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NGOs AND
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IN THE
SOLOMON
ISLANDS : A
CASE OF THE
SOLOMON
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DEVELOPMENT
TRUST (SIDT)

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NGOs AND RURAL DEVELOPMENT IN THE SOLOMON ISLANDS: A CASE OF THE SOLOMON ISLANDS DEVELOPMENT TRUST (SIDT)
A Thesis Submitted in Partial Fulfilment of the Requirements for the Degree of Master of Arts in Development Studies at the University of the South Pacific
by
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th
September 14th 1999
DECLARATION OF ORIGINALITY
Unless otherwise explicitly acknowledged in the text, this thesis represents my own original work. The thesis constitutes a piece of work I undertook in December 1998 and January 1999 from two areas in the Solomon Islands, Dr. Graham Mills from the Sociology Department of the School of Social and Economic Development, University of the South Pacific, Suva, Fiji, however, supervised the actual writing of the thesis. I solely declare that the contents of this thesis has not been previously submitted to any other university for a higher degree.
Tony Hou
14th September 1999

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Ill

To my mother, late father, sisters, brothers, and relatives at Mata, Aulutalau, Small Malaita, thanks {sae manoha) for all your love (haiamasina), kindness {Sae tianaha), caring and sympathy {Ho sulia tina), patience and tolerance (popoloha), and support (haiponiha) given to me during my childhood and for encouraging me to pursue higher education. My father would have rejoiced if he had lived to see the completion of this thesis. Huhuictai morrua hasia morua ka liliosia ri V (the seed you two planted is now ready for harvest).

I am grateful to the Sasakawa Young Leaders Foundation of Japan (USP/Sasakawa) and SICHE for the financial support given towards this undertaking. It would not be possible for me to study for the masters degree and undertake the fieldwork on which this thesis is based without your financial inputs.

Finally, for my wife Matilda Hou and daughter Griffith Houston Maliana this has been a rough and tiring journey. However, with your persistent love, kindness, patience, and encouragement, I am able to complete the journey. I thank you most sincerely right from the bottom of my heart.

The author is responsible for any weaknesses of this thesis.

IV

Abstract

Today current development discourse has given much attention to NGOs. This is because of the realisation that NGOs meet the needs of the people who have been neglected by the state and market forces. In the event where the state declines its role in the development process, leading to increasing poverty, both donors and the state are looking to NGOs as a means of getting benefits more directly and cheaply to the target groups than was previously the case with government intervention.

While it is true that NGOs have increased in numbers and size in response to the availability of funding from overseas donors, both of which are premised on `good' performance over the last decade, their contribution to development on a global scale remains comparatively limited. In many cases, NGOs have become ineffective managers of resources when trying to implement a diverse set of programmes, which requires managerial competencies for program integration beyond their capacities. In other words, the NGO sector has its own weaknesses, and despite being promoted and financially supported by overseas agencies, their contributions to development are often debatable. Given such a scenario, the critical evaluation of NGOs with regards to their roles and functions in the overall development context is an important exercise. This thesis attempts to critically assess the ability of NGOs to provide an alternative development, which is more effective than the state and the market. It examines, in particular, the development experiences of the Solomon Islands Development Trust (SIDT) in Solomon Islands. The study aims to assess the work of the SIDT in rural development, by considering whether their development programmes have enabled and empowered the target group to improve their well being or otherwise. Data on which the thesis is based were collected from Marau and Raroisu'u Ward in the Solomon Islands. The thesis argues that given the nature of the conventional development practice, the NGO sector alone cannot promote rural development effectively without support from the state and the market. It is recommended that the NGO sector such as the SIDT should work together with private agencies and the Government in order to address rural development problems in the country effectively. Their development approaches, however, must be guided and rooted in the indigenous way of life of the people they are concerned with.

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ABBREVIATIONS
AIDAB   Australian International Development Assistance Bureau

CARE   Co-operative Agency for Relief Everywhere
CDF   Constituency Development Fund
ECLA   The Economic Commission for Latin America
ECOSOC   Economic and Social Council
FSP   Foundation for the Peoples of the South Pacific
GNGOs   Governmental Non-government Organisations
GNP   Gross National Product
IMF   International Monetary Fund
MPs   Members of Parliament
MTWs   Mobile Team Members
NGO   Non-governmental Organisation
NICs   Newly Industrialised. Countries
PDF   Provincial Development Fund
RCDF   Rural Community Development Fund
SAPs   Structural Adjustment Programmes
SDA   Seven Days Adventist
SIAC   Solomon Islands Alliance for Change
SICA   Solomon Islands Christian Association
SICOPSA   Small Island Communities Projects Scheme
SIDT   Solomon Islands Development Trust
SINURP   Solomon Islands National Unity, Reconciliation Party
SICHE   Solomon Islands College of Higher Education
SSEC   South Seas Evangelical Church
UNDP   United Nation Development Programmes
UNDPA   United Nations Department of Political Affairs
VDWs   Village Demonstration Workers
WCED   World Commission for Economic Development
WDR   World Development Report
YWCA   Young Women Christian Association

Chapter One   Introduction

Scholars such as Chambers (1983, 1993), Gran (1983, Burkey (1993), Kabutaulaka (1993), Gegeo (1997) amongst others have pointed out that rural development still remains a major challenge to development practitioners, scholars, politicians and the world at large. In realising the importance of developing rural areas, the state and the market promoted 'growth-centred' and 'top-down' approaches as a way to achieve this objective. Despite their past attempts most rural areas in Third World countries such as the Solomon Islands still remains poor. This raises questions about the ability of development theory and practice to address growing problems in developing countries effectively and efficiently.

In discussing rural development in the past, NGOs were seen as a secondary partner in the development process. However, it was only recently that the current development discourse has given much attention to NGOs as a means of getting benefits more directly and cheaply to the target groups (the disadvantaged) than was previously the case with government intervention. This shift in project delivery from governments to NGOs was based on many debatable reasons. Firstly, NGOs have a long history in meeting the needs of the people who have been neglected by both the state and market forces. Secondly, the globalisation1 of the world economy in the last two decades has resulted in deregulation and privatisation policies. This has led to the state lessening its role in the development process. Thirdly, increasing socio-economic problems such as poverty, social inequality, unemployment and environmental degradation, which many Third World countries continue to face. And, finally, the increasing growth the of world's population which is putting greater pressure on scarce resources.

Consequently, to better understand the role of NGOs in development and its relationship with the state and market forces, it is important that one understands the meaning of these concepts first. This is crucial because these concepts often influence how the indigenous people conceptualise the notion of development.

1 Globalisation is a process whereby decisions taken by governments and organisations on economic activities such as production, distribution, consumption as well as trade and investment are influenced by events happening elsewhere in the world (Primo and Taylor, 1999; iv).

The concept of NGOs is often difficult to deal with because of its nature and functions. It embraces a wide

range of organisations, such as church groups, youth groups, multinational organisations, freedom fighters and education institutions (Rhodes, 1993 : 158). However, in most instances, the term NGO refers to organisations that are totally independent of the Government and who have "primarily humanitarian or co-operative, rather than commercial objectives" (World Bank, 1990a : 8). Zizzamia (1987 : 1, cited in Fernando, 1996 : 35), further defines NGOs as private organisations that pursue activities to relieve suffering, promote the interests of the poor, protect the environment, provide the basic social services and undertake community development.

According to Korten (1990: 2) the term NGO embraces a diverse number of organisations. Some are voluntary organisations (VOs)2 also known as community-based organisations. These Voluntary organisations often "pursue a social mission driven by a commitment to shared values". Public service contractors, (PSCs) are those that "function as a market-oriented, non-profit business, serving public purposes". The third, people's organisations (POs) also referred to as membership organisations, which serve the interests of the members, have member accountable leadership and are substantially self-reliant. Governmental Nongovernmental Organisations (GNGOs) are the creations of governments and serve as instruments of government policy (Smillie, 1995 : 34).

In this study, NGOs is defined as formal organisations which is not established by intergovernmental agreement that promote development not only in response to the needs of the disadvantaged but also to achieve its own goals.

It should be noted at this stage that the concept of development, for the purpose of this thesis (as discussed in Chapter 2 and section 6:4), does not necessarily mean the westernisation of a given society. Nor is it identical to modernisation. However, state and the Government will be used interchangeably in this context despite the fact that both concepts can have different meanings. For the purpose of clarification, however, the state is defined as an entity standing

2The term private voluntary organisation, common in the United States, is largely synonymous with NGO (Korten, 1990 ; 2).

above society with sovereign authority, its legitimacy being a function of its representation of the general interests of society. Government, on the other hand, refers to part of the state, which is responsible for legislation and administration of the public service (Naidu, 1991 : 19). Market is defined as an entity which represents the private sector and is responsible for commercial activities.

1:1   The Need to Study NGOs

The growing involvement of NGOs in the resolution of development problems such as poverty has precipitated a rapid increase in the literature about them as a valid focus for research. In recognition of this fact, since the beginning of 1970s a number of voices in UNESCO have been regularly raised which stressed the importance of NGOs in the social, economic, and political evolution of contemporary societies. Furthermore, a recent World Conference held at the University of Manchester in 1992 also called for ways to improve local NGOs' participation in the development process (Edwards and Hulme, 1992). This view was further advocated in the Commonwealth NGO Forum held in New Zealand in 1995, where it prepared guidelines for 'Good Policy and Practice' for NGOs (The Commonwealth Foundation, 1995). The call for NGOs to take part in the rural development discourse is also a growing concern in the Solomon Islands as articulated in the Solomon Islands National Unity and Reconciliation Party (SINURP) Programme of Action, 1995-1998 (SINURP, 1994).

In the Solomon Islands, rural development is critical due to the geographical dispersion of the country and the cultural and linguistic diversity that exists among the people. This means that multiple responses from the state, market forces and NGOs should be encouraged. The reason why this study focuses on NGOs is due to the theoretical debate about the weaknesses of the state and the market to address development effectively in developing countries. Furthermore, today many overseas aid donors are channelling their official aid through NGOs under what Robinson (cited in Edwards and Hulme, 1995 : 4) calls a 'New Policy Agenda'. This 'New Policy Agenda' is driven by two basic sets of assumptions. Firstly, NGOs have a long history of providing welfare services to the poor in places where governments lacked the resources to ensure everyone have equal access to these services. As such, official aid agencies tend to support NGOs to continue providing welfare services to those who cannot be reached through government services. Secondly, under this 'New Policy Agenda', NGOs are seen as a vehicle for 'democratisation' and essential components of a thriving `civil society' that in turn are seen as vital to the success of this new policy agenda's economic dimension (Moore, 1993 cited in Edwards and Hulme, 1995 : 4). It was assumed that NGOs are effective vehicles for the delivery of this new policy agenda's economic and political objectives. The overall picture is that NGOs are seen as the 'favoured child' of official aid agencies and something of a

panacea for the problems of development. As Vivian (1994) puts it, official agencies often see NGOs as a 'magic bullet' that can be fired off in any direction and, though often without very much evidence, will still find its target. Clearly, the increasing availability of official funding for NGOs, the popularity they enjoy and the increasing access they are offered to centres of national and international decision-making, represent both an opportunity and a danger (Edwards and Hulme, 1992 : 5).

While it is true that NGOs have increased in numbers and size in response to the influx of overseas funding, both of which are premised on 'good' performance over the last decade, their contribution to development on a global scale remains comparatively limited or at least under-reported. Many small-scale successes have been secured, but the systems and structures which determine the distribution of power and resources within and between societies, remain largely unchanged. Consequently, the impact of NGOs on the lives of poor people is highly localised, and often transitory. In many cases, NGOs have become ineffective managers of resources when trying to implement a diverse set of activities, which requires managerial competencies for program integration beyond their capacities. In other words, the NGO sector has its own weaknesses, and despite being promoted and financially supported by overseas aid agencies, their contribution to development is often debatable.

From the point of view of the sociology of development, a study of the role of NGOs in development implies that modernisation and neo-liberal development theories have failed to

address growing problems emanating from industrialisation, urbanisation, modernisation and the market economy in Third World countries effectively and efficiently. It further shows that development which was based on 'growth-centred' orientation in many situations, have often led to underdevelopment, resulting in social inequality, poverty, and unemployment. It is within this context, that new patterns of development thinking have increasingly considered taking the NGO sector into account, which was traditionally seen as effective in addressing social problems such as poverty and social inequality. However, the question is whether the NGO sector with its inherent weaknesses, is capable of providing an alternative development approach that wiil cater for the needs and aspirations of the poor people for which the state and the market were unable to address?

This study attempts to critically assess the ability of NGOs to provide an alternative development, which is more effective than the state and the market, by examining their internal strengths, or what is often referred to by Tendler (1982) as their "articles of faith". The study is also influenced by the ongoing debate directed towards NGOs, on the general 'assumed' successes and effectiveness of their work in the development process. In this study, the impact of the work of one NGO in rural development will be evaluated by considering whether their development programmes in a particular region, have enabled and empowered their target population to improve their quality of life or otherwise. It will further argue that in the Solomon Islands, the NGO sector alone will not be able to address rural development problems effectively,

As a result of the inability of the state and market forces to promote development that is responsive to the needs of the poor, a series of searches for alternative approaches to development has emerged. Here, scholars such as David Korten, Manfred Max-Neef, Hezel Henderson (cited in Pieterse, 1998 : 352), Hettne (1990), Robert Chambers (1983, 1993), and John Friedman (cited in Martinussen, 1997 : 337) have been at the forefront of philosophical considerations of an 'alternative' development model. Korten (1990 : 337) advocated the role of NGOs and their opportunities for strengthening the ability of weak groups and securing better living conditions for them. He further argues that there is a need to shift away from growth-oriented to 'people-centred' development strategies. Such a shift implies giving first priority to

the fulfilment of the basic needs of the people, which in turn, requires that the rich in the developed countries reduce their consumption rate to a sustainable level. In the same manner, John Friedman, is primary concerned with local and regional planning, while Robert Chambers based his analysis on 'reversals in management' styles, which in turn, called for a critical assessment of development work in rural areas (Martinussen, 1997 ; 337).

Most of the literature found on NGOs highlights poverty as an important area of NGOs focus (Tendler, 1982, Korten, 1987, Sen, 1987, UNDP, 1993b), This is not surprising, because the primary objective of NGOs when they first emerged was focused on the delivery of 'goods' and 'services' referred to as humanitarian assistance (Korten, 1990, Clark, 1991, Smillie, 1995). In the process however, NGOs have recognised that delivering the 'goods' and 'services' directly to the poor was insufficient in solving developmental problems. As such, the philosophy of NGOs has also undergone a gradual change from being essentially a relief and welfare agency, to one shaping development policy (Korten, 1987, 1990, Elliot, 1987, Senillosa, 1998). However, in the process of 'scaling-up', NGOs have been criticised for neglecting their initial task and for becoming embroiled in politics. In the same vein, critiques have pointed

out that NGOs are not addressing the needs of the poorest of the poor, and for undermining grassroots organisations. It is within this context that the critical evaluation of NGOs with regard to their contributions to development and societal context is an imperative exercise to identify their 'successes' and inadequacies in the development process. In other words, evaluation will ensure that the contributions of NGOs to rural development are more understood.

However, the nature of NGOs as they exist today, often makes such evaluations a difficult task, Edwards and Hulme (1995 : 6), for example, stated that "assessing NGO performance is a difficult and a messy business". In most cases, the absence of a huge body of reliable evidence on the impact and effectiveness of NGOs often makes it difficult to generalise about their contributions to development. This could be attributed to the fact that carrying out an intensive survey of NGOs would be very costly and time consuming. In many situations, evaluation of NGOs has been confined mainly to a few successful projects and sample sizes usually ranged from 25 to 100 informants (Hyman and Dearden, 1998 : 267). Here, Sen (1987 : 16) observed

that, factors such as diffused goals, lack of performance pressures, absence of formal systems, and a perception of evaluation as a non-legitimate activity make evaluation a non-priority for most NGOs. As such, current evaluation practice tends to be impressionistic, rather than realistic.

The evaluation of NGO performance must therefore be much wider than what is being currently practised. Sen (1987 : 164), for example, stated that the evaluation process should include the measurement of overall organisational effectiveness as compared to final program impacts. In this respect, measurement of intangible processes such as morals, values, participation, leadership, goal conflicts and congruence, interest groups and power equations, community needs and capabilities must be considered.

1:2   Aims and Objectives of the Study

The aim of the study is to examine to what extent the Solomon Islands Development Trust (SIDT) working in the area of rural development is effective in promoting village quality of life amongst its target population and to assess their 'successes' and 'failures' in this effort.

Objectives of the Study

1:      To identify what extent the SIDT development activities have 'empowered' the target population to participate fully in the development process.

2:      To identify whether the SIDT development programmes are useful and appropriate in meeting the development needs of their target population.

3:      To critically assess the ability of the SIDT in carrying out its development programmes among their target groups.

4:      To examine the relationship between the SIDT and the Government with regards to rural development in the country.

5:      To find out why some of the SIDT development programmes were not implemented at the village level.

1:3   The Research Methodology and Strategy

In this study, an evaluative research method was undertaken. Such a method of research is a common tool used in applied research3 that is employed "especially in the area of government and international agency activity" (Phillips, 1989 : 9). Furthermore, evaluative study ensures that the outcomes or impacts of development activities that have been completed are analysed against the expected goals and objectives of the SIDT. Here, it is important to understand that "evaluation necessarily involves a large element of subjective judgement, for the personal values of those engaged in evaluating are always part of the evaluation process itself. In fact the evaluation of social development programmes is a far less pure scientific and objective process than is sometimes claimed" (Taylor, 1991 : 8).

A field survey was chosen to study recipients of the SIDT development activities. Here, field survey is used to refer to a systemic way of gathering data from a given population. This is done by using both formal and informal interviewing questionnaires, in order to obtain relevant data from the informants who are representative of the population. Since the informants are scattered and diverse in numbers, this research method is suitable and is often used by NGOs and others who carry out similar research in this area.

The Subject of Study

In this study, I have chosen the Solomon Islands Development Trust (SIDT) for two basic reasons. Firstly, many outside people perceived the SIDT as the most active local NGO with regards to promoting rural development in the Solomon Islands. And secondly, the SIDT is the biggest local NGO, and has been in the country for the last seventeen years.

3 Applied research seeks to "add to the existing body of knowledge, and it also has the aim of providing

information immediately useful in understanding social behaviour or in attempting to resolve problems confronting individual groups or communities" (Phillips, 1989 : 9).

Selection of Informants

For the purpose of this study, two regions were selected out of thirteen of the SEDT's sites throughout the country (refer Map 1). These two sites were chosen due to the accessibility of data and limited financial resource. Furthermore, because of the limited time and finance, the sites selected were confined to Guadalcanal and Malaita only, These sites are Marau Sound on Guadalcanal and Raroisu'u Ward in South Malaita (refer to Map 1).

A stratified random sampling technique was used in the course of carrying out this research. Stratified sampling refers to a process whereby the population is categorised into different sub-groups according to certain criterion. This method is commonly used by many social researchers because it will ensure a good spread of respondents and adequate coverage of sub-populations (Walsh, 1996 : 116), Furthermore, the stratified random sampling method is useful in the sense that it facilitates the selection of informants within each given stratum. In this study, sub-populations are gender, marital status, and age groups. Since the population is relatively homogenous, the size of the sample taken is also small.

Data Collection

In carrying out this research, a combination of research strategies was used to collect the relevant data for the study. This includes, documentary sources, in-depth interviewing, and personal observations and experiences. Documentary sources that were used include the SIDT Annual Reports, Link magazines and comics, and other NGO publications that are relevant to the study. Here, in-depth interviews using both structured and unstructured questionnaires were employed to collect data from the SIDT officials at their office in Honiara, recipients of the SIDT development activities, government officials, other NGOs, and the general public. In so doing, three interview schedules (A, B, and C) were prepared (see Appendix 4). Schedule A was used to collect information from the SIDT recipients. Schedule B was used to gather data from the SIDT officials, while schedule C was used to collect information from other NGOs, government officials, and the general public. The researcher interviewed both the SIDT officials and others through a face-to-face technique.

Data collection started on the 22/12/98, at Marau Sound on Guadalcanal and lasted for five days. Apart from formal interviewing, informal discussions were also held between three selected SIDT field workers and involving both men and women. During the course of the discussions, I explained to them the purpose of this study. After that, I opened the discussion with a general question such as "how do you judge the work of the SIDT in Marau Sound?, then I left the floor open for discussion. In the event when the discussion shifted away from the topic, I came in with a comment or a question to keep them on the track. However, in all two informal discussions that lasted for two hours, the group members stuck to the topic most of the time. This clearly shows that the role of the SIDT in rural development is a 'hot' topic in Marau Sound. These discussions were very helpful for both parties (villagers and the researcher). For the villagers, this gave them an opportunity to express their feelings and views about the work of the SIDT and at the same time acquired a new stock of knowledge. From the researcher's point of view, not only did this add more information to the research, but was also a sign of the willingness and eagerness of the villagers to discuss the development issues affecting their lives.

The next place I visited was Raroisu'u Ward in South Malaita. Here, it took me ten days to carry out the fieldwork. This was because I had to travel (both by foot and by out-board motor) to reach places where the SIDT held their workshops in previous years. Because Small Malaita is so scattered and mountainous, I did not reach all the places where the SIDT had visited in the last decade. Apart from the interviewing process, a public talk was organised and held at Heukesia village on the 10/01/99 to discuss the general discourse of rural development in Smalt Malaita. The idea was to find out why there are so many development activities in which the SIDT programmes did not succeed as expected. Here, the structure of the talk was similar to the two informal discussions held in Marau Sound, where I opened the discussion with a general question. At Heukesia village, I asked, "why did rural development projects often fail in our area"? During the course of the discussion, the contributions of the SIDT to rural development in South Malaita were also highlighted. To ensure the villagers were part of the discussion, I asked

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one of the village members to chair the discussion, but in a very informally manner. The idea was to allow more people to contribute to the discussion. This public talk attracted about 100 people (both males and females) and lasted for two and half-hours. This again clearly show how 'hot' the rural development topic is in South Malaita. The outcome of this talk was very successful and ended-up with small refreshments

hosted by the researcher as a token of appreciation.

The last place I visited was Honiara, where the SIDT office was located. Here, I spent two weeks with the SIDT and another week with the general public, government officials and other NGOs. It took me a total of seven weeks to complete collecting the relevant information for the study. Whilst carrying out the interviewing process in Marau Sound and Honiara, pidgin English (Solomon Islands National language) was used, while in Raroisu'u Ward (Small Malaita), I used my own mother tongue. During the course of interviewing, I asked the questions and recorded the answers on the record sheets as well. This was to allow the researcher to control and guide the interviewing process along the way. In so doing, it was hoped that only relevant information was likely to be collected and recorded.

Each interview took approximately 30 to 50 minutes depending on which schedule was used. Apart from that, the researcher and the informants often took their time to discuss things more openly in an informal manner. Most of the infonnants were very keen and appreciated the effort and initiative put forward by the researcher to study this important area. The informants were well informed that the study will not directly benefit them, but it will indirectly make the SIDT and other NGOs and government policy makers aware of the present situation of the recipients. As such, it is hoped that the SIDT, other NGOs and government officials may tailor their development policies to reflect the desires and aspirations of the recipients.

A sample of 66 people was interviewed. Out of that, fourteen were women. These infonnants were selected on the basis of age, gender, knowledge and their involvement with NGOs, in particular the SIDT, and personal experiences and observations about the contribution of the SDDT to development in the country. A summary of the informants interviewed is indicated below (table 1).

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Table 1: The number of informants interviewed with reference to their organisations.

SIDT Centres	Number of Participants Interviewed.	Others	Number of Informants interviewed.
Marau Sound	25	NGOs	2
Raroisu'u Ward	20	SEDT Staff	6
Sub-total	45	Government	3
Final Total	66	Public	10
		sub-total	21

This information was supplemented by my own knowledge and observations of the SIDT development activities and personal experiences as a boy growing up in a rural area when the SIDT first introduced their development activities in South Malaita in the mid 1980s.

Data Analysis

Data analysis is guided by the grounded theory[4] (Jary and Jary, 1995) with a little help from radical political economy (Munck,1984, Sherman, 1987). Here, a framework is designed to assess the impact of the work of the SIDT in rural development among the selected regions. In this study, the term impact is used to mean whether the SIDT development activities have benefited and enabled the participants to improve their standard of living. Here, I intend to consider certain variables of NGOs, which assumed their effectiveness in the development process (see Chapter 3). These variables include, flexibility, the SIDT represent the authentic voice of rural people, the appropriateness of the SIDT activities, cost-effective, whether the SIDT has enabled the people to produce, at least the kind of development it has envisaged, and the SIDT working methodologies. In this context, it is important to consider two things. Firstly, whether the participants find the SIDT development activities useful and relevant to meet their needs. And, secondly, whether the SIDT development activities have helped and 'empowered' the concerned people to participate My in the development process. The quantitative data will be analysed using minitab (a statistical computer program) system while the qualitative data will

Grounded theory was discovered by Barney, G and Anselm, S in 1967. It developed from close observation of the world. Unlike formal or abstract theory that is developed by deducing (according to logical rules) hypothesis, which are then tested against observation, the grounded theory argues for inductive theory-building by developing theoretical ideas from observations of the data themselves. The approach is closely linked to symbolic interactionism, and is one of the few logics of qualitative research, another being analytical induction.

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be used as manual graphical illustrations to explain the research findings. These findings presented in chapter six, The findings shows the overall outcome of the total responses of the SIDT participants according to the above variables.

1:4   The Significance of the Study

While many studies have been undertaken in the Solomon Islands with regards to'rural development' (Roughan, 1986, Kabutaulaka, 1993, Gegeo, 1994 and 1997), there has been any work done on the contribution of NGOs to rural development. Roughan's examined a new way of looking at the notion of 'development,' which called for then formed organisation (SIDT) to embark on a training program for its field staff before deployed in the provinces (Roughan, 1998 :2). The outcome of his dissertation has consolidated the establishment of the SIDT; especially it's development philosophy and outreach programmes. Along the same line, Gegeo's works focuses on the relationship between bisnis and kastom in an attempt to find ways to integrate indigenous knowledge in the rural development discourse- On the other hand, Kabutaulaka's research was based on a rural service project facilitated by the state. These studies are important since they highlight new ways of addressing rural development in the Solomon Islands. However, none of these studies attempt to assess the socio-economic impact of the work of NGOs on the recipients. This study will help fill this gap, and is an additional to the previous work done by these local scholars. Furthermore, this study will be useful for three more basic reasons. Firstly, to document the voice of an indigenous scholar pertaining to the debate on NGOs and development. Secondly, it will provide the necessary background work for future research, and finally, it will produce some basic information, which will be of use to the SIDT and the government for their future development programmes.

Limitations of the Study

In this study, only two places were selected regardless of whether they have been successful or otherwise. This does not necessarily mean that all villages within the selected regions reached due to limited time and finance. Also, there is a possibility for mistranslation of

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responses to English since most of the interviews were done in the Solomon Islands national language-1 pidgin' and my own mother tongue, and the fact that English is my third language. As such, the possibility for the results to be distorted cannot be absolutely ruled out.

1:5   The Structure of the Thesis

This thesis is divided into seven chapters. Chapter one, the Introduction, has outlined the need to study NGOs, aims and objectives of the study, the research methodology and strategies the significance of the study and the structure of the thesis. The second chapter, Development, State, Market and Civil Society: Theoretical Debate discusses briefly the conventional development thinking and practice, which gave rise to the state and the market approaches to development. The position of the civil society, namely NGOs will be discussed as well. In chapter three, NGOs and Development is discussed in a more detail. The idea is to identify to what extent NGOs are more effective in promoting development than the state and the market. In so doing, five aspects of NGOs, which have enhanced their image as a successful vehicle in the development process will be discussed. These five aspects are: NGOs and poverty alleviation, NGOs are cost-effective and efficient, NGOs promote an alternative development approach, accountability and transparency, and flexibility, innovative and greater freedom. However, most of these aspects have been widely criticised, not only because most of them are merely 'assumptions', but are largely untested as well. In the fourth chapter, the emphasis is on NGOs and Development in the South Pacific. Here, the discussion will be based on the general contribution of NGOs to rural development and the problems faced by NGOs. In chapter five, the focus is on Rural Development in the Solomon Islands. This chapter traces the evolution of rural development and development issues affecting the country. The sixth chapter is on NGOs and Rural Development in the Solomon Islands. It first presents a brief overview of NGOs and development in the country. Here, the emphasis is focussed on the contribution of the SIDT to rural development in the Solomon Islands, which formed the basis of this study. The findings show the general contribution of the SIDT to rural development among the selected regions in the Solomon Islands. Chapter seven, the Conclusion, discusses the strengths, limitations and problems of

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the SIDT and other suggestions for change. The thesis will challenge other NGOs in the country to contribute positively to rural development in the Solomon Islands since the SIDT alone will not have much effect.

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CHOISEUL

SHORTLAND
ISLANDS

VELLA LA VELLA   KOLOBANGARA

SANTA ISABEL

NEW GEORGIA

NGELLA

RUSSEL ISLANDS

HONIARA

DUFF IS.

REEF ISLANDS

GUADALCANAL

SANTA CRUZ ISLANDS

BELLONA

UTUPUA

VANIKORO
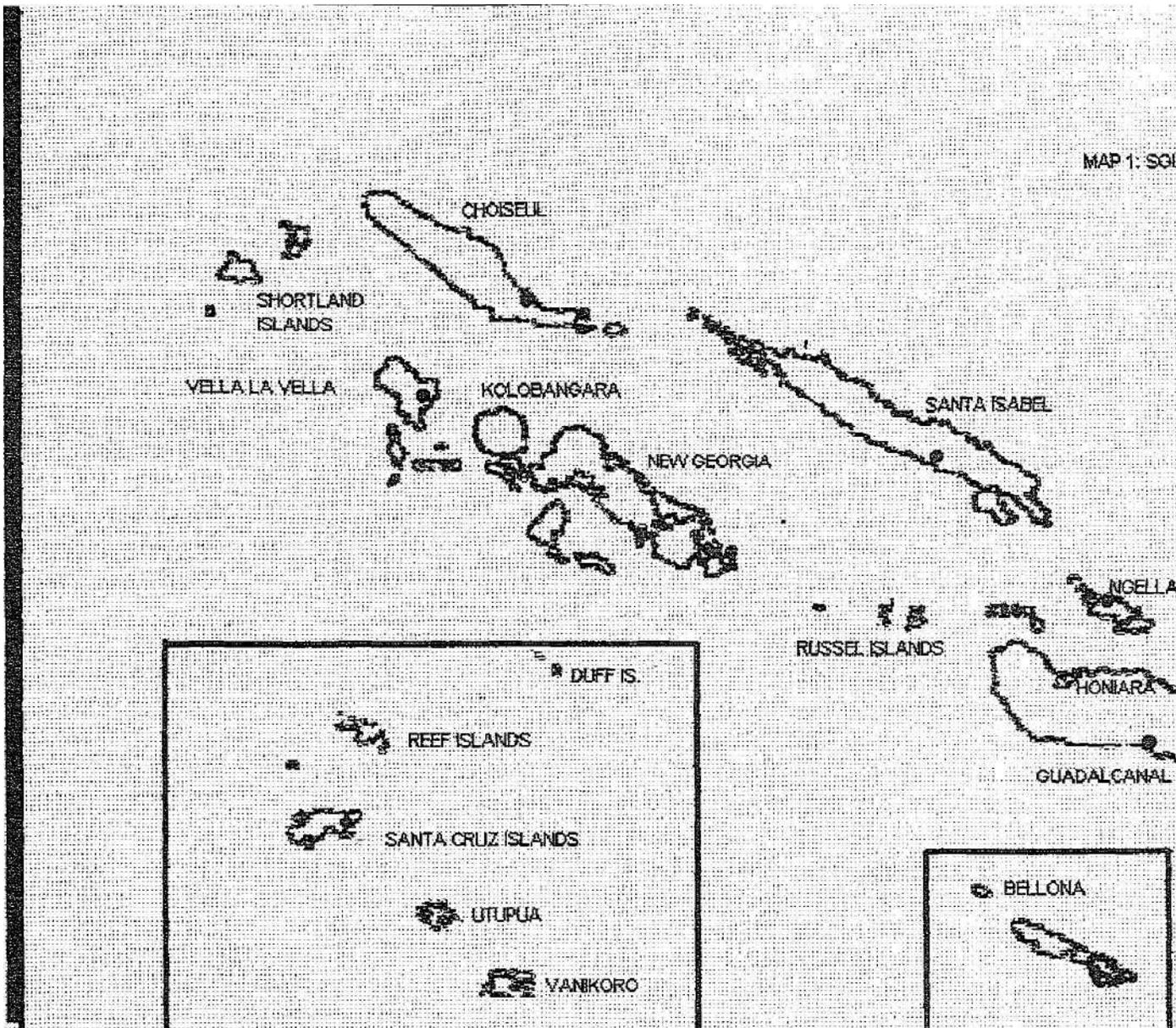
Chapter Two

Development, State, Market and Civil Society: Theoretical

This chapter briefly examines conventional development thinking and how it has been used in Third World societies. Here, the meaning of development and the position of the state and market forces in the development process will be discussed. Such a theoretical debate is necessary because it has provided the philosophical assumptions behind the rise of civil society in the development process, The last section of this chapter discusses the historical development of NGOs as important background to the next chapter.

In discussing the contribution of NGOs in development, it is important that the meaning of development is understood first. This is crucial because it is likely to influence the subsequent theoretical debate on how 'development' was addressed in Third World countries.

2; 1   The Meaning of Development

The concept of development is often difficult to deal with because its definition is usually value-laden and subjective; it means different things to different people at different times. In other words, development is a concept that is subject to change over time, in its language, strategies and practices. However, in most instances, the term 'development' is used to refer to an improvement in people's standard of living or well being. Such a standard of living can be achieved through higher incomes, better education and health, less

poverty and inequality, a clean environment, greater civic freedom and a richer cultural life (Goulet, 1995 : 1, Ryri&, 1995 : 33).

The idea of improvement in the standard of living usually has an economic connotation attached to it; this associates improved standards of living5 with the high mass consumption societies of the Western countries (Todaro, 1994 : 14-20). This link between high mass consumption economies and 'developedness' became prominent in the period following the

5 It is acknowledged, however, that what is regarded as an improved standard of living can be very subjective as well. This is because it depends on who is making the definition and what criteria are used to measure the standard of living.

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Second World War, when the dichotomy between the industrialised capitalist countries of the West and Third World became significant. The association between 'development' and economics is not surprising given that up until recently development was perceived of as almost exclusively an economic concept. Because of the economic bias of conventional development thinking, the discussion usually underlined two basic principles. Firstly, 'few people are worse off than before' and, secondly 'many people are better off than before'. This implies that development means a process of growth and change for a better or improved quality of life for the people concerned (Hou, 1998a : 5),

While it is true that economic development still remains an integral part of nation building, it should not be confused with the overall concept of 'development', Development therefore, must be seen as being much more than just economic development; it needs to be redefined. Seers (1979 : 12), for example, stated that "the meaning of development should consider three basic things, what has been happening to inequality, poverty, and unemployment"6. The concept of development as used here, refers to a process of growth and change (positive changes) which is not only seen in economic terms, but also as part of social, cultural, spiritual and political empathy as well (Olivia, 1995). The process should focus on increasing the well-being of the society as well as constituting a "transformation of humankind's consciousness; a spiritual, cultural and political issue and only secondarily as an economic question" (Roughan, 1986 : 4).

Development should not be seen and placed in government buildings, but rather, in communities and among the families and people in the communities. Hence, development should be 'people-centred oriented'. The process must put 'people first' to meet their basic needs and self-reliance, increase opportunity to live a longer and healthier life (Gustave, 1993), Furthermore, development should be seen as a process of transformation, for which individuals make decisions and realise his/her human potential and usefulness in society. As such, development should encourage individual 'participation' which thus becomes an integral part of the transformation of the country (Kabutaulaka, 1993 : 24). Here, 'participatory development1

6 If ait the three variables have declined from high levels, this can be seen as a period of 'development' of a given society, However, if only one or two decline, despite increase in per capita, it would be strange to call the result 'development'.

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would create more responsible human beings, not only in terms of meeting their basic needs, but also in realising their 'abilities', 'potential', 'dignity' and produce a 'competent' citizen (Gran, 1983 : 4, 327). As Goulet (1995 : 9) puts it; "participation is like a special kind of 'moral incentive'...which [participants benefit from in the development process]".

Because of the controversies involved in defining development, the ways in which it has been approached also varies. Here, I shall briefly discuss the modernisation theory as it forms the basis of the state and the market approaches to development in Third World countries.

2:3 Modernisation as a Development Model

Although the modernisation theory only gained its popularity in the 1950s and 1960s, its origin can be traced to the liberal tradition, especially to the work of prominent classical sociologists such as Durkheim, Spencer, and Weber, who were writing during the 19th century. Implicit in their writings was the dichotomization of societies into two groups,7 This process of change and dichotomy of societies into two opposing groups have played a crucial role in first articulating the unilinear perspective typically representing modernisation theory (Webster,1990).

The underlying philosophical reasons behind the modernisation paradigms could be categorised into two broad perspectives. Firstly, they emerged as an attempt to address the growing social and economic problems of Third World countries. The idea is that modernisation development theory could be used as a 'blue-print' or a 'model' for the socio-economic and political transformation of Third World societies in

order to achieve 'development' like the Western nations. And, secondly, it was used for economic reconstruction of the war-ravaged industrial countries in Western Europe. While this process was seen as a 'humanitarian' approach, which was traditionally practised by the NGOs, it cannot be divorced from political propaganda. Here, Seers (1979 : 25) observed that, "it has provided justification for aid policies aimed at containing Soviet Communism in the Cold War Period". Furthermore, it has been used to explain

7 Firstly, the 'traditional society' which is characterised as being simple, with a kinship structure, subsistence economy, small and village settlements, low levels of technology, and political hierarchy. And, secondly, the 'moden society,' which is claimed to be more complex and based on a cash economy, specialisation, rationalisation of tune, much more freedom, highly urbanised and technologically advanced.

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and justify the continues flow of foreign aid from developed countries to Third World societies. Consequently, development planning in Third World societies is still based on'economic growth' in order to replicate the process of development in Western industrialised countries.

In the early 1950s, proponents of the modernisation theory asserted that massive industrial development and increased domestic savings were ways to achieve growth and progress for Third World countries, Development and growth therefore, were driven by technical innovations, in association with the private sector mobilisation of credit in the economic system as a whole (Martinussen, 1997 : 56-57), Here, the notion of 'development' and 'growth' became synonymous with progress and high levels of civilisation. Growth was perceived as a natural process, which could be nourished through the application of correct and timely inputs. Likewise, development could be impeded by poor conditions such as lack of appropriate technology, infrastructure, capital, know-how and political stability(Hoogvelt, 1982). However, once these constraints were removed, the process of development would continue,

Dominant in the discussion of modernisation theory was Rostow's (1960) notion of the five stages of economic growth,8 which every society has to follow. Here, neo-classical theorists asserted that economic growth and structural change are inextricably interrelated, Therefore, to 'develop' means to achieve a similar socio-economic pattern as the industrialised countries of the West (Trowler and Triley, 1984 : 2). This type of 'development' can be measured through growth per capita income, which could be accelerated with the help of trade, aid, investment, and technologies from developed countries to Third World countries. This understanding assumed that development could only be achieved through assistance from the developed countries.

Based on the modernisation agenda, it was assumed that the state and the market would promote and facilitate development in order to achieve modernity. Korten (1990 : 96) refers to

8 Firstly, the traditional society, which is represented by poor technology; subsistence economy, and its political power is centralised and hierarchical. Secondly, the transitional stage which is the pre-condition stage for development. This stage is characterised by radical changes in the agricultural sector, transport and communication, and foreign trade. The third stage is the take-off. Hero, economic growth and investment are evident. Fourthly, the drive to maturity, where the leading sectors expand and diversify into other sectors of the economy. The fifth stage is the age of high mass consumption. This is characterised by a technically and technologically advanced self-sustaining growth-centred society with a high level of national income, high level of consumption, and stable political economy (Rostow, 1960).

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these two institutions, as the Government and business. Such a description resembles what Nerfin refers to as the 'prince', (who represents governmental power) and the 'merchant' (representing economic power). These institutions are not only imperative to the functioning of society, but often share complementary roles as well. As Korten (1990 : 96) puts it, "the prince maintains the public order [while], the merchant fills the need for goods and services.

2:3   The State

Although the state existed well before the 19th century, it only gained its popularity following the Second World War, Since then, the state was seen as an important initiator and catalyst of growth and economic development. During the 1950s and 1970s, there was a wide consensus that the state existed to protect the welfare of the citizens. However, even as a welfare agency, the state did not work against the market. Rather, it was seen as a complementary institutional device that promotes the extension of the market. Berthoud (1997 ; 73), for example, observed that through the state, one creates, maintains and regulates market forces for economic growth, of which the results should be distributed as fairly as possible throughout the society.

Since the state is seen as a welfare agency, both the developed and developing countries have accepted this

dominant role of the state. Consequently, many citizens began to expect the state to deliver the goods and services such as the provision of capital, the creation of job opportunities, provide and improve the basic infrastructures for entrepreneurs, provision of the basic communication and transportation networks, and basic health and education to them (SAARC, 1992 : 16). In this context, state-managed development could be characterised by two central components. Firstly, a statebuilding strategy that aims at anchoring the state institutions so that they can reach downwards and out to the citizens. Secondly, a state-managed development effort, which involves the use of the state bureaucracy as an engine of growth and development (Martinussen, 1997 ; 258), The rational behind this thinking is that state interventions are necessary because the market and private sector is still weak in many Third World countries.

The underlying argument was that under the existing conditions, Third World countries would not be able to initiate a sustainable and self-reinforcing growth process unless the state intervened and co-ordinated development efforts, In this argument, the state could and would act as a rational 'distributor' to serve the interests of the whole society. This line of thinking was dominated by four basic assumptions. Firstly, the state should participate actively in the procurement of material and social infrastructure because the necessary pre-conditions for economic growth and social progress would not be produced by the private sector. Moreover, the direct participation of the state in certain production sectors has been based on the argument that private capita! investment would not be forthcoming in a number of strategic areas. Secondly, the amount of capital required for physical and social development would be too large for any single private firms. Thirdly, the gestation period before a plan or project (eg. bridges and wharves) to complete could be too long compared with alternative investments. And, finally, the risks involved in providing social developments could be prohibitive for private enterprises (Martinussen, 1997 :258-259).

With regards to the general operational controls over private firms, state intervention has been justified by, inter alia, the need to create a better balance between economic sectors; dispersal of growth and income opportunities geographically and the wish to counteract foreign control over the local economy. In other words, state intervention in the market is important because it would regulate the economy in order to curb the power of private businesses and protect worker's right and the general welfare of the citizens.

According to this approach, in order to promote economic growth, the workers, private sector and the state should agree to a social contract between the different stakeholders, This social contract would outline the responsibilities of each group to ensure the steady growth of the national economy (Primo and Taylor, 1999: 7).

As a result of state intervention in the market economy, it has led people to rely on it (state) as being their sole provider, which thus increases their level of dependency. As a result, the state increases its size, which leads to a dominant public sector. Because of the increase in the public sector, it has often been subjected to inefficiency, over-use of resources, costly, top-down

approach rather than people-centre orientation, corruption, bureaucratic bottlenecks, malpractice, misappropriation, and lack of disciplinary measures (Gupta and Deklin 1992). In short, state bureaucracies become bloated. Here, Korten (1990 : 95) has pointed out that "people have been expected to put their faith and resources in the hands of government. In return government has promised to bestow on the people the gifts of development. This promise has proven to be a chimera born of a false assessment of the capacity of government and the nature of development itself. As a result of the above distortions within the government machinery, benefits did not trickle down to the poor. Instead, the few rich elite absorbed them, and thus the gap between the rich and the poor keeps on widening.

Critics also stated that the continuing government intervention in the market economy, in particular in employment, pricing, and investment policies, has often constrained the economic growth and performance of state enterprises. This is because government intervention is based on political motives, rather than on commercial objectives. Gupta and Deklin (1992), for example, observed that the Chairman of state owned enterprises in Papua New Guinea were approved by different ministers, involved, usually these appointments are based on 'political affiliation' rather than on 'merit'. Consequently, this has diluted the managerial quality of leadership, management is subject to government decisions, inappropriate capital and labour ratio, inability to generate a profit to cover operating costs, and poor quality of new investment outcomes (Adam and Cavendish, 1992 : 5-7), Furthermore, it is often argued that state intervention has led to an incredible waste of resources. In other word, instead of productive and development-promoting investments, resources have to a large extent channelled through the economics of affection and the patronage system. Critics also pointed out that public ftinds have been used for building political support and to pay off accumulated 'social and political debts,' rather than for promoting or bringing about economic transformation (Martinussen, 1997 : 248).

In most developing countries, government programmes designed to assist the poor such as the provision of low cost housing did not eventuate as expected.Kingsley (1991 : 121-123) and Bryant (1990), for example, observed that government did not provide enough houses to meet the demands of the poor. Secondly, the costs of production of these houses have also been

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skyrocketing, which are beyond the financial affordability of the poor. Thirdly, most of the houses that have been built largely benefited middle income groups, rather than the poor. This explicitly shows the failure and inability of the state in the development process.

The debt crisis in the early 1980s was also another common explanation for a new way of development thinking. In many developing countries, external debt spiralled out of control, leading to years of macroeconomic instability, painful economic adjustment, and low or negative growth. Thus, the argument goes, developing countries simply could not continue to absorb the fiscal burden of state controlled development. Also, evidence has shown that the state's direct participation in the productive sector, often resulted in low capacity utilisation and overemployment in public industrial undertakings. Consequently, cost-effectiveness has been low in the public sector, despite it often being in the areas where private enterprises have been able to earn substantial profits. For governments with an increasing deficit on their public accounts, this has been deemed unacceptable (Martinussen, 1997 : 260). It is on these basis that a new way of development thinking has re-discovered market forces and free-market enterprises.

Despite the volumes of critical literature on the state, it is still seen as one of the main providers of certain development activities such as health, infrastructure development, law and order, education, and will continue to play a crucial role in many Third World countries such the Solomon Islands.

2:4   Market Forces

Over the past several decades, developing countries have created state-owned enterprises in order to balance or replace a weak private sector, to produce higher investment ratios and yield a capital surplus to address the development problems in their respective countries. By the early 1980s however, evidence from a wide range of countries has shown that far too many state owned enterprises have been economically inefficient and have incurred heavy financial losses (Kikeri, Nellis and Shirley, 1992 : 15). This questioned the ability of the state to direct and manage development, claiming that the institution per se is inappropriate for the purpose and

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should therefore be 'rolled back' to give way to the market and the private sector. In the same line of thinking, Berg and Shirley (1987 : 2), argued that state owned enterprises are too big, and that it is doing too many things, which could be done more effectively and efficiently by the private sector. Furthermore, the public sector is not likely to foster efficiency and profitability in the sense that state enterprises do not have specific and clear objectives with regards to financial performance. Consequently, since the 1980s there has been an ideological shift towards the market approach.

During this period, most developing countries were experiencing a 'debt crisis', while the newly industrialised countries (NICs) of East Asia were experiencing economic growth. These countries, who became known as the 'Asian tigers' were; Singapore, Hong Kong, South Korea, and Taiwan. They were distinguished by superior export performance and high rates of economic growth, The successes of the NICs were widely considered by the IMF and the World Bank as a 'blue-print' to address growing development problems of Third World societies. Hence, the 'market' became a new chapter in the development debate as it was no longer "considered merely as a technical device for the allocation of goods and services, but rather, as the only possible way to regulate society" (Berthoud, 1997 : 70). It was assumed that the power of the market would solve the development problems. In this argument, the market capitalism which was linked with democracy assumed to be the best possible system for the whole of humanity. For example, the recent collapsed of the Soviet Union and Eastern Europe could be seen as the final victory of liberal capitalism. In short, market forces are often "considered as the way to escape insufferably bureaucracy and to guarantee a minimally decent material life for all" (Berthoud, 1997 : 70). The underlying philosophy here is that the market will bring about greater efficiency and development in the national economy. Here, Samirenda (1996 : 120) observed that the market economy would encourage private enterprises through promotion of competition. The spur of competition pushes firms to develop their marketing skills, pay close attention to service, keep up technologically, control costs, and rationally use scarce resources. Such a view was also shared by Rosenstein-Rodan (cited in Martinussen, 1997 : 228), where he claimed that market mechanisms would function tolerably well and bring about equilibrium with regards to allocation

of consumer goods and production. While the assumption behind competition is true in the theoretical sense, it still remains problematic for small island economies such as the Solomon Islands. Critics have pointed out that competition would only be favourable if the size of the market is large and a number of firms were producing similar products. However, in small island economies, smaller firms find it difficult to compete against multinational firms. As a result, the situation has led to the growth of monopoly, hence competition is not possible. It should also be noted that within a capitalism free-market system, business would only invest its money where the maximum profit can be made.

The 1990 World Development Report (WDR) revealed that the 1980s market economies attained a faster rate of gross national product (GNP) growth and were also more effective in the reduction of poverty. This report further stated that countries with a low GNP found poverty alleviation difficult (World Bank, 1990b : 50). It was this realisation that promoted a shift towards the market-oriented approach. Berthoud (1997 : 73), for example, stated that; 'the market itself is increasingly viewed as the only means to promote development". Dominant in the discussion of the market economic ideology is the general assumption that the wise course to promote and facilitate development is to 'bake a bigger cake' of national wealth. Here, it was asserted that it would be unwise to redistribute wealth or assets through a revolutionary process, for this is tantamount to the redistribution of misery. The goal therefore, is to create new increments of wealth as far as possible. In achieving this goal, it is important to increase domestic savings to the maximum degree. However, if these are not sufficient, foreign capital in diverse forms (loans, grant, investments), can be secured and apply it to productive investment. In so doing, it is likely to boost productivity that in turn will result in rapid economic growth (Goulet, 1995 : 85-86). The gist of development thinking was that the fruits of economic development would automatically trickle down to the rest of the population, and therefore be likely to solve development problems (Chambers, 1983, AIDAB, 1992 : 12) as more jobs are created and incomes increase, However, if they do not, then corrective welfare measures9 to ensure equity can be adopted by political authorities.

9 Welfare measures here refers to progressive taxation, subsidised food and social services for those unable to pay, provision of social security, and safety nets to protect the disadvantaged people.

In realising this, the neo-liberal market-oriented approach was integrated in the form of stabilisation and structural adjustment policies, as a solution for debtor countries to achieve development. It was the "only acceptable strategy for development" [for the third world] according to the World Bank and the International Monetary Funds (Walton, 1994 : 161). As George and Sabelli (1994 ; 72) puts it; "there is no alternative; we are all bound by a single compulsory truth, which should be recognised". In other words, it was argued that structural adjustment programmes (SAPs) are the only way to solving the debt crisis in developing countries.

The World Bank and the IMF implemented SAPs in two ways. Firstly, stabilisation policies (short-term target), which aimed at balance of payments constraints by devaluation of the local currency. And, secondly, the economic reform (long-term target) by deregulating the market economy and the labour market, and privatisation (SAARC, 1992 ; 19). The motive behind the market-oriented strategy was to remove all distortions (eg. trade barriers) that would impede the normal function of a free-market economy, Advocates of the market-oriented strategy, believe that the role of the state is simply to create the necessary conditions such as free trade for the private sector to increase their profits and re-invest them to generate more profits. In other words, market force should dictate the pace of the economy. Furthermore, it was assumed that a free-market economy would normally create the appropriate environment for market discipline to operate, While this is true in general terms, it is not actually the situation in certain cases, as there are also some state-owned enterprises that perform relatively well. In the same vein, Chambers (1993 : 96) observed that if the Government adopts a good approach and methods, even if they are diluted and performances are spotty, its total wider impact can still be enormous, due to their scale of operation. However, this development approach, which is based on market-oriented or export-led growth is still subject to a wider debate. Korten (1990 : 74-75), for example, asserted that the successes of theNICs were not purely based on market-oriented or export-led growth approaches, but rather incorporated other factors as well. In other words, exports represent only one part of the economic growth for these countries. For example, the institutions of these

economies that support this economic growth, and the way they were developed was never mentioned by the proponents of export-led growth, Therefore, the economic success of the NICs were also based on:

strong integrated domestic economies with institutional foundations that help to achieve broadly-based participation in the growth process; comprehensive and radical land reform; greater emphasis on education and adult learning; the development of transport and other infrastructure networks between the centre and the rural areas; and the development of policies aimed at increasing rural incomes and promoting the domestic market (Korten, 1990 : 74-75). I would also add to the list: quality planning and management; high level of urbanisation and the integration of indigenous knowledge into development discourse.

Other contributing factors included the huge foreign aid given to the NICs by the US between 1951 and 1965, the rapid expansion of world trade, strong state intervention in the market economy (protection), high tariff barriers, and their attitudes (culture) towards work (IFAD, 1992 : 11). In this context, Korten (1990 : 54) described the successes of the NICs as being 'equity-led' rather than 'export-led' oriented. Therefore, it would be erroneous to claim that the economic successes of the NICs were based purely on the market-oriented policies. Today, it is widely accepted that those who intend to replicate the story of the NICs need to note, not only on the issue of foreign aid and market policies, but also the issue of quality planning and management, state intervention, and indigenous knowledge.

In the 1990s however, it was clear that market-oriented policies did not provide development for the poor and the disadvantaged. This is because the primary objective of the neo-liberal market-oriented approach to development is on 'economic growth', rather than on social services. In other words, market oriented policies has no concern with what is being developed. Rather, it is more concern about 'getting the economy going1. There is now a great deal of evidence that very little trickle down ever occurs as the rich elite usually re-invests their economic surplus in luxury and unproductive sectors of the economy. Chambers (1983), for example, argued that even if the trickle-down effect did occur, it would only benefit very few people who usually associate themselves with the leaders. As a result, the gap between the 'rich' and the 'poor' keeps on widening. It is on this basis that market policies were perceived by many

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developing countries as reconstructing and perpetuating poverty, unemployment, and social inequalities. These policies further lead to the rise of insecurities, environmental degradation, and an increasingly unequal world. In this regard, the World Bank and the IMF were criticised not only for imposing their own interests on developing countries, but using their financial power to accomplish this mission as well. It could also mean that the market-approach alone will not solve the growing development problems experienced by developing countries. Consequently, a new pattern of development thinking has been calling for a more 'people-centred' development practice. Such a development approach emphasises the need to strengthen institutional and social capacity that require greater local control, accountability and transparency, initiatives, and self-reliance. This development approach was promoted by the NGOs (Drabet, 1987, Korten, 1987).

Although many Third World countries opposed the neo-liberal market policies for its lack of concern for the poor, there was a degree of acceptance that governments should do less in some areas in order to do better in others (Chambers, 1993 : 109). Evidence has shown that there are many development advisers, aid agencies, institutions, churches, etc. who still remain geared towards stimulating maximum possible rate of growth of business turnover, This could also mean that market forces would still appear as a possible path to development despite innumerable difficulties and setbacks.

2:5   Civil Society

The recent development discourse has tended to shift away from looking at development as an exclusively the domain of the state and the market by involving civil society,10 namely NGOs as a salient partner in the development process. The rise of civil society in the development process could be attributed to a number of debatable reasons (i) the failure and inability of the state and market forces to alleviate poverty, unemployment, and social inequality in both developed and Third World countries, (ii) the 'rolling back' of the state as the main provider and the mover of development as a result of the neo-liberal market policies, (iii) the rapid growth of world population which put more pressure on scarce resource, and (iv) the increasing amount of official

10 Civil society refers to other forms of social organisations that exist outside the formal political system and the corporate economy.

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aid given to NGOs. This implies that past attempts made by development theorists did not conceptualise the problem of poverty adequately in developing countries. In this context, development thinking in the 1980s shifted away from economic growth to 'sustainable' development and a 'people-centred participatory' approach. Furthermore, the 'people-centred' development approach has also called for redefining the goals

and strategies of development. Subsequently, the state and market forces tend to strengthen the role of the civil society (NGOs).

Korten (1990 : 96) stated that the role of NGOs in the development process is necessary because it meets the needs of the people, which have been neglected by the state and the market. This line of thinking was also advocated by the UNDP (1993b ; 5) where it sees NGOs as much more effective than governments in meeting human needs. Furthermore, the involvement of NGOs in the development assistance process is conceptualised as the outcome of the failure of institutional aid agencies and the national governments to "effectively promote development and raise the standard of the world's poor" (Drabek, 1987 : vii).

Although NGOs existed well before the 1940s, in both developed and Third World societies, the idea and application of NGOs as they are recognised today have a more recent history. In 1945 when the United Nations (UN) was formed, NGOs forced the Governments to make provision in the Charter for 'consultative' NGO status with UN's Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC). Although this was seen as a step forward, NGOs did not win any status beyond ECOSCO. In fact, NGOs were not given formal voice in the General Assembly or other bodies of the UN (Paul, 1996 : 3).

Over the years, NGOs have operated under a consultative status with various specialised agencies and funds of the UN. As the years went by, the number of NGOs has steadily grown and three types of organisations have emerged, those working on the environment, women's organisations and human rights advocacy bodies. These groups have been influential and still remain a strong presence at the global level (Paul,1996 ; 3).

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During the 1950s and 1960s the number of Western NGOs multiplied and their focus moved progressively into development activities. These development activities fitted well in the typical conventional development thinking, that helping poor communities to become more like Western societies through importing western ideas, technology, expertise and so on, As a result, the NGO community was almost exclusively a Western preserve; thereafter it has become increasingly a shared ground between the Western and Third World societies (Clark, 1991 : 34-35). In other words, the NGO sector in Third World societies was created by their Western 'counterparts'.

In the contemporary era, NGOs have also undergone a process of change in face and focus. Elliot (1978) for example, observed that NGOs could be viewed from three dimensions, the welfare approach, the developmental approach, and the empowerment approach. Likewise, Korten (1990 :115) regarded these stages as generations, "each moving further away from alleviating symptoms towards attacking ever more fundamental causes". These generations are relief and welfare, small-scale and self-reliant community or village development, sustainable systems development, and people's movements. An understanding of this evolutionary process of NGOs is important not only to conceive the role of NGOs in the 1990s, but more importantly to see whether the SIDT has followed the same trend or otherwise (see chapter 6), Here, I examined Korten's (1990 : 115-123) analysis of the four generations,

The first generation of NGOs mainly focussed on the direct delivery of goods and services to an immediate and visible need. This form of assistance is often referred to as 'humanitarian assistance'. The process involved provision of food, shelter and health care during natural disasters. Such a form of assistance emerged because of international voluntary action in helping victims of war and disaster relief to the poor. This form of assistance could be traced back to 1647, when the Irish Protestants sent food to assist settlers in America who were victims of wars with the Indians. Throughout the 17th and 18th centuries, British charities continued to provide assistance to missionaries and supported schools for Native Americans, and poor Whites. Here, religious institutions were seen as the main actor in this form of assistance. Classical examples of such NGOs were, the Red Cross, Oxfam, CARE, and the Catholic Relief (Clark, 1991, Smillie, 31

1995). The underlying assumption was that by providing short-term emergency relief efforts, the people assisted would be able to get themselves back on their feet in the fixture. As such, "the NGO is the doer, while the beneficiary is passive" (Korten, 1990 : 116).

The second generation of NGOs are those that emphasised developing the capacities of people to meet their needs through self-reliant and local action (Korten, 1990 : 118). These NGOs were usually based on community development approaches such as self-help village co-operative stores, water supply, and small-scale agricultural projects. The idea is to place stress on local self-reliance, with the intention that benefits will be sustained by community self-help action beyond the period of NGO assistance. Such a development approach very much resembles the ancient oriental proverb: "Give a man [woman] a fish and you feed him [her] for a day; teach him [her] to fish, and you feed him [her] for a life time" (cited in Korten, 1990 119).

This process was also seen as 'empowering' the community. Here, the basic assumption is that development problems lie exclusively in the individuals' lack of skills and physical strength. Therefore, these problems can only solved through the intervention of an outside body such as NGOs, which would assist communities to realise their potential through educational programmes, organisation, consciousness awareness, small funding, and the introduction of simple new technologies. As such, the role of NGOs was regarded as a 'mobiliser' rather than of a 'doer' (Korten, 1990 : 119). However, since NGOs are small, limited and often too fragmented to make any consequential or lasting impact on the lives of the people, this strategy often failed and built dependence instead of self-reliance.

The third generation of NGOs shifted beyond the individual community and sought changes in specific policies and institutions at the local, national and international levels, This approach also include building networks with other national and internationals NGOs in order to strengthen the functions of local NGOs to have control over their resources. This generation emerged due to continual growing frustration with the limitations of second generation strategies based on the realisation that: (i) the benefits generated by village interventions depend on a continued NGO presence and the availability of funds, (ii) NGOs are small and when operating on their own, it would be difficult for them to provide benefits to everyone other than a few

favoured local communities, and (Hi) self-reliant village development activities are likely to be sustained only if they are integrated into a supportive national development structure. Because of the general assumption that the existing structures tend to be hostile to, rather than supportive of, it is important that such structures be changed. Hence, the third generation approach was based on 'policy and institutional settings' (Korten, 1990 : 121).

The fourth generation of NGOs approach was based on transformations to an alternative development paradigm. Here, the emphasis was on a 'peopled-centred' development strategy (see chapter 3 for further discussion on this approach). They seek to move into what Nyamugasira (1998 ; 297) called a "faster lane" of positive and strategic social change by influencing attitudes, policies, and practices of the decision-makers at critical levels. Here, NGOs see part of their mission as being to represent the political concerns of the poor, by injecting the voice of the traditionally voiceless into the mainstream development. Their main focus is to make the world's political and economic institutions more broadly accountable in the development process. As such, NGOs can be characterised as a service organisation, which facilitate social transformation (Korten, 1990 : 127). These stages of NGO development implies that the contributions of NGOs to development is also subject to change, and thus needs to be re-examined.

The foregoing discussions examined how the state and the market approach development. It appears from the discussion that neither of two were seen as more effective in promoting development alone. This supports the call for the state, market forces and the NGO sector to work together in promoting rural development effectively.

In the next chapter, the discussion is specifically on the role of NGOs in development. It highlights both the advantages and disadvantages of NGOs, as they became involved in the rural development discourse. Some of these positive aspects of NGOs will be discussed further in Chapter 6 in the context of the Solomon Islands.

Chapter Three   NGOs and Development

Advocates of NGOs, claimed that it provides development that serves the interests of the people. Such assumptions were based on certain positive aspects of NGOs. These include five main areas: (i) NGOs and poverty alleviation, (ii) NGOs are cost-effective and efficient, (iii) NGOs and alternative development approach, (iv) NGOs are accountable and transparent, and (v) NGOs are flexible and free from other influences. This chapter therefore critically examines the position of NGOs in the development process as an attempt to identify whether NGOs are better placed to address 'development' more effectively and efficiently than the state and the market. In discussing the strengths and shortfalls of NGOs, it is hoped to generate a better understanding of the potential for NGOs to contribute to rural development.

3:1   NGOs and Poverty Alleviation

Today a growing number of Northern and Southern NGOs have intensified their advocacy work in an attempt to surmount the obstacles placed on their development efforts by the state and the socio-economic systems. In advocating the development efforts of such NGOs., many overseas aid donors are channelling their official aid to them (NGOs). In so doing, NGOs attempt to influence government policies and practices of the decision-makers at critical levels. Through their advocacy work, such NGOs 'have assumed the role of ambassadors for the world's poor (Clark, 1992 : 195). Here, these NGOs see part of their mission

as being to represent the political concerns of the poor and to inject the voice of the traditionally voiceless into national and international decision-making process.

It is widely believed that NGOs possess a number of characteristics, which give them a comparative advantage over the state and the market, whilst implementing projects and programmes aimed at addressing development needs of the poor. These positive aspects of NGOs in the development process were also acknowledged in the Human Development Report of 1990, as "enabling people to help themselves" and describes NGOs as being "small, flexible and cost effective" (UNDP, 1990 : 6). This is further evident as most of the literature found on NGOs has

acknowledged their contributions to development, and in particular, poverty alleviation[11]. The usual claim is that NGOs are 'cost effective' and 'good' at reaching and serving the needs of the poor. The Human Development Report of 1993 identified six main areas (addressing poverty, providing credit supports to the poor, reaching the poorest, empowering marginal groups, challenging gender discrimination, and providing emergency relief) in which NGOs are involved (UNDP, 1993b: 96-97). Four of these six areas focus directly on poverty alleviation. This explicitly shows the significance and high priority given to poverty among NGO activities. Furthermore, NGOs have also affirmed "a higher level of effectiveness in raising both the economic and the social status of the poor" (Robinson, 1992 ; 397). NGO staff usually work in difficult and remote areas, which are difficult to reach by government officials, (though this is not always the case) but where the country's most vulnerable people are living. In many cases, NGOs have a long history of providing welfare services to the poor people in places where the state or governments lacked the necessary resources to ensure universal coverage in basic health and education. In addition to education and health, NGOs also assist the poor in terms of subsidised loans, crops, cash benefits, employment, housing schemes, food and cloth, and other material benefits. As such, NGOs have been regarded as 'positive' in the sense that they complement and supplement the efforts of the state and the market in the development process. For example, in India, the Integrated Rural Development Programme (IRDP) was set up in 1978 to provide subsidised credit to the rural poor, to enable them to finance their small income generating projects and in the acquisition of the necessary materials for their projects (Robinson, 1992).

Another argument in support of NGOs was further highlighted by Clark (1991 : 53) where he pointed out that NGOs perform miracles by turning modest donations into hope for the hungry millions. He went on to argue that NGO officials make much greater sacrifices, and confront personal risks daily in the selfless service of the poor. This is because of the general assumption that NGO staff are highly committed to their jobs since they shared similar values and beliefs in the social change mission inherent in their work. As a result, NGO staff are prepared to work long hours for low pay (though this is not always the case). Also, NGO projects allow crops to grow abundantly where previously there was desert. Their relief supplies arrive on time,

11' Poverty alleviation refers to minimising the effects of poverty by helping the poor people in terms of food, cloth, shelter and other forms of financial support to improve their standard of living.

while the state or governmental emergency supplies remain tied up by 'red tap' or only benefit the well off. The NGO staff often talks in an everyday language, not the indigestible gobbledegook: of 'experts'. In other words, NGOs business is 'magic'.

Within the development process, however, some NGOs have come to realise that their contributions to rural development, in particular poverty alleviation is insufficient to secure lasting improvements in the lives of poor people. This is because NGOs are small, geographically fragmented, and only focussed on a few and small-scale projects which reach a relatively limited number of people. Furthermore, it is generally 'assumed' that the systems and structures that determine power and resource allocations, locally, nationally and globally still remain intact. These systems and structures therefore need to be changed. It is on the basis of a series of assumptions concerning the ability of NGOs to reach and benefit the poor through low-cost and effective interventions that arguments are made in favour of the needs for 'scaling-up' their impacts in order to benefit larger numbers of the poor (Edwards and Hulme, 1992; Sutherns, 1996). The idea of 'scaling-up' very much resembles what Clark (1991 : 39) referred to as 'muscling in'. This means that NGOs need to work together or network, in order to increase their impacts regionally, nationally or even internationally. To enhance their effectiveness at 'scaling-up' or advocacy, NGOs have moved away from their original objectives (relief and welfare) to one of shaping development policy (Korten, 1990). Here, some NGOs concentrate on awareness building, research, political empowerment, lobbying, and attempt to influence the policies of their governments that they assume obstruct and undermine any 'genuine'

development initiatives. It should be noted, however, that most NGOs are still relatively weak at advocacy and lack: the required expertise to match their capacities to deliver material assistance.

However, in the process of 'scaling-up' or advocacy, NGOs have been criticised globally for neglecting their initial task, and for becoming embroiled in politics. A good example was the battle between the SIDT and the Mamaloni Government over the Pavuvu island logging project in 1995 and tok baekshow radio program of the SIDT in 1997 (Roughan, 1998 : 7). As a result, the Prime Minister directed the General Manager of Solomon Islands Broadcasting Cooperation (SIBC) to temporarily suspend the tok baek show program in 1997. Additionally, NGOs have

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also been widely criticised for not addressing the real needs of the poorest of the poor, for undermining grassroots organisations, and for being top-down (Tendler, 1982, Robinson, 1992, Vivian 1994, Smillie, 1995). Through the process of 'scaling-up', there is a strong possibility that some NGOs will come to intervene with the work of smaller NGOs. This is particularly true when local NGOs affiliate with international NGOs and at the same time depend on them for financial support. Here, international NGOs becomes an extension of the local NGOs. In this context, overseas NGOs are likely to impose their views of development, their priorities and their bureaucratic requirements on the local NGOs, As such, local NGOs are likely to be 'pulled by the nose' and only work to sustain the interests of their overseas counterparts, rather than addressing local needs. A classical example is the YWCA in the Solomon Islands where they were often instructed by their overseas Head Office to put more emphasis on implementing the 'Women's Liberation Movement' (personal interview with YWCM staff), Another example of how overseas NGOs can manipulate their local counterparts was the recent UNICEF advertisement on February 9th, which called for applicants for the post of field officer from foreign nationals only residing in the Solomon Islands (Solomon Star, 03/03/99 : 1).

As pointed out above and in chapter two, NGOs have also moved away from their original objectives over the last decade. This means that the role of NGOs have also changed to some extent, Tendler (cited in Clark, 1991 : 54-55), for instance, observed that most NGOs tend to work with people who have some assets, some skills of farming, crafting, numerousy and literacy. Here, it was assumed that it would be relatively easy for NGOs to help increase the productivity of those assets and the applications of those skills, which in turn would stimulate development among the poor. In reality, however, seldom did this assumption materialised, since the middle class usually absorbed many of the benefits because they have access to those skills and knowledge, The real poor therefore, were often marginalised and neglected in the development process. In this respect, the argument that NGOs are 'good' at 'reaching' and 'helping' the poor could well be overstated and misleading. This could also mean that NGOs, whilst entering the communities, have preconceived ideas of who they should assist. A good example is the SIDT Women's Awareness Workshops in 1989, which catered only for churchwomen and local women leaders (SIDT, 1989b : 9). Therefore, the NGO rhetoric of

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working with the poorest of the poor could be seen as a polemical assertion and a patchy one too. As such the image of NGOs as the agent of the people, especially the poor, has gradually faded from the minds of many people.

Along the same line of argument, Tendler (1982) has pointed out that, NGO beneficiaries were usually in the middle and upper ranges of the income distribution brackets, rather than the poorest of the poor. In the same vein Robinson (1992 : 31), for example, argued that even if some benefits did trickle down to assist the poorest of the poor, the improvement in their economic status was usually small. He further stated that, NGO projects do not always benefit the real poor since they focus mostly on those who are easy to reach. For instance, in Fiji, Fernando (1996) observed that those NGOs who are involved in poverty alleviation programmes only concentrated on urban areas and their impacts are often transitory, The same is also true in the Solomon Islands where NGOs are more active around Honiara than in the provinces where approximately 80 percent of the population live.

The argument that NGOs represent the voice of the poor could be somewhat overstated and misleading. Nyamugasira (1998 : 300), for instance, stated that this is not basically true for three main reasons. Firstly, the poorest of the poor are, for a start, difficult to reach, despite NGO's claims to the opposite. In the same vein, Chambers (1993 : 28) has stated that:

They [poor] are typically unorganised, inarticulate, often sick, seasonally hungry, and quite frequently dependent on local patrons. They are less educated, less in contact with communications, less likely to use government services and less likely to visit outside their home area... They are relatively invisible,

especially the women and the children... Visitors could easily spend a week in a village without either seeing or speaking to the poor [due to their attitudes]...Visitors tend to see, meet, and interact with only the influential and better off rural people,

In most cases, poor people are often frustrated about their situations and always live with worries. They see themselves as unwanted people in society, thus often preferring to live by themselves and rarely interact with the rest of the community.

Secondly, most NGOs tend to be self-appointed, and neither consult, nor give feedback to the people they are serving. Sutherns (1996 ; 5), for example, stated that the poor people 'have no independent voice or authority over the NGOs in their midst'. In fact, NGOs rarely have constituencies that have mandated them as their representatives. Rather, most NGOs have always constructed their own abstract constituencies, which are dominated by global elite and create certain development issues purported to be those of the poor. In the process, NGOs are either consciously or unconsciously protecting their own interests and those of their kind. Therefore, the issue is not a question of Northern versus Southern NGOs, as is often portrayed, but rather, it is the 'poor' versus both.

Thirdly, in many situations, a majority of Southern NGOs emerged as a result of help from Northern NGOs. As such, they are expected to be accountable to their overseas counterparts (Northern NGOs), rather than to the local people they serve. In the same manner, NGOs are more concerned about their own survival and advancement, rather than the needs of the poor as they claim to serve and represented. For example, in situations where poor people still walk bare-foot, their purported NGO representatives will insist on the latest 4-wheel drive vehicles (baptised in the name of 'project vehicle') and so is explicitly biased to roads and urban areas (Nyamugasira, 1998 : 301). In this regard, NGOs could be accused not only of being patronising the poor, but for serving their own interests as well. Therefore, the argument that NGOs represent the authentic voice of the poor is merely a polemical assertion, born out of a few NGOs, which have been proclaimed publicly by their donors.

In short the poorest of the poor in general, and in particular women and children, continue to be disenfranchised, while NGOs (North and South) offer a poor imitation of their voice.

3:2   NGOs are Cost Effective and Efficient.

There is a pervasive assumption that NGO interventions are 'low-cost' by virtue of their small size, low over-heads and presumed effectiveness in terms of the benefits achieved. The smallness of NGOs also makes them easy to manage and co-ordinate their activities more effectively and

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efficiently. Moreover, most NGOs are controlled by people with respect and personal commitment, thus operating with a high standard of honesty and integrity. As a result of NGO staffs commitment to their job, they always search for funding to finance their projects and activities as well as being contracted by governments to carry out certain services such as health and poverty surveys on behalf of the state. For example, in 1986, The Solomon Islands Government used the SEDT to carry out a detailed survey on the damages caused by cyclone Namu (Roughan, 1990).

While it is true that NGO projects are often low-cost, there is little empirical evidence to substantiate this claim. The low-cost referred to here, was generally a reflection of their small-size and the limited number of activities NGOs are engaged in. However, in terms of service-provision, there is certainly evidence that NGOs are able to provide some services more cost-effectively than governments. For example, it is claimed that the Orangi Pilot Project in Pakistan developed sanitation systems at less than one-third of the equivalent cost in the commercial or government sector (Edwards and Hulme, 1995 ; 6). However, 'low-costs' could also mean 'poor' quality of services, which could not last for a longer period. A good example is the SIDT Village Demonstration Workers (VDWs) who only work for 14 days per annum in their respective regions. The outcome of their works is yet to be seen.

However, evidence from other studies contradicts the argument that NGO projects are low-cost, Tendler (1989), for instance, argued that there is no empirical study that demonstrates a general case that NGO provision is cheaper than public provision. Even where NGO service-provision is 'low-cost', it usually fails to reach the poorest of the poor, although it may still reach a wider cross-section of the population than government and commercial agencies (Edwards and Hulme, 1992 : 6). Along the same lines of thinking, Robinson (1992 :36) further claimed that even if NGO projects have an appreciable impact in improving the socio-economic status of the poor, many of their projects failed to reach the poorest and were of relatively marginal benefit to women. Most NGO practitioners often point to certain successful projects that have made a tremendous difference to the lives of the poor, but there is very little systematic evidence, which documents these claims. It should also be noted that NGOs cannot do certain things. For

example, NGOs do not build roads, wharves and bridges, The Government often does such projects. In that respect, you cannot ignore the state in the development process, As Chege (1999 : 2) puts it, "NGOs by themselves ... cannot effectively or efficiently develop countries". In that context, the argument that NGOs possess a comparative advantage over the state is weak and patchy.

The Human Development Report of 1990 also highlighted the importance of NGOs as being 'bottom-up1 and much more effective in the development process than the state. Such a philosophical assumption was also acknowledged in the 1993 Human Development Report, where it perceived NGOs as a 'major instrument for people participation' and a mechanism for rectifying the failures of the state and the market in the development process (UNDP, 1993a : 6). The underlying argument here is that NGOs are small and only concentrate on a few activities relating to the needs of the poor. These needs are identified through interaction between the poor people and NGO staff, and the fact that NGOs' physical base is usually close to the concentration of poverty areas. Because of this close interaction, NGOs are not only likely to be trusted by the poor, but more importantly, their work is regarded as being 'bottom-up' or having a people-centred orientation. The idea of 'people-centred' is usually equated with the 'participatory' development approach. Such a development approach came about as a result of the rise of 'alternative' theories of development, which called for 'participatory sustainable development'. Unlike the delivery approach,12 which considered the poor as passive objects who are not creative and innovative, helpless people who required assistance, the 'people-centred' approach sees the poor as active subjects in the development process.

3:3   NGOs Promote an Alternative Development Approach

The idea of an 'alternative1 development approach has been associated with NGOs in their recent involvement in the development process, Here, it was asserted that the kind of development approach, which has been promoted and practised by the modernisation development theory, did not cater for the well being of the most disadvantaged. This is simply because such a model was

The delivery approach is Where assistance in terms of capital is directly delivered 1o the people by the state and NGOs in order to solve their problems. This development approach was supported by the modernisation theory and is usually top-down oriented,

based on foreign cultures, ideas and beliefs, top-down and with a growth-centred orientation. Furthermore, evidence has shown that economic growth based on 'growth-centred' was not an effective approach to solve the needs of the poor. It is within this context, that a series of searches for 'alternative' approaches to development has emerged, from developing societies. These alternatives must ensure substantial increases in productive output, to meet the needs of the poor and the growing world population. Such approaches must be both consistent with the basic principles of 'participation', 'equity' and 'sustainable'. These aspects of 'alternative' development approaches have been promoted by NGOs. This raises the question of, in what ways is the alternative development approach distinguishable from mainstream development, as a roving criticism, or a development style? Increasingly, the claim is that alternative development represents an 'alternative development paradigm' But what exactly is an 'alternative development paradigm?

There are many ways of conceptualising what 'alternative' development is about and what its role is. However, in most cases, the idea of 'alternative' development is that of development from below. In this context, 'below' refers to both 'community' and 'NGOs'. As such, 'alternative' development approaches are frequently identified with development-by-NGOs. In other words, NGOs are the only organisation that practice and promote 'alternative' development.

Here, alternative development is used to refer to another way of achieving development, despite sharing the same goals as mainstream development, but using different means such as 'participation' or 'people-centred' and 'sustainability'. The idea, of'people-centred' development approach is based on 'good' intentions, which sees 'participatory' development approaches as an essential component to the success of projects and programmes. Cohen and Uphoff (cited in Burkey, 1993 : 56) further observed that local participation in the decision-making process during project implementation stage was crucial for project success. A good example is the Heukesia clinic project in South Malaita, Solomon Islands where local participation started from the initial stage of the project until the implementation stage (Hou, 1998a : 10).

Based on the above assumption, the idea is to return control over resources to the people and their communities, to be used in meeting their own needs and aspirations. This development strategy would not only create incentives for the those who own the resources, but also 'empowers' them to make better

decisions on how to use these resources. People-centred approaches further seek to broaden political participation, building from a base of strong people's organisations and participatory local leaderships. Here, Korten (1990 : 218-219) observed that "people-centred approach builds from the values and culture of the people". Political and economic democracy therefore becomes the cornerstones of such a process. Korten further stressed that this development strategy also calls for active mutual self-help among the people, and encourages them to work together in their struggle to solve their common problems. It further seeks to build within people a sense of their own humanity and their links to the earth, its resources, and the natural process through which it sustain all life (Korten, 1990 : 219). In other words, people becomes the 'centre' of their striving to achieve 'development'.

The basic argument is that NGOs promote a development vision that embraces the transformation agenda. According to Korten (1990 : 4-5), the transformation agenda underlines three basic principles which forms the basis of authentic development. Firstly, justice in the sense that people should have all the necessary means and the opportunity to produce a minimum decent livelihood for themselves and their families. This development strategy strongly opposes the rights of one person to accumulate wealth through exploitation of the resources upon which other people's livelihoods depend. Secondly, sustainability that promotes the use of resources not only for the benefit of the present generation but should also ensure that future generations will still benefit from the same resources. And, finally, inclusiveness that called for everyone to contribute positively to the overall well-being of their society, which simultaneously must be recognised and respected for such contributions

However, given the wide variety of NGOs, the equation 'alternative development is what NGOs do' would obviously not be adequate. This implies that alternative development is still subject to a wider debate. Therefore, the argument that development must be undertaken from within and geared to basic needs as an adequate way of redefining development is not only a

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polemical assertion, but a patchy one too. The alternative development referred to here, is an alternative in relation to the state and the market, (which represent mainstream development), but not necessarily in relation to the general discourse of 'developmentalism'. Therefore, it would be difficult to maintain that alternative development has developed a theory or a paradigm, despite Hettne (1990), among others, who have tried to make such a case, arguing that it represents a counterpoint to mainstream development13. Furthermore, the alternative approaches suggest more than it can deliver. According to the 1975 report of the Dag Hammarskjold Foundation, 'We Now? Another Development', argues that development should be; "geared to the satisfaction of needs", endogenous and self-reliant' and 'in harmony with the environment'. Whether this was meant to be an alternative practice of development apart from the mainstream development, or whether it was also to change mainstream development was not really settled. This approach has been carried further both under the heading of basic needs' and of 'alternative' development (Pieterse, 1998 : 346).

Despite the above attempts, there is no explicit boundary established between 'mainstream' and "alternative' development. As Pieterse (1998 : 349) puts it, "alternatives are co-opted and yesterday's alternatives are today's institutions". Hence, the difference between mainstream and alternative development, then, is just a conjunctual difference, rather than a difference in principle, although it tends to be represented as such. In itself, 'alternative' has no more meaning than 'new' in advertising. As Vattimo (1988) puts it "alternative development replicates 'the value of the new,' which is a pathos intrinsic to modernity", In the final analysis therefore, alternative development does not provide a new development model, but rather seeks to redefine and reconstruct the 'strategies' and the 'goals' of development. Therefore, the elements of alternative development mentioned by Hettne (1990) are no longer distinctive; basic needs, empowerment, participation, and sustainability have long been adopted in mainstream development. Alternative development is therefore, viewed as a roving critique of mainstream development, rather than as an alternative development paradigm. In many cases, the question of the status and scope of alternative development still remains unsettled.

13 Mainstream development here refers to the kind of development practice promoted by the modernisation theoiy which is based on 'growth-centred* oriented raid measured by means of GNP,

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The argument that the 'alternative' development model represents people's participation in the development process can also be subjected to a wider debate. Tendler (cited in Clark, 1992 : 58) for example has pointed out that there is confusion among the NGOs over the term's 'participation' and 'decentralisation'. She further stated that most decision-making is decentralised rather than 'participatory' or 'people-centred' as often

claimed by the NGOs. This is because NGO officials, and a few local elite, such as headmen, predominantly do decision-making. Also, most NGO activities have already been planned and designed in their office before being delivered to the people in the assumption that they are in their best interests. In the same vein, Edwards and Hulme (1995), further observed that at the beginning of a project, NGO staff often construct a framework of 'control' for potential 'participants' which clearly demarcate where to participate, and the kinds of participation that is expected of the communities.

This line of thinking was also articulated by Connell (1997 : 249), where he claimed that 'participation' or 'people-centred' development approaches involves more than simply going to the communities and asking them what they want and then providing it, regardless of the likely consequences or the prospects for success. Rather, it should be "about the sharing of knowledge and the transformation of the process of learning itself in the service of people's self-development" (Connell, 1997 : 249). Such a view was also articulated by Burkey (1993 : 57), where he stated that participation should ensure that poor people are aware of their situations, their problems and causes, and the development of their initiatives, self-confidence, creativity, pride and responsibility. Here, I go further to argue that 'participatory' development approaches require full participation at all levels in whatever activity is being undertaken. This type of `participation' means everyone should be treated equally in the development process regardless of his or her status, gender and race. Through the participation process, people are given value, respect and power, which hi turn will enhance their status, moral, confidence, and dignity within the community. However, in many cases NGO projects tend to be more 'managed' than `participatory'. As such, the balance of control usually ends up within the organisations, which are managing the project.

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In many situations, only certain elements of the participatory approach are represented in the development process. Also, only few local elite have been involved. However, their participation is largely restricted to the subservient role of primary labour, thus becoming very skilful at performing menial tasks (Gegeo, 1997 : 29). Therefore, the presence of a few people in the participatory process and the kind of participation involved are often misconstructed to represent the 'participatory' or 'people-centred' development approaches. Participation therefore, remains a valued concept and is often over emphasised.

In the midst of the development process, NGOs have become heavily dependent on foreign assistance and at the same time make their voices heard more loudly through "scaling-up" and 'advocacy'. Here, it is expected that NGOs would run the risk of being over 'hooked' on the agendas of others, such that their neutral position can be eroded. Jan Pronk (cited in Edwards and Hulme, 1995 : 5) warned that the`corruption' of NGOs would be the political game in the years ahead. Pronk saw 'corruption' not simply in terms of financial scandal, but more broadly as the deviation of NGOs from their mission of social transformation, Therefore, the only hope for NGOs to avoid 'corruption'in this context is to develop systems of performance monitoring; accountability and transparency.

3:4   NGOs are Accountable and Transparent

The idea of accountability and transparency has become dominant in the literature of NGOs in the last decade. As such, it has been widely acknowledged that NGOs are good at 'accountability' and 'transparency' compared to government bodies. The basic assumption is that 'accountability' and 'transparency' are often perceived as crucial elements for the successes of development projects and programs. As Edwards and Hulme (1995 : 9) have pointed out, strong accountability systems can help NGOs to take advantage of the opportunities offered under the 'New Policy Agenda5 (refer to Chapter 1) that catered for more funds to be given to NGOs. Performing effectively and accounting transparency are crucial elements of responsible practice, on which the legitimacy of development intervention ultimately depends. In other words, the absence of accountability is likely to affect the progress of any given organisation. Here, Tandon (cited in

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Edwards and Hulme,1995 : 47-48) further stressed that accountability underlines three basic principles. Firstly, accountability helps NGOs to clearly define their 'mission' and strategies to achieve such a 'mission'. Secondly, accountability is likely to stimulate 'good' performance in relation to that mission. It would help to indicate 'good' performance both in terms of process and outcomes, and is essential to generate feed back to the concerned institutions such as donors. And finally, accountability would ensure that NGO's role as an 'actor' in the civil society should be seen as being a good civic organisation in the development process.

Accountability and transparency are often used interchangeably by many NGOs despite the fact that both have different meanings. The term accountability, according to Edwards and Hulme (1995 : 12), is defined as "a criteria used to check institutions ...[in order to identify] whether they use their resources 'effectively',

'efficiently' and 'prudently1 to achieve reasonable progress towards worthwhile development objectives". It is a process where individuals and organisations are expected to report their daily activities to a recognised authority or authorities for the purpose of judgement. The idea of accountability is to produce a clear statement of goals, which emphasises honest reporting of what resources have been used, and what has been achieved or otherwise... This process could also be seen as an 'appraisal' system for which the responsible authority could judge a given institution or individuals whether their results are satisfactory or otherwise. Here, it is assumed that submitting annual reports to their respective authorities is regarded as being 'responsible' and 'answerable' by the organisation.

Transparency, on the other hand, simply means, to make things 'visible' and 'clear', for the public to see what is going on in the organisation. Often most NGOs advocated this definition, claiming that they do not hide what they are doing from the public, in comparison to government bodies. However, in this context, transparency is used not only to mean 'making things visible' but rather, it is about being 'honest', 'trustworthy' and 'free from deceit'. The basic assumption is that being 'responsible' and open to disclose any information about the organisation would lead to 'honesty', thus resulting in 'efficiency' and 'effectiveness'. It is because of this link that NGOs always use 'accountability' and 'transparency' together in the development process. Furthermore, NGOs have claimed that they have multiple accountabilities;

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'downwards' to their partners, beneficiaries, staff, and supporters, and 'upwards' to their trustees, donors, and host government. It is within this context, that NGOs have been proclaimed as being more 'transparent' than the Government.

The claim that NGOs are seen as much more accountable and transparent than the Government is still subject to a wider debate. Edwards and Hulme (1995 : 13 for instance, have pointed out that the emphasis put on NGOs to be accountable is not 'accountability' but rather seen as 'accountancy' and 'auditing' rather than 'learning'. Here, I go further to argue that accountability is nothing more than a criteria used by the NGOs to impress their donors to be confident in order to attract more funding in the future. Along the same line, it could also be seen as another way to impress the public that NGOs are doing 'a good job' compared to the government. However, this is not always the case as some government departments may also be accountable and transparent. It should also be noted that, NGOs themselves are not above corruption, let alone accountability and transparency. Accountability does not challenge the effectiveness of NGO projects, which are supported by overseas donors. Rather, it only seeks to find out whether the funds go to where they are supposed to go. This could also mean that NGOs must spend their budget for the purpose in which their financiers intend. In that sense, accountability is often seen as indirectly dictating to NGOs what they should do with the money given to them. The process takes away the constitutional rights of NGOs to decide on which projects to fund and where to distribute their funds. Therefore, accountability is like what Smillie (1995) called "a control function", rather than focusing on learning and sharing information in relation to NGOs evaluation procedures. It seems that the main emphasis of NGO accountability is to do with 'money' rather than how their development activities have been successful or otherwise. In other words, NGOs are 'good' at keeping records to show how well they spend their money in order to protect their donors and themselves rather than the recipients. In so doing, it could be argued the disadvantaged are often used by NGOs as their source to attract funding from overseas donors.

The argument that NGOs possess multiple accountability seemed to be overstated and misleading as well. As Edwards and Hulme (1995 : 9) observed, NGOs face problems with

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multiple accountabilities in the sense that they are expected to report to many authorities. As such, the tendency for NGOs to be 'over accounted' cannot be ruled out in the process of reporting, This could also mean that the chance for NGOs to produce inaccurate information cannot be ruled out in the process of collecting data. This is because most of NGO officials only collect information from their field workers at the semi-urban centres, on the assumption that they have been with the poor people in the remote areas. The so-called 'NGO experts' do not even have the opportunity to visit the poor people in the remote areas, despite claiming that they represent the voice of the poor people. In that situation, NGOs are there to generate employment for just a few people while maintaining the interests of their overseas counter-parts (donors and supporters). Along the same thinking, NGOs can also 'under account' as each responsible authority assumes that another authority is taking a close look at their actions and results. Consequently, NGOs are only accountable to their donors despite the claim that they possess 'multiple accountabilities'. In the process, NGOs tend to forget about their recipients, whether they are satisfied with their development activities or not.

The argument that accountability leads to 'honesty' seems to be misleading and an over simplification. Here, it is assumed that accountability is the only strategy to bring about 'honesty'. As a result, it tends to equate 'accountability' with 'quality of leadership, planning and management and development'. In other words, accountability does not necessarily lead to 'honesty' let alone 'efficiency' and 'effectiveness'. The issue of accountability and transparency also leads to the question of NGOs integrity.

3:5   NGOs are Flexible and Free From Internal and External Influences

Much has been acknowledged about the role of NGOs in development, in the sense that they are flexible and free from both internal and external influences. Smillie (1995 : 59) observed that "NGOs are less subject to the straitjacket of development orthodoxy than are official aid agencies and governments". At the same time, it is widely acknowledged that NGOs are flexible, innovative and creative in their work. This means their staff normally have greater flexibility to experiment, adapt and attempt new approaches and ideas. This is partly because the numbers

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involved in decision making are smaller, and the general belief of 'volunteerism' that is associated with NGOs. As a result, many NGO staff are encouraged to develop their own ideas. For example, the pioneering work of the Kaira District Dairy Co-operatives in the 1960s (Gujarat State, India), which placed a particular emphasis on women and the lawessness has grown into the Indian-wide White Revolution Programme. Likewise, the provision of credit schemes for the poor, primary health care, and functional literacy found in many developing societies are clear examples of how innovative and creative NGOs are (Clark, 1991 : 59).

In such situations, NGOs are often displayed as what Clark (1991 : 59) referred to as "a seeding role" by showing the efficacy of a new idea, publicising it, and perhaps persuading the responsible authority (government) to take notice of.

The argument that NGOs are free from external influences, needs to be clearly demonstrated. It needs to be stressed that many NGOs are fragile and tend to depend excessively on external donors, making them at times vulnerable to manipulation. In many cases, donor's funding schemes are based on projects with clear and specific criteria attached to them. As such, NGOs who intend to seek funding from these foreign donors are obliged to observe these preconditions before they can qualify for funding. For example, Green Peace is likely to fund any project that deals with environmental conversation than general projects such as water supply. Here, Clark (1991 : 64) further observed that donor funding often goes to NGOs who confirm to the models and priorities designed by them (donors). A classical example is NGOs in Ghana, under the Programme of Action to Mitigate the Social Costs of Adjustments they were 'controlled' by their donors (Clark, 1991 : 64). This process implies that donors are indirectly dictating to NGOs about which projects they want to fund regardless of whether such projects reflect the needs of the poor people or otherwise.

Chege (1999 : 3), for example, observed that in Kenya alone, an average of 240 new NGOs are being formed each year, competing for $1.2 billion in annual donor funding. This has led to a number of NGOs operate as' pocket NGOs' or 'briefcase NGOs' without known offices. Along the same line, others function as family business concerns, largely employing members of the same family. In short, NGOs are often set up to meet donor needs and programmes, a clear indication that they (NGOs) are not absolutely free from

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external influences. Moreover, this process often undermined the sovereignty of local NGOs to decide what projects should be funded and where the funds should go to. In this respect, NGOs are only working to ensure they survive and at the same time maintain the interests of their donors.

However, as NGOs become more involved in large-scale service-provision and depend heavily on foreign assistance, their flexibility, commitment and ability to be creative and innovative has gradually been eroded. The notion of commitment can be a double-edge shibboleth for two basic reasons. Firstly, it is often difficult to persuade NGO staff who have been working with the poor in the remote areas to follow approaches and procedures agreed centrally by their organisations since they prefer to receive their work signals from poor people in the communities-poor people often do things for themselves. Secondly, committed staff also tends to have strong views of their own which they are willing to share and express. However, the problems come about when NGOs affiliates with other NGOs or increases its size. This is simply because once the organisation is bigger, participation becomes more problematic. Decision-making becomes complex, and there is a strong tendency to become more 'top-down'. This would mitigate against some individual staff expressing their own ideas. Consequently, the organisation will be at risk of loosing the cohesiveness, self-respect, autonomy and flexibility, which they previously enjoyed. In that respect, staff will be frustrated, which in turn will affect their work performances, and eventually lead to the loss of

staff members.

In the foregoing discussions, I have attempted to show that the effectiveness of NGOs in contributing to rural development has been subject to a contentious debate. This is because of the general assumption that NGOs are effective in the development process has been widely exaggerated. Evidence from the above discussions also indicated that NGO activities do not necessarily reach the poorest people. Therefore, the assumption that NGOs provide alternative development, which is more effective than the state and the market is merely political propaganda, born out of the success of a few NGOs, which have been proclaimed publicly by their donors. It needs to be noted that many overseas donors preferred to channel their financial supports through NGOs because they are not government, and therefore are not subject to the

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normal checks and balances of diplomacy, and rational bureaucracy. The discussion, however, has also acknowledged NGOs as 'good' at identifying the needs of the poor people and awareness-building. However, since NGOs are weak, due to lack of financial resources, and are small and scattered, and lack capable human resources to implement their programmes successfully, their contribution to rural development therefore, remains limited and often transitory. This does not necessarily mean that NGOs perform less effectively than other organisations (public or private) in their respective activities. Rather, NGOs often perform less well than their popular image suggests. In other words, NGOs are not always 'magic'. This supports the argument the NGO sector alone cannot promote rural development effectively and efficiently without the state and market forces. Given the current conventional development practice, what is needed, is a complementary role to be established between the NGO sector, the state and market forces in order to effectively address the needs of the poor people in the development process. For this, NGO philosophy has to change. This new development approach to capacity building must be holistic, guided and rooted in the indigenous knowledge and the way of life of the people.

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Chapter Four NGOs and Development in the South Pacific

Much of the arguments, which enhanced the image of NGOs in development, were discussed in the preceding chapter. One of these arguments is that NGOs promote development from 'below'. This assumed them to fit in well with the traditional ethos of participation in many Pacific island communities, hence a minimum conflict would occur.

This chapter provides a brief overview of the role of NGOs in development in the South Pacific. This gives an idea of the kinds of work undertaken by NGOs in the region. It also highlights some of the problems faced by the NGO sector in the region and their relationship with the governments. Such an understanding is important because it enables us to see whether the SIDT in the Solomon Islands is also doing similar kinds of work.

4: 1 NGOs Development Activities in the Region

In the South Pacific, a significant number of NGOs were supported by religious organisations. They linked-up with community groups or worked within the existing socio-political organisations to implement local projects. This set the understanding of NGOs as formal organisations responsible for community development alongside the state. This was based on the pre-assumption that NGOs would bring in new resources such as money to assist the disadvantaged in the host country. In the same vein, such NGOs would also work on projects locally whilst waiting for natural disasters. As such, the increasing number of NGOs in the region can be seen as a response to the opportunities arising from the inadequate service-delivery efforts of the state and market forces. Based on such assumption, a number of overseas NGOs such as the Red Cross, Boy Scouts, YWCA, and Girl Guides have existed in the region for a period of time. These NGOs were also welcomed by both the colonial administration and the newly created independent governments.

Following the proliferation of NGOs in the region, church-based organisations have also expanded their activities in response to new development aspirations such as skill training, youth

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and sports development and nutrition. In the same vein, branches of overseas NGOs as well as local ones, provide their services to cater for new development needs such as women in development, support for the disabled, youth and sports, job creation and awareness-building of the effects of development on the environment. Table 2 (refer below) gives the general development activities carried out by non-governmental organisations in the Pacific region. It also indicates that many NGOs concentrate on education and youth and sports development, which accounted for 18 % of 1,012 NGOs in the region. However, only 2% of 1,012 NGOs provide credit facilities. This shows that many NGOs in the South

Pacific are still in the charity or handout phase. Many NGOs in the remote areas often function only when government services are inadequate, if not totally absent. However, it is only recently that branches of local NGOs are pushing for a wider participation in the socio-political dimension of development in some Pacific Island countries (third generations of NGOs). Classical examples of such NGOs are the SIDT in the Solomon Islands and Vanuatu's Nasional Komuniti Development Trust in Vanuatu (Roughan, 1994 : 145).

Table 2; NGO Development Activities in the South Pacific

NGO Development Activities	Percentage
, Education, including pre-school, non-formal education and technical skills training,	18
, Youth and sport development	18
. Community development	16
. Energy, housing for the poor, training on religious and family life, marital counselling, women's right and fund-raising for the poor	10
. Food production and environment	9
, Enterprise development and support to co-operatives	8
. Health and family planning	8
. Services for disabled people, the sick, elderly and terminally ill	7
, Energy relief Supplies	4
. Credit provision	2

Source: UNDP, 1994 : 53

There are about 1,012 NGOs and community groups, associations and organisations active throughout the region. A substantial number of these are church-based organisations. Interestingly, almost 50% of 1,012 NGOs in the region are women's organisations and groups. According to the South Pacific Commission (SPC), while most are engaged in activities like

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gardening, weaving, managing families, sewing, fund-raising for churches, schools and a substantial number of women's groups have recently focussed on environment, violenceagainst women and wider socio-political participation. This shows the rapid emerging concerns of Pacific women (UNDP, 1994 : 53). Such a move is in line with Korten's classifications of NGOs as described in chapter two (sections 2:5). According to Korten's classification, NGOs are moving away from their initial role of relief supply and community development to one of shaping development policy, NGOs in the region are also well organised. To co-ordinate the work of NGOs in the region, the Pacific Islands Associations of NGOs (PIANGO) was set up in 1991 with funding from UNDP. Basically the primary role of PIANGO is to co-ordinate and facilitates training and joint activities amongst NGOs throughout a network of national focal points.

4:2   NGOs and the Government

The inability of many governments to deliver sufficient services to the rural areas in the Pacific is well established. Accordingly, in some Pacific island countries, NGOs and community-based organisations have had notable successes in both mobilising community participation and delivering services. In Fiji, for instance, the government, NGOs and local communities have well-established collaborative relationships in operating the educational system. Here, the central government provides for the training and salaries of teachers who are hired under civil service rules and assigned to both community and government-run schools. In addition to that, local communities and NGOs manage 76% of 334 primary schools, 51% of secondary schools and 59% of technical and vocational schools. The central Government also provided financial support to schools through a grant-in-aid scheme (UNDP, 1994 : 58).

Within the development process, the Government and NGOs are seen as vehicles for
 linking up with communities. In the process, however, they represent intrusions into local culture, with its own unique values and norms, belief systems and traditional practices that have been formed and nurtured through years of contending with both the forces of nature and human-made conflicts. As such, Pacific island countries valued their cultures highly. This is evidenced in their
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national development plans, which reflect the need to preserve cultural integrity despite the frenetic race to achieve progressive changes in their way of life.

The argument for the integration of traditional systems in the development discourse is also a growing concern of many Pacific island countries. Such an idea was probably based on the realisation that local communities themselves have a lot to contribute in terms of traditional knowledge, indigenous technologies and organisational know-how. It is assumed that utilising local knowledge and building on their organisations will help ensure the success and sustainability of development activities at the community level. In Samoa, for instance, the Village Women's Committees have organised into two traditional subgroups, which perform an outstanding role as participatory structures for varied development concerns. Here, women are organised to support activities in the health sector such as weighing babies, feeding malnourished children, and providing health education. In so doing, not only are the unique features of Samoan culture maintained, but also it facilitates the development roles for village women as well (UNDP, 1994 ; 60). Likewise, in the Marshall Islands, the central Government contracts out services to the NGO sector. Here, the Youth to Youth in Health organisation became very active in responding to a broad range of needs and supports including gardening, income generating projects and cultural programmes (UNDP, 1994 : 61).

4:3   Development Problems Amongst NGOs in the Pacific

Although, in some Pacific island countries, NGOs have been praised for their achievements in many areas of development work, such successes, however, are limited and do not necessarily reach, the poorest of the poor. In many cases, NGOs do not have the funds and required staffing, and the management skills to carry out their work effectively and efficiently at the rural level. This means that there is much still to. be done. For further progress, this requires a significant shift in the attitudes and practices of government departments in most Pacific island countries, In the same manner, NGOs also requires changes in their practices, In other words, the government and NGOs should work together to define their respective responsibilities more clearly. Critiques also point out that although NGOs can reach more remote villages and be effective in raising

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consciousness towards change, they still lack the resources to provide support for local programmes and projects, They will need to be supported with the required resources. In many Pacific island countries, the attitudes of being passive recipients of services have been influenced by traditional cultural norms. This is evident as both the Government and NGOs continues to approach development from the 'top-down'. Furthermore, the lack of skills in promoting self-help projects sustainability also exists among the NGO sector. Consequently, numerous projects funded by overseas donors have failed to survive once funding ceased. This supports the argument that that NGOs do not have sufficient resources to continue working on community projects after overseas donor funding ceases. In short, NGOs cannot promote rural development effectively without support from the state and market forces.

There are also inherent differences between the Government and NGOs, which often make it difficult to establish ongoing working relationship. This is not surprising because as NGOs 'scale-up' their interventions, they are often involved in the socio-political dimension of development, As NGOs tend to compete with the state in the development process, conflicts sometimes arises among the two parties. This also affects the progress of their activities among the poorest of the poor.

In short, NGOs in the South Pacific are still heavily dependent on overseas donors to carry out their activities. Most of the Pacific NGOs are still in the charity or handout phase. However, today in some countries, a number of local NGOs have been branching out to become involve in the socio-political and environmental aspects of the development issue. One of these local NGOs is the SIDT in the Solomon Islands. This particular NGO will be examined in detail in Chapter 6.

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Five   Rural Development in the Solomon, Islands

This chapter is a discussion of rural development in the Solomon Islands. It examines, in particular, the evolution of rural development and development issues affecting the country. Here, a brief history of the Solomon Islands is discussed as important background to the rise of decentralisation and rural development in the country. Along the same line, a discussion on the development problems affecting rural development activities is crucial in the sense that it will enable us to identify whether the SIDT has been addressing these issues or not. The outcome of the work of the SIDT will then be assessed to determine to what extent the SIDT has been contributing towards rural development.

5:1   A Brief History of the Solomon Islands

The history of the Solomon Islands14 begins with the arrival of the ancestors of the indigenous Melanesians and Polynesians who first inhabited these islands. According to archaeological evidence, the first wave of migrants (Papuan Speakers) who became the ancestors of the Melanesian, came from Southeast Asia some 5,000 years ago. This groups of people were dark skin-coloured, who occupied the Western part of the Solomon Islands. They were horticulturists. The second wave of migrants (Austronesians) were fair skin-coloured people who came and occupied the islands of Malaka, Makira, Isabel, Guadalcanal, Central and the Eastern part of the Solomon Islands. Like the first group, they were also horticulturists. The last group of migrants came about 3,000 years ago and were the ancestors of the Polynesians. This group of people settled on atoll islands such as Ontong Java and Sikaiana. They were often referred to as 'Polynesians Out-lets' in the sense that they were located outside the boundary of the main Polynesians countries in the South Pacific (Bellwood, 1980 ; 174-185).

In 1568, the first group of Europeans to set foot on these islands was Alvaro de Mendana and his crewmembers. Alvaro de Mendana, who was a Spanish explorer, called these islands after

14 The Solomon Islands is an independent nation and consists of six main islands (Malnita, Guadalcanal, Makira, Isabel, New Georgia, and Choiseul) and more than 100 smaller ones. It is located in the South Pacific region between 5 and 12 degrees south latitude and 155 and 170 degrees east longitude, with a land mass of approximately 28,000 km2 (refer Map 1).

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the Biblical King Solomon; 'Solomon Islands'. He also sighted other islands and gave names to them (eg. Malaita and San Cristobal, or Makira). During the later part of the eighteen-century, other European explorers such as Carteret (1767), Bouganville (1768), Surville (1769), La Perous and Shortland (1788) came sailing around these islands. Some of them sighted new islands and gave names to them. For example, Shortland sighted Shortland Islands in 1788 and called it 'Shortlands' (Fox, 1967 : 5), Here, very little impacts were made with the indigenous people since these explorers did not intend to reside on these islands.

In 1845 the first group of Roman Catholic Missionaries, under the leadership of Bishop Epalle landed on Makira and tried to establish a mission station there. Their efforts however, did not succeed, not only due to a number of the missionaries being killed by the indigenous islanders, but also the climate was not suitable for them to survive. Subsequently, other groups of missionaries came to the Solomon Islands. These groups include the Anglicans Missionaries who came in 1847 under the command of Bishop Selwyn and the South Seas Evangelical Church (SSES) Missionaries in 1886 under the leadership of Florence Young. Gradually, the impacts of the missionaries started to be known as they involved the indigenous people in formal education. The Roman Catholic missionaries later returned in 1898 while the Methodists came in 1902 and the Seven-Day Adventists (SDA) in 1914. Much of their activities were based on education and health services in an attempt to pacify the indigenous people (Fox, 1967, Laracy, 1979, Bennett, 1987), In fact, the missionaries were responsible for peace among the Solomon Islanders and others, as well as pioneering to formal education, health services and Christianity. Their contributions to rural development in the Solomon Islands was significant,

Among other reasons, political rivalry between European powers for new territories, labour traffic in the South Pacific, and the continuos pressure from the missionaries now established in the Solomon Islands, drew Britain into declaring a British Protectorate over New Georgia and the southern part of the Solomon Islands (Guadalcanal, Malaita, Makira [formerly known as San Cristobal], and Savo) in 1893. Later in 1898 and 1899, Santa Cruz islands, including Utupua, Tikopia, Vanikoro, Anuta, Sikaiana, Rennell and Bellona were added to the Protectorate. However, the northern part of the Solomon Islands (Choiseul and Shortland

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Islands) Ontong Java and Isabel, which were formerly administered by Germany, were later added onto the protectorate in 1900, as a result of a treaty arrangement with Germany and in exchange for Britain's withdrawal from Western Samoa (Fox, 1967, UNDPA.,1978, Bennett, 1987 ; 193, Mamaloni, 1992).

During the first half of the British colonial administration, the notion of a rural development strategy was almost completely absent from their economic policies. This was because the Solomon Islands was taken in as the proviso, which they would pay for their own day-to-day administration costs. Therefore the idea to 'develop' the country economically was not their first priority. It is within this context, that there was no attempt to include Solomon Islanders in the development process in order to improve their standard of living or well being. Consequently, Woodford, who was the first Resident Commissioner, had to find ways to raise revenue to meet its own operational costs. Here, the best solution was the development of plantations. As such, Woodford and other Europeans (the colonial administrators, plantation owners,

traders, beachcombers and the missionaries) decided to establish several agricultural plantations in the country. Classical examples of these projects were Ruaniua, Rere, Visale, Yandina, Domma, Mamara, Hamilton on Choiseul and Lungga coconut plantations (Fox, 1967, Bennett, 1987).

Following the Declaration of a Protectorate in 1893, the British administrators assumed full political and economic control over all commercial activities in the country. In so doing, the British colonial administrators demarcated the Solomon Islands into four main districts: Western, Central, Malaita, and Eastern. Each of these districts was administered by a District Officer (Mamaloni, 1992 : 14). In the same manner, to ensure more Solomon Islanders worked on the plantations, a head tax policy was introduced by the colonial government in 1921 and placed on males between the age of sixteen to thirty. The motive behind this head tax policy was based on three basic reasons. Firstly, the colonial administration suffered chronic revenue problems. Secondly, taxation would act as an incentive to recruitment to the plantations, and finally, taxation would force 'development' on the islanders (Laracy, 1983 : 12, Akin, 1993 : 145-146). As a result of this head tax, real earnings for most islanders dropped, Furthermore, men who

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were eligible to pay tax, but did not go off to work, and who had no produce to sell had to rely on kin for the cash. This tax was seen as a new external pressure compelling men to work where formerly the choice had been their own and their community (Laracy, 1983, Bennett, 1987 :114),

Consequently, many of the Solomon Islanders were forced to work on the Europeans' plantations for an income in order to pay a head tax to the British colonial Government and for other imported goods, which were sold at their locality. This means that Solomon Islanders were used by the British officials and other Europeans as primary labour (mostly plantation workers) to produce export products to meet their own needs and interests. The idea was to regulate the participation of the indigenous islanders in the cash economy in order to extract and export more local raw materials to Great Britain. Here, British Government officials assumed that the best role for the Solomon Islanders in this new economy was merely as " producers of labour and raw materials [such as] copra, trochus, and pearlshell; and consumers of imported goods" (Bennett, 1987 :193).

The fragmented nature of the country's political culture, linguistic diversity, and geographical dispersion meant that decentralisation through rural development was seen as an ideal approach to socio-political and the economic development of the Solomon Islands. It was assumed by the British administration that decentralisation would enable District Officers to carry out the objectives of the colonial administration, in particular, law and order, and the collection of head tax (Fox, 1967).

From the indigenous perspective, however, decentralisation through rural development was perceived as the only way in which rural people could participate in the political and economic development of the Solomon Islands. While it may be true that decentralisation does lead to participation, the two variables are not necessarily identical. The concept of decentralisation is often referred to as a process where the central Government or an organisation transfers or moves part of it's physical structures, functions, decision making processes, personnel, and legislative power to a lower level of government situated in another parts of the country (in this case rural areas). A good example of decentralisation in the Solomon Islands is

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the Provincial Government system (formerly known as local government), which functions under the jurisdiction of the Central Government. In other words, decentralisation was nothing more than merely an attempt by the colonial administration to end centralisation. As Gegeo (1994 : 66) puts it; "the primary goal of decentralisation is not the participation of rural people, but rather the bureaucratisation of the periphery". Participation, as highlighted in chapter three, refers to an ongoing process where the beneficiaries are expected to take part in all levels of what is being undertaken. This process should start from the initial project identification, designing, and planning the project, implementation, monitoring and evaluation. In that context, decentralisation policy could be seen as merely a political propaganda entertained during the colonial era,

5:2 Towards Decentralisation intheSolomon Islands

In the Solomon Islands, moves toward decentralisation have resulted from a number of movements. These movements include: the Fallowes Movement, Maasina Rule, and Moro Movement (Gegeo, 1994 : 67). Each of the three movements will be discussed in brief, beginning with the Fallowes Movement.

The Fallowes Movement

Richard FaJlowes, an Anglican missionary working in Isabel, spearheaded the first movement, which took place in the 1930s. The movement claimed that the British administration had neglected the needs of rural people in terms of political autonomy, better schools and health services, and better working conditions. As

such, Fallowes was pushing for the establishment of 'Native Parliament' to discuss their problems and prepare demands for submission to the British administration (Laracy, 1983 : 13-14). Following a series of public meetings organised by Fallowes in 1939; the movement attracted wider support from the local people. Consequently, the movement quickly spread from Isabel to Savo, Neggla, Russell Islands, Guadalcanal, Malaita, and Makira (Milliard, 1978, Laracy, 1983 : 14).

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In containing this movement, the British administration deported Fallowes. As a result, the Fallowes movement ended, However, the Fallowes movement was seen as one of the forces that helped persuade the British administration in 1940 to set up a system of courts in all four districts (Malaita, Western, Central, and Eastern), thereby giving the indigenous people some degree of control over their own affairs (Hilliard, 1978, Laracy, 1983 : 14).

Generally speaking, the establishment of native courts was viewed as a major historical move toward promoting empowerment and the emancipation of the rural areas. However, because of the colonial atmosphere within which the system was set up, it was seen largely as an advisory body to the Government on matters having to do with villagers (Trench, 1944, Gegeo, 1994 : 67). In other words, native courts were seen as nothing more than one way to keep the local people happy so that they would not pressurise the Government over other matters.

Maasina Rule Movement

The second movement towards decentralisation took place after the Second World War. This movement, which was spearheaded by Alikii Nono'ohimae started from Are'are, Malaita in 1945, This socio-political movement was in response not only to Colonial subjugation, which had been experienced during the 1920s and 1930s, but also with the inability of the centralised colonial administration to generate benefits to the majority of the population who lived in the rural areas (Laracy, 1983, Kabutaulaka, 1991). The underlying motives behind Maasina Rule were decolonisation and localisation (Gegeo, 1994 ; 69).

The Maasina Rule movement was highly organised. In carrying out the movement's mission nine people were selected to represent nine districts or regions on Malaita. Most of these people were araha (chiefs) and chosen not only on the basis of their personal experience with the Europeans cultures, but for their ability to influence and lead in their respective communities as well. For example, five of the chiefs were school teachers. One, Timothy George, who represented Small Malaita, was born and educated in Australia. His parents had been indentured labourers in Queensland (Laracy, 1983 : 21).

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Like the Fallowes movement, Maasina Rule's message of socio-political and economic independence had gained currency throughout Malaita. However, it was not until 1946 that Maasina Rule came formally recognised following a meeting of 5,000 people gathered at the Government station at Auki. The main demand of the meeting was for a minimum wage of twelve pounds per month. As a result, the movement rapidly spread from Malaita to Ulawa, Guadalcanal, Marau, Isabel, Makira, Neggla, and the Western Solomons (Worsley, 1968, Laracy, 1983 : 21-22).

In response to this movement, the colonial administrators quickly jailed the chiefs and other leaders, However, in 1947 the Government came to realise that it must respond positively to Maasina Rule demands for political autonomy in order to prevent another socio-political movement. As a result, Malaita was mandated to have its own local council, which was later set up in 1952. This was the first ever council to be established in the Solomon Islands during the colonial era (Worsley, 1968, Mamaloni, 1981). The model was later adopted by the rest of the districts (Western, Central, and Eastern districts).

Moro Movement

The third movement, which came to be known as Moro Movement took place on Guadalcanal in. 1957 (Davenport and Coker, 1967, cited in Gegeo, 1994 : 75). Like the two previous movements, the Moro movement also articulated social, political and economic autonomy demands. However, its emphasises was based on preservation of indigenous culture and the environment (Tara, 1991, Solomon Star, 1992, issue 549, cited in Gegeo, 1994 : 65).

By the 1960s, the Moro movement had spread to other parts of Guadalcanal. To prevent the spread of the movement, the colonial administration quickly increased technical assistance to the Weather Coast. In spite of that, the Moro movement had gained strong supports from almost half of Guadalcanal people. Since then, the Moro movement has continued to be strong, although it has also become somewhat inter-dependant with the local government. During the national election in 1976, the movement had mandated one of their own, David Valusa, as Member of the

Legislative Assembly for East Guadalcanal. Alebua, who also sought support from the Moro followers,

defeated him in 1980 election. Many in the Moro movement considered it a major achievement for the movement when Alebua became Prime Minister in 1986 (Tara, 1991).

Today, the Moro movement is the only surviving attempt at decentralisation by indigenous people with its roots in the Fallowes Movement in the 1930s. The Moro village is one of best cultural centres, which become an attraction site for many tourists to the Solomon Islands.

5:3 The Idea of Rural Development

Following the above events, the colonial Government started to formulate its rural development policies, This process of rural development coincided with the Moro Movement, which occurred in the 1960s, and largely involved socio-economic development, mostly in agriculture and fisheries. Here, the idea of rural development was equated with decentralisation. However, because of the numerous socio-political conditions extant within the country during the 1960s, the application of the notion 'rural development' to different socio-economic activities carried out by the colonial government seems to be a misnomer (Gegeo, 1994 : 75.

Many development writers often view rural development as a process, which is concerned with the overall organisation and improvement of the living standard of those who are living in the rural areas. It implies a broad-based reorganisation and mobilisation of the rural resources, such as land, sea, water, human resources, etc. so as to enhance their capacity to cope effectively with the daily tasks of their lives (Chambers, 1983 : 147, Mabogunje, 1989 : 95). In other words, rural development is a specific developmental strategy employed in any given organisation, which embraces ideas and activities aimed at improving the standard of living or well-being of the people living in rural areas.15 Here, I go further to argue that rural development should be perceived as a process of social transformation, which underlying the basic re-organisation and political empowerment of rural people to enhance their abilities to make better decisions on how

15 Rural areas refers to non-urbanised areas where it consists of small settlements, people still depend on subsistence way of life, and often experience limited and poor infrastructures.

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to manage their resources effectively to achieve self-reliance and self-sufficiency. This process should not only focus on material and economic needs, but also on peace, harmony, caring, sharing and friendship. In other words, rural development is not simply about teaching rural people how to catch plenty offish or schools, clinics, and roads. Rather, it is a process of 'growth in humans' to adapt to new structures and positive changes that will contribute towards the improvement of their community systems of understanding, reasoning, and creating a new stock of knowledge (Hou, 1998b ; 11).

The idea of rural development therefore, is a relatively new phenomenon in the Solomon Islands. It was only in the 1960s and 1970s that the notion of 'rural development' gained its popularity when Solomon Islanders started to assume some form of political responsibilities (Kabutaulaka, 1993 : 78). During this period, the Solomon Islands was still a British Protectorate; thus the values and ideas attached to development have been greatly influenced by western ideologies. Here, policies and projects were designed absolutely by the British colonial government officials. As a result, the nerve centre of real decision making on national issues were not in the hands of indigenous people, not only due to their skin pigmentation16, but what was regarded as their 'inferior' knowledge as well (Hou, 1998a:10).

Based on the above perception, the colonial leaders started to transform the indigenous Islanders to live like a 'modern person' as represented by western civilisation. In so doing, the colonial government officials began to train Solomon Islanders for leadership roles, but this was done mainly to promote and maintain the interests of the existing colonial structure, This is evident as most of the development projects introduced in the country were not only initiated by the expatriates, but also more importantly, still based on the same development model practice in African, Latin America, and other developing countries. Here, Gegeo (1997 : 17) observes that "rural development [in the Solomon Islands] therefore was promoted not in response to the needs of the villagers, but rather according to what expatriate colonial leaders presumed was best for the Solomon Islanders". In other words, rural development was dictated to the Solomon

16Pigmentation, here refers to the black coloured Solomon Islanders which signifies the concept of 'inferior' in comparison to 'white' (Europeans), the so-alled 'superior' at that period.

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Islanders by outsiders rather than being initiated and 'rooted' in the knowledge-base of the villagers, thus benefiting the outsiders most.

Since then, the state was seen as the centre of development activity. With the construction of a few roads, hospitals, schools, wharves, bridges and other agricultural projects such as a cattle industry throughout the

country, this implied that the colonial administration did engage in rural development. These projects were not controlled by the local people, despite the fact that some of them were located in the provinces and administered by the provincial government (formerly known as Local Government). In fact, provincial government was only an extension of the national colonial government administration. The colonial administrators assumed that a 'top-down' approach was the best developmental strategy to 'develop' the Solomon Islands. This means that development did not come from 'below' and contained few communities inputs, but rather from central Government's perception of local needs. In other words, the Government's role was to decide what kinds of projects (eg. clinics and schools) were appropriate to meet the needs of the people. As a result, most Solomon Islanders often viewed these projects as nothing more than part and parcel of the Government's normal operations. The indigenous people, of course, were glad to see the projects such as hospitals, roads and schools built. As such, this set the tone of development thinking of most Solomon Islanders to perceive development as the domain of the Government. This view represented their understandings of what government is all about.

In the 1960s and 1970s in the Solomon Islands, the connection between projects and government in people's minds was illustrated by how villagers referred to specific development projects. For example, Gegeo (1994: 77) stated that the main road running the entire length of West Malaita was and still is referred to as 'gafamanu roto' (government road). This view implies that government is an entity that exists to serve its own needs rather than the needs of the Solomon Islanders. Because of the structural 'top down' approach employed by the colonial Government, the extent and manner in which the Solomon Islanders were involved in rural development projects was very much seen as 'receivers'. In other words, the Government was the 'creator' and 'provider' of services while the indigenous people was 'receivers' and

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'consumers' of these services. This understanding was also reflected in the way in which Solomon Islanders take part in the development process; mostly as subservient manual labour, As a result, the 'top down' approach employed in rural development, a small proportion of the total population have been involved in some rural development activities while the majority of the people were left out, especially women.

Prior to the country's political independence in July 1978, the notion of rural development was based on community-based development projects such as 'co-operative societies' and 'cattle projects', Classical examples of such projects were the Nangali Cattle Project, Gorokiki Blue Hills Society and Mastaliu Farmers on Guadalcanal and, Guguba Land Purchase Co-operative at Holokama on Isabel (Larmour, 1979). The idea of community co-operative projects was probably based on the predominant assumption that Solomon Islanders traditionally lived and organised themselves in a community; working in groups and not as individuals. It was assumed that 'communal societies' would facilitate and stimulate people's participation in the production of goods and services for the nation building. Here, Kabutaulaka (1997) claimed that while it is true that Solomon Islanders did work together for specific purposes such as gardening, it is not absolutely correct to assume that they usually work together for the accumulation of 'community wealth' measured in monetary values and administered by a few chosen people, In most instances, the accumulation of material wealth is entirely up to individual families. It should also be pointed out that the notion of 'community' was a new concept, which became associated with the establishment of the 'Bigman' system,17 during the colonial era. In fact, Solomon Islanders were living in lineage groups, rather than a wider community under one powerful leader. Kabutaulaka (1993 : 81) for example, stated that "the community joined only when the aspiring Bigman had established himself and his wealth and was already recognised as [being] a Bigman". This means that the community was there only to honour the person's political achievement as being a Bigman and assist in partaking in whatever benefits were to be derived in due course. It is because of this misunderstanding about how the Solomon Islands societies function among other reasons, that has led to the failure of a number of rural development projects in the past. Classical

17The bigman system is a political systemwhere individuals fight among others to be a leader such as chiefs, In this context, 'bigman' is used interchangeably with chief.

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examples of such projects were Kapoa Co-operative Society and Mata Community stores in Aulutalau, Small Malaita (Hou, 1998a : 16).

The Post-Colonial Era.

In the 1980s, it was obvious that the fruits of rural development did not trickle down to serve the needs of the rural population as expected. As a result, it has given more opportunities for NGOs to participate in the rural development discourse. At the same time, overseas donors were favouring NGOs on the general

assumption that they (NGOs) are 'good' at meeting the needs of the people who have been missed out by government services. Consequently, NGOs such as Churches tend to expand their roles (eg. transports) while several new ones came into existence such as the SIDT in 1982.

Since then, rural development has followed a new direction. It was the first time in the political history of the country to see the Government put more emphasis on rural development by establishing three funding schemes. These funding schemes are: the Provincial Development Fund (PDF), the Small Islands Communities Projects Scheme (SICOPSA), and the Constituency Development Fund (CDF). The underlying motive behind such funds was an attempt by the Solomon Islands Government to involve rural people in the socio-economic development of the country,

The Provincial Development Fund JPDF)

The PDF was set up in 1980 under Kenilorea's Government to replace the general development allocation that operated since independence. The general aim of this fund was to provide efficient, flexible and controlled source of funds to provinces to finance small infrastructure projects within their general development plan (Nanau, 1995 : 92), The Provincial Development Unit (PDU) of the Ministry of Provincial Government administered this fund. The PDU also seeks funding from overseas donors. For example, during its first two years of operation, PDU received $250,000 from Great Britain, and $202,000 from Australia (Nanau, 1995 : 92), Project proposals were

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usually channelled and endorsed by respective officers in the provinces (eg. Fishery Officers), before it was considered by the PDU. In other words, applicants cannot submit their project proposal directly to the PDU for consideration.

It needs to be pointed out that since PDU deals with foreign donors, the Solomon Islands Government has very little or no say over the policies of the Unit. In other words, PDU draws up its policies in line with the donors' policies and expectations. Of course, donors work closely with the PDU, but the donors themselves set out the guidelines on how their funds are to be used. In this regard, donors control PDU's operations and the level of funding depends very much on the success of PDU funded projects. As a result, much of the funds were used for income generating projects, other than social infrastructure. For example, in 1990 income generating projects were allocated 78% compared to only 22% on social and administrative infrastructure, 86% to 14% in 1991, and 81% to 19% in 1992 (PDU, 1993 : 4, cited in Nanau, 1995 : 137). This clearly shows that PDF funds are mostly used for income generating projects.

In many situations, rural poor people did not benefit from the PDU, Basically this is because it takes a lot of time and efforts to draw-up project proposals. Also, the PDU required a standard form of application, which is difficult for rural poor people to undertake. In this respect, PDF could be seen as serving the needs of the 'advantaged' people only. It is within this context, that the government has established two other funding schemes (see below).

The Small Islands Community Project Schemes (SICOPSA)

The SICOPSA fund was set up in 1989 under Mamaloni Government. The idea was to assist rural people to contribute to the socio-economic development of the country. This was seen as being in line with the Government policies on rural development as articulated in the Solomon Islands National Development Plan 1985-1989 (SIG, 1985). It needs to be noted that this fund is coming directly from the Government's 'purse'. In the past, the SICOPSA fund was paid out to the each Area Council's accounts throughout the country. Each of the Area Councils approved and paid out money to whoever they recommend. Because of the continuos mismanagement of

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the SICOPSA fund, a new system was set up recently. Under this new system, the Ministry of Provincial Government and Rural Development will pay successful applicants with materials (worth SI$5,000 maximum) rather than cash. The move to tighten the Government's reins on management and administration of the SICOPSA was justified because the Ministry of Provincial Government and Rural Development is now paying the money rather than through the Provincial Government (Solomon Star, 26/04/95, cited in Nanau, 1995 : 133).

While this move was seen as a genuine one, however, it has diverted attention from poor people in the rural areas. In many cases, only those who are working in Honiara and a few better-off rural people are likely to benefit from the SICOPSA. As such, this move could be seen as 'disempowering' and 'urban' oriented.

The Constituency Development Fund (CDF)

 As the name depicts, this fund is given to all members of parliament (MPs) for the development

of their respective constituencies. This funding scheme was set up in 1991 under Mamaloni Government. In disbursing this fund, the Ministry of Provincial Government approves the fund and pays each Member of Parliament a sum of SI$50,000 quarterly. This means within a year each MP receives SI$200,000 or (SI$800,000 per term). Like the SICOPSA fond, the CDF is also coming directly from the Government's purse paid under the Ministry of Provincial Government. As such, it has no strings attached.

The disbursement of the CDF is controlled by individual MPs. Therefore, decisions on how to spend the CDF is left entirely to the individual MP's discretion. However, MPs often appoint their own committee members to co-ordinate and over-see all projects, which are to be funded from the CDF. The types of projects funded by the CDF can be either 'services' such as education, water supply and sanitation, and clinics, or 'income generating' projects funded on a community or family basis.

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While the concept and the ideas behind the establishment of the CDF were genuine, the way the CDF was administered and distributed has been widely criticised. For instance, the appointment of a committee to co-ordinate and screen projects was often comprised of close friends and supporters of individual MPs. As a result, most of the financial support was not only given to close relatives, but was absorbed by this small committee as well. Furthermore, it is often claimed that some MPs did not use the CDF for their constituency's people, but for their own projects and close personal friends (Solomon Star, 03/02/99 : 4). Likewise, because recipients of the CDF are not expected to be accountable for the money received, many rural people tend to misuse the funds given to them. The mismanagement of the CDF funds given to them have reflected their own understanding of what the Government is all about as referred to earlier (see page 67).

Another common problem with the CDF is that, most MPs have often used it for unproductive projects such as sports uniforms, musical instruments, funeral, and other personal uses. These projects do not actually develop the rural areas because they are 'dead' projects. Moreover, such projects do not generate job opportunities, benefit many people, or have the potential to grow. In other words, they only benefit a few people within a short period.

Consequently, the fruits of the CDF have not trickled down to assist rural people as it was intended in the first place. The CDF was in fact, a potential source of development funding, but it has never been utilised properly. In this respect, one could argue that, the CDF was set up for a political motive rather than a developmental one. It needs to be stressed here that 'politics' and 'development' cannot be separated from each other as often portrayed by the initiator of the CDF. Politics is about the power to decide on where, how, what, and when resources (eg, capital) or development activities such as clinics should be distributed to the people. Putting it differently, politics and development represents two sides of the same coin. Therefore, the establishment of the CDF could be described as another political game being played in the 1990s.

In response to these criticisms, the present Government has tighten the way in which the Rural Community Development Fund (RCDF) (formerly known as CDF) should be administered.

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Under the new conditions, individual MPs are expected to keep a daily record on projects funded from the RCDF in their respective constituencies. Also, the RCDF is subject to auditing to ensure that the fund is used on community projects (Solomon Star, 01/02/99 : 4).

It is widely acknowledged that economic development cannot take place unless the required conditions on which it normally thrives (eg. fertile land, capital, educated labour force, access to appropriate markets, proper infrastructures, etc.) are present. In many cases, natural constraints are often seen as the main factors, which hinder rural development in the Solomon Islands. However, it should also be stressed that natural constraints have been used as a scapegoat for the fact that rural development problems, which the Solomon Islands has been facing for the decade, were in fact human-created.

5:4   Rural Development Problems in the Solomon Islands

This section briefly looks at rural development constraints in the Solomon Islands. Since there are many constraints to rural development in the country, the discussion will mainly centred around six areas: social, economic, geography, land tenure, corruption and politics.

5:4:1 Social Problems

The failure of many development activities has given rise to numerous social problems such as rapid population growth, increasing urbanisation, and the breakdown of families, resulting in a rising crime rate and environmental degradation, to name just a few.

Population Growth as a Problem

It is often argued that a rapid increase in population growth has hindered effective rural development programmes. This is because an increasing population growth means, greater demand for hospitals, education, financial resources, increase rural-urban migration, land shortage, increase in unemployment and poverty, and other related problems. It should be noted

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that although population density in the country still remains below sixteen people per square kilometre, less than 20% of the total land mass (28,000 km2) is considered arable land.

The problem with a fast growing population is that economic growth is unable to keep pace with it. In many cases, low economic growth represents a serious obstacle to achieving further progress in human development, not only due to the threat it poses to well-being, but also the pressure it places on the Governments' ability to finance improvements in basic services vital for human development. This means that countries, at present unable to generate sufficient formal employment opportunities and provide adequate social services for their people, face an even more daunting task in the future. In the Solomon Islands the problems emanating from low economic growth have been exacerbated due to high rates of population growth. For example, Sikua (1997 : 8) observed that in the Solomon Islands, with the population growth rate of 3.5% (1986 Census), a net increase of 7,000 jobs is needed every year in order to maintain the present ratio of formal jobs to population growth. In fact, people who are seeking jobs are more than twice the number of jobs available in the open market. These issues have diverted the attention of the Government from focussing on the needs of rural people.

Urbanisation as a Problem

As stated above, urbanisation is also associated with rapid population growth in urban centres and rural-urban migration. The rural population of the country is about eighty percent. Such a huge population in the rural areas further justified the need for rural development if development is to reach and benefit the majority of the people, However, despite the huge percentage of rural population, the Solomon Islands has been experiencing a fast growing urban population over the last decade. This is evident as a result of the inability of the Government to cater for the needs of the rural population. As a result, rural dwellers have often migrated to urban centres such as Honiara (capital of the Solomon Islands) has been rapid. For example, in Honiara the population growth was more than 6.8% per annum (UNDP, 1994 : 33). This process has resulted in a number of problems such as squatter settlements (eg. Koa Hill and Matariu), housing problems, overcrowding, rise of unemployment and poverty, continues pressure on the environment, which

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resulted in environmental degradation, traffic congestion, air pollution, and urban crimes (eg. prostitution, domestic violence and alcoholism among the youths). These problems have been exacerbated due to poor urban planning and management in all urban centres throughout the country. These issues have often forced the Government budgetary allocation to be diverted from rural development projects.

The Breakdown of Families as a Problem

Today, the Solomon Islands is gradually experiencing social breakdown and family disintegration as a result of the changes that are introduced in the country. Domestic violence and divorce has also increased in the country. For example, in 1996 and 1997 the divorce rate was 3.7% while in 1998 it has increased to 5.5% (Nori, 1999 :3). At the same time, the extent of prostitution and sexually transmitted diseases (STD) are prevalent among teenagers Also, child abuse is slowly increasing, although there is no reliable statistics available to determine its magnitude in the country (Solomon Star, 20/01/99 : 2). A few young children and the old aged were often found along the streets of Honiara late at night. This clearly shows that the traditional way of life where children and the old aged are cared for and hospitalised by their sons or daughters and close relatives is slowly disappearing. It seems that the Solomon Islands societies are beginning to disintegrate to an extent that people are now questioning whether development (change) is for the better, for whom, and in what ways. These problems will divert the attention of the Government from the rural development activities.

Environmental Degradation as a Problem

The issue of environmental degradation cannot be discarded from any form of development project regardless of its size. The nature of environmental problems as we experienced them today have a great impact and cost on those who depend entirely on the environment for their survival. The pollution of rivers and streams, destruction of fragile forests, soil erosion, loss of wild foods and habitats, poor soil fertility, are all associated with mining and logging. A classical example is Gold Ridge gold mining on Guadalcanal

where those people who are living along the
plain started to experience pollution of their rivers and streams. In the same vein, Honiara coastal sea was reported to be polluted (wastes from factories and sewerage) with coliform bacteria that are harmful to the marine resources and human beings (Solomon Star, 09/05/99 : 6-7). Along the same development path, logging has been dominant in the country for the last decade. The current level of logging in the country is also considered as unsustainable. For example, recorded cut in 1991 was 292,000 cubic metres, while in 1993, it has increased to 686,000 cubic metres. With this current rate, it is estimated that exploitable forest resources will be exhausted sometime early next century (Davis and Abbott, 1989, World Bank, 1991, Leary, 1993). It should be noted that, although Solomon Islands has a natural forest area of around 2.4 million hectares, only 20% is thought to be commercially exploitable, the remainder being on very steep sites and scattered over small islands (Thistlethwaite and Davis, 1996 : 62). As such, the destruction of traditional sources of food, fuel, medicines, shelter for fauna and flora, building materials, and soil erosion became rampant in the development process.

Although reforestation has been taking place, it only covered up to 1,300 hectares out of 8,000 hectares of Government land, which has been logged in the country (Thistlethwaite and Davis, 1996 : 65). However, population growth often makes it more difficult in many areas to reforest customary land, which following logging, these areas have been converted to agricultural use. Furthermore, logging roads provide access to new agricultural land, which may be developed for subsistence and cash cropping. Other forms of developments such as subsistence farming and large-scale plantation agriculture have also damaged the environment in a similar manner. These issues are likely to affect the well being of the people who depend entirely on the forest for their livelihood.

5:4:2 Economic Factors as a Problem

The Solomon Islands economy is relatively small and largely based on limited resources such as minerals, copra, cocoa, palm oil, fisheries, and logging. In other words, the economy is heavily based on subsistence agriculture, for its exports. The other characteristics of the Solomon Islands economy include, small domestic market, high balance of trade deficits, high dependency on
foreign aid, foreign ownership of the major companies operating in the country, and geographical isolation. These characteristics often inhibit effective rural and urban development. The smallness of the cash economy also means that it is often difficult to develop economic diversification. Consequently, the country is susceptible to world market fluctuating prices as well as natural disasters such as flooding and cyclones. Furthermore, because the population of the Solomon Islands is so small, it represented a small domestic market, which is a problem for diseconomies of scale. This often results in the production of goods and services for local consumption being very expensive. Along the same vein, the geographical location of the country away from the main overseas markets (Asia, Europe and USA) means that external trade and the costs of imports and exports are extremely high. Because the country consists of many scattered islands, the sea separates each island from each other; this means the development of effective transport and communication networks are difficult and very costly to maintain. These issues become exacerbated when the country continues to face cash-flow problems.

Today, the Solomon Islands economy is stagnant and at the edge of bankruptcy by world standards. The country owed more than SI$850 million both locally and overseas by 1997 (Finance Ministers, 1997). In response to the ailing economy, the Government has recently embarked on structural adjustment programmes (SAPs). While it may be true that SAPs are likely to restore the economy, the general effects of this program on the population are enormous. The people in the Solomon Islands currently experience these effects. Classical examples include rising inflation, high costs of living, rising unemployment, reduction of government grants to the Solomon Islands College of Higher Education (SICHE) and other secondary schools, poor infrastructure services provided by the Government, lack of proper storage facilities in the rural areas, transport difficulties, lack of funding to rural people, and increases in poverty and social inequality especially among the aged people. These issues have affected the level of rural development activities throughout the country.
5:4:3 Geographical Factors as a Problem

The geographical isolation and dispersion of the Solomon Islands is often conceived as a hindrance to effective rural development. As pointed out earlier, the Solomon Islands is scattered over 1.34 million square kilometres of open and often stormy ocean. This means that transportation and communication

infrastructures are difficult to develop and above all, very expensive to maintain them throughout the country. As a result, some islands do not have access to important infrustructures such as road, wharves, and bridges, proper storage facilities and communication networks, which stimulate and facilitate rural development. A good example is Aulutalau region of South Malaita where it has been without these services since the colonial era. Furthermore, due to mountainous and rugged islands, only 12% of the country's land are judged suitable for subsistence and large-scale agricultural farming (Thistlethwaite and Davis, 1996 : 61). In many places, the terrain is too steep and swampy, which are not suitable for subsistence farming. This problem becomes even worst in the islands where logging companies have been operating. The dispersions of the islands have also, make internal travelling a difficult task and expensive not only for the Government and NGOs officials, but for rural people as well. In short, these issues have hindered effective rural development in the country.

5:4:4 Land Tenure as a Problem

In the Solomon Islands, land is seen as not only a source of food, but also as constituting some significant elements of historical, political and spiritual aspects of society. For example, land holds the 'tambu' (scared) sites, and monuments that represented the history of their society. It is because of these historical ties that land becomes an important link between the living and the ancestors. Politically, land is important in the sense that it binds people together as a land-owning group. Moreover, land is a source of political and economic power, the more land a tribe or clan owns, the more politically and economically prestigious it is. The spiritual significance of land is that it becomes "the most valuable heritage of the whole community, and could not be lightly parted with" (Zoleveke, 1979 : 4). In summary, land is the 'soul' and the 'heart' for the Solomon Islanders.

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Traditionally, land is owned by a group of people who are descendant from a known ancestor(s), which is called 'lineage' and not by institutions such as the Government, churches or councils. There was no individual ownership to land, despite the fact that individuals have the right to use land. In that context, land is not perceived, as a commodity that can be sold and bought like other goods.

However, since the arrival of the Europeans and the British colonial regime over the islands, land tenure systems have changed. The foreigners have introduced a new system of land rights and land ownership to the indigenous people. Under this new system, land can be owned and sold by individuals. As such, land becomes a marketable commodity while land rights depended on the authority of the state.

Since more than 80% of the land in the Solomon Islands are customary land (which is owned by the indigenous people), the Government often find it difficult to implement its plans effectively. A good example is the 'Rennell Bauxite Mining Project' where the land owning groups still not allow their land to be mined (Kaitu, 1981 : 31-36). Along the same line, it takes years for the Government officials to negotiate with landowners before any development project can take place on their land. For example, negotiations for the Gold Ridge Mining Project started way back in the 1970s (News Drum, 4/4/75), before it was approved in 1995. It is within that context, that customary land becomes a problem for rural development in the Solomon Islands.

5:4:5 Corruption as a Problem

The socio-political problems involving corruption in the Government and the lack of vision as to what kind and level of development the Solomon Islands should pursue are clear examples of human-created problems, which have been hindering rural development in the Solomon Islands in the recent years, Corruption as used here, denotes the financial scandal among public officials and malpractice in public offices. In many cases, corruption takes away the trust and honest practices among public officials. It allows public officers to cheat and mismanaged public funds for their own ends. For example, the 1995 alleged financial scandal where public officers had mismanaged

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about SI$10 million and more than SI$1.3 million in 1996 in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (Aqorau, 1997) These funds should have been used for rural development projects throughout the country. It is within this context, that corruption is regarded as a problem to development.

5:4:6 Politics as a Problem

Since the Solomon Islands gained its political independence from the British in July 1978, the country has experienced a number of major political changes, The nature of the country's politics as experienced today can be described as being 'hot' and volatile. This has resulted in Votes of No-confidence in all five Prime Ministers in all their terms in office. A good example of such politica! events was the recent change of Billy Hilly's Government in 1994. In the same vein, domestic political unrest has also been experienced in

the country. For example, the 1989 civil unrest between Malaita and Rennell and Bellona, which cost the Government SI$200,000 compensation to the Malaitan people. Another similar event is the current ethnic tension between the Guadalcanal and Malaita, for which the Government would pay more than US$800,000 compensation to Guadalcanal Province following the deaths of a number of its people alleged to have been killed by Malaitans (Fiji Times, 13/04/99 : 13). In addition to that, the Government has already spent SI$0.5 million to cater for those who were victims of the ethnic tension (Solomon Star, 01/06/99 : 1). These funds should have been used to promote rural development in the country. Furthermore, there are also continuous trade disputes between the Government and the unions. As a result, the unions since independence held a number of industrial strikes. For example, the 1989 Teachers Strike, which resulted in the suspension of all teacher, and, the 1991 Public Servant's strike which lasted for almost a month (Kabutaulaka, 1993 : 75). Also, there have been many changes of Government Ministers and conflict of interests within the Government, which at times often resulted in the sacking of Ministers. A classical example is the recent sacking of Mr. Sogavare as Minister for Finance in 1998. However, none of these political changes have proved to be useful, rather than merely causing instabilities, which often diverted
attention from the need for careful planning and management of rural development activities in the rural areas.
The unstable political environment could be seen as one of the major factors affecting the level of development in general and in particular rural development. Internal political disagreements often put the Government's attention off the real development issues and problems. As Kabutalaka (1993 : 75) puts it; "too much time is spent on political bickering and struggling to keep in power, so that less time is spent on development discussions and on implementing development plans".
While it is true that individuals have the right to express their political views on certain developmental issues, these political events have exaggerated the problem because the Government has been pre-occupied with internal politicking and power struggles, rather than concentrating on any fruitful political discussion on matters affecting the nation as a whole. In the same vein, continues changes of Government also means that existing development programmes are not going to be implemented because every new Government comes in with their own program of action and development plans.
In summary, rural development is a relatively a new concept in the Solomon Islands. It was only in the 1960s and 1970s that rural development became a popular concept throughout the country. During that time, the term rural development was equated with decentralisation. Such a process was still based on a 'top-down' approach. As a result, many people perceived the notion of development as the domain of the Government.
Despite the numerous attempts being made by the government and NGOs towards rural development in the Solomon Islands, the fruits of rural development still did not trickle down as expected. This could be attributed to a number of problems, which includes both the natural and human-created problems. Natural constraints include the geography of the country, while human-created problems include problems such as a rapid population growth, urbanisation, social break down of families, economic issues, land tenure, corruption and political ones. These issues have
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often diverted the attention of the Government from rural areas. Therefore, these issues need to be addressed if rural development is to be effective in the Solomon Islands.
The next chapter discusses the role of the SIDT in rural development in the country. It also looks at how the SEDT attempts to address some of the above development issues,
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Chapter Six   NGOs and Rural Development in the Solomon Islands.
The rise of NGOs in the Solomon Islands was based on the general assumption that NGOs would promote and facilitate development, which meets the needs of the disadvantaged. Such an assumption was in response to the opportunities arising from the inadequate service-delivery efforts of the Government. It was assumed that NGOs would fill in the vacuum left by the Government services.
Chapter three discussed the positive aspects of NGOs, which enhanced its image in the development process. This chapter considers some of these positive aspects in the context of the Solomon Islands. It attempts to discuss whether NGOs also contribute to development in general and rural development in particular. In so doing, the thesis examines one NGO in particular, The Solomon Islands Development Trust (SEDT), which has come to understand more deeply its unique role in civil society. The chapter, first gives a brief overview of the role of NGOs in the country, and then followed by a detail account on the

SIDT.

6:1   An Overview

In the Solomon Islands the work of NGOs have been defined by their involvement with different aspects of development work, such as education, health, funding of project proposals, poverty alleviation, community work, to name just a few. From the earliest days, the work of missionaries was solely based on the provision of the basic education and health services throughout the country. They linked-up with communities and, in most cases, establish community groups or work with existing organisations to implement local projects. As such the Government and the people have considered NGOs' major purpose was to bring more and more resources (eg. schools) to bear on village people's material well being. Consequently, in the late 1970s, branches of overseas NGOs such as the Red Cross, Girls Guides, Rotary Club and YWCA came to be established in the country. They have all contributed in one way or another to the development of the Solomon Islands. Table 3 (see below) gives the general activities carried out by NGOs in the country. It shows that 20% of 55 NGOs work is in education, including pre-school, non-formal education and vocational skills training and religious training, women's interests and pastoral counselling in the country. However, a smaller percentage of NGO works are in youth and sports development, services for disabled people, relief and emergency services and credit provision. These activities supplement the role of the state in the development process. Because of the consistent involvement of NGOs in development, they become recognised as partners in the development process (the third sector). Since much of NGOs' activities are still based on charities and community-based development, they can be placed in the first and second generations of NGOs (Korten, 1990).

Table 3: NGO Development Activities in the Solomon Islands

NGO Development Activities	Percentage
. Education, including pre-school, non-formal education and technical skills training and awareness building	20
. training on religious and family life, pastoral counselling, women's right, nutrition, child care and youth groups	20
. Community development	18.2
. Energy, housing development for lower income groups,	7.3
. Health and family planning	7.3
. Human development	7.3
. Enterprise development and support to co-operatives	7.3
. Relief supplies	3.6
. Youth and sports development	3.6
. Services for disabled people, the sick, elderly and terminally ill	3.6
. Credit provision	1.8

Source: UNDP, 1993b : 34-36

It was only recently that there has been a change in emphasis, which saw a group of local NGOs branching out to become more and more concerned with the socio-political and environmental aspects of development issue, Roughan's (1998) observation was that this shift was due to Solomon Islanders taking a leadership in NGOs and the rise of local NGOs in the country. Such an argument while may be true, seems to contradict the trend of NGOs and their relationship with their overseas donors. Chege (1999 : 3), for example, observed that the mushrooming of NGOs in the 1980s, were due to donor emphasises on environmental and women's empowerment issues. Today the trend has shifted to 'good governance' and 'democratisation'. In other words, local NGOs who wish to seek funding from such overseas donors must tailor their programmes according to these pre-conditions.

Following the proliferation of NGOs in the country, church-based NGOs have not confined themselves to missionary work; rather they found themselves responding also to new development aspirations such as post primary education, skills training, transportation, and nutrition. For example, the SDA Church provides primary education and basic health services, as well as air-transport, post primary education, community-based projects and leadership training. It needs to be noted that out of 30 vocational schools in the country, churches manage 80% (24), while the communities18 manage the remaining 20% (6).

Likewise, churches manage 13% or 10 out of 75 secondary schools in the Solomon Islands (Siku, 1997 : 6). Today, there are 55 NGOs formally registered under the Charitable Trustees Legislation. Like NGOs in the Pacific, NGOs in the Solomon Islands are also well organised. The Development Services Exchange (DSE) is the umbrella body for NGOs in the country. Its main functions are to co-ordinate and facilitate training for local NGO workers, disseminate information on overseas donors, and lobby for its members in the country. It also holds regular monthly meetings with speakers on different development issues. These meetings provide a forum to share information and discuss problems.

In summary, NGOs have also contributed in one or another to rural development in the country. As a result, NGOs have been recognised as partners in the development process,

The next section discusses in detail how the SIDT contribute to rural development in general and in particular among the people of Marau and Raroisu'u Ward. It also explores the indigenous philosophy of development and the relationship between the Government and the SIDT.

18 Communities here refer to local villages, who organise and manage small vocational schools by themselves with the help from their churches and other donor agencies in Honiara and abroad.

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6:2   A Brief History and Overview of the SIDT

In May 5th 1982, John Roughan19 inaugurated the Solomon Islands Development Trust (SIDT) with funding from an American NGO, the Foundation for the Peoples of the South Pacific (FSP).

The development philosophy and outreach patterns of the SIDT were largely drawn from Roughan's early 1980s dissertation on rural development amongst the Are'are people of Southern Malaita. Roughan's dissertation called for the newly formed organisation (SIDT) to embark on a comprehensive training program for its field workers before they are deployed to work in their respective provinces. From the beginning of its existence in early 1982, the SIDT questioned the prevailing development paradigms and criticised them for not involving rural people in the development process. The SIDT, however, did not see itself as a new agent of change simply by pushing self-help grassroots community projects. Rather, it was concerned with local people's natural resources being destroyed by commercial logging companies, multinational-fishing companies and large-scale agricultural projects. Here, the SIDT saw socio-political dimensions of a people-centred development as being as critical to the well being of people as are the issue of resource management and the funding of project proposals. In implementing this development vision, a Board of Trustees was set up, which consisted of Solomon Islanders drawn from local organisations such as Teachers Unions, the National Provident Fund, the National Council of Women, Solomon Islands Christian Association (SICA), Government representatives, and the Young Women Christian Association (YWCA). This Board of Trustees has directed the SIDT to be initially involved in the development of education, awareness building, and villager training. Furthermore, this Board of Trustees saw project funding and implementation as not being priority issues (Roughan, 1998).

Following the establishment of the Board of Trustees, the SIDT began to formulate its development philosophy and outreach training programmes. The SIDT development philosophy was "to empower villagers through development education and political awareness and to

19 John Roughan was a former Catholic Priest who came to work among the people of Are'are in the 1960s as a priest. However, he resigned from priesthood and married to a woman from Are'are in the 1970s. In early 1980s, Roughan did his doctoral research with the people of Are'are where he examined a new way of organising a village for development. His dissertation has consolidated the establishment of the SIDT, especially its outreach programmes and development philosophy. Today, Dr. Roughan is the advisor of the SIDT. He is now a citizen of the Solomon Islands.

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strengthen village life, local organisational efforts and increasing village economic viability" (SIDT, 1989a ; 11). To achieve this broad development philosophy, the SIDT has formulated five specific objectives.

To create a special woman's bureau and a women's mobile team presence working closely with the mobile teams,

To collect and share through print and other appropriate means the development information and understanding that village people ask for and required,

To research, develop and share suitable ways to reach-out, touch and empower villagers to be more in charge of their lives,

To promote co-operation among local and overseas NGOs, aTo liaise with development institutions, groups and organisations on behalf of the village person (SIDT, 198The SIDT consists of eight main departments and employs around 30 permanent staff and more

Funding the Organisation

To organise and train personnel for a national outreach program calls for many types of resources. The SIDT's major resource base, however, is its many workers: trained villagers, theatre workers, media skilled people, and office staff. However, to carry out a national village-oriented outreach program of more than 250 workers is not a development shortcut. The creation and sustaining of a people-centred development program from the community is extremely expensive, but necessary move to engage and empower the backbone of the country: the village people (Roughan, 1998 : 3).

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Since the establishment of the SIDT in 1982, much of its funding sources have come mainly from overseas NGOs and organisations (see appendix 2). In the SIDT's 1996 Annual Report, for example, 65% (SI$1,427,03275) of the total income (SI$2,195,435) came from overseas NGOs such as the Green Peace, Australian Foundation for Asia/Pacific, Bread of the World, ICCO, FSP, Commonwealth Foundation, Christian Aid, Bio-diversity, and ASPBE. About 29% (SI$636,676.15) came from its own sources (contract work, conference fees, interests from bank savings, and sales of its Link magazines), The remaining 6% (SIS 131,726.10) came from different government groups such as the Australian High Commission, Dutch Embassy, New Zealand and Japanese High Commissions (SIDT, 1996 : 1-2).

In determining the contribution of the SIDT to development in the Solomon Islands, it is important that we examine its development trends first. This is vital because not only will it enable us to see whether the SIDT has shifted away from its original objectives, but also equally important it will help us to focus on its development activities.

The development of the SIDT could be categorised into three main phases. Firstly, the period between 1982-1986, where the SIDT set itself the task of bringing development education to village people focussing on health issues such as clean water supply and sanitation. The underlying messages behind the SIDT first series of educational awareness programmes were the essence of having access to clean water supply, sanitation and environment, Here, the SIDT working methodology to bring about educational awareness activities to rural people was the use of mobile team members (MTMs). These groups of MTMs worked for 14 days in a year for $6 per each workshop day (SIDT, 1989a :3). The MTWs use the Development Wheel Tool, Village Quality of Life Index, and Past/now/future20 exercise (SIDT, 1989a : 3, 1990 : 2). Since then, the training of MTMs became a critical factor in the SIDT village outreach programmes. From 1984-1986, the SIDT was working closely with the Government's 'Rural Water Supply and Sanitation Programmes'. In 1986, the Government used the SIDT to carry out a national disaster and

20 The Development Wheel Tool, focuses on what resources are available to the people (eg. land). Village

Quality of Life Index, emphasise 'village quality'. Here, variables such as proper drainage, rubbish, access to water supply and sanitation are examined. The Past/Now/Future examined the use of resources in relation to increase population from the past, now and future to see whether resources have declined, stable, or otherwise. The idea is to see whether such issues have affected the lives of the rural people in their everyday life.

nutritional survey, and a housing rehabilitation awareness program on its behalf. As a result of the SIDT's strong involvement in these activities, the Cabinet in 1988 endorsed the SIDT to be registered under the Charitable Trust's Legislation. This allowed the SIDT to be tax exempted.

The second phase was between 1987-1993, Again, the SIDT developed a second three-year outreach program as from 1987-1989. This three-year program was focussed on natural disaster awareness preparedness, environmental and population issues, resources management and the effects of unemployment in urban centres. The disaster awareness and preparedness program was a response to the devastating Cyclone Namu in 1986, which killed 103 people and left more than 30,000 homeless. In South Malaita, for example, the SIDT hosted 45 workshops on disaster awareness and 8 special workshops on logging and political awareness in 1989 (SIDT, 1989b : 10). The SIDT assumed that their outreach program on disaster awareness would help villagers to prepare to cope with and protect themselves against the effect of disasters in the future.

To enhance the use of MTMs method, the SIDT launched a bi-monthly publication, 'Link magazine' in 1987. The Link magazine was used to highlight certain development issues such as logging. For example, Link magazine number 11 highlighted the effects of population migration. The SIDT MTMs also used Link magazines as a way of informing and up-dating villagers on what is happening in the country. The idea was that the MTMs would explain the nature of development issues such as logging, population growth, and unemployment to rural people and then leave a copy of the Link magazine behind with them. In the same year, 'Komiks' was also set up. Here, the 'Link magazine' and the 'Komiks' were used interchangeably in the sense that one focussed on written materials while the other translates these written ideas into pictures (SIDT, 1989a).

In September 1988, the SIDT's theatre group, 'SEI'21 was formed. The idea of taking a theatre group into villages underlined three basic principles. Firstly, to present important social and educational issues in a lively and entertaining manner. Secondly, to enable illiterate people to

21 The 'SEI' theatre group is one of the divisions in the SIDT, which deals mainly with drama on development issues such as teenage pregnancy, immunisation and domestic violence.

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better understand different development issues put forward by the SIDT, and finally, to create an educational resource to assist NGOs and the Government in their village extension work (SIDT, 1989b : 4, 1990 : 4). The 'SEI' group created skits on many issues such as logging, teenage pregnancy, malnutrition, family planning, breast feeding, and unemployment throughout the country. By the end of 1988, 'SEF had toured 60 villages and acted out the skits to more than 12,000 people (SIDT, 1989b : 4).

The next three-year program (1990-1992) focussed on population education, resource management and social well being in the village. In 1990, a total of 420 workshops were organised by the SIDT MTMs on population awareness and resource management throughout the country. Out of those 420 workshops, 49 were in South Malaita and 39 in Marau (SIDT, 1990 : 10).

By 1990, the 'SEF theatre group had gained popularity in the country. In Honiara, for example, 'SEI1 appeared in almost every workshop organised by NGOs in 1990. Furthermore,   }|J
the 'SEI* group also trained secondary school fine arts trainee teachers at the Solomon Islands   ti!
College of Higher Education (SICHE), and St. Dominic's Rural Training Centre, and took part in
»!(■
a Secondary Schools Cultural Festival at Gizo in 1990 (SIDT, 1990 : 4). The 'SEF group became the pioneer of drama for public education in the Solomon Islands.

Encouraging women to participate in the development process has also been an ongoing concern of the SIDT since it was established. As a result, in 1990 the SIDT introduced leadership training for women around the villages throughout the country. This idea was probably based on the general assumption that village women's needs are not well served and often their crucial role in development is not given sufficient consideration. As such, it was assumed that by providing leadership training workshops to the women, it would enhance their skills and knowledge, thus would give them confidence to analyse their own problems. Following the first series of leadership training workshops organised by the SIDT in 1990, a total of 148 village women attended. During these workshops, the SIDT came to realise that, village women in the

Solomon Islands have been facing problems such as lack of funding, low
literacy, lack of leadership and management skills, and lack of access to new information. The SIDT Women's Group therefore, intends to provide educational awareness programmes not only to address these problems, but also on issues such as domestic violence, which affect the lives of women throughout the country. In so doing, the SIDT Women's Group has embarked on a number of development activities such as leadership training, home management, decision making skills, ways of rinding funding, book-keeping, sewing, and cooking (SIDT, 1990 : 8). As a result of this initiative, the SIDT Women's Group, in 1990 has organised leadership training workshops among 67 villages throughout the nation. Out of these 67 villages, 7 were in Marau and 11 in South Malaita (SIDT, 1990 : 9).

The third phase of the SIDT could be categorised as from 1994 and onward. Here, the SIDT focussed on Village Demonstration Workers (VDWs) where they only stayed in their respective villages. This idea was probably based on the understanding that, in the traditional context, Solomon Islanders have to clean their own houses first before they can clean other peoples houses. As such, each of the SIDT VDWs is expected to show to the village people what   1

they have been talking about. In this context, each VDWs must have a secured and raised house,   I
a 'supsup1 garden, a family toilet, sleep under a mosquito net nightly, and an improved kitchen22.   '
The basic assumption was that this could be used as a model which villages could copy. These   j
i practical demonstrations are clearly linked to what the SIDT referred to as 'feminisation of the   '
development dollar'. In short, during the first two phases, the SIDT's outreach programmes,   f
which was carried out by the MTMs were merely 'preaching' abQut the necessity of villagers having a toilet, a clean water supply, working on a 'supsup' garden, and upgrading the-family kitchen. As Roughan (1998 : 6) puts it, the current approach however, is no longer about 'talk' but 'action'.

In early 1994, the SIDT pushed on with the idea of 'people-centred' development-approaches, which were based on a clean environment, self-reliance and self-sufficiency, and more participation in the political process. As a result, the SIDT started to be involved in the socio-political aspects of the country. For example, tfre SIDT has been very vocal in the Pavuvu

n An improved kitchen implies raised cooking stove, clean and secured place to put kitchen utensils, and higher from the ground.
Island-Logging Project in 1995. Here, the SIDT went further to conduct a survey among the indigenous people of Pavuvu by asking their opinions about the logging project. The survey results showed that about 90% of those interviewed disagreed with the statement; "Government has the first say over [the] development of Pavuvu island" (SIDT, 1995, cited in Roughan, 1998 : 7). The result of this survey was presented by the SIDT officials during a public forum in which government officials were also present.

In response to this public forum, Prime Minister Mamaloni described it as a 'public rebuke' to his authority. As such, he issued a written public warning to the NGO sector and in particular their expatriate advisers "not to interfere in Government development matters of [the] Solomon Islands and to refrain from feeding the media with false information". Mamaloni further asserted that, "these NGO personal are the same characters who have destabilised Papua New Guinea during the past ten years and have now come here to do the same to our people and country" (Mamaloni, 1995, cited in Roughan, 1998 ; 7). It is within this context that the SIDT

reinforced its determination to play a more proactive role in the socio-political aspects of the   fij
i'i' country. In so doing, the SIDT devised a weekly radio program in 1997, which was based on
'good governance policies' in an attempt to assist people to understand 'good governance' as well as how to choose a 'good' person for 1997 general election. Here, it seems that the SIDT has been playing the role of a 'political watchdog' in the sense that it attacked government policies. This is evident in the 1997 Komiks, Link Magazines, weekly radio programmes, and the 'SEI' theatre groups, which all highlighted the issue of'good governance' and how to choose a 'good' person for the nation's highest office in the 1997 general election (refer section 6:4 for more discussion).

From the above discussion, it is obvious that the SIDT has been shifting its role and focus on different development issues Over the last decade. This shifting of role is not a strange thing among NGOs as stated by Korten (refer chapter two). According to Korten's classifications of NGOs the SIDT could be placed in the third generations.
While it is true that the SIDT has reached thousands of people through its outreach programmes since it

was started in 1982, still it proved difficult to assess how well the different development messages had anchored among villagers. There was very little or no impacts being made to improve the well being of rural people. It was clear that local understanding of the sociopolitical dimensions of development is an important aspect of the process. However, it became very obvious that merely informing resource owners through workshops, drama, seminars, and weekly radio programmes were not enough. Here, the SIDT came to realise that while information sharing and training are vital parts in the development process, the people of the Solomon Islands could only engaged with their own advancement when they could see, touch, taste, and feel alternatives to the typical development paradigm. Therefore, the idea of information sharing and training have to be connected to practical, everyday ways of changing people's resources to monetary value (cash). Thus, it is important that the SIDT clearly demonstrate in tangibles forms how a clan's natural resources such as trees, fruits, and land could be further enhanced to produce cash needed for the majority's subsistence life style.

As a result, the SIDT in recent years has focused more and more on its efforts to the issue of projects and programmes, which show how villagers could change the natural wealth of the bush and the sea into cash. Classical examples of these projects include; the fibre paper making projects in Balai village, West Kwaio, and Nazareth and Bareho in the Western Province; ngali oil pressing in Makira; sustainable forest management, honey production in Makira; and buffer-fly ranching (SIDT, 1996 : 7, 1997, Roughan, 1998 : 5-6). The idea is to teach rural people to provide for themselves, rather than keep on providing for them as was the case in the past. While the SIDT development philosophy is to empower rural people to provide for themselves, and not to keep on providing for them, the 1996 and 1997 Annual Reports, however, showed that the SIDT did commit some fluids towards specific projects. For example, the Ngali nut project was granted SI$230,000, while the Butterfly ranching project was given SI$10,969 (SIDT, 1996 : 2). Whether these funds have been spent on the actual costs of these projects or its administrative costs was not clearly settled whilst carrying out my interview with the SIDT staff.

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In summary, the SIDT is the largest and most vocal local NGO in the Solomon Islands. It appears from the discussions that the SIDT contribution to rural development in the Solomon Islands is based on educational awareness building and village training. These activities fit in well with its development philosophy. In disseminating information on development issues such as logging to the people, the SIDT employed varieties of methods. These include the use of the MTMs, media, drama, and VDWs. It should also be noted that the SIDT did respond to most of the rural development issues discussed in chapter five. The underlying message behind the SIDT educational programmes is to make people aware of the negative aspects of different development issues in the hope they would make a 'good' decision about their future lives.

6:3 Framework to Evaluate the Impact of the SIDT in Rural Development

This section discusses the findings of my fieldwork in two selected regions in the Solomon Islands. In analysing the impact of the work of the SIDT in rural development, certain features that make the NGO successful are considered. These features have already been discussed in chapter three,

As stated in Chapter 1 (section 1.3), three central criterions needs to be considered when evaluating the work of the SIDT. Firstly, whether participants find the SIDT development activities useful and relevant in meeting their community needs.23 Secondly, whether the SIDT development activities have 'empowered' the target group to participate fully in the development process. And, finally, whether the SIDT has enabled rural people to produce, at least the kind of development it envisaged. Here, six variables were selected to evaluate the work of the SIDT in rural development, These variables were selected because they often enhanced the image of NGOs in the development process.

Did the SIDT Represent the Authentic Voice of Rural People?. This would give us an idea whether the SIDT has been working consistently with rural people in order to enable them develop their skills and knowledge to provide for themselves. The question I asked

23 Here, community needs is defined as involving the concerned people in the development process to produce the kinds of development that reflect their needs (eg water supply) and anchored in their way of life.

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was "how many times the SIDT workers visited your village in one year"? Although it was difficult for the respondents to remember exactly how many times the SIDT workers visited them, 20 out 45 (13 in Marau and 7 in Raroisu'u Ward) managed to answer this question (see figure 4 below). The result shows that the highest number of visits the SIDT workers made to the communities was only 2 within 14 days of work in

1989 and 1992. This was only in Marau. In Raroisu'u Ward, the SIDT workers only visited them once in 1989, 1991 and 1992. Since 1993 the SIDT workers failed to visit these communities anymore, The same trend is also experienced in Marau. When I asked why the SIDT workers no longer made visits to these communities, an official in the SIDT told me that the SIDT has already shifted away from the use of MTWs to VDWs. Such a change was due to two basic reasons. Firstly, the use of MTWs (touring groups) was expensive, and secondly, the outcome of the MTWs was not well received in the communities, The assumption was that the use of VDWs would make a big difference in the sense that the VDWs are based in the villages and would mobilise people to do things for themselves, However, in reality seldom was this the case as the VWDs are often buried under the weight of their work.

■	2-5 m	Figure 4:		The SIDT	Number of Visits to the	Communities	
.its	2 1	IMIslilsfBli HHHffil8SB BB«ia|WiEH BP	|f|||§f	Si|HB aUfStMKHftlUnRliUlS KUfUinHlUPwJHSBv			. jTeBS^rBTSAj m-H' AMU ^r ■ O HBHiWJHW WitBflii^iMn
	1.5 1 1 I 0.5 i	TBlHHiBKfla ^ijaBHH iiiSBlliliil	jHWfflBB *M8?BB BM rmmc "mtHH?i wHrTM agaBJwBa BBiam vRffffrmf Hll mtUfB	tiSSwJfflififfBFwi^'- ^jW^ffiBwKiiflt JBSBIKSKifiBBH^Iffi' MWiflSHtBiiKlitfHJiJi			i 1
No. of Vis	0 -P Year	1 1989	2 1990	3 1992	4 1991	5 1993	wEssBSB&vE sEaBSKui 6 1994

The results show a lack of frequent visits by the SIDT workers to its target groups. As such, the elders in both communities describe the work of the SIDT as a 'bouncing ball'. This supports the argument that the SIDT is not a true representative of the authentic voice of rural people, The absence of the SIDT field workers in these places can be articulated in a number of

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ways. For example, if you go to Marau and Raroisu'u Ward in South Malaita, you would hear people whispering among themselves; "that the waves of the SIDT came around this way a few years ago, but it did not physically changed anything in our communities". In the same vein, an elder man in Marau stated that "the SIDT is yet to prove to us what it has been talking about over the past years". It is on this basis, that the people of Marau and Raroisu'u Ward described the work of the SIDT as mae or mate which means 'dead'. Such a view implies that the SIDT is physically 'sick' and 'not functioning'. However, it was only when I visited these places that people came to realise that the SIDT is still physically alive. This view could also mean that the SIDT all along has been fighting for its own survival, rather than enabling the target group to promote the kind of development that is responsive to their needs.

Flexibility. The idea behind flexibility is to consider whether the SIDT officials have sought advice from the recipients whilst formulating their development activities and procedures by which to implement these programmes. Also, flexibility would give us an indication whether the

i

SIDT methodological approaches are 'top-down' or 'bottom-up'. Such a variable is considered   i

because of the rising criticism directed at NGOs claiming to be 'bottom-up' whilst in fact, they   i
still follow 'top-down' approaches (Tendler, 1982). The questions asked during the survey were   i
"who initiated these activities" and "did the SIDT consult you when designing these activities"?   I
Figure 5 (see below) shows that 93% or 42 out of 45 participants interviewed (25 in Marau and 20 in
Raroisu'u Ward), claimed that the SIDT did not bother to seek advice from them about its   j
development activities and how to implement them, About 7% (3 out of 45) claimed that the SIDT did ask
for their opinions about what should be included in future women's programmes. Interestingly, this 7%
only accounted for married females and mostly from Marau. This clearly shows that the SIDT formulated
its own development activities and delivered them to rural people. Because of the 'top-down' approach
employed by the SIDT, the extent and manner in which the people of Marau and Raroisu'u Ward were
involved in their development activities, was very much seen as 'receivers'. As a village elder man in
Raroisu'u Ward put it, "the SIDT is the 'producer' and 'creator' while we are the 'receivers' of their
activities". Since people are seen as 'receivers' they feel that they are not part of the SIDT development
programmes. Here, it is important to note that having access to information is not the same as knowing how
to make use

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of it. In the same vein, delivering information from a 'top-down' approach is not 'empowerment'. Rather, it
is enhancing the development workers own situation. Empowerment is defined as a process of
strengthening people and enhancing their abilities to envision, affirm and act on who they are. This process
requires consistent dialogue with the people and giving them our attention, which in turn requires time,
patience, humbleness, respect, reliable and courtesy. Based on this understanding, the way the SIDT deliver
its activities to rural people is not directly 'empowering' them to develop their skills and knowledge in the
development process.

Figure 5: The SIDT Consulted the Villagers When Designing their
Programmes

st Consulted
93%
Not consulted
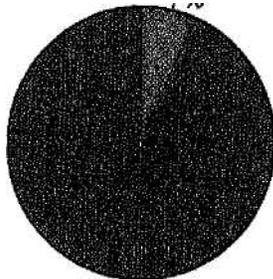
The Appropriateness of the SIDT Programmes. As stated in chapter three, one of the positive aspects of
NGOs is that they promote development which is responsive to the needs of the poor rural people. Here, I
asked "has the SIDT activities solved your community needs"? As indicated in table 6 (see below), 82% or
37 out of 45 participants interviewed in both places asserted that the SIDT activities are useful but not
appropriate, while only 11% (5 out of 45) of the participants claimed that the SIDT programmes are useful
and appropriate. The SIDT activities were regarded as not useful and appropriate by 7% (3 out of 45) of the
participants. The result indicates that a large percentage of the SIDT participants found its activities are
useful but not appropriate24 to meet their community or individual needs. A large number of those who
claimed the SIDT activities are useful but not appropriate were married, elders,25 male and those
si,

24 Appropriate means that the SEDT activities solve part of individual or groups development needs. In
this case that 11% represents employment. Useful, on the other hand refers to activities of things that can
be used for practical purpose, but not yet solving a development problem such as access to water supply.
Here, elder is defined as more than 30 years old.
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who only achieved primary education. This contradicts the argument that NGOs promote development that
serves the needs of rural people. As an elder man in Marau puts it, "the SIDT activities looks good, but
incomplete". In the same vein, the elders in Raroisu'u Ward stated that "the SIDT is only strong at talking"

or "good at making too much noise". These views imply that NGOs are not necessarily a true representative of the authentic voice of rural people.

Table 6: The Overall Perception of the SDJT Activities

Variables	Useful but not Appropriate 37	Useful and Appropriate 5	Not Useful and Appropriate 3
Male	29	3	2
Female	8	2	1
Married	32	5	3
Single	5	0	0
30 years less	7	1	1
30 years more	30	4	2
Primary	28	4	2
Secondary	8	1	1
Tertiary	1	0	0

In South Malaita and Marau, there is a clear difference between the term 'useful' and 'appropriate'. The term 'useful' can be translated as synonymous to the South Malaitan term Me 'elatina and Marau Aresimi which means something 'good' in the sense that it does not affect individual social status and their cultural norms and values. Furthermore, 'useful' is often used to judge the nature of variety of activities in order to determine whether such activities are worth consideration or otherwise. Under the notion of useful is the idea that activities or things can be used for a practical purpose, but not yet solving a development problem and enhancing people's ability to create a new stock of knowledge, In short, useful activities have their own positive aspects if they are used properly in the future, Appropriate, on other hand, can be equated to the local vernacular term to 'ohu. This means it has a direct impact and attempt to solve a given problem, either materially or non-materially. In other words, appropriate is the outcome of the application of useful information to a given situation in an attempt to solving it and at the same time enhancing people's ability to develop their skills and knowledge. This relationship is illustrated below.
•Useful—
—►Appropriate, problems solved or enhanced skills & knowledge
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It is because of this understanding that the people in Marau and Raroisu'su Ward argued that useful activities should always be connected appropriate activities.

Did the SIDT Enable the Tatget Group to Produce, at Least the Kind of development it Envisaged? This would give us an idea whether the SIDT messages have 'rooted' (accepted as the base of way of life) among the target population or not. Here, I asked "did the SIDT activities make any impact in your life"? The responses to this question are summarised in table 7 below. The result clearly shows that there was very little impact made upon the lives of the people in Marau and Raroisu'u Ward following the activities of the SIDT. The least impact is in family planning (2% or 1 out of 45), followed by improved kitchen and toilet (7% or 3 out of 45), and supsup garden (9% or 4 out of 45). Access to bed-nets or mosquito net appears to be the highest with 67% or 30 out of 45 respondents. This explicitly indicates that the SIDT messages are not yet rooted among its target population. In other words, the SIDT has not yet enabled the target group to produce the kind of development it portrays.

Access to bed-net is higher because the Government supplied mosquito nets to almost everyone who was badly affected following cyclone Namu in 1986. Therefore, it would be erroneous to claim that this was due to the work of the SIDT. Access to a modern toilet received very little impact due to many reasons. However, three of these reasons are: (i) people do not have time, commitment and materials to build their own toilet, (ii) people are used to using the bush for a toilet as they have done for years, and (iii) the modem toilet is not only new to the people but it does not correspond to South Malaita and Marau culture. Traditionally, females and males (especially brothers, sisters and in-laws) are not allowed to use the same toilet because that would be regarded as disrespectful. For chiefs, elders and magicians (kastom man) it is believed that using the same toilet as females would affect the power of their magic. In the same manner, access to modem family planning methods also caused very little impact because it does not correspond to Marau and South Malaita culture. As an elder man in Marau put it, "the use of condom implies disrespectful, dishonest, unfaithfulness and lack of affection to your wife".
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It is interesting to note that, despite access to improved kitchen and supsup gardens are not in conflict with people's way of life, more than 90% of the respondents in both categories still failed to follow the SIDT teachings. According to the elders in both communities, they claimed that "the SIDT approaches seems to undermine our traditional form of kitchen and gardening". This view implies that the SIDT is imposing its own ideologies on the people, rather than enabling them to develop their skills and knowledge in order to provide for themselves.

Table 7: The Overall Impact of the SIDT Activities Amongst the Target Population

Variables	Toilet Yes No 3 42		Bed-net Yes No 30 IS		Improve Kitchen Yes No 3 42		Supsup Garden Yes No 4 41		Family Planning Yes No 1 44	
Male	2	32	25	9	2	32	0	34	1	33
Female	1	10	5	6	1	10	4	7	0	11
Married	3	37	27	13	3	37	2	38	1	39
Single	0	5	3	2	0	5	0	3	0	5
30 years less	1	8	2	7	1	8	2	7	0	9
30 years more	2	34	28	8	2	34	2	34	1	35
Primary	0	34	20	14	0	34	2	32	0	34
Secondary	2	8	9	1	2	8	2	8	0	10
Tertiary	1	0	1	0	1	0	0	1	1	0

Cost-effectiveness of the SIDT Programmes. As discussed in chapter three (section 3:2), it is widely assumed that NGO interventions are cost-effective in comparison to government intervention. Cost-effective as the name depicts, refers to the lower costs involved in an NGOs operations when compared to the Government. For example, whether the administrative costs of an NGO providing low cost housing were similar or lower than the administrative costs of government low-cost housing. However, critiques have pointed out that low cost services provided by NGOs are often of low durability and construction. Furthermore, NGOs provide low costs due to their volunteer force (unpaid labour), using local resources (including labour) and tax exemptions. For example, the SIDT VDWs are paid only $6 per workshop for 14 days annually. Here, I asked the YDWs whether $6 is worth the kind of work they have been doing. According to VDWs at Marau, "this amount ($6) was very small compared to those who are working in the SIDT office and the nature of our work". He further stated that "$6 is no longer an incentive, given the fact that things are now very expensive nowadays". So what would you expect? The VDWs suggested "that $15 per workshop would be a reasonable amount". Such a

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view implies that the VDWs also want to see an outcome from their 'sweat' a clear indication that they do not want to work for small rewards.

Table 8 gives the overall expenses of the SIDT activities in 1997. A detailed summary of the SIDT expenses on different activities is shown in appendix 3.

Table 8: The SIDT Overall Expenses in 1997

ITERMS	AMOUNT (SIS)	PERCENTAGE
Information Sharing	673,464	40
Natural Wealth to Cash	450,052	26.7
Organisation	328,249	19.5
Administration	231,849	13.8
	1,683,614	100

Source: SIDT, 1997 Financial Report.

Information sharing refers to the strategies the SIDT used to disseminate information to the people. These strategies include the use of VDWs, which accounted for (SI$416,735), print media (SI$83,840), theatre group (SI$156,000) and distance education (SI$16,889). The natural wealth to cash refers to projects which the SIDT involved with rural people. These projects are conservation in development (SI$270,000)5 butterfly ranching (SI$48,353), eco-forestry (SI$45,732), and other programmes (SI$85,966). The organisation is the external costs for which the SIDT has to meet during their operation. These costs

include audit (SI$12,000), building (SI$57,089), space costs (SI$139,953) and travel (SI$42,761). The administration is the internal costs, which include salary (SI$98,255), income tax (SI$26,143)3 fringe (SI$80,742) and national provident fund (SI$26,709). The general impression here is that the SIDT activities are not cost-effective as often claimed,

The SIDT Working Methodologies. This is to enable us to understand whether the SIDT working methodologies are appropriate means of disseminating information to their target population or not. Here, I asked the respondents "which method of delivering information enables you to, at least get what message the SIDT is trying to put across". Table 9 (see below) clearly indicates that radio programmes and use of the Link magazines and Komiks, which represented 7% or 3 out of 45, were the least effective methods. This was followed by the use of the MTMs,

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which only accounts for 22% (10 out of 45) and drama 33% (15 out of 45) respectively. The use of VDWs accounted for only 44% (20 out of 45) of the total respondents.

The reason why the use of radio is not an appropriate method of delivering information is due to three basic reasons. Firstly, not all villagers have access to a radio. Secondly, even if some have access to a radio they cannot afford to provide batteries for them weekly. And, finally, villagers do not listen to radio regularly. In the same vein, the use of Link magazines and komiks were considered as inappropriate because about 80% of rural people in the country are still illiterate. As the elders in Raroisu'u Wards puts it, "radio programmes, Link magazine and Komiks are not our traditional way of disseminating information". He further stated that "such methodologies not only have no place in our daily lives, but also were seen an inappropriate form of mediation".

Table 9: ThcO verall Ap propnateness of the SIDT Working Methodologies.

Variable	Radio YES NO 3	42	Link & Komiks YES NO 3 42		MTWs YES 10	NO 35	Drama YES NO IS	30	VDWs YES NO 20	25
Male	3	31	2	32	8	26	10	24	13	21
Female	0	11	1	10	2	9	5	6	7	4
Married	2	38	1	39	7	33	12	28	18	22
Single	1	4	2	3	3	2	3	2	2	3
30 years less	1	8	2	7	6	3	5	4	6	3
30 Years more	2	34	1	35	4	32	10	26	14	22
Primary	0	34	0	34	4	34	9	25	13	21
Secondary	2	8	2	8	5	5	5	5	6	4
Tertiary	1	0	1	0	1	0	1	0	1	0

It is interesting to note that the use of drama did not make as much impact as expected by the SIDT. One of the reasons for this is that rural people often regard such activities as 'entertainment', hence only love the 'fun' of the SIDT activities. In the same manner, the use of MTWs and VDWs were seen as 'top-down' and 'judgmental' in nature. As an elder in Marau put it, "the SIDT somehow is indirectly saying that the way we live is unhealthy and unacceptable". He further claimed that, "if we are to wait for the SIDT to tell us the best way to live, then we should not have survived up until today". It appears from table 9, that a huge number of people who claimed that the SIDT working methodologies are not appropriate are married (38 out of

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40), elders (34 out of 36) and (34) primary educators. This further supports the argument that the SIDT is not directly empowering the target population.

In the foregoing discussions, I have attempted to evaluate the impact of the work of the SIDT amongst the people of Marau and Raroisu'u Ward. It appears from the discussions that the SIDT has been at the forefront of awareness building in the communities. However, the impact of the SIDT work is not yet well received in these two communities. This supports the argument that NGOs, especially the SIDT cannot promote rural development effectively and efficiently without the state and market forces.

In the next section, I examine the indigenous philosophy of development as an attempt to explain why the SIDT development activities are not rooted amongst the people of Marau and Raroisu'u Ward in South

Malaita.

6:4 The Indigenous Philosophy of Development

The concept of development can be translated as synonymous to the South Malaita and Marau term mauriha, which means life, or working for life. It implies that the ultimate objective of development or progress is the sustenance of life. In the traditional context, the people of Raroisu'u Ward and Marau conceptualise the term development as a consequence of hoelana hunitoiha, the vernacular term for 'hard work'. This means that development cannot be achieved without hard work, hence ownership and exercise of right over property. This subsequently results in to'oto'o, the vernacular term for 'self-sufficiency' and 'self-reliance,' which is the basis of the way of life in Marau and Raroisu'u Ward. Traditionally, life should not be dependent on others for free handouts.

Underlying the notion of 'hard work' is the idea that development 'emerges out of one's own hand' or 'sweaf. Here, emergence does not necessarily mean the idea that a project must originate with oneself. Rather, the fact that one takes up an idea even if it is someone else's means that one becomes the new 'originator' in term of emergence. As Gegeo (1997 : 36) puts it, "one has to take an idea, which is an abstraction and give it life by turning it into a project; [thus]

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the idea materialises...through one's own work". A classical example is the garden produce that comes from one's own sweat or hard work thus, is regarded as 'positive outcome'. In this respect, development is best conceptualised as a 'blessing' and 'alive', which underlies the notion of 'unalloyed good' rather than a process of decay, decomposition and destruction of the people's way of life. In short, development should be holistic, encompassing the 'quartriad' of human needs: spiritual needs (working together), psychological needs (knowledge and skills), economic needs (material things), and social needs (people).

These elements are embraced in what the South Malaita and Marau people viewed 'living a normal way of life' or mauriha mliatotolaha. This way of life is not one based on the kinds of life brought by the foreigners. Rather, the way of life that is 'rooted' in thirteen principle cultural values. They are: (1) sharing, generosity, (2) love and kindness, (3) caring and sympathy, (4) hospitality, welcoming and comforting, (5) co-operation and assistance, (6) peace, harmony and stability in society, (7) companionship and friendship (8) trust, honesty, faithfulness. Loyalty and reliability, (9) showing respect to others, (10) obedience and humbleness, (11) giving without quick expectation, (12) patience and tolerance, and (13) happiness, joyfulness and willingness (Hou, 1998a : 12). These thirteen core values constitute the 'soul' and the 'heart' of what the South Malaita and Marau people conceptualisation of a 'normal life' is, therefore it should be seen as the paramount objective of any development model introduced to them. Here, the concept of 'normal life' very much resembles the 'good life' as stated by Goulet (1995 ; 40-45), which underlines three basic values;26 'life-sustenance,' 'self-esteem' and 'freedom'. Therefore, any development model, which does not take into account the above thirteen core cultural values is seen as 'discriminatory', 'alienating', 'degrading', 'unethical', and 'unacceptable' by the people of South Malaita and Marau, and thus is destined to fail. These thirteen core values are 'rooted' and institutionalised in the people's culture (totolaha). Here, culture or totolaha is used to refer to not only a body of knowledge and ideas values, norms, rules, laws and principles, which provide for proper social behaviour, but also equally important is the notion of 'respect'. Here, the people of South Malaita and Marau argue that for a person to achieve the state of life, which is considered 'normal life' or 'completeness' he/she must live according to the thirteen core values

26 Life-sustenance refers to the basic requirements such as food, shelter, clean water and healing. Self-esteem, refers to self-actualisation, respected and dignity, while freedom emphasis security and protection against all inhuman treatments such as slavery and exploitation.

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mentioned earlier. In achieving that, one would be highly 'respected', 'dignified' and 'honoured' by others in the community, thus one would be considered as 'a real person' or 'a renown person' living in 'great contentment'.

Based on the background of the philosophy of 'living a normal life' or mauriha sulia totolaha, it is explicit that the rural development based on a 'top-down' approach is problematic to the people of Marau and South Malaita. This is because the emphasis of a 'top-down' approach is one-sided, lacks a consistent dialogue with the people and above all often undermined the indigenous knowledge and skills of rural people.

While it is true that the people of Marau and Raroisu'u Ward share certain epistemological understandings, which link with the SIDT development philosophy (self-reliance and self-sufficiency), their approaches are quite different from each other. The SIDT approaches to rural development embraced two things (training and talking), while the target group's approaches constitute quartriads of human needs (spiritual,

psychological, economic and social). It is on this basis that this Thesis calls for the NGO sector, the state and market forces to approach rural development as practised and conceptualised by the people.

6:5 The Government and the Politicisatiosa of the SIDT

This section briefly discusses the relationship between the Government and the SIDT in an attempt to identify whether both have been working together in promoting rural development in the SoJomon Islands. As stated in the introductory chapter, the previous Governments and the present one have called for NGOs to participate in the rural development in the Solomon Islands. However, in spite of this recognition, the Government has not yet formulated a specific policy with regards to the role of NGOs in the country. This however, does not necessarily mean that the Government does not work with NGOs on specific projects. For example, in 1984 the SIDT was contracted by the Government for SI$53,O00 to carry out a health survey on 'Rural Water Supply and Sanitation

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Programmes' and again in 1986 for SI$50,000 to undertake a disaster survey throughout the country (SIDT, 1989a, Roughan, 1990). Also, between 1991-1993, the SIDT, the Government and other sectors of the community joined forces to fight against malaria throughout the country. As a result, malaria has reduced drastically from 440 annual incidence per 1000 people to 207 in 1996 (SIDT, 1996 : 5). This shows that if the state, NGOs, private organisations and the communities work together in the development process, there is high possibility that certain projects can be achieved within a given period of time.

In 1994, the SIDT shifted its role to include political education. This shift was probably based on the general assumption that many rural villagers throughout the country were not aware of the political issues (eg. their rights and duties as citizens), which affect their daily lives. In so doing, the SIDT started to play a critical role in the socio-political aspects of the country. A good example was the recent Pavuvu Island logging project in 1995, where the SIDT and the Government became 'enemies'. In fact, the Pavuvu incident has encouraged the SIDT to play a more aggressive role in the day-to-day politics of the country. For example, ten months before the national election in August, the SIDT began its four theatre teams to tour and present political drama in hundreds of villages, published three issues of Link magazines and two pidgin Komiks reviewing issues on 'good governance1 and 'corruption1. On top of that, the SIDT established a weekly radio program, trained its 260 VDWs to share political information with villagers, and set up public forums both in Honiara and in the villages to discuss political issues concerning the up-coming election. In the front row of this political education were the SIDT's four theatre teams where they reach out and inform remote communities about the election process. Here, 'The Power of the Chair' was the message to rural people. The underlying message was that 'rural people have the power to give or to withhold the chair of parliament through their vote (Roughan, 1998 : 9).

The SIDT was well organised in carrying out this political education program, In fact, the SIDT has never organised its forces like this before, These four theatre teams worked in such a way that one followed the other after each presentation. For example, the 'SEF team once moved on to a nearby village the resident VDW followed up the (SEI] team with the current issues of

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Link magazines, which detailed how to choose a 'good' person for the nation's highest office. Also, the results of the People's Report Card about the current government's services to the people (see below) are used in the course of their political education. In the same vein, the SIDT groups also presented kinds of questions villagers should asked during the campaigning period (eg. what is the position of women in politics?). Likewise, Pidgin Komiks indicates how to choose worthwhile and reliable person for parliament that re-reinforces the 'SEI' message. Also, the SIDT weekly radio program broadcast similar messages. However, the SIDT's radio program was so biased that Prime Minister Mamaloni intervened twice to prevent the program from continuing in air. The radio program, however, was later reinstated. Furthermore, public forums were initiated by the SIDT where the Concerned Citizens Movement met monthly to discuss relevant political issues (eg. corruption) affecting the people. For more than ten months prior to the 1997 national election, the SIDT's building compound was used as a venue for political discussion by the Concerned Citizens Movement Group (Roughan, 1998 : 9),

The People's Report Card

Although the peak of the SIDT's political education came about in 1994 and onwards, it began offering rural people a new way to register their feelings about how the Government of the day was working for them before 1993. Here, the SIDT undertook a nation-wide survey to canvass villagers and town people on how well or poorly they viewed the Government was servicing their needs in terms of health services, education opportunities, natural resource management, and the availability of money, The results of the

four national surveys (1993-1996) are shown table 10 below.

The results shows that under the leadership of Billy Hilly (1993-1994), satisfaction in the services in four categories reached 54%, while Mamaloni Government over seven years in office, could only managed to reach on average more than 50%. As pointed out above, this information were used by the SIDT not only to describe the work of individual Governments to rural people, but as a way to campaign against Mamaloni Government not to return to office again.

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Table 10:The Results of the People's Report Card

Variables	1989-1993 (Mamaloni Govt)	1993-1994 (Billy Hilly Govt)	1994-1995 (Mamaloni Govt)	1995-1997 (Mamaloni Govt)
Health Services	47%	59%	53%	53%
Education	48%	55%	53%	55%
Resources	57%	55%	58%	53%
Money	48%	46%	44%	48%
Average	50%	54%	50%	50%

Source: SIDT, 1997, Link 45 : 8

In the same manner, two more surveys were done in 1996 and 1997 by the SIDT among 39 out of 47 constituencies. As usual, the SIDT asked about 2,000 people what they thought about their current Member of Parliament (MP). The result shows that if the election were to take place immediately, two out of three would vote against their current MP. The SIDT was so confident about their results that it published and named those MPs who would not be returned to their seats. The result also pointed out that about 55% of the current MPs would not return their seats in the August 1997 general election. In response to this result, The Solomon Voice (a local newspaper) claimed that such results were misleading because the survey was conducted by villagers and not professionally carried out. Whatever the situation, the 1997 election showed that 51% of all members did not get returned to their seats, which was close to the SIDT's prediction of 55% (Roughan, 1998 : 10). According to the SIDT, this was a great achievement for them as well as for the country. Such a claim was based on the fact that when the SIDT was not involved in political education, there was a higher tendency for MPs to be returned to their seats. For example, in the1993 election only 19% failed to be returned to their seats in Parliament.

, Consequently, the relationship between the SIDT and the Government as from 1995-1997 was described by Roughan as a 'rough sea'. There was no proper dialogue between the two on matters affecting the nation as a whole. However, in spite of that, the SIDT still continues to perform its normal functions as well as political education throughout the country. This shows that Solomon Islands is a real 'democratic' country.

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Today, the Solomon Islands Alliance for Change (SIAC) Government under the leadership of Ulufa'alu has restored good relationship between the Government and the SIDT. In demonstrating this, the present Government is currently working on a draft policy with regards to the work of NGOs in the Solomon Islands. In the same manner the SIDT also reduced its level of 'anti-government campaign, a clear indication that it has been fighting against the Mamaloni's Government's return to office.

In summary, there is a clear indication that the SIDT and the Government are not working together to promote rural development in the Solomon Islands since 1994. It should be noted that political bickering amongst NGOs and the Government can also put them ofif from given much attention to the needs of rural people. It is on this basis that the call for the NGO sector and the Government to work together in promoting rural development in the country is important.

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Chapter Seven   Conclusion

The foregoing discussions examined in this Thesis are based on three central objectives. Firstly, whether the SIDT development activities through its outreach programmes have enabled the target population to improve their standard of living? Secondly, has the SIDT development activities 'empowered' the target population to participate fully in the development process? And, finally, has the SIDT enabled the target group to produce, at least the kind of development it envisaged?

The SIDT is the biggest and most vocal local NGO in the Solomon Islands. It was established in 1982 and gained its popularity in the mid 1980s, following its' outreach development programmes. The fragmented nature of the country's socio-political systems, language, and geographical dispersion meant that rural development is an ideal approach to the social, economic and political development of the Solomon Islands. However, the above factors were also the ones that make the promotion of effective rural development difficult to be carried out by the Government alone. As such, it has given an opportunity for NGOs to be partners in the development process. Because of the above factors, the SIDT officials thought that the outreach programmes were suitable approaches to promote development education and political empowerment among the people of the Solomon Islands.

From the analysis of the SIDT development activities in Marau and Raroisu'u Ward, a number of conclusions are made. Firstly, after 16 years of operation, the SIDT has achieved very little in its attempt to improve the standard of living amongst the people of Marau and Raroisu'u Ward in South Malaita. In other words, the SIDT is doing less well then its popular image often suggests. Consequently, the SIDT is becoming another organisation that uses overseas funding to serve its own development ideologies.

Secondly, the SIDT methodological approaches are still heavily 'top-down'. Here, people feel that they are not part of the SIDT development activities in the sense that all its development programmes are done only by a few SIDT officials. As such, people regard the SIDT as another

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strange organisation that works precisely like the colonial administration used to. It should be noted that the traditional participatory approach in the Solomon Islands is one based on continuos dialogue, where both parties always work together in all activities undertaken in the development process (see Chapter 5). In this context, the SIDT has ignored the traditional participatory approach which the indigenous people often used in the development process.

Thirdly, it is obvious that the people of Marau and Raroisu'u Ward do share certain epistemological understandings, which link the SIDT development philosophy (self-reliance and self-sufficiency). However, the way the SIDT approaches rural development is quite different from how the people of Marau and Raroisu'u Ward approaches it. The SEDT approaches concentrate only on two things (training and talking) while the target group's approaches are holistic, encompassing a quartriad of human needs: social needs (bo'obo'o ana noni), spiritual needs (bo'obo'o ana totolahatiana), psychological needs (bo'obo'o ana mamanataha) and economic needs (bo'obo'o ana mama ana weoha). This explicitly demonstrates that the SEDT has discarded the way rural people of Marau and Raroisu'u Ward approaches rural development. Rather, the SIDT is imposing its own development philosophies upon the people of Marau and Raroisu'u Ward.

Finally, much of the SIDT development outreach activity is only based on educational awareness programmes. These awareness programmes are considered by the people as only 'useful' in terms of enabling rural people to be aware of certain negative impacts of development (eg. environmental degradation due to logging). It needs to be pointed out here that, the SIDT is merely preaching and teaching about an 'alternative' development approach. However, in the process, the SIDT failed miserably to provide the necessarily means to achieve their goals. As such, the SIDT development approaches are described as 'one-sided' and therefore, failure is inevitable,

7:1 The Strengths of the SIDT

As pointed out in Chapter six, the SEDT is a local NGO. Therefore, it is likely that it's

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development agenda would reflect the development needs of the indigenous people. Nevertheless, the result clearly shows that this was not necessarily the case. In pursing the development philosophy of the SIDT, thirteen centres were set up throughout the Solomon Islands (refer Map I). These centres are responsible for dissemination of information and training villagers. This set up has complemented the role of the Government in rural development. Also, the SIDT utilised local resources in its outreach programmes. Therefore, problems such as language, culture and other environmental factors are likely to be eliminated. Along the same line, local people should also be willing to take part in these programmes because the development worker is one of them. Moreover, local people know the problems and the development needs of rural people better than an outsider. This move is in line with the SIDT development approaches of'empowerment' as a tool to involve more people in the development process,

Another strength of the SIDT is that its development activities did not conflict with the traditional culture of the people, except for the use of modern toilet and family planning. In many cases, the SIDT attempts to re-enforce the idea of'self-reliance' and 'self-sufficiency* to rural people through having a supsup garden

and be responsible for the development of their resources. It should be noted that such a move is not strange to the people of the Solomon Islands. In fact, 'self-reliance* and 'self-sufficiency' are part and parcel of the indigenous discourse of development in both regions. For example, the term 'self-reliance' and self-sufficiency' can be translated to the traditional concept of to 'oto 'o in both places. In short, the work of the SIDT is just re-affirming the traditional way of life. It is because of this that 82% of 45 respondents claimed that the SIDT development activities are useful (see table 6).

Finally, the SIDT did not only brings in more overseas funds into the country, but also created employment opportunities for a number of local people. These funds have enabled the SIDT to carry out its development activities throughout the country. In this regard, the SIDT also contribute in terms of awareness-building and training as one way to promote rural development in the Solomon Islands.

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7:2 The Problems and Limitations of the SIDT

In the course of carrying out its development activities throughout the country, the SIDT has encountered a number of problems. Here, I shall discuss four of the problems, which hindered its effectiveness.

Shortage of Skilful Human Resources

It is commonly acknowledged that skilfiil human resources are more likely to implement the organisation's programmes effectively and efficiently in comparison to non-skilful ones. As stated by one of the SEDT staff, "our limited skills and knowledge often affect the progress and quality of our services to the people". She further stated that the media department is currently understaffed. This view implies that the SIDT needs more and better professionally trained staff.

The 'Top-down' Approach

As pointed out earlier, much of the SIDT development approaches are still heavily 'top-down', Because of the 'top-down' approach employed by the SIDT, the extent and manner in which the target population were involved in their programmes, was very much seen as 'receiver'. In other words, the SIDT is the 'producer' and 'creator' while the target group are the 'receiver' and 'consumers' of their activities. This contradicts the principles of 'participatory' and 'flexibility' advocated by the SEDT. Therefore, the argument that the SIDT represents the authentic voice of rural people could be overstated, as it only represent some of them.

The SIDT Lack Financial Resources

Much of the SIDT's financial supports come from overseas NGOs, governments and the SIDT itself (refer appendix 2). As such, its development programmes heavily depends on the amount of funds the SIDT secured from its donors. Therefore, the financial position of the SIDT is not well secured. According to one of the field workers in Marau, the change to VDWs came about

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because the SIDT cannot afford to pay for the expenses incurred whilst travelling and talking to people throughout the country.

It is interesting to note that while the SIDT claimed a lack of financial resources, its 1997 annual budget showed that SI$80,000 was committed for fringe benefits apart from normal staff salaries. Furthermore, while the SIDT also committed SI$190,813 for its centres throughout the country (SEDT, 1997), in South Malaita the SIDT did not have an office or building from which its VDWs could do their work. This contradicts the claim that NGOs are more accountable and transparent than the state, I would suggest that the SIDT funds need to be carefully scrutinised against its outcomes.

Geographical Factors as a Problem

As mentioned in Chapter 5, the geographical dispersion of the country could also be seen as one of the major obstacles to any effective rural development programmes implemented in the Solomon Islands. Because of this, the SIDT development activities tend to concentrate along the coastal areas where they are accessible. In such a situation, the SIDT tend to neglect those villages located inland. A good example is the villages in Aulutalau (within Raroisu'u Ward) South Malaita, where people argued that they have never seen any sign of SIDT field workers in their villages since 1993 (personal interview). Therefore, it could be an overstatement to claim that the SEDT represents the authentic voice of rural people, but rather just some of them.

7:3 Recommendations

For any development approach to be effective in the Solomon Islands, in particular among the people of Marau and South Malaita, it must reflect the way indigenous people perceive the term 'development' and their way of life. Here, people and development workers must be seen as one entity in the development process. Development workers must be familiar with the social and cultural systems in which they are working in order to successfully promote change. Furthermore, development workers should understand

their work among the poor would undoubtedly lead to
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changes in social relations and cultural traditions. Therefore, it is important to realise that insulting statements about traditional ways of life and condemnation of people's customs are likely to negatively affect any development programmes introduced to the villagers. It should be noted that new ideas and activities would only be adopted if they do not create more conflict with the way of life of the people. In other words, traditional values and norms should be recognised and appreciated for their special contribution towards a better life. Development workers should assist the people by analysing their beliefs and traditions to identify whether these beliefs and traditions have provided them with emotional and economic supports, or contribute to keeping them in a state of poverty and oppression. In the process, development workers should not impose changes on the people. Rather, the people themselves are entirely responsible to make the proposed changes when they see such changes are in their favour.

In order to implement the above ideas, it is important that development workers reside and work with rural people in their daily activities. Although, this is quite similar to the outreach programmes of the SIDT, the emphasis however, is much more on villager's involvement in the development process rather than the 'top-down' approach. In so doing, development workers need to work along side the villagers in two broad groups. Firstly, the lineage groups, which often consists of two to five families. In many cases, people's immediate problems are identified here. It should also be noted that rural poor would generally attempt to first solve their economic problems because they consider them as the most urgent within the limits of their own resources and opportunities. Unless their economic situation is improved all other development activities will be less than successful. Here, it is important that development workers aim to address these problems in order to improve the standard of living within each family household. It needs to be noted that all small economic projects should be vested in this group. This is because not only does this group of people own the resources such as land, but they are also very closely related. In this regard, benefits derive from any development projects are more likely to trickle down to assist the poorest of the poor. Of course, individual aspiration should be encouraged as well.

The second group consists of all individuals, clans and families. This group will be represented by a selected committee to work on their be-half. For example, in South Malaita we
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referred to this group as the 'Council of Chiefs'. This group should be mandated by the people to co-ordinate policy matters, communal and regional projects such as water supply, church, road, wharf, clinic, schools and rural housing. Here, development workers should concentrate on how to assist this group seeking funds to meet their development needs. Within the process, educational awareness and political empowerment can also take place. However, the emphasis should be placed on how to ensure rural people have access to the basic services such as water supply and health. Also, it is important to note that people would first choose activities, which directly affect their daily lives before proceed on other general areas such as political education and other awareness programmes. It needs to be noted that development workers are not there to 'spoon' feed rural people. Rather, its main job is to facilitate rural people to do things for themselves.

Based on the findings and the conclusion made above, a number of recommendations are made. These recommendations are not exhaustive. Here, the author presents some ideas that may hopefully lead to effective promotion of rural development by the SIDT in the country.

Firstly, the Government, NGOs and private sector should all work together in the development process. This is to avoid unnecessary duplication of services. For example, NGOs should also provide funding for small and specific projects such as water supply. Furthermore, NGOs should also assist the Government to identify the needs of rural people. In the same manner, the private sector should not only continue to provide basic services to its employees, but also to support rural development programmes financially. Secondly, the NGO sector (eg. SIDT) should also assist rural people to seek funding from overseas donors to finance their development needs. Here, NGO workers should reside and work consistently with rural people in two groups as identified above (the lineage group and the Council of Chiefs). In this respect, it is important that NGO workers are familiar with the necessary bureaucratic procedures and technical knowledge on how to apply for overseas funds. Thirdly, the Government, rural people and NGO workers should all be involved in the monitoring
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and evaluation process. They should all work together to determine what goes wrong and attempt to solve the problems encountered.

Finally, the state, the NGO sector such as the SIDT, and the private sector should not complete among themselves in the development process. As stated above, they should always work together because the final product of their outcome is to improve the standard the living of the people. In that context, people should be at the 'centre' of their development agenda.

For the SIDT to promote rural development that responds to human needs, its policies and programmes must ultimately be 'anchored' and guided by what people already know and their way of life. Thus, it is important that the SIDT development strategies are holistic and 'rooted' in the 'heart' of a given society. As Burkey (1993) puts it:

Go to the people,
Live with them,
Love them,
Learn from them,
Work with them,
Start with what they have,
Build on what they know,
and in the end, when the work is done,
The people will rejoice: 'we have done it ourselves'.

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Appendix 1: The Organisational Structure of the SIDT

VI) \v	VD W	VD W	VD W	VD W	VD W	VD W	VD W	VD W	VD W		VD W	VD W	VD W

Source: SIDT, 1990

F/O: Field Officer for Temotu, Choiseul, Western one and two, Central, Isabel, Malaita, South Malalta, Honiara, Guadalcanal, Marau, Rennell, and Makira

VDW: Village Demonstration Workers in each of the above centres.

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Appendix 2: The SIDT Funding Soiuces, 1997

FUNDING SOURCES	AMOUNT iBl$\
1: Australia Foundation for Asia/Pacific	110,050
2: Canada Path	44,116
3: Germany Bread for the World	67,903
4: ICCO of Netherlands	599,406
5: New Zealand	289,347
6: ITTG/Green Peace	8,985
7: New Zealand High Commission	289,362
8: UNICEF	37,156
9: United States	224,350
10: MacArthur Foundation	107,261
11: Biodiversity	117,089
12: United Kindom	189,168
13: Christian Aid	38,000
14: UK/FSP/ODA	59,196
15: Cooper 8s Lybrant	12,610
16: Interest	10,416
17: Office Block	127,516
18: Gold Ridge	21,707
19: Sales	1,414
Total	1,7445.158

Source: SIDT, 1997 Annual Report.

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Appendix 3: Summary of the SIDT Overall Expenses for 1997

DEPARTMENT AND ACTIVITIES	AMOUNT SI*
It INFORMATION SHARING	673,464
village Demonstration Wokers	416,735
Training	140,871
Centres	190,813
Advisory Council	11,595
Volunteer	16,478
2: PRINT MEDIA	83,840
Link	34,162
Balance Edit	49,678
3: THEATRE GROUP	156,000

SEI and Mere Akson	134,903	
Action Community Theatre	21,097	
4: DISTANCE EDUCATION		16,889
Radio Unit	1,722	
Radion Expenses	10,167	
5: NATURAL WEALTH TO CASH		450,052
6: CONSERVATION IN DEVELOPMET		270,001
Ngali Nut Oil	107,260	
Administration	162,741	
7s BUTTERFLY RANCHING		48,353
Project	22,520	
Salary	25,833	
8: Eco-FORESTRY UNIT		
EFU Program	45,732	
Balance	107,647	
9: OTHER PROGRAMMES	28,085	
Development Service Exchange		
Rural Water Supply & Sanitation	85,966	
Survey	17,190	
Project	744	
Women's Study Program	34,237	
10: ORGANISATION	10,170	
Audit	23,625	
Building		328,249
Transport	12,000	
Contingencies	57,089	
Space Costs	13,542	
Travel	12,742	
Special Program 15th Anniversary	139,953	
Hi ADMINISTRATION	42,761	
Salary	50,162	
Pay as you earn {income tax)		231,849
Fringe	98,255	
National Provident Fund	26,143	
	80,742	
	26,709	
TOTAL	1,683.614	

Source: SIDT, 1997 Annual Report.
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Appendix 4: A Sample of the
Interview
Section A: Background Information
1: Name of the participant:........................... 2: Gender:............
3: Maritual Status:.................................. 4: Age ....
5: Religion.................................. 6: Source of income:
7: Formal education..............................

Section B: Information on the SIDT Programmes.
8: List the kinds of development activities the SIDT talked about in your village.
9: Who initiated these devlopment activities?   SIDT or Community or Both:...........
10: Does these development activities relevant to meet your development needs? Yes/ No
11: If Yes, in what ways..
If No, why?..
12: List development problems you have been facing before the SIDT came to your village.
13: Do you still experience these problems? Yes or No;...........................*......
14: If Yes, why?..
If No, why? ....
15: How do you assess the work of the SIDT? Useful or useful in some ways, or not 16: Explain your
answer..
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17: Does the SIDT activities make any impact in your life? Yes or No 18: If your answer for question 18 is
Yes9 explain:........................
If your answer is No, explain:...
19: List some disadvantages of the SIDT development activities.
20: What do you expect the SIDT do to in your community?
21: How many times the SIDT staff visited your community?..........
22: Does the SIDT activities gives you self-autonomy? Yes or No
23: If your answer is Yes, How?..
If your answer is NO, why?...,.
24:Did the SIDT activities successful in your community? Yes or No: 25: If your answer to question 25 is
YES, explain.........................
If your answer for question 25 is NO, why?..............................
26: Any general comments about the overall work of the SIDT in your village or area.
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Schedule B: Fog the SSDT Staff Only
1: How many departments consists of the SIDT?..........
2: List the objectives of the SIDT development activities:
3: List the kinds of development activities the SIDT introduced to the communities.
4: Is the SIDT development programmes short-term or long-tenn approach?
5: What is the SIDT target population?..................SIDT priority area ..
6: Does the SIDT give money or material to the communities? YES or NO
7: If NO, why?..
8: Does the SIDT achieve its objectives? YES or NO.
9: If your answer to question 8 is YES, explain..................................
If your answer to question 8 is NO, why?
10: In what ways will the SIDT improve its contribution to rural development in the country?
11: Does the SIDT change its role since it was set up in 1982? YES or NO 12: If your answer to question
11 is YES or NO, Explain.......................
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13: Does the SIDT has a training program? YES or NO.   Short-term or Long-term......
14: Are you confident with SIDT staff whilst carrying out their work amonst rural people? YES or NO
If your answer is YES, explain:..
If your answer is NO, Why?..
15: Can you comment on the relationship between the SIDT and the Government with regards to your
work? ....
16: Does the SIDT receive finanacial support from the Government? YES or NO.
17: If NO, why?..
If YES, when and how much? ....,.............................
18: Do you have the required number of human resources? YES or NO
19:IfNO,why?..
20: List some disadvantages of the SIDT programmes..
21: What was the general reaction from the communities, in response to' the SIDT activities?
22: How would you know the SIDT activities are not 'rooted' in the villages?

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23: Does the SIDT consult the communities whilst formulating their activities?

IfYES, in what ways:..

If NO, why?...,.....

24: General comments about the work of the SIDT in the country.

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Schednale C

1: What is the position of the Government with regards to the work of the SIDT?

2: Does the Government assist the SIDT financially? YES or NO

3: If NO, why? ....

4: What do you expect the SIDT to do in terms of promoting rural development in the Solomon Islands?

....

5: How would you evaluate the overall work of the SIDT in the country?

6: List some disadvantages of the SIDT programmes:

7: In what ways do you think the SIDT activities are useful?

8; Does the SIDT development activities directly addressing the real needs of rural people?

YES or NO...

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If your answer to question 8 is YES, is explain:..................

If your answer is to question 8 is NO, why?......................

9: List some of the rural development problems in the country.

10: Do you think the SDDT is addressing these rural development problems? YES or NO If your answer to question 10 is YES, explain;...

If your answer to question 10 is NO, why?

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