



**AgEcon** SEARCH  
RESEARCH IN AGRICULTURAL & APPLIED ECONOMICS

*The World's Largest Open Access Agricultural & Applied Economics Digital Library*

**This document is discoverable and free to researchers across the globe due to the work of AgEcon Search.**

**Help ensure our sustainability.**

Give to AgEcon Search

AgEcon Search  
<http://ageconsearch.umn.edu>  
[aesearch@umn.edu](mailto:aesearch@umn.edu)

*Papers downloaded from **AgEcon Search** may be used for non-commercial purposes and personal study only. No other use, including posting to another Internet site, is permitted without permission from the copyright owner (not AgEcon Search), or as allowed under the provisions of Fair Use, U.S. Copyright Act, Title 17 U.S.C.*

**Goodbye to Projects?  
The Institutional Impact of  
Sustainable Livelihoods  
Approaches on  
Development Interventions**

By Tom Franks, Anna Toner,  
Ian Goldman, David Howlett,  
Faustin Kamuzora, Fred  
Muhumuza and Tsiliso  
Tamasane

### **Acknowledgement**

This research is funded by the Department for International Development of the United Kingdom. However, the findings, interpretations and conclusions expressed in this paper are entirely those of the authors and should not be attributed to the Department for International Development, which does not guarantee their accuracy and can accept no responsibility for any consequences of their use.

## CONTENTS

### Executive Summary

<b>1. Introduction</b>	
1.1 Background	1
1.2 The Research Study	5
1.3 The SL-grounded audit of development interventions	7
<b>2 Putting SL Principles into Practice</b>	
2.1 Poor people as focus	9
2.2 Participation	11
2.3 Partnership	15
2.4 Holistic approach	19
2.5 Policy and institutional linkages	22
2.6 Building on strengths	25
2.7 Flexibility and dynamism	27
2.8 Accountability / Responsiveness	29
2.9 Sustainability	31
2.10 Overview	36
<b>3 SL-grounded analysis of the format of development interventions</b>	
3.1 Introduction	37
3.2 Management/Intervention Format	38
3.3 Funding	40
3.4 Capacity-building processes	42
3.5 Design	43
3.6 Implementation	44
3.7 Monitoring and Evaluation	46
3.8 New tools and skills required for institutionalising SLAs	49
3.9 Overview	50
<b>References</b>	52
<b>Appendices</b>	
1 The authors	53
2 Working papers	54
3 Case studies	55
4 Research questions	56
5 Dissemination	57

## ACRONYMS

ASPS	Agricultural Sector Programme Support
CBP	Community-based Planning Project
DBS	Direct Budgetary Support
DEAT	Department of Environmental Affairs and Tourism (South Africa)
DFID	Department for International Development
FAO	Food and Agriculture Organisation
HIMA	Environmental component of ASPS Programme
LAPCA	Lesotho Aids Prevention and Control Authority
LFA	Logical framework analysis
M&E	Monitoring and Evaluation
NAADS	National Agricultural Advisory Service
NEMA	National Environmental Management Authority (Uganda)
NGO	Non-Governmental organisation
PLA	Participatory learning approaches
PMA	Plan for the Modernisation of Agriculture
PRA	Participatory rural appraisal
SCLP	Sustainable Coastal Livelihoods Programme
SHARP!	Sexual Health and Rights Programme
SLA	Sustainable Livelihoods Approaches
SMUWC	Sustainable Management of the Usangu Wetland and its Catchment
SSR	Social Science Research Programme
SWAP	Sector Wide Approach
TEAM	Training for Environmental and Agricultural Management
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme

## Executive Summary

---

The research study *Goodbye to Projects?* grew out of the increasing interest in sustainable livelihoods approaches (SLA) and growing disillusionment with projects as mechanisms for addressing the development needs of poor people. Its aim was to investigate the implication of the adoption of SLA on the management of development interventions, and in particular on the future of development projects. The underpinning research questions were:

- How are elements of the sustainable livelihoods principles being applied in practice?
- What are the problems and challenges for managing livelihoods-oriented development interventions?
- What is the future for development projects, given the increase in direct budget and sectoral assistance?

The research was carried out by a partnership of development institutions in the UK, South Africa, Tanzania and Uganda over the period 2001-03, with funding from DFID. It was conducted in two phases. The first phase consisted of reviews of the use of sustainable livelihoods approaches and the format of development interventions generally in Southern Africa, Tanzania and Uganda. The second phase comprised the selection and detailed analysis of ten case studies, four each in Tanzania and Southern Africa, and two in Uganda. The case studies were chosen to represent a range of scales of development assistance in four broad sectors (HIV/AIDS, community based planning, agriculture/rural development and natural resources). They varied from a small-scale localised project in HIV/AIDS implemented by an international NGO to a large-scale public programme providing support to the agricultural sector. Nine of the interventions studied were in project or programme format, the tenth was a multi-sectoral strategy with central government funding. All of them were livelihoods-oriented, that is, they all began with a broad understanding of the multiple influences on peoples' lives and their vulnerability to shocks and stresses. However, only a proportion of them explicitly adopted SLA.

A standard methodology was followed for each of the case studies. The key information covered the following issues: the description and key events of the intervention; an assessment of its impact; its critical features; an SL-grounded audit, comprising a series of in-depth questions based on sustainable livelihoods principles concerning the design and implementation of the intervention.

A comparison of the case studies suggests some general lessons, both in relation to the application of SLA, and to the future of development projects:

- Attention to all SL principles is required for an intervention to have the potential to create sustainable impact. Principles are not only a checklist but provide a framework for the critical analysis of possible actions;
- SLAs lend themselves to participatory planning, which aims to address needs across a range of sectors. They may not be so well suited to large interventions in specific sectors, where too much emphasis on a bottom-up approach may lead to the loss of a bigger strategic picture and differential coverage of services;

- The concepts of ‘ownership’, ‘participation’, ‘empowerment’ and ‘partnership’ need to be worked through critically in relation to the exercise of power in all stakeholder relationships. Acknowledging and seeking to reduce disparities of power in implementation is a considerable challenge, requiring new skills and working practices for all parties;
- Livelihoods analysis (using for instance a livelihoods framework) can lead to an improved holistic understanding of ground-level realities, but interventions should be carefully focused, and seek holism through appropriate partnerships;
- Interventions need to fit in two ways: into people’s lives, and into the wider institutional context of government, civil society and private enterprise;
- Active integration with existing systems should be sought through incremental and adaptive processes. We need to refine our understanding of process approaches and action learning to apply this more effectively in development interventions;
- Consideration of all aspects of sustainability is essential to ensure an impact from interventions on people’s livelihoods. Economic and institutional sustainability are vital in the short term but longer term social and environmental consequences of intervention must be thought through in all cases.

Comparison of the case studies also makes it possible to draw out some observations for the planning and management of development interventions, in relation to such issues as funding mechanisms, capacity-building, design, implementation, monitoring and evaluation. This analysis highlights both the weaknesses and strengths of interventions in the traditional project or programme format, and suggests how these might be addressed. It also suggests that many of these strengths and weaknesses may apply equally to other forms of development assistance, such as sector-wide approaches, or direct budgetary support.

In bringing together the analysis of the case studies in this research two dominant themes emerge. The first of these is the question of power. The SLA has been criticised as neutral in terms of power but through constructing a picture of an intervention in terms of SLA principles we see that power and governance relationships are the critical link in most processes. They structure which people have voice at the micro-level, how much room to manoeuvre is available to partners and which policies are adopted at the macro level. In most cases change to these relationships will have to be initiated by the dominant voices (the fund-bearers and agenda setters) who will need to question the assumptions and boundaries on which their engagement is founded.

The second theme to emerge is the question of integrating action. It is clear from the case studies that significant impact cannot be made by an intervention unless it is sustainably integrated within the local institutional context. In most cases this refers to working directly with governmental structures and other local initiatives, building on and complementing what is already in place and working. In this case also the power dimension is important. Integrated interventions should not seek to dominate the institutions which they are supporting but must facilitate incremental capacity-building in relation to specific purposes which fit with the existing context.

The project format has over the years proved itself a convenient and simple mechanism for the transfer of aid resources. However projects are founded on unequal power relationships between donor and beneficiary and they often fail to integrate properly with other development initiatives, with the result that their impacts are unsustainable. Our research suggests that:

- projects can retain a useful role as locations of learning-by-doing, and as a way of gaining understanding of local-level realities;
- projects must ‘fit’ their operations more closely to existing capacity and resource streams, so that lessons learnt are relevant more widely;
- they need to link in to existing funding procedures, so that they are not established as isolated islands of resources whose impact is unsustainable when project funding ceases;
- institutional structures established by projects must account for their legitimacy and impact in an increasingly self-critical way.

Sustainable livelihoods approaches suggest that people should shape their own lives through flexible and dynamic processes of development. Whilst seeking to work with the full complexity of livelihoods, the interventions in our case studies in all formats display a striking uniformity of tools, language and theme. The challenge is to diversify the format of development interventions in line with the livelihoods principles to respond to the complexity and diversity of the peoples’ lives.



## 1. INTRODUCTION

### 1.1 Background

The research study *Goodbye to Projects?* evolved from consideration of two distinct but complementary trends, the increasing interest in sustainable livelihoods approaches as a means of addressing the needs of poor people, and growing disquiet over the effectiveness of projects in delivering development.

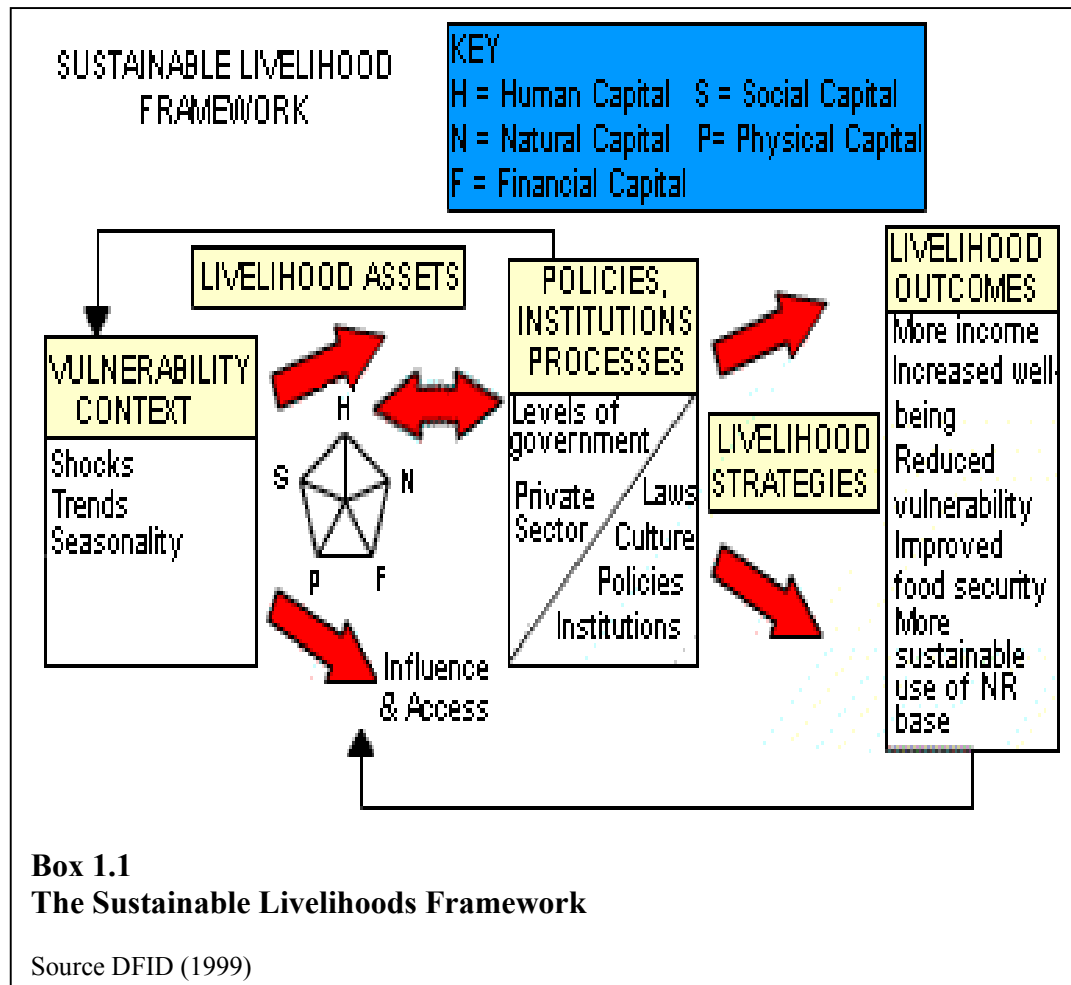
#### **Sustainable Livelihoods Approaches**

In the last five years ‘sustainable livelihoods approaches’ (SLAs) have increasingly entered the development arena and are used by a range of organisations including the World Bank, FAO, UNDP, DFID, Oxfam and CARE (Hussein 2002). Broadly, the different SLAs are based on a multidimensional understanding of people’s lives, which recognises the different assets and entitlements that people hold in the wider context of institutions, regulations and cultural norms. An understanding of the complexity and integrated nature of livelihoods allows for a better understanding of their vulnerability to external shocks and stresses.

Claims have been made regarding the transformative ‘power’ of SLAs, for instance, that they offer a solution to the failure of sectoral interventions to address the wider livelihood constraints that people face. It is clear that SLAs do represent a new way of thinking for some, in their explicit recognition that livelihoods are multi-sectoral, that all aspects of people’s lives will impact on the livelihoods choices that they make, and that livelihoods are embedded within specific institutional contexts (Carney 2002).

SL thinking has been developed in three clear ways: as a normative goal, as a framework and as a set of principles for action (Farrington 2001). The original concept of *net* sustainable livelihoods derives from the work of Chambers and Conway (1992), which argued for the creation of livelihood strategies that account for their long-term impact on the use of natural resources. Specific discussion was aimed at the need for redistribution from the wealthy to the poor. This concept demanded change not only in the management of interventions but also in the fundamental assumptions that underpin them. Chambers and Conway’s conceptual approach draws on Amartya Sen’s entitlements approach to understanding and addressing poverty.

A number of livelihoods frameworks illustrate this conceptual thinking. Box 1.1 illustrates DFID’s ‘Sustainable Livelihoods Framework’ (DFID 1999), which views livelihoods as being the outcome of choices people make based on their ‘capital assets’ (divided into categories of human, natural, social, physical and financial). ‘Policies, institutions and practices’ shape the extent to which people are able to draw on or develop particular capital assets in order to sustain a livelihood. Hussein (2002) details some of the other livelihood frameworks in use by agencies such as CARE and Oxfam.



Recognising and responding to the complexity of both the productive and reproductive aspects of livelihoods requires interventions that seek to connect the realities of poverty at the micro-level with policy-making at the macro-level. It is also necessary to ensure that development interventions can demonstrate sustainable impacts. Building on the various frameworks of sustainable livelihoods, a number of attempts have been made to derive sets of “livelihoods principles” which guide the practical application of the theoretical concepts of livelihoods (for example, Carney 2002, Khanya 2002). These sustainable livelihoods principles have their foundations in ‘learning process approaches’ (Korten 1980; Korten 1988; Hulme 1995; Bond and Hulme 1999). Thus the evolution of sustainable livelihoods approaches can be seen as a continuation of the debate surrounding the most effective format for and management of development intervention. It is suggested that SLAs have a potential role to play in improving the poverty focus of development assistance in whatever format - project, programme, sector support or budgetary assistance (Akroyd and Duncan 1998). In Box 1.2 we build on existing lists of ‘principles’ and best practice in order to reflect the more operational focus taken here, and to assist us in auditing the application of livelihoods approaches in development intervention.

### **Box 1.2 SLA principles for development interventions**

**Poor as focus:** Interventions start with a complex understanding of poverty and individual livelihoods and ensure that the poor are the central focus of the objectives of intervention.

**Participation:** Interventions aim to empower stakeholders to play an active role in intervention and service provision. They recognise and try to minimise barriers to participation, but show an awareness of its practical limits.

**Partnership:** Interventions work in partnership with other development partners but try to minimise the control and influence exerted by more powerful partners.

**Holistic Approach:** Interventions seek to respond holistically to livelihoods through cross-sectoral synergies but without addressing ‘everything’ through a single intervention.

**Policy and Institutional Linkages:** Intervention must build on linkages with policy processes and institutions to avoid replication and ensure sustainable impact. Linkages should connect the micro, meso and macro levels and ensure learning and information sharing at all levels

**Building on strengths:** Interventions recognise that needs and problems can be tackled through working with existing strengths

**Dynamism and Flexibility (Learning):** Interventions need to learn and adapt from their experience. They recognise that time and organisational constraints can decrease effective learning.

**Accountability and Responsiveness:** Interventions should be accountable and responsive to a wide range of stakeholders, particularly the poor to which they are directed.

**Sustainability** should be sought on four levels:

Financial: so that they can continue without support from external funding sources

Institutional: through integration with existing institutions

Environmental: to maximise the sustainable use of natural resources and minimise waste and pollution

Social: to minimise social exclusion and complement the local cultural context.

Source: Goodbye to Projects? Study team

### **Projects and Development**

Projects and programmes have been the primary mechanism for development assistance throughout the latter part of the twentieth century. Starting initially with infrastructure and other capital-intensive (blueprint) projects intended to support economic growth, the focus shifted through the 70s to projects meeting basic needs and then in the following two decades to process projects of institution-building and

human development. Whilst this was accompanied by increasing interest in other development activities such as policy analysis and public sector restructuring through structural adjustment programmes, projects continued to be the favoured vehicle for aid funding, partly because the project format facilitated the strict financial control thought necessary for the proper accountability of public funds by donors (Cusworth and Franks, 1993).

Projects used in this sense have a precise definition and a relatively uniform format. They involve the investment of resources (financial and human capital) over a limited time frame to produce assets (“outputs” in the terminology of the logical framework) which will yield a stream of future benefits (the project “purpose”). There has been considerable discussion over many years of the relative merits of blueprint and process projects, and the advantages of flexibility which process projects provide. In essence, however, both blueprint and process conform to the definition of a project given above, and differ mainly in the procedures which are adopted to plan and implement the investment.

Projects and programmes share the same basic characteristic of time-bound investment to produce assets. The terms are often used interchangeably, as they are in many of the case studies investigated in this research. Programmes, however, tend to be larger in scale and less precise in detail. They generally comprise several components, each of which constitutes a project in its own right, and which may be very different in nature. Together the components contribute to shared objectives, which may best be expressed at the goal level of the logical framework.

Disillusion with projects in development has grown over recent years on counts of both effectiveness and efficiency. Whilst there have been undoubted successes, both at the project level and in more general developmental terms, there is still a widespread belief that projects overall have not been effective in delivering development. This has been based on findings that their positive impacts have not been sustainable, their negative impacts have often been greater than expected, that they are frequently not “owned” by the beneficiaries but by the donors and their technical assistance specialists, and that they exist as “islands of resources” in an environment of resource scarcity. In terms of efficiency, projects are criticised as having high transaction costs for the amount of development assistance that is actually delivered. In addition projects do not lend themselves to a co-ordinated approach to development, with different donors funding different projects, which do not complement one another and indeed are often in competition.

Donors and others have therefore been looking for different strategies and mechanisms to support development. Strategies have focussed particularly at the level of policy analysis and advice, on the assumption that improvements in the policy environment are more important than finance in the development process. In terms of funding mechanisms, donors and recipients are showing increasing interest in larger-scale procedures, either through Sector-Wide Approaches (SWAPs) or Direct Budgetary Support (DBS). SWAPs in principle comprise a combination of policy advice and programme and project investment across a whole sector (typically the social sectors such as health and education) supported by basket funding from a group of donors. In this way the problems of lack of co-ordination and ownership can be avoided, as the beneficiary government can set its own priorities for the sector and

negotiate support for them with the donors as a unit, rather than singly. DBS takes this process a stage further. It involves the large-scale transfer of funds from donors directly to the treasury. These then in principle become part of the government budget, which can be utilised as required along with internally generated resources. The advantages of DBS are said to relate to efficiency because of its lower relative transaction costs, and ownership, because it puts the recipient government in control of its spending processes and priorities (Ryan and Toner, 2003).

## 1.2 The Research Study

The study 'Goodbye to Projects? - The Institutional Impact of a Livelihood Approach on Development Interventions' was a collaborative study between: the Bradford Centre for International Development, UK; the Economic Policy Research Centre, Uganda; Khanya - Managing Rural Change, South Africa; Mzumbe University, Tanzania (Appendix 1). It was undertaken between 2001 and 2003, with support from the UK's Department for International Development (DFID) under the Social Science Research Programme (SSR).

Building on an initial review of the literature the research sought to engage with the practical issues of applying a sustainable livelihoods approach, and its impact on the format of development interventions. The underpinning research questions were:

- How are elements of the sustainable livelihoods principles being applied in practice?
- What are the problems and challenges for managing livelihoods-oriented development interventions?
- What is the future for development projects, given the increase in direct budget and sectoral assistance?

The study examined how selected case study interventions operated in relation to the key ideas within SLAs through a sustainable livelihoods-grounded audit (based on sustainable livelihoods principles). This was used to identify and clarify the challenges to the design, appraisal and implementation of development interventions required by the adoption of a livelihoods approach.

The research was conducted in two phases. The first phase consisted of country reviews of the use of sustainable livelihoods approaches and the format of development interventions generally in Southern Africa, Uganda and Tanzania. These reviews revealed that use of sustainable livelihoods approaches was not widespread. The most extensive application was found in South Africa and Lesotho. However, in Tanzania, it was widely considered a 'DFID idea' and the only other organisation applying sustainable livelihoods thinking was CARE Tanzania. The country reviews were written up in Working Papers 2,3 and 4 (appendix 2).

The second phase of the research selected ten case studies for a detailed review of the application of sustainable livelihoods approaches, and the implications of the format of the intervention used in each case. The case studies were selected to include a range of scales and formats within the health (HIV/AIDS), planning, agriculture and natural resource sectors (Box 1.3). All the interventions included in the study were

considered to be livelihoods orientated, that is, they all began with a broad understanding of the multiple influences on peoples' lives, and their vulnerability to shocks and stresses. However, not all of them explicitly adopted the SLA.

Of necessity the research tended to focus on projects and programmes, with the exception of the Ugandan Plan for the Modernisation of Agriculture (PMA), as these are the common forms of development interventions. DBS is a new approach and too large in scope to be investigated within the relatively constrained resources of this study. SWAPs tend to be large-scale undertakings, which need considerable resources for a thorough investigation, especially to compare several of them. Fuller details of the case studies are given in Appendix 3.

### **Box 1.3      The Case studies**

#### *HIV/AIDS Interventions*

- **AIDS/STD programme:** This case explores the Ugandan government's strategy to combat the spread and impact of HIV/AIDS
- **SHARP (Sexual Health and Rights Programme):** a CARE South Africa & Lesotho project training peer educators to target high-risk groups to disseminate information on HIV/AIDS.

#### *Community-Based Planning Interventions*

- **Planning programme for district development within capacity 21 (Tanzakesho):** A UNDP project in Tanzania piloting a participatory planning methodology for the production of environmentally sustainable village plans.
- **Community-based planning project:** a DFID-funded, four-country action-research project covering South Africa, Uganda, Ghana and Zimbabwe exploring how an empowering participatory planning process can be integrated with the local government planning system.

#### *Agricultural/rural livelihood Interventions*

- **TEAM (Training for Environmental and Agricultural Management):** Implemented by CARE Lesotho, funded by NORAD and later by DFID, to develop an agricultural extension model based on farmer extension facilitators.
- **Agricultural Sector Programme Support:** A programme financed by Danida in Tanzania, implemented by various government ministries with components including institutional support, smallholders irrigation, on-farm seed production, rock-phosphate research, private agriculture sector support and an environmental programme.
- **Magu District Livelihood and Food Security Project (MDLFSP):** A CARE Norge project aiming to decrease the vulnerability of 5000 households in Magu district, Tanzania, through a range of activities covering agricultural extension and strengthening community groups.
- **PMA (Plan for the Modernisation of Agriculture):** PMA is multi-sectoral partnership between government, donors and NGOs. It seeks to reform all aspects of agriculture in Uganda, as well as including initiatives in complementary sectors.

#### *Natural resource interventions*

- **Sustainable Management of the Usangu Wetland Catchment (SMUWC):** A DFID-funded project in Tanzania aiming to improve the management of water and other natural resources in Usangu in order to improve the livelihoods of poor people and downstream users.
- **SCLP (Sustainable Coastal Livelihoods Programme):** A programme funded by DFID South Africa and the South Africa Department of Environmental Affairs and Tourism aiming to stimulate integrated and sectoral approaches to sustain and optimise the allocation of coastal resources

Data was collected in relation to the ten case studies over a period of eighteen months (January 2002-June 2003). Once permission for an intervention to be included in the research was granted, exploratory interviews and documentary searches were carried and a stakeholder analysis prepared. Semi-structured and group interviews then took place with stakeholder representatives. Each partner in the study was responsible for the case studies within its own country, and organised the field work, data analysis and writing up according to its own programme. However all partners worked to the same general format on each case study, and staff from the different partners assisted in one another's field work so as to compare findings and generate common reflections.

### 1.3 The SL-grounded audit of development interventions

All the case studies in this research were analysed according to the following questions and headings:

**Description of the intervention:** The description included a chronological description of the evolution of the particular intervention and details of the main stakeholders and activities. Original logframes and planning documents were reviewed where possible.

**Impact:** Assessment of the impact of interventions relates to the success or failure of an intervention to achieve the outputs or outcomes that were the main objectives of the intervention. This was confined to opinions given by interviewees and review of documentary evidence since the scope of the study did not allow for significant impact assessment with intervention beneficiaries at the micro-level (although this was done on a limited scale in most of the case studies). An assessment was also made of the costs of the intervention balanced against the number of people who benefit from it.

**SL-Grounded Audit:** Taking the livelihoods orientation as a starting point, each of the case studies was then analysed using a series of questions adapted from the SL principles:

- Poor People as focus
- Participation
- Partnerships
- Holistic approach
- Policy and institutional links
- Building on strengths
- Dynamism and flexibility
- Accountability/ responsiveness
- Sustainability

Full details of the questions relating to the principles, which were assessed in relation to each case study, are given in Appendix 4.

### **Critical factors**

Finally, an assessment was made of key factors in the success or failure of the intervention, in order to try and gauge the relative importance of SLA, against other issues:

- What were critical factors affecting the performance of this intervention?
- How much did elements of the SL principles contribute to performance?

Each of the case studies was written up as a separate working paper (Appendix 2)

### **Comparative analysis of case studies**

Structuring the data from each case study in this way allows us to compare interventions very different in scale and focus. The extent to which we can extrapolate from and generalise about ten case studies is debatable. However, given that the case studies were a purposive sample from a broad survey of livelihoods-oriented practice in each country it would be expected that lessons derived from this analysis will be broadly applicable to livelihoods-oriented development practice in general.

During the analysis it became apparent that the SL-audit process was in fact more suited to the analysis of projects than large-scale interventions such as sector-wide approaches and direct budgetary support. Nevertheless, there are valid lessons to be derived from the analysis for such large-scale strategies. Indeed, perhaps the greatest strength of the methodology is that it reveals gaps and contradictions in much development practice and challenges policy-makers and practitioners to justify or to close them, whether assistance is provided through projects, programmes or other larger-scale interventions.

This report presents a synthesis of the analysis of the case studies. Section 2 draws the case studies together and considers the lessons they offer in relation to the underpinning principles of a livelihoods approach. Section 3 develops this theme into practical considerations for the management of interventions and the future of development projects.



## 2 PUTTING SL PRINCIPLES INTO PRACTICE

In this chapter each of the adapted SL principles is analysed across the case studies. A table giving a summary of the data in relation to each case study is included in the discussion.

### 2.1 Poor people's livelihoods as a focus

Effective poverty-focused interventions based on sustainable livelihoods principles start from a consideration of people's livelihoods as opposed to their resources or the services they need. There are two separate issues to be addressed by this principle - firstly whether an intervention recognises people's livelihoods (holistically) as the basis for action, and secondly how effectively does the intervention identify and target the 'poor'.

All the case studies were committed in principle to improving and/or sustaining people's livelihoods. All of the interventions stated an intention to work with the poor and attempts were made by most interventions to disaggregate specific categories of the poor (Table 2.1).

**Table 2.1 Use of SLAs in the Case Studies**

Case Study	Country	Purpose	Use of SLA
AIDS/STD programme	Uganda	Response to HIV/AIDS epidemic	No
SHARP	Lesotho	Reduction in vulnerability of HIV/AIDS affected households	Yes, based on CARE's Household Livelihoods Security Framework
Tanzakesho	Tanzania	Advocacy of participatory planning processes for sustainable development	No
CBP	South Africa	Implementation of community-based planning systems	Yes. The project was explicitly based on SLA.
TEAM	Lesotho	Development of regional methodologies for improvement of rural livelihoods	Yes, based on CARE's Household Livelihoods Security Framework
ASPS	Tanzania	Increase in income and improved nutrition for poorest smallholders and women	No
SMUWC	Tanzania	Improved management of water and other natural resources in the catchment	Some analysis of livelihoods undertaken during implementation
Magu	Tanzania	Increased livelihood security for 5000 vulnerable households	Yes, based on CARE's Household Livelihoods Security Framework
PMA	Uganda	Elimination of poverty through multi-sectoral interventions to improve livelihoods	Use of SLA in design
SCLP	South Africa	Development of an integrated approach to management of coastal resources	Use of SLA in design

Five of the interventions in this research employed some form of livelihoods analysis to work through the practicalities of implementing interventions that recognised and responded to the complexity of livelihoods (PMA, CBP, Magu, SHARP and TEAM).

In CBP livelihoods analysis was conducted in planning exercises with a range of social groups identified as vulnerable by community representatives. CARE's Household Livelihoods Security (HLS) framework was used in TEAM, SHARP and Magu to identify vulnerable households. This categorises people into livelihood groups, which are used to indicate levels of poverty. PMA sought to respond to livelihoods concerns expressed through the Ugandan Participatory Poverty Assessment Project.

Although Tanzakesho, the AIDS/STD programme, ASPS, SCLP and SMUWC did not employ specific forms of livelihoods analysis, they all recognised the multi-sectoral nature of people's livelihoods and attempted to understand them.

There are important linkages with the principle of holism, discussed in section 2.4 below. In order for an intervention to respond to the livelihoods of the poor, the design of the intervention must reflect a holistic understanding of both livelihoods and poverty. Whilst most interventions did disaggregate the poor and attempt to gain a holistic understanding of livelihoods, the priorities of the poor were not always reflected in the activities and scope of the resulting interventions. In PMA livelihoods was supposed to be central. However, in the National Agricultural Advisory Services (NAADS), which is one of the key services within the PMA, the focus was on supporting individual "enterprises". This does not reflect the reality of complex livelihood systems and also favours commercial over subsistence farmers.

TEAM diversified its activities and supported a project producing essential oils. This incorporated commercial farmers and diverted attention away from the poorest groups identified in the baseline study.

**Key points:**

- Livelihoods analysis can be a useful means of disaggregating and targeting specific groups of the poor;
- Effective poverty reduction requires that the priorities of these groups should be linked to the design and scope of the project, and reflected throughout its implementation.

## 2.2 Participation by beneficiaries

The terminology used to classify participation in this study is shown in Box 2.1. It defines self-mobilisation at one end of the scale and manipulative participation at the other.

### **Box 2.1 Definitions of types of participation**

- a) *Self-mobilisation*: People participate by taking initiatives independently of external institutions for resources and technical advice they need, but retain control over how resources are used.
- b) *Interactive participation*: People participate in joint analysis, development of action plans and formation or strengthening of local institutions. The process involves interdisciplinary methodologies that seek multiple perspectives and make use of systemic and structured learning processes. As groups take over local decisions and determine how available resources are used, so they have a stake in maintaining structures or practices.
- c) *Functional participation*: Participation seen by external agencies as a means to achieve project goals, especially reduced costs. People may participate by forming groups to meet predetermined objectives related to the project. Such involvement tends to arise only after external agents have already made major decisions.
- d) *Participation for material incentives*: People participate by contributing resources, for example, labour in return for food, cash or other material incentives.
- e) *Participation by consultation*: People participate by being consulted and by answering questions. External agents define problems and information gathering processes, and so control analysis. Such a consultative process does not concede any share in decision-making, and professionals are under no obligation to take on board people's views.
- f) *Passive participation*: People participate by being told what has been decided or has already happened. It involves unilateral announcements by an administration or project management without any listening to people's responses.
- g) *Manipulative participation*: Participation is simply pretence, with representation on official boards by people who are not elected and have no power.

Source: Khanya (2002)

Reflecting recent trends in development, participation by beneficiaries was adopted as a general principle in the case studies and was an intrinsic element of all of them (Table 2.2)

**Table 2.2 Comparison of participation in case studies**

<b>Intervention</b>	<b>Design</b>	<b>Implementation</b>	<b>M&amp;E</b>
AIDS/STD Programme	Limited/consultative and functional. Mainly by government officials and agents of international organisations such as the WHO.	Functional, interactive and self-mobilising. A wide range of groups were free to participate as on a specific objective or target population.	Self-mobilising. Individual groups/or institutions arranged their own M&E but reported to programme management through their immediate supervisory body.
SHARP!	Consultative, functional: baseline and survey studies carried out to understand issues from community perspective	Functional: peer educators, and CBOs are used to carry out the programme's activities.	Passive: Stakeholder's meetings are held to inform stakeholders re progress on planned activities, and new ones
Tanzakesho	Consultative discussions with implementation teams in District Councils. Joint SWOT analysis of existing planning systems	Interactive: Pilot villages interacting with Core Teams members developed village plans and undertook micro projects	Consultative evaluations, attempts made to establish self-mobilising and interactive M&E systems, but difficulties in establishing systems.
CBP	Workshops held between partners to compare best practice. No direct consultation occurred at micro-level.	Community bodies were given the task of producing development plans, facilitated by the project partners	M&E was undertaken by the project through consultation with community members by external consultants.
TEAM	Consultative, functional: baseline and survey studies carried out to understand issues from community perspective	Passive: beneficiaries participated in the implementation of certain activities within the	Consultative: beneficiaries were consulted during each stage of review.
ASPS	Consultative- stakeholders at different levels consulted and their views incorporated in PSD	Functional, incentivised- micro-level beneficiaries participated in implementation by providing labour and land.	Functional- Developed elaborate M&E system that was implemented by project staff with no major involvement of micro-level beneficiaries.
Magu	Consultative- using HLS framework various stakeholders were consulted in at designing stage	Functional, incentivised- some institutions participated in implementation of various activities.	Functional- Beneficiaries participated in M&E but system was very time-consuming.
PMA	Consultative: wide ranging participation by different stakeholders under the umbrella and facilitation of government.	Functional, interactive and self-mobilising. Partners decide what to do with the available resources and in the given context.	Passive. M&E is left to the different levels of government and, to an extent, development partners.
SMUWC	None: the project was prepared by consultants as part of a World Bank project preparation exercise	Functional: local stakeholders participated in defining environmental and natural resource management needs	Consultative: plans for participative monitoring were at an early stage of discussion with stakeholders
SCLP	Consultative: Government officials identified and consulted local stakeholders to identify issues.	Functional: Use of implementing agents to implement projects in and on behalf of poor communities	The Project Memorandum has made provision for PM&E through the logical framework

In the design phase, just over half of the interventions used some form of participation. This was usually consultative participation, relying on PLA, PRA and other rapid appraisal techniques.

All interventions involve participation in implementation<sup>1</sup>. The spread of practice is wider in implementation than in design, ranging from self-mobilisation of community groups to a purely functional process in which the intervention managers determine when and how people 'should' participate.

The majority of case studies show that monitoring and evaluation (M&E) remains very extractive (consultative in nature) and more interactive forms are shown to be problematic to put into practice. Much M & E remains necessarily attached to donor and organisational reporting requirements. Some interventions did attempt to stimulate participants (beneficiaries) to lead the monitoring process but found difficulties in doing so within the time and cost parameters of the intervention. For example, CBP aimed to allow ward committees to monitor and evaluate their plans but experienced problems with implementation in the pilot study and this was not institutionalised into the core methodology. TEAM and Magu used the concept of participatory village self-monitoring. Whilst praised for allowing villagers to actively learn it was also criticised, by project staff, as being too complex and difficult to understand.

Most interventions studied adapt their participatory processes to local conditions and do attempt to include and listen to the poorest groups to some extent. The PRA process in Tanzakesho was held over a several days and included separate sessions for groups such as women and youth. Implementers showed awareness that these processes do not necessarily reach the poorest groups, but find themselves constrained by time and resources in addressing this.

The majority of the case studies attempted to use intensive, resource-heavy participatory processes covering small groups e.g. at village level in Tanzakesho, Magu, SHARP and TEAM. This leads to problems with the sustainability of the systems that they sought to establish.

The gap between the rhetoric and reality of participatory processes is not necessarily due to faulty technique or lack of commitment to the idea of empowering the poor. It appears in the case studies to be caused by institutional constraints, as well as other features of intervention design, such as poor integration with existing institutional mechanisms.

It is notable that most interventions in this study justified their use of participatory processes as a means of empowering the poor. However, in the majority of these cases there was no clear evidence of large-scale empowerment. This suggests that interventions need to think beyond the rhetoric of participation and try to fit forms of participation with the objectives of their activities and not seek to present all instances of participation as empowerment. For example, self-mobilisation by 'communities' was aimed at in the implementation of community plans in CBP and Tanzakesho. Gender awareness work in Tanzakesho and Magu was said to have empowered

---

<sup>1</sup> At the time of analysis the implementation of SCLP had only recently begun, and it was not possible to draw any firm conclusions regarding participation in its implementation.

women. Consultation (rather than self-mobilisation) was required in the preparation of PMA, SMUWC and ASPS. In operationalising some aspects of ASPS, such as construction of water control structures, participation by material incentive is appropriate.

PMA and CBP were notable in attempting to fully institutionalise participatory processes. CBP explicitly attempted to find a way out of 'one-off' PRA exercises as a means for people to influence resource allocation in district government. It sought to develop a methodology that could be employed at the level of district and local government. PMA operates as a national strategy, one of whose aims is to allow local groups to demand the agricultural services that they need.

Participation is not necessarily a useful principle for its own sake, and there has to be a trade-off between quality and quantity of participation. Increasing consultative participation may not increase 'voice' or influence over processes. It is therefore very important to make a distinction between the ends and the means of the type of participation employed. Effective participation can be a means to inform (as opposed to control) existing institutional processes. Practical and cost-effective participatory measures look to see how to 'fit' into existing information sources to build on the strengths of the existing system and to move to a much deeper and evolving process of participation.

**Key points:**

- Effective participatory mechanisms show a linkage between the objectives of intervention and the type of participation used at each stage;
- Sustainable participatory systems build from existing structures to institutionalise new systems, which recognise the importance of financial, institutional and social sustainability;
- The development of simple and effective participatory monitoring systems is a long-term process. In the case studies, this process was undermined by constraints in resources.

## 2.3 Partnerships with agencies

The necessity of forging effective partnerships of donors, government, civil society and private enterprise in poverty reduction is well recognised. However, the shape and range of such partnerships is not so widely discussed. Many partnerships claim to be a way of extending ‘ownership’ to certain stakeholders but an analysis of the control and contribution to partnerships allows us to investigate the reality of these claims. The typology of partnerships used in this study is given in table 2.3.1.

**Table 2.3.1 Typology of Partnership**

Type of partnership	Extent of partnership	Contribution	Control
Multiple agency	Partner(s) implement, gov/PM has no role	All do own activities	None control others
Oversight	Partner(s) implement, gov/PM maintains oversight	All do own activities	gov/PM oversight
Enabling	Partner(s) play predominant role in implementation, gov/PM has some budget or staff allocated	All do own activities, gov/PM funds others	Some control by funders, partners control own activities
Supportive	Gov/PM supports other partners to play significant role	All do own activities but some guidance/facilitation from gov/PM.	Some control by funders, partners supported/advised by gov/PM
Equivalent	Gov/PM plays strong role as well as other partners	All do own activities. Gov/PM directs some.	Strong control by funders in some areas of activity.
Coordinated	Gov/PM plays strong role as well as other partners, but these are coordinated through some steering group	Strategy managed through steering group. Partners manage day-to-day running.	Overall control with steering group. Some flexibility in day-to-day operations
Legal	Gov/PM plays strong role as well as other partners, but these are managed through a legal entity, with key stakeholders sitting on the board	Activities are regulated through legal entity representing stakeholders	Controlled through legal obligations to agreed regulations
Funding	Gov/PM funds, others implement	Activities sanctioned by gov/PM	Funders choose what to implement, others implement agreed plan
Internal control	Gov/PM plays predominant role	Activities defined by gov/PM	Overall direction by gov/PM, partners follow directives

Gov/PM = Implementing government agency, or project/programme manager

The case studies showed a range of partnerships according to this classification. The type of partnerships employed by the interventions appears to correlate with their format and scope. The projects showed stronger direction from project management, so tended to develop internal control/funding relationships (with the exception of CBP). The programmes and larger-scale strategies by necessity had to work in a more coordinated way with other partners.

Table 2.3.2 below summarises the case studies according to the partnerships they formed with other agencies.

**Table 2.3.2 Summary of partnerships with agencies**

<b>Intervention</b>	<b>Type</b>	<b>Extent</b>	<b>Contribution</b>	<b>Control</b>
<b>CBP</b>	Enabling/co-ordinated	National, local government, and NGO partners.	Financial resources provided by donor, local governments and time by all partners.	Coordinated – overall control with steering group although PM managing funds had strong role.
<b>SHARP!</b>	Internal control/funding	CARE implementing, government is providing limited coordination	Governments does not necessarily own activities, but gives approval	Funders have some control while CARE controls its own activities
<b>TEAM</b>	Internal control/funding	CARE lead role in implementation - government has some budget	CARE owns and funds their activities. Poor links with local government but improving	Funders have some control while CARE controls its own activities
<b>AIDS/STD programme</b>	Enabling	Government supports other partners to play significant role. Some informal horizontal linkages	All do own activities with some guidance/facilitation by the government.	Some control by funders, with partners advised by AIDS/STD Programme
<b>PMA</b>	Coordinated	Steering group includes donors, government and NGOs	Strategy managed through PMA secretariat and all implement	Overall control through steering committee, although donors have strong influence
<b>Magu</b>	Internal control/funding	Some partnerships with private sector, research institutes	Managed by parallel structure- poor links with local government	Controlled by CARE management
<b>ASPS</b>	Coordinated	Partnerships of government, donor and research institutes	Activities run through local government structures	Project management at HQs and local government structures
<b>SMUWC</b>	Internal control	Strong with the Ministry of Water, some linkages with other partners	Multiple agencies managing own activities. No direct contribution to the project	Partners had some control over the project through the Steering Committee
<b>SCLP</b>	Supports/funding	Implementing Agents implement projects. PM provide funds and oversees the process	DEAT through PM provide funding. Activities are sanctioned by government	DEAT control funds and sanctions projects/activities
<b>Tanzakesho</b>	Coordinated	Donor/ national ministry	Activities run through local government structures	Day-to day activities controlled by district council - resources controlled by funders



## **Contributions**

Contributions to partnerships can take many forms, from financial inputs to staff time and voluntary labour. In the AIDS/STD programme, partners external to government made their own contributions to a core vision of reducing the impact of HIV/AIDS. In PMA, ASPS and Tanzakesho there was an attempt to coordinate the partnerships, and in all of these interventions the influence of donors is directional. Whilst TEAM, SHARP, Magu, and SMUWC did form partnerships with other agencies, these relationships were more about communication rather than institutionalised coordination. CBP succeeded in some way due to the limited financial resources it controlled as a project. This forced the intervention to make strong and strategic partnerships in South Africa with local and national government. The project relied on partners to find resources (funds and staff) in order to implement the CBP planning methodology. This illustrates how a project using effective partnerships can draw in a wide range of additional contributions to the goal it is seeking to achieve.

## **Control**

In the majority of projects, although partners may be involved at a consultation level, control of activities is retained by funders/managers. There is tension between the need to deliver on output and the desirability of working in partnership. This is really a question of power: donors controlling funds frame the boundaries of what actions can be taken. How this power is used is important in shaping how a partnership operates. For example, although PMA began as a Ugandan initiative, donors play a strong role in shaping the intervention. They are well represented on the national steering committee and employ Technical Advisors within the PMA secretariat. This raises questions about the strength of local ownership and control over the conceptualization of the PMA.

CBP operated as a coordination project for multi-agency action. The project activity was facilitatory and so its power was not directional; this was also the case in the AIDS/STD programme.

TEAM, Magu and SHARP all stated a commitment to working in partnership but in practice such partnerships proved to be problematic (particularly with government). TEAM eventually managed to make some impact at national level, despite having weak partnerships at district level.

SMUWC worked with local and national government in a training and advisory role, but retained control of activities. While retaining the final say on types of projects, the SCLP has entrusted the implementing agents with the responsibility of designing, and implementing interventions, with minimal control.

ASPS recognised the need for strengthened partnerships in phase 1 and was committed to building on this in phase 2. The partnerships in CBP proved very effective at committing organisations and bringing national partners on board. The AIDS/STD programme effectively increased the level of available resources and created synergies between partners. The broad partnerships in PMA should reduce replication and transaction costs, as was also the intention in ASPS, albeit on a smaller scale. Tanzakesho formed good partnerships with local and national government but maintained overall control of activities.

Consideration of partnerships should differentiate between horizontal and vertical partnerships. Many of the interventions formed good vertical partnerships linking the micro (local), meso (district) and macro (national) levels, but attention should also be paid to the strength of horizontal partnerships which can ensure that, collectively, partners respond holistically to livelihoods. SMUWC worked to form horizontal linkages to facilitate district government to work with irrigation groups.

The AIDS/STD programme worked through statutory vertical government linkages but also formed good horizontal partnerships with international NGOs who could fill gaps in service delivery.

Partnerships require institutionalising into intervention processes so that they can build on existing strategic alliances and nurture synergies between agencies. There is often a semblance of partnership, which actually overlies control by the implementing partner.

The strength and extent of partnerships is very significant for sustainability. Many of the interventions recognised the need for strong and meaningful partnerships as implementation progressed, in order to ensure sustainability and replicability when the implementing partner withdraws.

**Key points:**

- Partnerships can be built through the contribution of time, finance and other resources;
- Sustainable partnerships recognise and act to reduce the differentials of power and control in their relationships;
- Effective partnerships can be a critical element of institutional sustainability; They are needed both vertically (linking the micro-meso-macro levels) and horizontally (to provide a holistic approach).

## 2.4 Holistic approach

Whilst we can understand livelihoods in terms of different types of assets, it is important to recognise that such assets are only parts of a whole. It is to the whole that interventions need to try to respond. Our analysis suggests that a single intervention should not attempt to address every issue but that it is possible to respond holistically through good horizontal and vertical partnerships (section 2.3) and effective linkages (section 2.5).

Table 2.4 below summarises the case studies in terms of the extent to which they adopted a holistic approach.

**Table 2.4 Holistic Approaches**

Intervention	Holistic analysis in design	Co-ordination with other development activities
CBP	A holistic planning process was used in design	Being operated as part of the local government system
SHARP!	PRA revealed other pressing livelihoods issues in the area – but project focus was HIV/AIDS	Focused on its programme alone, while working with other key partners. That is, it did not become part of other HIV/AIDS activities/ programmes
TEAM	Broad livelihoods issues were identified through PRAs	Coordination was inadequate as there was no interaction between TEAM and District government staff.
SCLP	Broad stakeholder consultation culminated in the identification of 28 thematic areas for intervention	Links well with environmental awareness and poverty alleviation efforts in coastal towns of South Africa.
AIDS/STD programme	Holistic understanding of HIV/AIDS affected households - brings together range of interventions.	Strategy led and coordinated by Ugandan AIDS Commission (national government) coordination between statutory health services and INGOs
PMA	Holistic strategy - working across relevant sectors to tackle all factors which impact on agriculture including roads, education etc.	Integrated government strategy – links to local government system through decentralisation framework
Magu	Focused on many livelihood issues	Worked independently at beginning. Later worked with several local partners
ASPS	Deals with agricultural sub sectors but does not consider marketing aspects	Phase two will be internalised in local government plans.
SMUWC	Holistic approach to livelihoods from the design stage	Closely linked with certain initiatives (projects)
Tanzakesho	Holistic analysis with an environmental emphasis. Broad PRA helping local government to work cross-sectorally.	Mixed - limited NGO involvement. Restriction to pilot villages makes district co-ordination difficult

## Design

All the case studies showed a broad holistic awareness of the issues that they sought to address, following from the livelihoods orientation that underpins the interventions (see section 2.1). This was carried through to design in varying degrees. There is a clear distinction to be found between interventions operating cross-sectorally (Tanzakesho, CBP, SHARP, SCLP and the AIDS/STD programme) and those that

focus on a particular sector (PMA, TEAM, Magu, ASPS, and SMUWC). The principle of holism is harder to address in sector-specific interventions. The PMA demonstrates an attempt to locate agriculture cross-sectorally and shows some of the obstacles to working in this way. The design of PMA is holistic, but relies on implementation in various sectoral ministries. The lack of holism in the first phase of ASPS was seen as a problem, but was to be addressed in the second. Most interventions recognised cross-sectoral linkages, but attempting to do too much within the project or programme risks unsustainable management systems. Evaluation reports from TEAM suggest that trying to address several aspects of livelihoods in one intervention can result in a dilution of focus and impact. TEAM and Magu performed livelihoods analysis in order to understand and respond holistically to people's livelihoods. However both show evidence of trying to control too much internally. For instance, the focus of TEAM on extending useful lessons about Farmer Extension Facilitators was diluted by trying to influence too many aspects of farmers' livelihoods within the project.

### **Co-ordination with other development activity**

Co-ordination with other development activity is another aspect of holistic approaches. Some case studies show effective integration with development activity both cross-sectorally and across levels. In CBP attention was paid to bringing development actors within a community together in order to contribute in an integrated way to the district development plan, as well as bringing together partners from meso and macro levels to work together in promoting micro-meso linkages. CBP also sought to engage key actors who, although not directly involved in the intervention, would have a vital role in upscaling and replicating the intervention methodology.

This coordination was not as effective in Tanzakesho, although it showed some examples of co-operation with NGOs in the implementation of micro-projects. Interventions working outside existing institutional structures seem to have greater difficulties in integrating their activities (TEAM, Magu, SMUWC and SHARP). Thus where TEAM worked within the existing organisational mechanisms (participating in a national group on a unified extension strategy) it had significant impact, while it had much less impact at district level where it operated as a parallel structure. The AIDS/STD programme by definition existed to coordinate HIV/AIDS related activity undertaken by all agencies in Uganda and appears to have functioned effectively in doing so.

### **Impact**

Most interventions attempted to design interventions holistically in livelihoods terms (using tools such as PRA and livelihoods surveys to do so). However the crucial factor is the extent of the integration of the intervention in relation to existing development activity. The Ugandan HIV/AIDS strategy showed the potential success of holistic integration across sectors and across levels. Intervention design needs to be relevant to people's livelihoods, but in order to have long-term impact activity also needs to be coordinated cross-sectorally and across levels. The production-related interventions (TEAM, Magu, ASPS and PMA), whilst all having a holistic understanding of agriculture, faced some difficulties with trying to increase

production in the absence of any control over external markets (both local and international). For this reason TEAM attempted to include marketing as part of its remit. However, in order to coordinate a fully holistic response it is necessary to recognise the assumptions upon which an intervention is built. For instance the PMA assumed that the majority of Ugandan farmers would be lifted out of poverty by increasing production, which necessitates the existence of effective local and (open) global markets. It also assumed, that in reducing the role of government in service provision, there was sufficient private sector capacity to fill the gap.

Whilst many of the agricultural interventions considered in this research seek to increase production for the market, there is a need to consider wider national and international marketing implications much more explicitly. This reflects underlying assumptions on the part of intervention designers and the dominant international discourse on the desirability of economic liberalisation. Very little discussion of this issue can be found in the case study documentation. The PMA was particularly interesting in this regard as it was founded on the assumption that reducing the role of government in agriculture service provision would lead to a flourishing of private agricultural service providers. This would in turn increase production, generating increased economic growth that will therefore reduce the poverty of subsistence farmers. Fieldwork in this research suggests that the capacity of the private sector has been overestimated in Uganda. It therefore indicates that interventions need to carefully think through the assumptions that they make, particularly in respect of external factors over which they have very limited control.

**Key points:**

- Holistic action can be achieved more effectively through horizontal partnerships than by a single agency;
- Intervention in all aspects of livelihoods *within* a specific project is unsustainable;
- In the majority of the case studies the assumptions made in design were not questioned or revisited during implementation.

## 2.5 Policy and institutional linkages (micro-macro links)

This section explores policy and institutional linkages from two perspectives. Firstly, it recognises that interventions need to understand how they relate to and integrate with existing structures and institutions. Secondly, sustainable livelihoods thinking argues that intervention should start with the concerns of people and work upwards to inform the operation of organisations at meso level and the making and shaping of policy, linking the micro to the macro level.

Table 2.5 below summarises the policy and institutional linkages in the case study interventions

**Table 2.5 Summary of policy and institutional linkages**

<b>Intervention</b>	<b>Integration with existing structures</b>	<b>Linkages: micro-macro</b>
CBP	Fully integrated with local government (now working at national level)	Partnership established linking local government, national government and facilitators in each country.
SHARP!	Parallel structure with some coordination activity	CARE interacted with national ministries in Lesotho and provincial departments of the Free State Government, as well as local governments structures and local CBOs
TEAM	Parallel structure with some coordination activity	CARE interacted with the national ministry, and local farmers and their organisations including CBOs, but not at district level
SCLP	Fully integrated with government and private sector organisations	Successfully linked to national, provincial and local level (implementing agents) structures.
AIDS/STD programme	National level coordination strategy for existing structures	Evolving CBOs influence district through local government plans. Policy based on information from districts
PMA	New Secretariat created but integrated with national government activity. Ministry of Finance responsible to assist with cross-sectoral linkages	District PMA coordinators are key linkage between macro and micro. Potential that district PMA coordinators will be sidelined by parallel implementation of other elements of PMA
Magu	Parallel structure with poor coordination linkages	Linked well with national policies, not with meso
ASPS	Integration with some government structures	Linked well with national policies, not so well with meso
SMUWC	Parallel structure	Project was very active in influencing policy at macro level from its micro-level experience
Tanzakesho	Integrated with local government/ ministry	Linked well with national policies. Integrated with meso level but activity only in pilot villages.

### Integration with existing structures

Interventions providing extra resources to existing institutions face problems. How can extra resources be provided in a sustainable manner and without overloading capacity of existing staff? The critical factors in this respect are related to the pace of the intervention and the need to 'fit' within existing institutional mechanisms. For instance CBP did not require a full-time commitment from partners but was designed to add value to their existing work. Tanzakesho and PMA illustrate some of the

difficulties faced by existing institutions in adopting radical reform. PMA drew many staff from existing agricultural institutions at all levels. Tanzakesho operated as a parallel structure within local government, which resulted in differential coverage by staff between pilot/non-pilot villages. Setting up of parallel structures can reduce the capacity of existing institutions by attracting staff, distorting participation through payment of allowances, and through the inequality of wealth between donor-funded interventions and local government (as in TEAM, Magu and SHARP). It is perhaps not a coincidence that the Lesotho Aids Prevention and Control Authority suffered from a lack of staff whilst the SHARP project employed a highly qualified and competent team.

Some interventions also recognise the importance that new systems fit with existing funding cycles. ASPS and CBP both tried to adjust systems to fit existing governmental funding cycles. The early experience from PMA also suggests the importance of integrating participatory processes with grant releases/funding cycles so that the views of people have sufficient time to work through the system and ensure that they are taken into account when funding decisions are taken at the district level.

The Magu project showed a great willingness to work through certain traditional structures, whilst having problems in relating to local government. This perhaps indicates that NGOs feel happier in working with 'traditional' (non bureaucratic groups) and less comfortable with bureaucratic institutions, which they often see as part of the problem and not part of the solution.

Interventions need to consider how well they 'fit' into existing structures and systems in order to reduce transaction costs and to ensure that the lessons that they generate are more widely applicable. However, care must be taken not to increase the burden on existing institutions or to decrease their capacity. For example, in Tanzakesho core team members from local government spent a disproportionate amount of time attending to pilot villages.

### **Linking the micro to the macro level**

The SLA principles stress the need for interventions to respond to people's livelihoods at the micro-level. The normative implication underlying this is that meso and macro level institutions will respond to and serve the micro level rather the other way around

Some case studies show good evidence of linkage directly from macro to micro but showing limited linkages with the meso (regional/district) level of government). This can be seen to some degree in Magu, SMUWC, TEAM, SHARP and ASPS. Interventions working directly with local government address this missing linkage to varying degrees. The potential for sustainable impact appears to be greater where the intervention is fully integrated with institutional patterns such as testing and implementing methodologies across the whole of local government areas (as in CBP) rather than in pilot villages only (as in Tanzakesho). The design of an intervention can ensure that it links effectively with the micro, meso and macro agendas and increase the likelihood that micro-level concerns will influence policy decisions. In SCLP, feedback from participation at the micro-level was able to influence a government

white paper as the programme design ensured effective linkages between national and provincial governments and projects at micro level.

**Key points:**

- Examples of good practice from the case studies show the importance of integration with cycles of planning/funding;
- Case studies with sustainable impact recognise that vertical linkages operate both upwards, from the micro to the meso and macro levels, and downwards, from the macro to the meso and micro levels;
- They also attempt to link to policy processes and existing institutions during all phases, building on supportive policy frameworks and influencing policy where appropriate.



## 2.6 Building on strengths

This principle can be viewed both in operational and normative terms. Table 2.6 summarises how the interventions in this study build on strengths at different levels.

**Table 2.6 Building on strengths**

Intervention	Use of strengths at different levels
CBP	Yes - an intrinsic part of design at all levels – although this can be strengthened in the planning process
SHARP!	Yes - Peer education and training builds on the human skills of participants SHARP interacts with different national ministries and international NGOs.
TEAM	Yes at micro level. Not at meso and macro levels
SCLP	The programme invested a considerable amount of time and money building capacity of national and provincial staff to link environmental and livelihoods issues across all the sectors.
AIDS/STD programme	Yes at all levels resulting in greatly increased capacity nationally and locally to deal with HIV/AIDS (although with differing coverage)
PMA	Yes at macro level. Not at micro level Good speed of penetration of some aspects of the plan in macro and meso levels. Questions about micro remain.
Magu	Yes - at micro level, traditional groups strengthened Not at meso and macro levels, poor interaction with local government
ASPS	Yes - at micro and macro levels. Increased capacity demonstrated at meso and macro.
SMUWC	Institutional analysis revealed local strengths and changed some elements of the project.
Tanzakesho	Yes - at micro and meso levels (although based on problem analysis) Not clear at macro-level

At an operational level, building on strengths means that interventions can identify institutional/community strengths and use these as the basis for action, as opposed to starting where there are perceived problems. All interventions in this research used existing skills and capacities of individual staff within local communities, local government and national ministries, although only two of the ten case studies can be said to build on strengths at all levels.

The question that the case studies do not sufficiently answer is whether the use of existing institutions and staff actually results in increased capacity or whether it is done simply to reduce staffing costs. In some cases, individuals become overloaded with additional duties or diverted from original duties. For example, the core team in Tanzakesho focused a disproportionate share of their time on pilot villages at the expense of non-pilot villages.

All interventions utilised existing institutional strengths at some level (although in some cases through parallel structures, e.g. TEAM) but the critical difference is whether interventions build on this strength or not. Some use of existing structures may be diversionary, in terms of diverting the scope and remit of specific organisations, such as the use of CBOs in SHARP and perhaps also in the use of ‘traditional’ societies in Magu.

In addition, actions taken by interventions can reduce levels of service. For example, the PMA reduced the direct delivery of extension services without sufficient private sector capacity being available to replace it.

At a normative level building on strengths can also be thought of as using ‘vision’ rather than ‘need’ as a starting point for action. It is not clear from this research whether this difference in framing an intervention makes a difference in outcome. CBP took a vision-based approach and specifically tried to move away from a problem-based planning system. By contrast, Tanzakesho worked from a needs-based analysis, in order to have achievable plans, which are not just dependent on large contributions from outside. Although the starting points were different, both Tanzakesho and CBP worked towards the idea of having a community-owned goal, towards which resources would be mobilised with primary responsibility for development being placed on ‘the community’. CBP specifically tried to move towards strengths and vision-based planning. It succeeded to varying degrees in the different countries. On a peer review conducted in Uganda, one of the people who had facilitated a local parish plan was asked what was different about the CBP methodology. He replied “it is based on strengths, not problems”, and when asked what difference that made, he replied “when you plan on strengths it is possible to move forward, but when you base it on problems you get paralysed by all the problems” (Khanya, 2002)

It was argued by the CBP project management that focusing on strengths helps to give communities and institutions confidence and a belief that they can succeed. However, there is a need to be careful that working on strengths does not overload or distort the activity of systems and individuals. Understanding and recognising strengths is an inherently subjective process but the use of methodologies such as PRA in Tanzakesho, resource mapping in SMUWC and the planning processes in CBP enabled communities to reflect and discuss their perceptions of their strengths.

**Key points:**

- Interventions which demonstrate a sustainable impact build on the strengths of existing institutions;
- Some case studies used a *vision*-based process rather than *needs*-based analysis in order to build the confidence of communities to drive their own development;
- Evidence from the case studies shows that building on the existing capacity of staff (e.g. in government) can divert them from fulfilling their existing duties.

## 2.7 Dynamism and flexibility

Most of the case studies demonstrated a reasonable degree of dynamism and flexibility, with changes taking place as implementation proceeded. However a deeper analysis indicates that it is more important to consider more subtle processes of learning and responsiveness - how did the interventions learn from the evolving pattern of implementation, and how effectively were they able to respond to changes.

All case studies could have more rigorously engaged with the assumptions that they make and limitations that they experience in trying to implement. Table 2.7 below summarises how the objectives of the interventions changed as they progressed.

**Table 2.7 Dynamism and flexibility**

<b>Interventions</b>	<b>Did objectives change?</b>	<b>What further intervention arose?</b>
<b>CBP</b>	Project started aiming to develop pilots but then quickly moved on to mainstream these into implementation, develop video etc	Development of Harmonised Participatory Planning Guide in Uganda Development of linkages with Municipality Integrating Development Plans in SA
<b>SHARP!</b>	Previous project changed focus as needs dictated – hence the change to SHARP	Fits into CARE's evolving programme Expanding further in Free State
<b>TEAM</b>	TEAM's focus changed over time to accommodate new insights	Focus on institution building, marketing and growing essential oils pilots
<b>AIDS/STD Programme</b>	No - objective was to reduce HIV transmission and co-ordinate care	New interventions arose from partners at all levels responding to situation
<b>PMA</b>	Still in early stages - not all components operationalised. Some indications that focus may be shifting to commercial farmers	N/A
<b>Magu</b>	Yes - project realised need to increase focus on marketing	Marketing components and partnerships
<b>ASPS</b>	No - but process was flexible in trying to extend timescales to accommodate participatory processes.	Phase II will address weaknesses identified in phase I
<b>SMUWC</b>	Objectives changed at output level at several points during implementation, later at purpose level.	Others continued some initiatives after project was stopped.
<b>Tanzakesho</b>	No - but process was flexible to accommodate fuller participation	Programme is influencing national guidelines for planning

### Evolving objectives and processes

All case studies showed a general level of responsiveness to changing conditions, with objectives and activities being broadened or altered. Some explicitly altered their operational mechanisms to enhance implementation. For instance ASPS showed

a willingness to alter funding cycles in order to satisfy the pace of participatory work. CBP developed a core methodology across the four countries, and then each country adapted this to suit its own conditions. This also left room for learning. The ability for dynamism varies across levels. The case studies show the relative ease of altering ground-level activities but the alteration of strategic commitments at policy level is harder to effect, as in PMA, and ASPS.

### **Resulting further action**

All the interventions studied resulted in some form of further action. Often this is in the form of feeding information up to the national level as in the case of CBP, Tanzakesho, and TEAM. In other cases other funders/agencies took on parts of interventions. For example, an NGO continued participatory work after initial funding for SMUWC ceased.

National strategies formed part of an evolving policy framework and both the AIDS/STD programme and PMA were strongly influenced by high-level political commitments and preferences.

All case studies appear to be quite responsive in terms of scaling-up successful aspects of interventions, but not quite so ready to address weaknesses. ASPS was notably open about the limitations of its first phase. Other interventions, whilst identifying limitations in documentation, do not appear to have strategies for addressing these.

Whilst most interventions are flexible in terms of being able to alter their day-to-day activities, there is room for reflection on the weaknesses of intervention and on the assumptions that underpin the actions that they take. Effective learning reflects on both the strengths and weaknesses of an intervention. CBP sought to pilot a planning methodology that could be replicated and upscaled by the meso-level of government. In contrast Tanzakesho piloted an innovatory and much-praised methodology, but district government staff admitted that they could not replicate the system beyond a few pilot villages.

There is also a crucial link between monitoring and evaluation and the responsiveness and learning of an intervention. An effective M&E system can be a vital tool in aiding learning. CBP demonstrated continual learning, firstly through peer discussion of current practice and international study visits, and secondly by a process of reflection on and adaptation of a core methodology as it was put into practice.

### **Key points:**

- Case study projects show that piloting is a useful means of learning - but that pilots need to aim at mainstreaming;
- All case study interventions illustrate learning by doing and the link between learning and action through monitoring and evaluation.

## 2.8 Accountability

Sustainable livelihoods principles demand that interventions are responsive to and accountable to those that they attempt to benefit. In thinking through accountability, it should be recognised that true accountability cannot be achieved simply by involving beneficiaries in monitoring and evaluation. Accountability entails that beneficiaries ask questions and demand answers from intervention management.

Table 2.8 summarises the accountability mechanisms in each of the case studies.

**Table 2.8 Summary of accountability**

Interventions	Accountability to beneficiaries and wider public	Who reports to whom and what about?
CBP	Project not accountable to local people, but plans are generated by citizens Wider stakeholders participate in national annual stakeholder meetings	Quarterly reports to DFID. 6 monthly project meetings partners report to each other. Now Steering Committees established in SA, Uganda and Zimbabwe.
SHARP!	Monthly meetings with stakeholders committees	Quarterly reports to funders and government HIV/AIDS bodies
TEAM	None	Quarterly reports to funders and Ministry of Agriculture
AIDS/STD programme	Varies between partners. AIDS/STD programme reports to government	Variable- but generally intra-organisational. Reports not widely shared
PMA	Accountable to government	PMA secretariat reports to Parliament and donors. Visits to districts made by MPs.
Magu	Accountable to HQs but had a good M&E system - some beneficiary influence	Reports to funders and HQ
ASPS	Reported to local government bodies e.g. Full Council then to HQs	Projects to districts and districts to HQs
SMUWC	Little accountability to beneficiaries in first phase, but extension phase broadened approach to reach the wider public	Reported to the project coordinator, financing agency and steering committee on a quarterly basis. Reported at the district level on a monthly basis.
Tanzakesho	Reported to local government bodies e.g. Full Council then to HQs.	Reports up chain from village council to district to ministry/UNDP

### Accountability to beneficiaries and general public

None of the case studies account directly to beneficiaries at the micro-level. There were some attempts in resource-heavy projects operating at the micro-level to involve beneficiaries in monitoring and evaluation but it is unclear whether these projects were actually accountable to beneficiaries (TEAM, Magu, SHARP, SMUWC).

Interventions operating through governmental structures are potentially accountable to a wider public through voting mechanisms and other representative systems. This includes CBP, ASPS, SCLP, AIDS/STD programme and PMA.

Under PMA, farmers' forums were established to contract agricultural extension service providers in an effort to increase local accountability but there were many questions about the representativeness and effectiveness of these bodies.

## **Who reports to whom and what about?**

The majority of reporting across all case studies was constructed so as to satisfy donor requirements. However, locally integrated interventions also reported to parliament/council bodies. Written reports were generally in English in all case studies which limits readership. This is a problem in Tanzania, particularly at the meso level. It is not so acute in South Africa and Uganda as English is an official language in these countries. Many of the case studies recognised this as a problem and some took steps to have reports available in local languages. In Tanzakesho some reports were in Swahili, but demands were noted for more. In SMUWC the problems of local accountability were also recognised at the end of the first phase, and the extension phase put considerable effort to make its findings more accessible to beneficiaries and stakeholders, with all its written output being available in both English and Swahili. In CBP, feedback at the micro-level is provided to ward committees on their plans. At the meso and macro levels 4-country partner meetings and now national Steering Committee meetings report on progress and experience from pilot implementation.

The use of local consultants in offering technical support and monitoring and evaluation is also seen to improve local accountability. Successes in this respect were shown in CBP in South Africa and Uganda, and also in Tanzakesho. This increases the sense of local ownership and ensures that interventions relate more closely to their cultural context.

Increasing accountability at the micro-level is not easy within the timeframes of many interventions and managers may be unwilling or cautious to expose their interventions to public scrutiny. Mechanisms need to be institutionalised as part of an intervention rather than as a one-off component of M&E. Many desire wide reporting both orally and in written local languages. In Uganda the use of local media as a way of stimulating debate is increasingly recognised and should be explored by interventions. CBP also effectively utilised the local media in South Africa to raise the profile of its activities and to foster a broader process of community engagement.

### **Key points:**

- In order to be more accountable some case study interventions recognised the importance of:
  - using local languages in reporting
  - employing local consultants to offer technical advice and to undertake evaluation.
- Interventions with more effective reporting mechanisms employ different strategies to increase accountability:
  - Reporting to beneficiaries on components which relate to them
  - Reporting to partners through steering committees or other forms development committees
- Some case studies demonstrate the value of a practical relationship with the media as a means of improving accountability

## 2.9 Sustainability

The methodology and scope of this research project prevents us from assessing how each of the interventions studied will contribute to improving the sustainability of people's livelihoods, since this would require a major evaluative study in its own right. The analysis presented here relates to the potential sustainability of the impact of an intervention in relation to four aspects (economic, environmental, institutional and social) identified in sustainable livelihoods thinking.

### Economic sustainability

Table 2.9.1 below summarises the economic sustainability of each of the case studies.

**Table 2.9.1 Summary of interventions in terms of economic sustainability**

Intervention	Economic sustainability
TEAM	No - very intensive & resource dependent
AIDS/STD programme	Most activity heavily reliant on external funding
PMA	Possibly integrated with government resource streams (although dependent on donors)
Magu	No - very intensive & resource dependent
ASPS	Integrated with existing resource streams, but heavily dependent on donor commitment
SMUWC	No - very intensive & resource dependent
Tanzakesho	No - very intensive & resource dependent
CBP	Yes - stimulated local flow of resources rather than financing directly (although still challenges in terms of the cost of the planning)
SHARP	No - very intensive & resource dependent
SCLP	Appraisal indicates positive economic returns

In most cases assessments of financial rather than economic sustainability could be made in relation to the interventions studied. The analysis indicates that systems set up by the majority of interventions rely heavily on external funding sources. CBP was the exception as it used its funds as a facilitatory mechanism to establish community-based planning systems, using existing resourcing streams in most cases. The project funded a series of workshops and study visits to stimulate partners to pilot the planning methodology designed in the process. Partners sought their own funds for implementation. The local municipality provided staff for facilitation and \$5000 to each ward to fund activities identified in community plans. However, most case studies showed little engagement with the issue of long-term economic sustainability and intervention designs relied heavily on external funding streams.

The AIDS/STD programme strategy tried to co-ordinate and support the actions of a wide range of interventions. However, many of these interventions were externally funded and therefore economically uncertain, as the programme had no control over

the funding of its international partners. The economic sustainability of the co-ordination strategy was dependent on political will to mobilise resources.

The funding for PMA comes from the central government of Uganda, with direct budgetary support from donors. Given that a large proportion of central government's budget is comprised of development assistance with certain conditionalities, large programmes such as PMA rely on continued commitment by donors.

Projects and programmes such as Magu, SHARP, SCLP, TEAM, SMUWC, ASPS (in pilot areas) and Tanzakesho actually limit the sustainability of the systems that they establish as they exist as islands of resource in environments of resource scarcity. This places the interventions in powerful positions, which in turn can weaken the capacity of local government and partners to operate effectively.

### **Social sustainability**

The term social sustainability is used in this study to relate to a normative goal of minimising social exclusion and maximising social equity. Table 2.9.2 summarises the social sustainability of each of the case studies.

**Table 2.9.2 Summary of interventions in terms of social sustainability**

<b>Intervention</b>	<b>Social</b>
TEAM	Vulnerable groups are target beneficiaries of the intervention
AIDS/STD programme	Most activities well integrated and targetting groups vulnerable to HIV/AIDS
PMA	Imposition of new groups (farmers' forums) at local level. Has not built on existing groups, and farmers must choose only one.
Magu	Focus on women-headed households. Some traditional institutions were strengthened
ASPS	Consideration of gender. Activities not well integrated with existing groups- some new groups imposed
SMUWC	Attempted to address the issues and concerns of disadvantaged. Constraints to engagement not overcome
Tanzakesho	Questions over access to process by poorest groups.
CBP	Questions over access to process by poorest groups.
SHARP	Vulnerable groups are target beneficiaries of the intervention
SCLP	Vulnerable groups are not able to access the intervention

Most of the case studies were targeted at the poor and vulnerable. However they were able to show little evidence of efficacy (TEAM and Magu did indicate levels of participation from certain social groups as categorised by the interventions). The majority of case studies showed weak engagement with the idea of social sustainability and a narrow range of methodologies with which to explore it. SCLP excluded vulnerable groups through the government tender procedures that place emphasis on formal business plans. As a result, projects within SCLP were awarded to local business people with support from the implementing agencies.



The dangers that participatory methods can reinforce social exclusion, strengthen dominant voices and simplify relationships were not recognised in any of the case studies. Specifically, the dark sides of participation should not be overlooked. In Tanzakesho it was said that the PRA planning process enabled one village to identify and ‘repatriate’ a number of witches.

CBP ensured that the livelihoods of disadvantaged groups were analysed separately in the planning process, and their preferred outcomes and key risks/vulnerabilities were included for prioritisation. However there was no guarantee that these would be selected in the overall community prioritisation, although an evaluation indicated that the plans did represent the needs of the disadvantaged. Increasing social sustainability is a long-term and iterative process. If community-based planning processes begin to truly reflect the demands of the currently excluded the development agenda may begin to be shaped very differently.

### **Environmental sustainability**

Whilst all the rural and natural resource-based case studies (six out of ten) do consider environmental sustainability, it forms a sub-component of intervention activities in the majority of cases. In SMUWC, a natural resources management rather than a production-focused intervention, the environmental sustainability of water resources in the Usangu catchment was the key reason for creation of the project. SMUWC also liaised and worked with district and central government to build capacity for natural resource management.

**Table 2.9.3 Summary of interventions in terms of environmental sustainability**

<b>Intervention</b>	<b>Environmental</b>
TEAM	TEAM is concerned with environmental awareness issues. These were offered in the package.
AIDS/STD programme	Not a specific concern
PMA	Links with National Environmental Management Authority but unanswered questions about impact of PMA
Magu	Environmentally friendly technologies encouraged - organic pesticides etc
ASPS	The HIMA component supposed to tackle this was not integrated fully. Some potentially harmful environmental consequences
SMUWC	Aim to increase understanding and management of natural resources, therefore was (intended to be) environmentally positive.
Tanzakesho	Very thorough and innovative environmental focus
CBP	Second version of manual stronger on environmental side
SHARP	Concerns about proper disposals of condoms
SCLP	The intervention aims to promote environmentally sensible practices and policies

Only two of the case studies mainstreamed environmental issues (Tanzakesho and SCLP) into governmental structures, in this case with regard to community-based planning and the implementation of Capacity 21 commitments that were signed up to

in Rio in 1992. The PRA planning process in Tanzakesho had a strong environmental awareness component. The main problems identified in village plans were environmental. The resulting actions were the cleaning and protection of water sources, the promotion of environmentally benign technologies and the passing of by-laws to prevent over-grazing and assist the regeneration of forest reserves.

ASPS had an environmental component, HIMA, which was a pre-existing project that was brought under the wider ASPS programme. However, it did not appear to be holistically integrated across the programme.

If the PMA is to be successful in Uganda the steep rise in commercial agriculture may have some environmental impacts. These were little explored within PMA itself, the responsibility being passed to NEMA (National Environmental Management Authority). In addition the enterprise-based system proposed for extension services means that environmental elements such as forestry are not likely to receive priority consideration.

Some commentators have suggested that the potentially negative environmental consequences of increased condom use are insufficiently considered in AIDS/HIV interventions such as SHARP and the AIDS/STD programme. In addition, urban environmental concerns, such as refuse, were revealed as being of a high priority to the participants in CBP in Mangaung Municipality in South Africa.

### **Institutional sustainability**

This refers to the potential for structures and processes to be maintained and to continue to perform their functions. It is summarised in Table 2.9.4.

**Table 2.9.4 Institutional sustainability**

<b>Intervention</b>	<b>Institutional</b>
TEAM	No effective partnership between TEAM and government took place at district level, so replicability is limited
AIDS/STD programme	Variable - many NGO operations work as parallel structures to government. However, coordination through AIDS/STD programme
PMA	New multiple bodies at all levels may be problem (multiple reporting and resource constraints)
Magu	Unsustainable parallel project structure. Some activity integrated with traditional groups may be more sustainable.
ASPS	Potential sustainability in working with government structures. Questions over imposition of co-operatives
SMUWC	Some of the institutions established by the project can be self-sustaining
Tanzakesho	Good use of existing local government structure which allows process to be shaped by local context.
CBP	Considerable efforts made to ensure part of system and replicable. Work continuing to strengthen support system
SHARP!	Works with government structures, NGOs and local CBOs, Weakens institutional capacity at macro?
SCLP	SCLP provides support to existing structures

As discussed earlier with regard to institutional linkages, interventions establishing parallel management structures have a particular problem with regards to institutional sustainability. This is a weakness in the three case studies implemented by NGOs (SHARP, TEAM and Magu), although the involvement of TEAM and SHARP at the macro-level demonstrates that some institutional adaptation might be achieved if interventions are properly linked.

It is also potentially a problem with parallel intervention management units, e.g. those established at the macro level with regard to PMA, and ASPS, and at the meso level in Tanzakesho, despite these working with government. Although the experience of operating and working with these systems potentially enhances governmental capacity and learning (as is the case with SCLP), this will largely depend on the relationships between the institutions. Setting up such systems can be useful in terms of being able to by-pass political bottlenecks.

CBP is the only project intervention that facilitated the creation of a system by fully utilising existing institutional capacity.

Interventions must also be careful that they understand the capacity and function of existing organisations with which they are working, and avoid diverting or subverting their activities. For example, SHARP sought to work through local NGOs to encourage income generation activities and to provide home-based care. There is some evidence that this may divert CBOs from their existing functions. This may also be a danger in Magu in which the use of 'traditional' groups in implementation may prove to be diversionary and unsustainable.

### **Key points:**

All aspects of sustainability of impact need to be considered, with particular regard for economic and institutional sustainability in the short and medium term, and attention to environmental and social sustainability in the medium and long term.

Interventions which have a potentially sustainable impact on livelihoods have the following characteristics:

- **Economic/ financial sustainability:**
  - They appraise economic sustainability but attach equal weight to the other aspects of sustainability.
  - They integrate pilot activities into existing resource streams;
- **Social Sustainability**
  - They recognise the danger of capture of project benefits by elite groups;
  - They understand who is not participating and why this is happening;
- **Environmental sustainability**
  - They recognise that environmental issues also present opportunities;
  - They value the brown (urban) environment where necessary;
- **Institutional sustainability**
  - They avoid use of parallel structures;
  - They avoid diverting CBOs from their existing functions.

## 2.10 Overview

All the case studies in this research showed a livelihoods-orientation in that they start from a commitment to improving people's livelihoods. This does not mean they were all taking a 'sustainable livelihoods approach'. However, by analysing each case study in relation to a range of SLA principles it is possible to identify strengths and weaknesses in the current planning, implementation and evaluation of interventions. In this respect, this research does not aim to identify the novelty of SLA itself but to understand it as a mechanism for a unified framework of best practice.

A consideration of the strengths and weaknesses displayed by case studies in this research allows us to make the following recommendations and observations for the institutional adoption of sustainable livelihoods approaches:

- Attention to **all** SL principles is required for an intervention to have the **potential** to create sustainable impact. Principles are **not** only a checklist but provide a framework for *thinking critically* through action;
- SLAs lend themselves to participatory planning, which aim to address needs across a range of sectors. They may not be so well suited to large sectoral interventions, where too much emphasis on a bottom-up approach may lead to the loss of a bigger strategic picture and differential coverage of services;
- The concepts of 'ownership', 'participation', 'empowerment' and 'partnership' need to be worked through critically in relation to the exercise of power in all stakeholder relationships. Acknowledging and seeking to reduce disparities of power in implementation is a considerable challenge, requiring new skills and working practices for all parties;
- Livelihoods analysis (for instance using a livelihoods framework) may lead to an improved understanding of the complexity of ground-level realities but specific interventions should be carefully focused. Effective partnerships create synergies that enable multi-sectoral action rather than using a single "integrated" intervention to respond to all aspects of livelihoods.
- Interventions need to fit in two ways: into people's lives, and into the wider institutional context of government, civil society and private enterprise;
- Active integration with existing systems should be sought through incremental and adaptive processes. We need to refine our understanding of process approaches and action learning to apply this more effectively in development interventions;
- Consideration of **all four** aspects of sustainability is essential to ensure an impact from interventions on people's livelihoods. Economic and institutional sustainability are vital in the short term but longer term social and environmental consequences of intervention must be considered in all cases.

### **3. THE FORMAT OF DEVELOPMENT INTERVENTIONS**

#### **3.1 Introduction**

This chapter explores the range of management practices utilised in the case studies. It engages with two strands of debate: firstly, the demands made by the adoption of sustainable livelihoods approach on intervention management procedures (such as design, implementation and monitoring), but secondly (and simultaneously) with the debate that questions the shape and even the existence of certain models of development assistance.

As noted in chapter 1, critics of a project approach to development assistance point to the failure of projects to deliver development goals, and broadly support the increased funding by some donors of sector-wide approaches and direct budget support. Through this analysis we are able to identify and confirm some of the problems with projects, but also to suggest ways in which the project format can evolve, to stimulate and facilitate a sustainable positive impact on the livelihoods of the poor. Critical analysis of interventions through an SL-grounded audit, which encompasses best practice, offers some insights into means of ensuring that project interventions avoid the tendency of becoming unreplicable and unsustainable ‘islands’ of resources.

Programme approaches made up of a range of interventions seek to overcome some of the problems of isolated sector- or geographically-specific projects. However, in terms of having the potential to create sustainable impact, programmes can easily fall into some of the same problems as projects, such as the creation of unsustainable parallel structures and lack of integration with existing capacity and resource streams.

Sector-wide approaches and direct budget support potentially avoid some of the shortcomings of projects and programmes, but have a whole set of problems of their own related to trust, attribution of impact and ownership. These issues are briefly discussed in this analysis, highlighting the potential and limitations of the range of tools and mechanisms, which are currently being used to implement such approaches. Even in these cases the SL-audit appears to be a useful means of cross-checking elements of best practice and highlighting potential gaps and assumptions in an intervention.

Given that the case studies in this research provide a small-scale cross section of intervention format, this study also offers some lessons concerning format, funding and management of development assistance processes. The analysis aims to address the needs of development practitioners who are interested in the practical management of interventions by identifying tools, skills and practices that can be utilised in planning, implementing and monitoring interventions. This chapter also suggests how aspects of livelihoods thinking and experience can guide practitioners in attempting to address some of the challenges of development assistance.

### 3.2 Format/ Management Mechanisms

The ten case studies in this research reflect a range of intervention formats (Table 3.1).

**Table 3.1 Case study formats**

Case study	Format
CBP	Project, 2001-3 (with extension to 04), conducted in four countries, with support from DFID.
SHARP!	Project funded and implemented by CARE Evolved from SAFE I and II (1995-2000) SHARP 2000-2005
TEAM	Project funded and implemented by CARE 2 phases + pilot extension (1995-2002)
AIDS/STD programme	Programme, 1992 onwards. Programme components funded by different partners
PMA	Strategy focusing on agriculture and other related sectors, funded by direct budget support
Magu	Project 1996-2000, funded and implemented by CARE
ASPS	Programme funded by DANIDA. Phase I 1998-2002 Phase II 2002-2006
SMUWC	Project 1998-2001, with extension to 2002. Some aspects of the project were subsequently taken up by an NGO.
Tanzakesho	Project, 1999-2003, within UNDP's Capacity 21 Programme
SCLP	Programme, part-funded by DFID

Magu, TEAM, SHARP and SMUWC are examples of resource-intensive projects employing separate project management structures and operating in small geographical locations.

CBP operated as a project but in a very different way to those discussed above. It was essentially a process and learning project that has sought to stimulate activity within existing structures and resource streams by bringing together personnel from a range of organisations to evolve and formulate methodology and develop a national process to support participatory planning and management. The project worked internationally to share lessons and incorporate innovative thinking.

Activities undertaken as part of ASPS and SCLP were linked through a programme of interaction with all levels of government. Activities under both these programmes aimed to stimulate existing capacity and to provide specific material and human resources.

The two interventions studied in Uganda are both cited as models for the future of development assistance. The AIDS/STD Programme co-ordinates all activities directed at alleviating the HIV/AIDS epidemic (whether governmental and NGO, local and international) and was funded by central government with specific inputs from donors through basket support. PMA was engaged in the holistic reform of government support for agriculture in Uganda, with substantial technical assistance from donors, and funded through central government by direct budgetary support from donors.

Whether aid is managed through projects, programmes or larger-scale support, the same questions need to be asked about how to build most efficiently on local strengths (and to address weaknesses) so as to stimulate sustainable change but without seeking to control it.

### **Projects and Programmes**

Magu, TEAM, SHARP and SMUWC projects are problematic as they concentrate high levels of resources in geographically small areas, which diminish the usefulness of the lessons that can be learnt from them. We can characterise these projects as strongly external to local institutional systems in terms of control over decision-making, funding and accountability.

Tanzakesho was a pilot project within a broader programme of activities undertaken by UNDP. It operates through existing government structures but was not fully institutionalised within existing resource streams, with the result that the systems and technologies promoted by the project were not financially sustainable.

CBP showed an alternative means of operating a project as a facilitatory mechanism and means of performing action-learning. The crucial difference between CBP and the other project case studies is the explicit recognition of the need to work within institutions without overloading capacity. It utilised existing resource flows, in addition to stimulating the flow of new funds.

Overall, the case studies suggest that projects still have a role in development assistance as opportunities to gain knowledge and understanding of development needs and to experiment with action. However, they must build on existing resource flows, be more patient, plan at the outset for replicability and sustainability, utilise local knowledge, invest more in building up local expertise and ensure that local capacity is not diminished through project structures.

### **Sector Wide Approaches (SWAPs) and Direct Budget Support (DBS)**

These formats look promising in terms of efficiency of delivery but questions arise from this research concerning:

- The elusive nature of ‘ownership’ - who controls large strategies such as PMA, which show evidence of a very strong donor voice, whilst operating by a principle of local ownership?
- The efficiency of delivery - do they reduce transaction costs or introduce new ones through an increased demand for technical advisors within central government? Do technical advisors have a supervisory role and what is their exit strategy? These questions relate to both ASPs and PMA.
- The evaluation of outcomes - there is a move away from measuring outputs to assessing outcomes (impacts), but how can we judge the success or failure of

particular measures in the short term? PMA and SCLP were both criticised for failing to deliver speedy results, but both were concerned with long term institutional reconfiguration. It is therefore difficult to attribute distinct elements of cause and effect.

One potential danger in the use of existing institutional systems, either in projects/programmes or larger-scale assistance is the potential for hatching ‘cuckoos’. This refers to donors’ use of advisors/processes within governmental systems who actually distort and weaken capacity due to power imbalances between donors and recipient governments.

Overall, the analysis suggests that projects and programmes can retain a useful role providing they ‘fit’ their operations more closely to existing capacity. Larger-scale processes such as SWAPs and DBS can offer efficiency savings and may be more effective at delivering development in the longer term, but this will depend on the evolution of effective (equal) partnerships between donors and government.

**Key lessons:**

- Case study projects show a greater degree of sustainable impact when they are integrated with existing organisations and institutions and work to mobilise existing resources and stimulate new funds;
- All case study interventions demonstrate the need for a consideration of power relationships, whether they are in the format of a project, programme or larger-scale strategy;
- The case studies suggest that advisors and processes partially integrated with existing systems can cause distortions (and reduce capacity) in these institutions.

### **3.3 Funding mechanisms**

This is an area of particular importance, since projects provide a convenient mechanism for aid transfer for both donors and recipient governments. However, this convenience brings its own dangers, in separating out the project from important complementary activities and processes. In addition, projects have defined life spans, which are often of relatively short duration, so that there is insufficient time to establish and support key developmental processes.

The case studies show a variety of funding mechanisms:

*Direct budget support*

- Uganda’s PMA is funded from central government, with direct budget support from donors. Donor representatives sit on the steering committee and have some control over how funding is allocated. Donor-funded technical assistance is also provided to the PMA secretariat.

*Central government funding*

- The Ugandan government funds the AIDS/STD programme. A wide range of donors fund individual NGO activities within the programme, which has limited control over the activities that individual donors choose to fund.



*Funding coalitions*

- Magu, TEAM and SHARP are funded through varying funding coalitions from CARE International, partners, bilateral development agencies and grants from charitable trusts and companies. CARE country offices manage the resource flows.
- SCLP is a national programme, with funding of specific elements by DFID.

*Funded by donors*

- SMUWC was developed in response to a request by the Tanzanian government and was funded by DFID with implementation subcontracted to a team of consultants;
- CBP was funded by DFID as an action-research project, with very limited donor funds stimulating partner resource flows for the implementation of the planning. There was also considerable flexibility from the donor in how the funding was used, which strengthened the ability to be responsive and learn. CBP is now funded by a coalition of funders in each country;
- Tanzakesho and ASPS were directly funded and managed by single donors. They worked in partnership with existing government institutions, although they were not fully integrated with government systems;

Interestingly the three interventions most underpinned by the SLA (CBP, PMA and SCLP) show the diminishing interest of donors in the *direct* relationship between money spent and actions taken, perhaps reflecting the increasing focus on outcome rather than output. The donor in all these cases was more interested in institutional and strategic reform in the interests of the poor and in meeting the Millennium Development Goals, than in the specific detail of project and programme outputs.

**Key lessons:**

- Interventions should link to government financial systems for long-term sustainability, as attempted in CBP.
- Funding should leverage local resources in a meaningful way, so ensuring local commitment. In some cases fewer resources can actually be more effective, as it ensures commitment.
- The case studies show that sustained impacts require nurturing through long-term support. This is particularly so in interventions that stimulate processes of institutional restructuring.

### 3.4 Capacity-building processes

Capacity-building is taking an increasing role in development interventions, across all sectors. Projects reflect this trend, and many projects have significant capacity-building components or else have capacity-building as their main focus. In most cases it takes the form of training provided to community-based workers, volunteers, representative groups, and governmental staff at all levels. However capacity-building can be a broader process that works with both individuals and systems to encourage a reflective peer learning and review process, such as the exchange of facilitators between districts and countries in both Tanzakesho, and CBP. From case study evidence, the most effective capacity-building appears to require a process rather than a series of one-off events.

The provision of training does not necessarily build capacity and it is clear that extra responsibilities in relation to managing interventions puts an additional burden on staff. For instance, Tanzakesho directed the attention of core governmental personnel away from districts as a whole and towards intervention villages.

Capacity building of local government is further complicated through the operation of parallel management structures. Magu and TEAM began with the intention to build the capacity of local government but CARE staff gave advice to farmers which conflicted with official messages, thereby undermining the capacity of local government to work with farmers. This was also the case in the operation of SHARP in Lesotho, which employed highly qualified and experienced staff, whilst the newly established Lesotho HIV/AIDS Prevention and Control Agency (LAPCA) experienced difficulties in recruitment.

CBP and Tanzakesho both reported on the importance of using local experts and consultants in building capacity and evaluating progress.

The PMA secretariat made extensive use of technical expertise provided by donors. However, this raises questions about the role played by donor staff placed within government structures. Are they there purely to provide expertise or do they have an additional supervisory function? Is there an exit strategy for these staff?

The provision of training is no guarantee of improved capacity. Capacity comes from having the room to manoeuvre, to learn and make mistakes, and to develop and apply new knowledge. Care must be taken to increase capacity rather than to increase the time burden on partners and participants.

#### **Key Lessons:**

- The case studies demonstrate that effective capacity-building is not simply concerned with the provision of training but about building knowledge and capacity to take action through learning by doing;
- They also show that there is a fine line between capacity-building and undermining capacity through overloading or diversion;
- The greatest increases in capacity shown in the case studies appear to emanate from processes of reflexive peer learning and review.

### 3.5 Design

A significant part of the debate over the differences and relative importance of blueprint and process projects is focussed on the phases of planning and design. The importance of appropriate mechanisms for participation and for flexibility to allow for changes to take place as planning proceeds is now well recognised, particularly in relation to process projects. Design processes utilised in all the case studies are outlined in table 3.2.

**Table 3.2 Design processes**

<b>Case Study</b>	<b>Design Processes</b>
CBP	Designed based on close contacts with existing partners and networks.
SHARP!	Logical framework analysis (LFA), institutional analysis, needs assessment, Household Livelihood Security Approach (HLS). The design built on previous projects
TEAM	HLS, baseline surveys, LFA, financial, economic and institutional analyses of project area.
AIDS/STD programme	Strategic initiative to draw actors together under a statutory body in Presidents Office
PMA	Government/donor partnership, design based on Uganda's Participatory Poverty Assessment Programme
Magu	Rapid food and livelihood security assessment conducted in district. Involved stakeholder consultation
ASPS	Consultative at macro level, LFA, some economic, social and environmental analysis conducted
SMUWC	In response to donor's concept, consultants produced LFA with hydrological, environmental, institutional, financial and social analysis.
Tanzakesho	Preparatory phase of consultation at macro-level. Designed by UNDP with academic partners.
SCLP	Baselines surveys, public hearings, financial, social, economic and institutional analysis of the area

Within projects such as CBP, SHARP, TEAM and Magu, livelihoods analysis (using, for example, a livelihoods framework) can lead to an improved holistic understanding, but the interventions based on such analyses should be carefully focused. Interventions need to 'fit' in two ways: into people's lives, and into the wider institutional context of government, civil society and private enterprise. CBP in particular made this linkage between baseline analysis and action through a critical and reflective application of the principles of participation and partnership to explore the linkages between communities, organisations and policy-making.

ASPS, Tanzakesho, the AIDS/HSTD programme, PMA and the CBP project were designed in a less formal way than SMUWC, TEAM, Magu and SHARP. In essence these larger interventions operate as learning processes informed by the interaction and experiences of partners as well as participation by beneficiaries. In such circumstances it may not always be appropriate for each new intervention to start from a new baseline. PMA's foundations in the Uganda Participatory Poverty

Assessment Project showed the potential for the use of existing data collection. In the more open learning processes of interventions such as SCLP and PMA, SLA frameworks can be useful for thinking through action and governance issues.

### Key Lessons:

- Case studies indicate that SLA can add value in design by encouraging designers to think holistically. Holistic analysis of livelihoods, institutions and the external context is required at all levels, both nationally and internationally;
- The aim must be to create a learning process within the intervention.
- The design must include consideration of how to identify and build effectively on local strengths (and address weaknesses) to stimulate sustainable change but without seeking to control it;
- Effective design of interventions requires an understanding of power relationships and how the intervention will seek to address this to improve poor people's control over development.

## 3.6 Implementation

Most of the case studies were in the phase of implementation (one was completed, and one had only recently started). It was therefore possible to derive some general lessons for implementation which are of relevance to successful projects (Table 3.3).

**Table 3.3 Implementation approaches**

Case study	Implementation
CBP	By local partners using participatory methodologies. Key element: developing national coalition and process to support participatory planning
SHARP	Peer-educators, volunteers, partnerships with CBOs, NGOs and Government Agencies, steering committee. Managed by parallel structure.
TEAM	Farmers Extension Facilitators, very participatory. Managed by parallel structure
AIDS/STD programme	Networking, mobilizing resource flows, raising profile of specific issues
PMA	PMA secretariat provides technical management, strategic management by steering committee
Magu	Delivered through project workers in partnership with range of actors. Managed by parallel structure
ASPS	Varied with activity. Broadly participatory. Capacity-building through training at meso level
SMUWC	Varied activity - much technical data collection and analysis. Some work on strengthening local institutions to manage water in the catchment
Tanzakesho	PRA planning process delivered through meso and micro-level government structures. Further inputs by local experts, trainers and consultants.
SCLP	Use of implementing agents to run programmes for vulnerable groups

All interventions studied utilise partnerships for implementation. Some partnerships were embedded within government structures, such as Tanzakesho, ASPS and CBP. Existing staff were trained and directed through the intervention to carry out activities at the micro and meso levels of government. Partnerships with local civil society and private sector actors were encouraged and facilitated. Micro-level participation in some form was also an integral part of the delivery of these interventions.

The use of partnerships in all interventions required the evolution of effective mechanisms for managing and stimulating these partnerships. Steering committees were a widely used mechanism but the case studies show that these need to be vested with authority and require careful management both in terms of constituent representation and functional support. For example, there were questions concerning the strength of the donor voice within the PMA steering committee.

The implementation of the two Ugandan interventions is framed by the dominant model of political economy in the country, which see government's role primarily as the provision of a stable macroeconomic framework and the provision of limited basic services. Both interventions were characterised by high-level political support thorough the championship of the President and sought to create regulatory frameworks and co-ordination for ground-level activities. These systems were built around bottom-up demand for services.

Magu, SHARP and TEAM were delivered through CARE country offices and employed specialist project staff for implementation. All these projects had an emphasis on micro-level participation. Implementation was also facilitated by partnerships with local government (meso level), 'traditional' groups and the private sector. SHARP also encouraged wider participation by stakeholders through the operation of a project steering committee. Similarly, a steering committee supervised SMUWC in partnership with local stakeholders.

All interventions involve some form of working partnership but the effectiveness of these partnerships was insufficiently reflected upon during implementation. Effective partnership working at all levels is a vital component of delivering potentially sustainable development intervention. This means thinking carefully through the power relationships in partnerships and perhaps in many cases seeking to reduce the obvious power disparities between partners. Successful partnership involves creative negotiation and seeking synergy between different partners' mandates as a starting point for action.

The two governmental strategies in Uganda show different ways in which donors may make inputs to on-going strategic activities. The AIDS/STD programme co-ordinated donor activity but it had no control over the length or remit of donor projects. PMA was an open-ended intervention with a range of donor support that is negotiated according to the demands of the plan.

As table 3.1 shows, most of the case studies had a 2-3 year cycle, but many operate over longer periods with follow-up phases and extensions. Extensions were contingent on the accessing of funds for each phase. For example:

- TEAM was originally funded by NORAD but was later taken over by DFID;

- Aspects of SMUWC, a project embedded in a larger World Bank project, were later taken over by an international NGO;
- ASPS was designed as a long-term intervention with two phases over 8 years.

Short timeframes offer little incentive for development agencies to assess outcomes for beneficiaries rather than simply measuring intervention outputs. In addition, although most interventions were flexible in terms of revising their day-to-day activities, they were constrained at a strategic level by the short timeframes in which they operate. Longer timeframes would have provided more opportunity to develop partnerships, institutionalise systems and assess impact.

**Key lessons:**

- The case studies suggest that interventions should consider the potential for a range of different implementing agents, rather than trying to implement all activities internally;
- There is a need for the creative negotiation of power relationships in partnerships through the active encouragement of vertical as well as horizontal partnerships which straddle micro-macro links where possible. Successful partnership involves seeking synergy between different partners' mandates as a starting point for action.
- However participation by CBOs and beneficiaries needs to be thought through carefully in order to avoid overloading or diverting them. Care must be taken to actually increase capacity, rather than just increasing the responsibilities and time burden on partners and participants;
- Case study interventions demonstrate the need for flexible timescales in order to stimulate effective learning processes. Longer timeframes for intervention provide more opportunity to develop partnerships, institutionalise systems and assess impact;
- The case studies also show that sustainable impact is more likely when implementation is integrated with existing governmental funding and planning cycles;
- The importance of politicians in driving processes forward was visible in certain of the case studies.

### **3.7 Monitoring and Evaluation**

It is widely acknowledged that monitoring and evaluation is a problematic area for all types of development assistance. Whilst projects perhaps lend themselves more easily to these processes than other formats the practice remains difficult and often unsatisfactory. Table 3.4 summarises the approaches to M&E adopted by each case study.

The case studies show that monitoring systems tend to be constructed in order to meet donor requirements and expectations. Evaluatory processes appear to be more tailored to meet the specific management needs of the intervention with respect to learning from actions taken and assessing the satisfaction of partners and beneficiaries.

**Table 3.4 M&E approaches in the case studies**

<b>Case study</b>	<b>Monitoring &amp; Evaluation</b>
CBP	Monitoring within country by local steering mechanisms. 6 monthly 4 country project meetings run as reflexive workshops where monitoring and action planning done. Evaluations conducted by independent local consultants. Annual feedback to national stakeholders.
SHARP	Feedback from peer educators via reporting chain from micro to macro. Mid-term review. Collection of data to assess outputs. Stakeholder and beneficiary meetings
TEAM	Participatory and self-reporting systems developed, baseline surveys, livelihood experiences
AIDS/STD programme	At strategic level and throughout system - according to procedures of partners.
PMA	Developing an M&E system to build on existing systems
Magu	Elaborate M&E system - fairly participatory at village level.
ASPS	Elaborate system designed - all reports in English
SMUWC	Internal chain from project to donor - later developed to include local partners.
Tanzakesho	Collaborative reporting chain integrated in system. Some reports available in Swahili, most in English. Evaluatory visits by designers
SCLP	M&E systems already in place

The case studies show that monitoring systems tend to be constructed in order to meet donor requirements and expectations. Evaluatory processes appear to be more tailored to meet the specific management needs of the intervention with respect to learning from actions taken and assessing the satisfaction of partners and beneficiaries.

Donor monitoring requirements tended to be pre-defined through the use of logical frameworks (and other planning tools) and were reported quarterly in most cases. It is noticeable that the project interventions working to achieve specific outputs monitor their activities according to pre-defined criteria. For instance TEAM recorded the proportion of people who have moved from one livelihoods category to another as defined through their methodology. Many interventions tried to quantify their activities and estimate the number of beneficiaries reached through the intervention.

Monitoring needs to work from the strengths of existing monitoring and information-gathering systems. Donors and international NGOs need to avoid burdening partners with overly complex reporting systems, as in the case of TEAM and Magu

Some attempts were shown in the case studies to establish participatory (and more qualitative) M&E systems involving beneficiaries. TEAM and CBP both attempted to institutionalise fully participatory monitoring systems but found difficulties in doing so within the funded time frames.

Evaluatory studies were available for most of the interventions. They tended to be framed around questions specific to the finders and designers of an intervention.

Many of the interventions evaluated the satisfaction (or otherwise) of ‘beneficiaries’ as in CBP and Magu. CBP partners contracted local independent consultants to undertake evaluations in South Africa and Uganda and also reported progress to the learning group formed by the project.

Among the case studies, only CBP employed a self-reflective evaluatory system. This was achieved through international project meetings and study visits, which appeared to be very effective in sharing knowledge and maintaining enthusiasm and commitment.

Other interventions looked to link with existing information systems and develop existing information management systems. Tanzakesho sought to strengthen record keeping at the village level as a means of monitoring changes.

To some degree this reflects a move from an outputs to outcomes focus demonstrated in both the PMA and AIDS/STD programme. In terms of monitoring, the AIDS/STD programme acted as a central focus for the monitoring information collected by the large range of interventions that fall within its remit. PMA was seeking to develop a system that utilises existing sources of information and can adapt collection mechanisms to meet new requirements. Evaluation of both strategies took place at the level of individual components but both were also open to the scrutiny of the Ugandan parliament as evidenced by debates over the poor performance of PMA. As discussed in preceding sections, donors retain a strong presence in the shaping of national strategies in Uganda and questions remain unanswered from our research in relation to the supervisory role of technical advisors working within governmental bodies.

In the majority of cases information flows are upwards from the micro to the macro level and there is limited top-down accountability to beneficiaries. As noted above SHARP, Magu, CBP and TEAM tried to use participatory feedback systems but experienced problems in institutionalising them. An important constraint was limitations on the time (and inclination) of people to attend meetings and feedback sessions. However, those people involved directly in implementation of an intervention often ask for more feedback and discussion. It is most important that front-line and field staff are not missed out in any feedback process as they are best positioned to identify institutional blockages in any system. PMA, CBP and Tanzakesho made efforts to drive the process from bottom upwards but feedback and participation by the ultimate beneficiaries was fairly limited.

Tanzakesho and SMUWC were the only intervention to do some reporting in a local language and participants and partners welcomed this. ASPS also identified the importance of reporting in local languages for phase II of the programme. The employment of local consultants is desirable, as evidenced by the successes with this approach in SMUWC, CBP and Tanzakesho (section 2.8). However, there also appeared to be a tendency to develop manuals of lessons and best practice without sufficient critical reflection and comment on the processes which form the bases of the manuals. This applies to both CBP and Tanzakesho.

Feedback mechanisms need to be built into systems, but these take time to develop. Overall our research recognises that evaluation by beneficiaries is an area requiring more research and learning.



**Key Lessons:**

- The case studies in this research suggest a need for more emphasis on M&E as the reflective part of action learning;
- Interventions with a more sustainable impact work towards a single system of reporting based on existing systems, rather than multiple or complex reporting procedures.
- Where possible, M&E processes should employ local consultants and the outputs should be available in local languages.
- Evaluation by beneficiaries, in these case studies, was limited to consultation. Participatory feedback mechanisms (involving beneficiaries and front-line staff) need to be built into systems, but these take time to develop.

**3.8 New tools and skills**

Many of the tools and skills for project development are well-known and much discussed. They include such techniques as the logical framework (itself the subject of considerable debate and controversy), stakeholder analysis, various approaches to participatory assessment, and a range of analytical methods and models.

The case studies in this research show a standard pattern in the use of design and implementation tools. TEAM, Magu, SHARP, SMUWC and ASPS were developed using a logical framework analysis backed up by baseline and analytical studies. For instance, CARE used the Household Livelihood Security Approach, whereas SMUWC commissioned independent institutional and environmental analyses. CBP also used a log frame as a planning tool, but area-based analysis was left to project partners. Many interventions within the AIDS/STD programme also operated using logical frameworks, stakeholder analysis, PRA and other well-known tools.

All interventions reviewed in this study can be seen to show aspects of learning-by-doing, although the analysis in written reports remains at a fairly superficial level in terms of questioning how and why specific activities are chosen and implemented.

As mentioned in previous sections, participation is widely used in implementation of activities, but little in design or monitoring and evaluation. In most interventions it remains at the consultative level.

CBP, PMA and SCLP showed a process approach to design, using and adapting specific techniques as required but focused on facilitation of process and institutional change.

**Key tools and skills**

Evidence from these case studies shows the importance of the following skills and attitudes:

- Improved reflective, analytical and critical abilities to understand livelihood strategies and related economic, social, environmental impacts and assumptions.

- Less formality and more flexibility about the use of specific tools and reporting requirements (such as logical frameworks) and more openness to different tools and types of information and M&E.
- Effective skills for: listening and learning; working in partnership; understanding power dynamics; negotiating with others; facilitation of process, cross-cultural team building.

Whilst tools and manuals can be useful in guiding thinking in the design, monitoring and evaluation of interventions, they are not an adequate substitute for long-term and committed engagement in process.

### **3.9 Overview**

In bringing together the analysis of the case studies in this research two dominant themes emerge. The first of these is the question of power. The SLA has been criticised as neutral in terms of power. However, many of the key principles arising from SLAs can be seen to focus on issues of power and relationships. Thus, seeing poor people as the focus of development requires that they take a central role in defining needs and aspirations for themselves, rather than having them identified and delivered by others. The principles of participation and partnership seek for a new and equal relationship to replace previously hierarchical linkages of donor, client and beneficiary. Making interventions accountable and responsive to poor people likewise implies that they should be in a position to control their own development.

Through our analysis in terms of SLA principles we see that power and governance relationships are the critical link in most of the development processes in our case studies. They structure which people have voice at the micro-level, how much room to manoeuvre is available to partners, which policies are adopted at the macro level and whose interests they reflect. In most cases change to the status quo will have to be initiated by the dominant voices of donors and clients who will need to question the assumptions and boundaries on which their engagement is founded. Integrated interventions cannot seek to dominate the institutions which they are supporting but must facilitate incremental capacity-building in relation to specific purposes.

The second theme to emerge is the question of integrating action. As in the case of power relationships, SLA principles suggest that integrated action is an important component of successful development. Livelihoods analysis requires us to take a holistic view of the complexity and diversity of poor people's lives, and to respond across the range of this complexity. Building on strengths and making development dynamic and flexible assists the identification of a variety of interventions which can work together and complement one another in supporting diverse livelihoods, without requiring a single intervention to attempt to cover all needs and possibilities. Strong policy and institutional linkages provide additional mechanisms for supporting livelihoods in an integrated fashion.

It is clear from the case studies that significant impact cannot be made by an intervention unless it is sustainably integrated within the local institutional context. In most cases this refers to working directly with governmental structures, particularly at the meso-level, which has the responsibility for service delivery. In this situation,

issues of power relationships, resource control and financial sustainability are critical, if an intervention is to have lasting positive impact on people's lives.

Projects are often criticised as a mechanism of development aid on grounds both of power and integration. The format of projects gives too much power to the funders and technical assistance specialists who are implementing them, and too little voice to the beneficiaries and implementing partners. In addition, projects are very often implemented without sufficient consideration of other complementary or parallel development. Sometimes, indeed, they find themselves in direct competition with other projects and interventions. In addition, our analysis indicates that projects often seek to bypass or supplant existing institutional structures in order to achieve their outputs.

Our analysis indicates that projects can retain a useful role as locations of learning-by doing, providing they 'fit' their operations more closely to existing capacity and resource streams, so that lessons learnt are relevant and can be applied more widely. They should not continue as isolated islands of resource in which participation is a functional process to achieve structured objectives, where partnerships are confined to communication and there are limited linkages with the existing policy and institutional framework. Donor-funded parallel structures and NGO projects in particular must be increasingly self-critical in accounting for their legitimacy and impact on the livelihoods of the poor.

SWAPs and perhaps DBS potentially offer a way out of some these dilemmas and potentially offer efficiency savings by reducing transaction costs. However, the limited evidence from our study indicates that these larger-scale interventions themselves may face similar challenges in addressing problems of design, power relationships, ownership and integration. They may be more effective at delivering development in the longer term but this will depend on the evolution of effective (and more equal) partnerships between donors and governments. For all formats of development intervention SLAs can help by focussing on the key issues in supporting the livelihoods of the poor. If these key issues are addressed, then projects and programmes alongside new and large-scale mechanisms such as SWAPs and direct budgetary support certainly continue to have an important role in development in the appropriate circumstances.

Sustainable livelihoods approaches suggest that people should shape their own lives through flexible and dynamic processes of development. Whilst seeking to work with the full complexity of livelihoods, the interventions in our case studies in all formats display a striking uniformity of tools, language and theme. Our challenge now is to diversify the format of development intervention in line with the livelihoods principles to respond to the complexity and diversity of the peoples' lives.

## REFERENCES

---

- Akroyd, S. and A. Duncan (1998). The Sector Approach and Sustainable Rural Livelihoods. Sustainable Rural livelihoods: What contribution can we make? D. Carney. London, Department for International Development.
- Bond, R. and D. Hulme (1999). "Process approaches to development: theory and Sri Lankan practice." World Development **27**(8): 1339-58.
- Carney, D. (2002). Sustainable Livelihoods Approaches: Progress and Possibilities for Change. London, UK Department of International Development.
- Chambers, R. and G. Conway (1992). "Sustainable Rural Livelihoods: Practical Concepts for the 21st Century." Institute of Development Studies Discussion Paper 296.
- Cusworth J and Franks T (1993) Managing Projects in Developing Countries. Longmans. Harlow.
- DFID (1999). Sustainable Livelihoods Guidance Sheets 1-4. London, Department for International Development.
- Farrington, J. (2001). Sustainable Livelihoods, rights and the new architecture of aid. Natural Resource Perspectives 69. J. Farrington. London, Overseas Development Institute.
- Hulme, D. (1995). "Projects, politics and professionals: alternative approaches for project identification and project planning." Agricultural Systems **47**: 211-33.
- Hussein, K. (2002). Livelihoods Approaches Compared. London, Department for International Development.
- Korten, D. C. (1980). "Community organization and rural development: a learning process approach." Public Administration Review(September/October).
- Korten, D. C. (1988). From bureaucratic to strategic organisation. Transforming a bureaucracy. F. F. Korten and R. Y. Siy. Westport CT, Kumarian.
- Khanya (2002) (Guidelines for Community Participation in Local Governance in SA) available at <http://www.khanya-mrc.co.za>
- Ryan P, Toner A (2003) Direct Budget Support and Poverty Reduction Strategy Papers: A Fundamental Shift or a Transitory Fashion" in Potts D, Ryan P and Toner A, Development Planning and Poverty Reduction. Plagrave MacMillan, Basingstoke

## APPENDICES

### 1. THE AUTHORS

Tom Franks is a senior lecturer at the Bradford Centre for International Development, UK

Anna Toner is a lecturer at the Bradford Centre for International Development, UK

Ian Goldman is a consultant and founder-director of 'Khanya-managing rural change', South Africa

David Howlett is an environmental advisor with UNDP in Tanzania

Faustin Kamuzora is a lecturer and researcher at Mzumbe University, Tanzania.

Fred Muhumuza is a research fellow at the Economic Policy Research Centre in Uganda

Tsiliso Tamasane was a consultant with 'Khanya-managing rural change', South Africa

*For more details on the project, this paper, and others in the series, please contact the UK or African co-ordinators:*

Tom Franks or Anna Toner, BCID, University of Bradford, Bradford, West Yorkshire, BD1 7DP, UK Tel: +44 (0) 1274 235286; Fax: +44 (0) 1274 235280; email: [t.r.franks@bradford.ac.uk](mailto:t.r.franks@bradford.ac.uk) or [a.l.toner@bradford.ac.uk](mailto:a.l.toner@bradford.ac.uk);

Ian Goldman, Khanya – managing rural change, 16A President Steyn Ave, Westdene, Bloemfontein 9301, Free State, South Africa. Tel +27 (0)51 430 0712; Fax: 27 (0)51 430 8322; email:

Fred Muhumuza, EPRC, Makerere University Campus, 51 Pool Road, PO Box 7841, Kampala, Uganda. Tel: +256 (0)41 541023; Fax: +256 (0)41 541022; email: [muhuma@hotmail.com](mailto:muhuma@hotmail.com)

Faustin Kamuzora, Mzumbe University, P.O. Box 397, Morogoro, Tanzania. Tel: +255 (0)23 604381,3,4; Fax: +255 (0)23 4382; email: [frkamuzora@yahoo.co.uk](mailto:frkamuzora@yahoo.co.uk)

## **2. PROJECT WORKING PAPERS TO DATE**

1. Annotated bibliography on livelihood approaches and development interventions.
2. Appraisal of the use of livelihoods approaches in South Africa.
3. Review of approaches to development interventions in Tanzania: From projects to livelihoods approaches.
4. Review of development interventions and livelihoods approaches in Uganda
5. A livelihoods-grounded audit of a Participatory Planning for District Development within Capacity 21 programme (Tanzakesho) in Tanzania
6. A livelihoods-grounded audit of the Community-Based Planning (CBP) action research project in South Africa.
7. A livelihoods-grounded audit of Agricultural Sector Programme Support (ASPS) – Tanzania
8. A livelihoods-grounded audit of the Sustainable Management of the Usangu Wetland and its Catchment (SMUWC) project in Tanzania.
9. A livelihoods-grounded audit of Magu district livelihood and food security project (MDLFSP) in Tanzania
10. A livelihoods-grounded audit of the Sexual Health and Rights Programme (SHARP!) in Lesotho and South Africa.
11. A livelihoods-grounded audit of the Training and Environmental Management (TEAM) project in Lesotho.
12. A livelihoods-grounded audit of the Sustainable Coastal Livelihoods Programme (SCLP) in South Africa.
13. A livelihoods-grounded audit of the Plan for the Modernisation of Agriculture (PMA) in Uganda.
14. A livelihoods-grounded audit of the AIDS/STD programme in Uganda.

More details on the project and copies of recent publications can be found on the project's web site:

[www.bradford.ac.uk/acad/bcid/research/livelihoods\\_and\\_poverty/projects/goodbye/papers.php](http://www.bradford.ac.uk/acad/bcid/research/livelihoods_and_poverty/projects/goodbye/papers.php)

### 3. CASE STUDIES

Case Study	Country	Main Agencies	Purpose	Activities	Cost	Timescale	Use of SLA
<b>AIDS/STD programme</b>	Uganda	Central government WHO, USAID, INGOs	To respond to HIV/AIDS epidemic	Clinical management, nursing care, counselling support, social support	Ministry of Health estimate \$106.3 million	Launched in 1995	No
<b>Sexual Health and Rights Programme (SHARP!)</b>	Lesotho	CARE Lesotho and South Africa	Reduce vulnerability of HIV/AIDS affected households	Peer education, building capacity of community-based organisations and service providers, resource centres, home-based care	\$433,450 for year 2003/4	2000-5	Livelihoods analysis
<b>Planning programme for district development within capacity 21 (Tanzakesho):</b>	Tanzania	UNDP/Central and regional government	Advocacy of participatory planning processes for sustainable development	Strengthening decentralisation framework, review of planning framework to include sustainable development	Unavailable	1999-2002	No
<b>Community-based planning project (CBP)</b>	South Africa	DFID-funded, Khanya –managed NGO and district governmental partners	Implementation of community-based planning systems	Learning process with international partners, piloting community-based planning methodology.	DFID finding \$421,000 \$250,000 from district government	2001-4	Livelihoods analysis and use of principles
<b>Training for Environmental and Agricultural Management project (TEAM)</b>	Lesotho	CARE Lesotho DFID-funded	Development of regional methodologies for improvement of rural livelihoods	Institutional strengthening, experiential learning, marketing, training materials design, research and information	1 <sup>st</sup> phase \$1.55 million, 2 <sup>nd</sup> phase \$1.4 million	1 <sup>st</sup> phase 1997-9, 2 <sup>nd</sup> phase 1999-2000	Livelihoods analysis
<b>Agricultural Sector Programme Support (ASPS)</b>	Tanzania	DANIDA and Central government	To increase income and improve nutrition for poorest smallholders and women	Institutional support, smallholder irrigation, on-farm seed production, rock phosphate research, private agriculture sector support, environmental conservation	Unavailable	1 <sup>st</sup> phase 1998-2002, 2 <sup>nd</sup> phase 2002-2006	No
<b>Sustainable Management of the Usangu Wetland Catchment project (SMUWC):</b>	Tanzania	DFID and central government	Improve management of water and other natural resources in the Usangu catchment	Scientific investigations, institutional development and capacity-building.	\$5 million	1998-2001	Some livelihoods analysis
<b>Magu District Livelihood and Food Security Project (MDLFSP)</b>	Tanzania	CARE Tanzania and CARE Norway	Increase livelihood security for 5000 vulnerable households	Local institutional strengthening, formation of marketing associations, experiential learning	\$1.34 million	1997-2000	Livelihoods analysis
<b>Plan for the Modernisation of Agriculture (PMA)</b>	Uganda	Central government (with donor technical support)	Strategic framework for eliminating poverty through multi-sectoral interventions to improve livelihoods	Institutional reform, policy formulation, privatisation of extension services, building capacity for microfinance.	Unavailable	1998 onwards	Use of SLA in design
<b>Sustainable Coastal Livelihoods Programme (SCLP)</b>	South Africa	DFID and Central government	Develop an integrated approach to management of coastal resources	Piloting public and private strategies building institutional framework, providing information and awareness	\$5.25 million from DFID	2002-2005	Use of SLA in design

## **4. RESEARCH QUESTIONS**

### **Poor People as focus**

- Did, the objectives of the intervention include a mention of people and their livelihoods?
- How central was this to the intervention's objectives?
- How much were household livelihoods a focus during implementation?

### **Participation**

- What type of participation was used at each stage of design, implementation, monitoring and evaluation?
- How and when did this participation occur?
- What incentives were there for people to participate?

### **Partnerships**

- What was the type of partnership and collaboration between organisations?
- Who owned the intervention?

### **Holistic approach**

- How holistic was the analysis used in design?
- How does the intervention fit into the broader national/regional development plan?
- How does the intervention coordinate with other development interventions in the area?

### **Policy and institutional links**

- How integrated was the intervention with existing institutional structures?
- What evidence is there that the intervention addressed linkages between policy at micro, meso and macro levels and across sectors?

### **Building on strengths**

- Does the intervention build on existing capacity at different levels?

### **Dynamism and flexibility**

- Did the objectives and activities of the intervention respond to a changing environment and/or demands?
- What further interventions have arisen from the intervention? How did this take place?

### **Accountability/ responsiveness**

- Who reports to whom and what about?
- Do beneficiaries or partners have an influence on the intervention and how?

### **Sustainability**

#### Economic

- Is the intervention financially sustainable?
- Are the technologies/services introduced through an intervention economically viable for beneficiaries?

#### Social

- Are vulnerable groups able to access and use effectively the systems of the intervention?

#### Environmental

- Are the technologies/services environmentally beneficial?

#### Institutional

- Are the institutions created/used by the intervention able to sustain themselves beyond the life of the intervention?
- Will they continue to generate the outcomes (as opposed to specific outputs) envisaged?



## 5. DISSEMINATION

The analysis and findings arising out of Goodbye to Projects? were presented at several workshops during 2003 and early 2004. These included:

### March 18<sup>th</sup>, 2003 - EPRC, Uganda

The workshop was held by the Goodbye to projects? study to presenting the work in progress to staff from both the PMA and AIDS/STD programme. The workshop was used as a mechanism of receiving comment and feedback on the emerging analysis. It was attended by some 25 people.

### July 23<sup>th</sup>-24<sup>th</sup>, 2003 - Bloemfontein, South Africa

The Learning about Livelihoods workshop was organised jointly by Khanya-managing rural change, CARESA-Lesotho and Oxfam, and was part-funded through Goodbye to Projects? Findings from the study were presented on the first day to provide background for a wide-ranging series of presentations and discussions. There were 93 participants. A full report is available at [www.khanya-mrc.co.za](http://www.khanya-mrc.co.za).

### December 11<sup>th</sup>, 2003 - Mzumbe University, Tanzania

A Learning Livelihoods workshop was held at Mzumbe University on 11<sup>th</sup> December, attended by 66 participants, including academics, project staff and the media. Outputs from the Goodbye to projects? study formed a major component of this workshop. A book entitled "Understanding Complexities of Livelihoods Systems for Sustainable Poverty Reduction" was produced.

### January 26<sup>th</sup> - 28<sup>th</sup>, 2004 - Bagamoyo, Tanzania

The workshop Incorporating Livelihoods into the PRSP Process was organised by UNDP, Tanzania to bring together government staff, consultants and academics to discuss the key issues. Around 70 participants attended. Goodbye to Projects staff made presentations both on the key findings and on selected case studies, to provide inputs to the discussions.

### February 24<sup>th</sup>-25<sup>th</sup>, 2004 - Bradford Centre for International Development, UK

The workshop Where Next for Sustainable Livelihoods was organised jointly by the Bradford Centre for International Development and Livelihoods Connect to mark the end of the project, and to discuss the next steps with practitioners, funders and academics working in SLAs. Around 25 participants attended. Key plans arising out of the workshop include activities to :

- strengthen the focus on meso level institutions and processes
- realise the potential of SLAs in national level policy and planning
- incorporate considerations of power into the concepts and framework of livelihoods analysis
- synthesise best practice arising from recent work on livelihoods.

Individual responsibilities and outline programmes for these plans were agreed at the workshop.

Feedback meetings were held in February 2004 with staff in Kabarole and Luwera districts in Uganda, where the field work for the PMA and AIDS/STD programme was undertaken.