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**Participatory Approaches to Development:
An Analysis of the Experiences of Development
Projects in Sudan**

A thesis presented in fulfillment
of the requirements for the degree of
Doctor of Philosophy
in
Development Studies
at Massey University, Palmerston North,
New Zealand

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2007

Abstract

This thesis aims to explore and analyse the experiences of participatory development projects in Sudan. The study focuses on participation in development, an issue that has attracted debate and discussion since the early 1970s. To contribute to this discussion and create more knowledge on this issue the White Nile Agricultural Services Project (WNASP) and North Kordofan Rural Development Project (NKRDP) were selected as case studies. Through various methods the nature and potential of participatory development approaches and interventions have been explored with the aim of identifying the factors that influenced people's participation, and suggesting ways to improve the practice of participatory development at grassroots level.

The study found that although the projects encouraged and claimed to adopt participatory approaches, people were not engaged in a process through which participation could achieve empowerment or create real changes in their lives. The outcome of people's participation in the projects was influenced by development providers' policies, credibility and behaviour of staff, nature and amount of resources, socio-cultural norms, power relations, and communities' previous experiences, organisation and level of education. This suggests that primarily, designing participatory development programmes requires an in-depth understanding of prevailing social, economic, political and physical environments. Secondly, development providers should adopt approaches that accept negotiations with communities and challenge oppressive situations. Finally, if participatory development is to achieve its objectives, local communities must be provided with resources, information and skills.

Based on evidence from powerful individuals in North Kordofan, this thesis suggests a moral-obligatory approach as one of the ways to improve the practice of participatory development in Sudan. This approach requires a fundamental change in development providers' policies, visions and credibility. If the essence of participatory development is adhered to, and if strategies and plans are designed collectively then there is an opportunity for making real change in the lives of those addressed by development interventions. This thesis concludes that more research is needed to explore the values, role, and impact of development providers and facilitators, as well as the nature and potential of local communities' participative values, organisations and practices.

Acknowledgments

This thesis is a product of inputs, cooperation and support I have received from a range of people and organisations to whom I would remain indebted and whom I would like to acknowledge.

I am very much grateful to my supervisors: Prof. John Overton, Ms. Janet Reid and Dr. Maria Borovnik. My sincere gratitude to John for the insightful guidance, continuous support and encouragement I received throughout the way. Special thanks to Janet for her constructive ideas, critical assessment and friendly support, and to Maria for her valuable inputs and constant enthusiasm. I also acknowledge the support of all the staff and colleagues at the Institute of Development Studies at Massey University. Special thanks to A/Prof. Regina Scheyvens, Kristy, Rochelle and Polly for sharing ideas and surrounding me with a friendly environment.

My deepest gratitude to my family: to my husband, Mohamed Ugool for his understanding and continued support and to my sons, Mahmoud, Ahmed and Abobaker who have enlightened my life and spared me some space to complete this study.

I acknowledge with gratitude the hospitality, cooperation and inputs of the research participants in Sudan. Without their participation and contributions these research findings would not have been exist.

Many credits are due to the International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD) Central Unit in Khartoum and the project management in NKRDP for the opportunity given to me to conduct my field work and be part of project settings. I would like to thank Mr. Yassin Doleib, the Monitoring and Evaluation Manager of NKRDP, who arranged to send me the permission to study the project's experiences, and arranged for accessing the project's information and participants.

I am very grateful to all the staff of the National Forests Corporation (FNC) for their support and assistance in various aspects. Special thanks to Dr Abdel-Azim Margani, Mr. Mamoun Gasim and Mrs Hana Hamdalla for their unlimited and friendly support. My sincere gratitude to my colleague Anwar Abdel-Hameed, Director of the White Nile State Forests, who provided me with accommodation, transportation and for introducing me to many local authorities and informal organisations in the White Nile State.

I deeply appreciate the valuable suggestions and ideas provided to me by Dr. Khalid Al-Amin and Dr. Abdel-Azim Yasin. I also appreciate their efforts to access other facilities at the University of Khartoum and interviews with academics.

My heartfelt gratitude to my family and friends in Sudan: My mother Aisha M. Jubara, my sister Eiman Masad and my brothers, Omer El-Gaili, El-Fatih Salih and Abass A. Al-Kalifa who have always been there for me.

Most of all, my sincere thankfulness to *Almighty Allah*, the God of the Universe, for providing me with strength and provisions to complete this project.

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Glossary of Sudanese Terms

| | |
|----------------|--|
| Al-Hakama'a | A woman who speaks with wisdom and offers consultation |
| Dar | Community centre |
| El-Goodeya | Community-based mechanism for conflicts resolution |
| Feddan | Unit = 0.42 ha = 1.03 acre |
| Ijara | Leasing contract |
| Magmuat Negash | Focus group discussion |
| Mudharaba | Participation contract |
| Murabaha | A purchase and resale contract |
| Musharaka | Participation contract |
| Nafir | Mobilisation |
| Qard al-Hasan | Good loan |
| Salam | A purchase contract |
| Sanduq | A traditional participatory savings/ revolving fund |
| Sheikh | A village headman |
| Takaful | Social justice and solidarity |
| Umda | Locality headman |
| Wali | State Governor |

Glossary of Terms and Abbreviations

| | |
|----------|---|
| ABS | Agricultural Bank of Sudan |
| ARC | Agricultural Research Corporation (North Kordofan State) |
| ASF | Agricultural Support Fund |
| CCU | IFAD Central Coordination Unit / Khartoum |
| CDF | Comprehensive Development Framework / World Bank |
| CSOs | Civil Society Organisations |
| DANIDA | Danish International Development Agency |
| DFID | Department for International Development / UK |
| FAO | Food and Agriculture Organisation |
| FCB | Farmer Commercial Bank / Sudan |
| FINIDA | Department for International Development Co-operation / Finland |
| FNC | Forests National Corporation |
| FRC | Federal Rule Chamber |
| GAD | Gender and Development |
| GCRT | Gender Center for Research and Training / Khartoum / Sudan |
| GDP | Gross Domestic Product |
| GoS | Government of Sudan |
| GROs | Grassroots Organisations |
| HDA | Human Development Approach |
| IAAS | Institute of African and Asians Studies, University of Khartoum |
| IFAD | International Fund for Agricultural Development |
| IFAD-CCU | IFAD Central Coordination Unit |
| IFPRI | International Food Policy Research Institute |
| ILO | International Labour Organisation |
| IMF | International Monetary Fund |
| IRDS | Institute of Research and Development Studies, University of Khartoum |
| ISS | Institute for Security Studies |
| MAAI | Ministry of Agriculture, Animal Resources and Irrigation (State) |
| MAF | Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry (Federal) |
| MESA | Ministry of Education and Social Affairs (State) |
| MFLF | Ministry of Finance and Labour Force (State) |
| MFNE | Ministry of Finance and National Economic |
| CDS | Comprehensive Development Strategy / Sudan |
| NGOs | Non-Governmental Organisations |
| NKRD | North Kordofan Rural Development Project |
| NKS | North Kordofan State |
| ODA | Overseas Development Administration / UK |
| ODI | Overseas Development Institute / UK |
| OECD | Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development |
| WB-PDLG | World Bank-Participatory Development Working Group |
| PDW | Popular Development Works |
| RC | Red Crescent |
| SAP | Structural Adjustment Programme |
| SCOVA | Sudan Council of Voluntary Agencies |
| SDD | Sudanese Dinars (SDD 1.00 = US\$ 0.005) |

| | |
|--------|--|
| SIDA | Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency |
| SOS | Sahel International / UK |
| SPLA/M | Sudan People's Liberation Army/Movement |
| UNDP | United Nations Development Programme |
| UNEP | United Nations Environment Programme |
| UNICEF | United Nations Children and Education Fund |
| UNOPS | United Nations Office for Project Services |
| UNRISD | United Nations Research Institute for Social Development |
| USAID | US Agency for International Development |
| USDS | United States Department of State |
| VDOs | Village Development Organisations |
| WB | World Bank |
| WFP | United Nations World Food Programme |
| WID | Women in Development |
| WNASP | White Nile Agricultural Services Project |
| WNS | White Nile State |
| WRI | World Resources Institute |