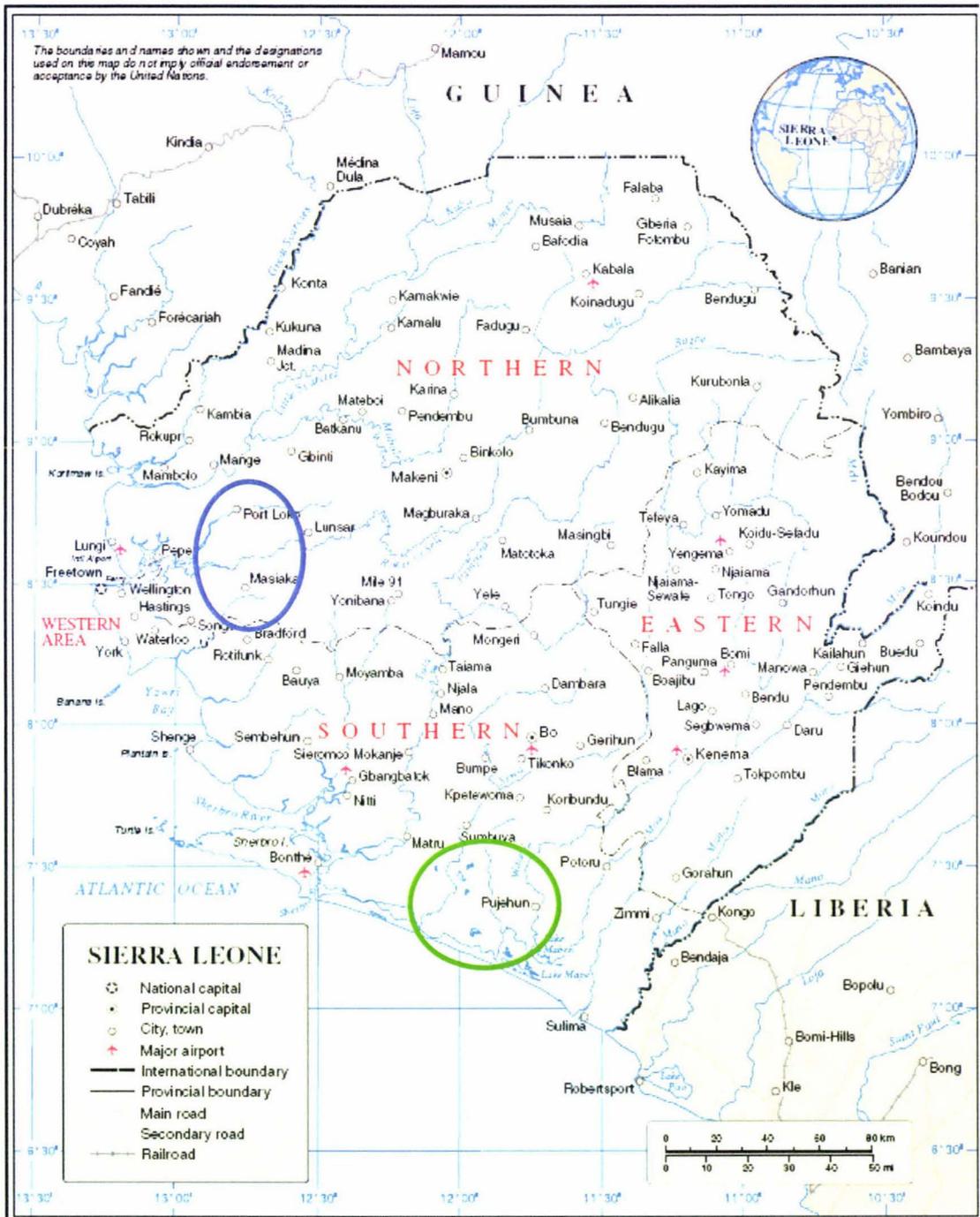
B: Social Capital input scores

Community	T & Tw	Rec. & Sol.	C.A. Cop.	Inst. Trust
Bawulo	4.67	4.71	4.88	3.91
Gbangba	4.53	4.63	4.69	3.86
Gobaru	4.32	3.87	4.36	4.51
Benga	4.59	4.72	4.77	3.90
Mallen	4.60	4.68	4.63	3.83
Port Loko	4.22	3.82	4.30	4.60
Magbelleh	4.57	4.77	4.81	3.87
Maforiki	4.45	4.70	4.76	3.86
Markiteh	4.55	4.76	4.70	3.84
Songo	4.61	4.64	4.79	3.88

C: Social Capital Outcome Variables

Community	Sense of Eff.	C.A. Cop.	Social Coh.	Info & Com	Sanctions
Bawulo	4.42	4.88	4.72	4.21	4.80
Gbangba	4.58	4.69	4.59	4.27	4.50
Gobaru	4.72	4.36	4.31	4.24	4.15
Benga	4.45	4.77	4.65	4.28	4.75
Mallen	4.47	4.63	4.67	4.11	4.72
Port Loko	4.67	4.30	4.27	4.21	4.48
Magbelleh	4.57	4.81	4.75	4.19	4.65
Maforiki	4.55	4.76	4.70	4.20	4.68
Markiteh	4.50	4.70	4.72	4.17	4.73
Songo	4.40	4.79	4.69	4.10	4.77

Appendix C: Research Districts and Population Characteristics



Selected Population Characteristics of Research Districts
(ten years of age and above)

Population Characteristics	Pujehun (%)	Port Loko (%)
Literacy rate	26.85	32.26
Illiteracy rate	73.15	67.74
Paid work	2.13	2.55
Self Employed	43.83	43.67
Unpaid work	13.37	15.12
Looking for work	0.85	0.65
Not wkg or Looking for work	3.29	4.09
Household work	18.72	16.25
Students	16.26	14.78
Retired	0.23	0.57
Others	1.30	2.32

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