**Community Leadership, Social Capital and Rural Development in Solomon Islands:**

**A Central Kwara'ae Constituency Study, Malaita Province,**

**By**

**John Niroa Misite'e**

**A Thesis submitted in Partial Fulfilment of the Requirements for the Degree of Master of Arts in Development Studies.**
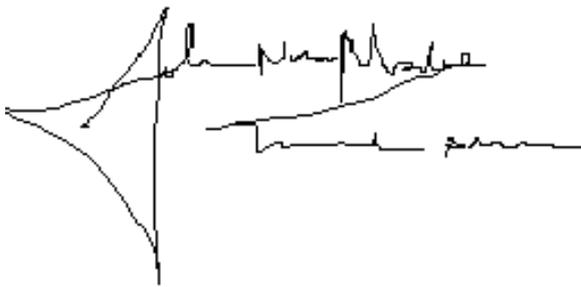
**Pacific Institute of Advanced Studies in Development and Governance.**

**The University of the South Pacific**

**DECLARATION OF ORIGINALITY**

I, John Niroa Misite'e declare that this thesis is my own work and that, to the best of my knowledge, it contains no material previously published, or substantially overlapping with material submitted for the award of any other degree at any institution, except where due acknowledgment is made in the text.

…………………………………………

John Niroa Misite'e

Date: October 2008

i

# DECLARATION OF ORIGINALITY

I, John Niroa Misite'e declare that this thesis is my own work and that, to the best of my knowledge, it contains no material previously published, or substantially overlapping with material submitted for the award of any other degree at any institution, except where due acknowledgment is made in the text.
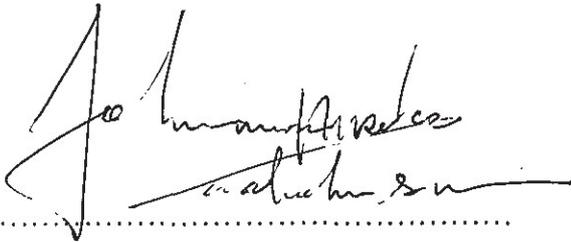
John Niroa Misite'e

Date: Oct 2008

**Statement by Supervisor**

I hereby confirm that the work contained in this thesis is the work of John Niroa Misite'e unless otherwise stated.

Signed:

**Dr Miliakere Kaitani, Lecturer, School of Governance and Development Studies**

Date: 26 March 2009

# ABSTRACT

This thesis intends to demonstrate that socio-economic development at the rural level in Malaita Province depends on two factors: leadership and good social relationships within and between rural communities. Development in rural Solomon Islands raises many complex social issues that influence its outcomes. Rural communities and people play a key role in determining how social issues and problems such as conflict between tribes, local political groups, communities and so on are dealt with. At present social issues and conflict between local groups are negatively affecting local level development. It is therefore believed that greater attention needs to be given to social relations and leadership to understand how communities can solve these problems which they are well placed to do.

This research was guided by a key research question: *How do Community Leadership and Social Capital influence Rural Development in Malaita Province?* Two key objectives were proposed to be addressed in this research question:

- To identify the influence of leadership and the role community leaders play in rural community socio-economic development process and
- To determine the importance of social relationships to local development process and the role of community leaders in facilitating it.

Five leadership dimensions of; *vision, shared-vision, collaboration, communication and trust, and networking and strategic alliances* were used in the research to measure the effectiveness of community leadership in rural community development process. A case-study strategy was adopted with two rural communities in Central Kwara'ae, Malaita Province taken as the two distinct 'cases'. Interviews and observational tools were used for collecting information. Thirty-three respondents were involved in the study with many identified as community leaders themselves.

The study found that local people understood and recognized the importance of leadership in socio-economic development at the local level. It was also found that 'collaboration' entails the other four leadership dimensions used in the framework for this study and was important to be developed in an environment where there were multiple stakeholders with different views on development were involved in the process. It was also found that the effectiveness of community leadership is related to social relationships and participation in local development initiatives was related to strong social relationships as well as leadership itself.

 In overall social factors such as leadership and social capital are found to be important factors to consider in rural development discussions in Solomon Islands. The study concludes that rural communities in Central Kwara'ae would have to deal with poor leadership and social relationships which were shown to negatively influence development at the rural level.

Areas for further research were suggested and implications for theory and practice were discussed in the conclusion of the thesis.

# ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

# TABLE OF CONTENTS

# LIST OF TABLES

# LIST OF CHARTS

**CHAPTER 1**

**INTRODUCTION**

*We have to have a leadership that understands that its role is to create an environment for the*
*people to come together to attack the problems that confront them*
*(John Jacob cited in S, W., Morse, 2004: 181).*

**1.0 Background to the Study**

This study aims to examine the influence of social infrastructure in the rural development process in Solomon Islands. Among other factors, this thesis argues that 'social infrastructure' which includes 'community leadership' and 'social capital' is among the important social factors to consider in the rural development discussions in Solomon Islands and Malaita province in particular where fieldwork for this thesis was carried out.

The term 'social capital' is used here to refer to the networks and links– developed and/or ones which can be potentially developed– between and/or among different groups i.e. communities, churches, landowners, tribes, NGOs, provincial government and so on in the rural development process. It is simply a form of relationship among these groups built on trust. In this thesis 'rural development' encompasses development strategies and activities which aim to enable the rural people to control more of the benefits of socio-economic development which seem to be controlled in urban areas.

Development in rural Solomon Islands, generally, raises many complex social issues that influence its outcomes. Rural communities and people play a key leadership role in determining how social issues and problems, as will be briefly outlined below, are dealt with. At present social issues such as conflict between tribes and landowning groups, poor relationships between community churches, women's organizations and so on are negatively affecting local level development. The participation of local people and community groups in development activities at the rural level seem to depend on these

relational issues. I believe that greater attention needs to be given to 'social infractures' particularly social relations and leadership. It is important to understand how communities can solve their own problems which they are well placed to do. Simply, the thesis argues that technical approaches to development may not be the only means to address rural development, but the social aspects and behaviour of the society must also be considered for rural development to be achieved in rural Solomon Islands[1].

Development commentators recognize the negative influences of poor social relationships and leadership on the government's rural development programmes in Solomon Islands. Roughan (2006) in particular believes that among other technical difficulties faced by the Manasseh Sogovare-led Grand Coalition for Change (GCC) government's rural development programme, "the greatest obstacle against the rooting of the [Grand Coalition for Change Government's][2] rural development plans remains internal blockage". For Roughan, 'internal blockage' includes poor social infrastructures: lack of or low local capacity to carry out development programmes and internal conflicts between different social groups in rural areas. Because of this he suggests that firstly, community people must see that they are a vitally important partner in the rural development process. This partnership process, he suggested, should be one which empowered the rural people to get fully involved in the rural development process as both the national government and the resources owners (mostly rural population) share

---

[1] The Solomon Islands government is currently embarking on a Peace and Reconciliation programme between parties directly involved in the recent social conflict in Solomon Islands (see footnote 25). Although such peace building processes are important for the national development process of the country, this thesis is more concerned with current local level community social issues such as the division between local communities, tribes or political groups which seem to be ignored but exist and hinder the development process at the rural level in Solomon Islands. This thesis views the current post-conflict reconciliation process in Solomon Islands as a reactive measure. What this thesis proposes is a more proactive approach to developing socially cohesive rural communities.

[2] Grand Coalition for Change (GCC) is the coalition of different political parties which make up the recent government of Solomon Islands led by Prime Minister Manasseh Sogavare. Note: Prime Minister Sogavare was ousted in a motion of no-confidence by the parliamentary opposition group in December 2007 which now forms the present Coalition for National Unity and Rural Advancement (CNURA) government. However the issue of rural development remains a challenge for the future governments. Therefore Roughan's view is still valid in this discussion.

resources needed for development. He also points out that this partnership and empowerment process is not an easy task.

Commentators like Kabutaulaka (2000) and Otter (2002) point out that one of the reasons for this difficulty in building partnership is that for a good number of Solomon Islanders their identity is rooted in their allegiance to their tribal groups or clans which seems to have negative impact on the local development process as people do not work to embrace 'others' (e.g. tribes, ethnic, village communities, province etc…) identity which can also be based on different cultural values and practices found in communities throughout the archipelago[3]. This is reflected in the rural development process but also in the national development process of the country as people do not relate to each other well in the society.

Otter (2002) sees this as the failure of the government (since colonial times) to foster in the people a sense of 'ownership' in their country's development process. But perhaps one should also scrutinize the factors influencing identity building and the efforts made at the rural level in addressing this issue and its influence on the local development process. In other words, the leadership role played by rural people must also be identified for its influence on rural development. Geography, tribal and/or ethnic identities clearly provide a basis for competition between different groups rather than cooperation and collaboration a more reasonable development approach in an environment where factors of development (e.g. land, rivers, forests etc.) are limited or controlled by a very few people. It is within these differences that "internal blockages" (as pointed out earlier) to rural development seem to lie and it is important to address these local level problems to allow for development to occur smoothly in the rural areas. Rural people are well placed to address them. Therefore, it may be misleading to say that it is the failure of the government to address identity issues at the local level in the Solomon Islands. One has

---

[3] What I intend to point out here is simply the general wide spread division between different community groups such as churches, tribes and land owning groups, local political groups, etc. There are exceptions of rural communities which work together. For instance, in North New Georgia Island in Western Province, different tribal groups work together in one of the successful conservation and tourism programmes in Solomon Islands.

to also scrutinize the effort local people demonstrate to promote socially cohesive communities where people develop respect and trust and work together towards achieving their development aspirations.

Aqorau (2006) believes that for socio-economic development in Solomon Islands to take place in the rural areas would require 'a change in the attitude'[4] of rural people who make up 80% of Solomon Islands population. Rural people hold primary rights over land, forests and marine resources which are essential to development. Aqorau adds that an important initial step is for rural people to allow the tribally owned resources such as land, rivers, forests, harbors and other marine resources to be utilized for economic benefits of the rural areas. Like Roughan (2006), he asserts that 'partnership' is vital in an environment where different stakeholders are involved to allow for development in the rural areas. The common factor in both Roughan and Aqorau's arguments is the call for 'partnership', a process which both commentators see as involving a common understanding between or among different actors i.e. national and provincial government, rural communities, NGOs etc. participating in and/or affected by this process.

Why Aqorau calls for a change of attitude is clear: in rural areas conflict between and among tribes, communities and individuals on rights of usage and ownership over these resources are common. These have negative consequences and are a hindrance to development. Often, only the 'high profile conflicts' are visible and far greater numbers are either unnoticed or under-reported, yet they have an important effect on the development process at the local level. Hassall (2005:192) rightly points out that "conflicts need not be violent to have a significant impact on economic development and public life: they can be played out through forms of hindrance, delay and blockage, using formal and informal processes". These are the types of conflict and social relationships that this thesis is concerned about. How the local community leaders deal with such

---

[4] Aqorau does not intend to mean that Solomon Islanders must do away with their cultural values or views and practices. In fact some forms of cultural practices are suitable to the development process as shall be shown in the later chapters of the thesis.

community level cases is believed to be important for the success of the rural development process in Solomon Islands.

The Malaita Province Strategic Plan 2007-2017 (Malaita Province, 2006:12) in reference to land and conflict on Malaita, states that land is fundamental to the ability of the Province to develop itself and that "there is not only a shortage of land... [but] disputes over land cause disharmony in our communities and are themselves a barrier to development". The Malaita Strategic Plan believes that the responsibility in solving these land disputes rests on the people who potentially can play a major part to the success (or otherwise) of rural development process on Malaita.

The Central Malaita Development Trust Agency (CMDTA) (2006) recognizing the impact of poor social relationships on development in the Central Malaita[5] region notes that developing a 'right attitude' toward development is important for Malaita Province. 'Right attitude', for CMDTA, constitutes people seeking and appreciating their role in the rural development process and take initiative in identifying and addressing local level issues and particularly conflicts over land, forest, rivers and marine resources.

Sanga (2007) with reference to the Gula'ala[6] group of East- Kwara'ae Constituency of Central Malaita identifies that the spirit of *ofuofua*[7] (to bind or unite people) is important when people of different tribes and ethnic groups, church or political ideologies co-existed. He believes that

> [the] spirit of *ofuofua* should therefore be encouraged and nurtured to permeate the spiritual, the communal and the corporate dimensions of the community... ... *ofuofua* is the way forward to stability and the creation of the right environment for

---

[5] Central Malaita is the case-study region for this research. See Chapter 4 for details of the case-study area.

[6] Gula'ala is a small ethnic group within the Kwara'ae group of people in East-Kwara'ae Constituency. They live mainly on the coastal fringes and on two Islands (Kwai and Ngongosila) off the main Island of Malaita. They speak both the Gula'ala and Kwara'ae languages and are themselves a mixture of Kwara'ae and other ethnic groups of Lau, Kwaio and Are' are (see Chapter 4 for languages on Malaita).

[7] *Ofua* literally means 'to group people together'; *ofufua* is the act of grouping or uniting different things, particularly different people/groups, together. In this context it carries the notion of 'cooperation' and unity.

entrepreneurship with reduced risk if the Gula'ala peoples expect success in corporate enterprises and other developmental endeavors. *Ofuofua* has the potential to facilitate the advancement of Gula'ala without which others (e.g. non-landowning groups) would find it hard to access better opportunities (ibid: 10).

Swanson (1996) states that the importance of 'social infrastructures' which include leadership and 'social capital' is often over-looked in rural development discussions mainly because these factors are viewed as 'soft' areas in economic development. She points out that the general basic assumption for not incorporating social factors such as leadership and social capital from which good social relationships develop into development discussion is that "if you can't see it, touch it, smell it or taste it, it isn't real". This is because these abstract notions are difficult to quantify. She believes though that "if these social infrastructures are acted upon, nurtured and mobilized they can be the facilitators of the much loved economic perspective of development" (ibid: 103).

Capital investment in rural Solomon Islands' communities from 'outside' often goes into the formation of physical infrastructure, equipment and sometimes into inventories, rather than into human capital development. For example, recently, the World Bank approved US$3.2 million under an International Development Assistance (IDA) grant to strengthen the rural economy of Solomon Islands by increasing access for rural communities to infrastructure and services (see http://www.sibconline.com.sb, 9/2007)[8]. Whilst it cannot be denied that access to infrastructure and services are vital factors for economic development at the rural areas, I argue here that equal attention should be given to developing and strengthening social infrastructure, like the need to build and strengthen good social relationships and community leadership at the community level. These also have significant influence on rural development in Solomon Islands. Rural development will continue to be the central theme in Solomon Islands development discussions for many years to come as 80% of the country's population lives in the 'rural areas' (Solomon Islands Statistics Office, 1999). It is also probable that this process will

---

[8] See also these news items for similar development view; *Solomon star, June 12, 2006; Solomon Islands Broadcasting Corporation, 9/2007;* and *Solomon Star July 10, 2006.*

continually be dominated by the neo-classical development approach that emphasize on investing in the development of technical capacity, physical infrastructures, and financial capital. In the face of this there is a need to point out the importance of developing human and social capital[9].

## 1.1 Rationale for the Research

Rural development has long dominated the development debate in Solomon Islands even before the country gained political independence in 1978 (Solomon Islands Government National Development Plan (SIGNDP) 1985-1989; SIGNDP, 1980-1984; SIGNDP, 1975-1979). In many rural development programmes and discourses, there is often an emphasis on 'tangible' development inputs such as financial capital and technical know-how with little acknowledgement of the significance of social factors such as leadership and the need to build good social relationships at the rural community level[10]. When they have been mentioned (Malaita Province, 2006; Solomon Island Government/Department of National Planning, 2006; Central Malaita Development Trust Agency, undated), these factors are not been given the in-depth attention and analysis that they deserve[11].

Leadership has been central to 'organizational literature'[12] where it is seen as key to achieving positive changes or aspired goals of a given organization. A similar assumption is also made with respect to the role good leadership can play in leading to positive community change. This view is also put forward by the Pacific Institute in Advanced Studies in Development and Governance's Leadership Program at the University of the South Pacific which asserts, "Good Leadership transforms communities, schools,

---

[9] This view is discussed in detail in Chapter 2.

[10] Refer to footnote 1 and 25.

[11] See Aqorau (2006); Roughan (2006); Sanga (2005); Otter (2002) and Liloqula (2002) for discussions and views in this area.

[12] Organizational literature is used in management and leadership studies. Many of the textbooks are concerned about how firms and corporations and other organizations such as schools, police, government ministries and private organizations in which human interaction is high, view leadership as a (prime) factor in their existence and future development.

businesses, institutions and nations", and that "Leadership is the core driver for community change"[13].

Various development actors in Solomon Islands also hold the view that leadership is an important factor for positive development and change in communities. For example the Australian Council for International Development (ACFID) facilitated a three-year leadership-training programme for community development NGOs from 2002 to 2004. In its evaluation ACFID outlined four key areas of leadership in the rural community that it deemed vital for positive changes to take place in a community. These include the need for leaders: (i) to engage in building trust through dialogue between and among different parties in the communities, (ii) develop a gender balance in decision making in the community, (iii) be competitive and learners of new ideas for the community, and (iv) leadership roles in community development must be understood well by both the community and the 'change agents' such as the NGOs, church based groups and the like (ACFID, 2004).

Similarly, a recent Central Malaita Development Trust Agency Report[14] (CMDTA) (2006) recognized the importance of good leadership for positive community development in Central Malaita. The report identifies that one of the weaknesses and threats to development process in Central Malaita region is that there is lack of clear development vision and direction, and that many people do not have a vision for the development of the region. The report points to poor leadership by individuals and local actors (villagers, chiefs, church groups, landowners etc.) who have failed to identify how communities can 'work together' to achieve their development goals. The Report asserts that cooperation between different actors (government, NGOs, communities etc.) is vital for the successful development of Central Malaita and that the latter depends on a

---

[13] http://www.governance.usp.ac.fj/project_networks/leadership/

[14] Central Malaita Development Trust Agency (CMDTA) is a semi-voluntary development agency established in 2004. It consists of Central Malaita Credit Union Ltd, Central Malaita Cooperatives and Central Malaita Farmers' Association. The CMDTA key aim is to combine limited resources in three development areas namely; finance, agriculture and trading of basic goods to its members and to encourage self-sufficiency in developing the Central Malaita region. The board of the Agency is made up of some key Central Malaita people in the both public and the private sectors. See chapter 4 for details on Central Malaita constituency.

peaceful society, stable politics, reliable infrastructure and good economic, social and moral structures. In other words more networks and positive relationships must be developed and natured in Central Malaita communities if rural development is to be achieved. These features will encourage people to be involved in the rural development process. The Report adds that Central Malaita is poorly developed because people expect development to come to them. It asserts that development will take place only when people themselves are 'organized' and see where each group can contribute positively in this process. This will also enable the various actors to develop a sense of direction to move the region towards achieving its aspired goal. It concludes:

> By nature we [humans] are more reactive than proactive. Our lives are directed more by stimuli or daily happenings. We are never principled in life, only few people are. Because of this we never focus and act rightly, and always miss the mark for whatever we aim for. Presently, society [Central Malaita] does not know where it is going. It simply flows with the 'tide', wherever it flows. Right or wrong it does not matter anymore. Self-esteem, pride, personal gain and corruption prevail over service and charity. Society must be redirected to being sober, moral, upright and industrious. Redirection and focus take place only when will power is exercised. As it is at the moment will power is lacking at all levels of life (CMDTA, 2006: 3).

The above suggest what constitutes 'good leadership' and why it is an important factor in facilitating working-together for positive changes in rural communities, and hence rural development.

## 1.2 Purpose of the Study

The aim of the study is to examine how 'behaviors' and 'social factors' such as leadership and community networks or organisation can be incorporated into rural development policies, programmes and discussions in Solomon Islands, particularly on Malaita Province where the fieldwork for the study was carried out. Focus is given to how these factors influence development at the rural community level.

The overall research question is: **How do Community Leadership and Social Capital influence Rural Development in Malaita Province?** The principal research questions are:

- How is leadership for socio-economic development defined in the rural communities?

- What underlying leadership dimension(s) influence(s) development at the community level?

- How are local organizations governed in Central Kwara'ae communities? What leadership roles are played; by whom, how and why? How might these roles influence community development?

- How are decision-making processes viewed within community organizations? What degree of participation do community people display within community organizations?

- How do social relationships influence community responses in community organizations?

- How does social cohesion influences development at the rural areas or communities?

## 1.3 Summarized Research Methodology

This research is approached from a post-positivist point of view; that reality (ontology) is socially constructed and that reality will only be partially known. The view of people in their sphere of existence is viewed as their worldview and from which reality is constructed. This study is interested in understanding the 'relationship of leadership and good social relationships to rural development in Solomon Islands'. The study is interpretive because it depends on the literature for theoretical background to the research question and also information is gathered from small groups of people in their context through a form of interviews, direct observations and analysis of documents on the phenomena in the research process. It is interested in the function of personal interaction of people within their communities and their perception on the phenomena central to this investigation. The case-study approach is deemed suitable to investigate the problem of the study.

Three sources were used as sources of data: interviews, documents and long-term observations. Both the researcher and four research assistants between May and June 2007 did in-depth interviews. A total of 33 individual were interviewed. The sample selection in this process was 'simple random' sampling using a village household list to identify households/community person to be interviewed by the research assistants. A focus group interview was also held at Radefasu Community. Eight (8) participants attended this session. The interviews were taped recorded with the consent of the informant being sought before doing so. Interviews range from thirty minutes to an hour and a half. All interviews were done in pidgin except when concepts and terms need to be related or translated to the local dialect. In the latter case, a research assistant helped to relate the concepts in the local dialect. The technique used in the study for selecting community leaders was 'snow-ball sampling'. The technique was deemed appropriate because of the nature of the problem under investigation, i.e. leaders and the roles they play in relation to development at the community level would be difficult for an 'outsider' to identify easily. This sort of information may not be identifiable by an outsider but rather by the community people themselves. Several informal discussions and interviews were also held in Auki and Honiara with Provincial members and people from Central Kwara'ae and other development aid-agencies in Auki.

Documents used in the study included forms of data not gathered from interviews and personal observations such as 'development reports', 'local schools minutes of meetings', 'newspaper articles' and 'relevant internet documents. Most of these documents were collected during the fieldwork. Others were collected over the course of the research. Direct observation was also deemed relevant for this study because the focus was on assessing the social behaviour of a particular social group. In this study observation was done to identify the responses of the community people to community development activities. Observation was also done on the community-wide responses to village development activities in general. This observation process was done over five-month period from February to June 2007 in both case-study communities. 'Behavior sampling' was used in the observations.

The data collected was presented as a 'thick description' using direct quotes as evidences. Analysis of the data is qualitatively done using emerging key terms from the data in the final analysis on the problem of investigation in this study: the influence of leadership and social relationships to development in Central Kwara'ae.

A detailed report of the methodology utilized in this research is provided as Appendix A.

## 1.4 Key Assumptions

This study was based on a number of underlying assumptions:

- That useful and accurate insight into the nature of leadership and social relationships in relation to rural development in Solomon Islands can be obtained from key informants and village respondents.

- That the approach taken in this study is appropriate for the purpose of the study which is to examine the influence of leadership and governance processes and social relationships in rural development process in Solomon Islands. Two rural communities were chosen as 'case' studies for investigation. Evidence was mainly collected through the use of interviews and observation tools. These methods are assumed to be appropriate for this study.

- That the information obtained from the analysis of all the data collected was valid and that the quote used were representative of the findings

## 1.5 Delimitations and Limitations of the Study

It is important to note that this study was done within a place-time context. It was carried out at a time when the government was highly supportive of a rural development focus within its development policy. But it was also conducted from the perspective that social aspects of development were insufficiently discussed in the rural development discourses and process at this time. The study is limited to discussing the nature of leadership and governance and social relationships and the impacts on rural development in two rural communities on Malaita: Radefasu and Kilusakwalo. Case studies look at an issue in its particular situation; hence this study was not intended to be representative of the situation throughout Solomon Islands or the whole of Central region of Malaita Province. However, it is hoped that the findings from these two communities will assist in better

understanding the roles of leadership and social relations in the development process in other parts of Solomon Islands and in rural development in general

The researcher chose to include among the participants and respondents in the study people who were identified as 'leaders' in their own communities. It is therefore recognized that they may have biased views in their assessments of their leadership roles in the communities' development processes. However, it was felt important to discuss with leaders how they viewed their role for the purposes of the study. In addition, it would have been difficult to carry out this research without including them as they are key figures in village and community life.

The research used interview and observational methods to collect evidence thus emphasizing a qualitative approach which was felt to be more appropriate than a quantitative or survey approach. The case study sampling group was limited to thirty-three respondents but the researcher also spent time in informal dialogue with local Central Malaitan people in the township of Auki. Informal discussions were also held with the premier of Malaita province and other provincial members at Auki. The researcher also took time to observe the various activities related to the Central Kwara'ae constituency development, namely the Central Malaita Cooperatives, Central Malaita Farmers Association and the Credit Union in Auki. Responses of the people to these initiatives were notified and included in this study.

**1.6 Definitions**
- <u>Actors</u> – Representatives of individuals or groups who have a stake in a policy or program that related to or may affect rural development process. It is used interchangeably with 'stakeholders'.
- <u>Generalizability</u>- In qualitative research, this refers to how a finding in one case study can be generalized to another context. It is about the possibility of making generalization from the findings of a qualitative research.
- <u>Community</u>- the term is used to refer to an identified social group within a geographical location. It is also used interchangeably with 'village'.

- Organization- refers to the formal set-ups in the village such as schools, health centres, credit schemes and the like which are operated by village people and social groups.

- Social groups- the term is used generally to refer to a village community, gender based groups such as youth, women's or men's organization, landowners, church groups and other similar groups.

- Social relationships- refers to the relationship between different social groups in a given community or constituency.

For the sake of convenience the two case communities will be abbreviated as:

Radefasu Community (RC) and Kilusakwalo Community (KC).

**1.7 Thesis Organization**

This thesis consists of seven chapters. Chapter 1 introduces the thesis and outlines its motivations, objectives, arguments, and rationale. It presents the background to the study, and raises important research questions. Justification for the research is also presented. Chapter 2 reviews the literature on development, outlining the major theories in development discourse. This provides a theoretical framework within which discussions of and policies on rural development in Solomon Islands are located. Chapter 3 reviews the literature on leadership, community governance and social capital. It is divided into two parts. Firstly, leadership, community governance and social capital concepts are discussed from a wider theoretical view. This allows for understanding the social theoretical views on how leadership and social capital influence social and economic development at the local level. Secondly the chapter discusses the nature of local governance structures and processes in Solomon Islands highlighting their importance in rural development discussions in Solomon Islands. An over-view of traditional governance and leadership studies in the Pacific is also provided. Chapter 4 presents an over-view of the area and villages covered in the case studies. It gives a historical overview of socio-economic development in Malaita Province. The focus is on socio-economic development in Central Malaita, in particular Central Kwara'ae. The discussion focuses on the role of leadership in the development process in these places. Chapters 5

and 6 present a qualitative discussion of the research findings from the two case-study communities. Direct quotes will be used as evidence from the field data collected in the communities. The research questions will be used as guidelines for topical presentation of the main findings from the fieldwork. Chapter 7 compares and analyses the key findings and briefly relates these to the theoretical frameworks presented in Chapters 2, 3 and 4. Implications for further research into the problem and for practice are also presented. A personal remark by the researcher concludes the whole study.

**CHAPTER 2**

**RURAL DEVELOPMENT IN SOLOMON ISLANDS: A THEORETICAL
FRAMEWORK**

**2.0 Introduction**

This chapter examines the contemporary development theories and their underlying
assumptions about the process of development; its objectives and the factors that
influence it. The chapter focuses specifically on how different schools of thought inform
and influence the discussions about, as well as our understanding of, the process of rural
development. It is within this larger discussion that the case of rural development in
Solomon Islands is located. The chapter therefore aims to explore how rural development
in Solomon Islands is influenced by and fits into the major theoretical perspectives on
development.

**2.1 The Concept of Development**

The desire to progress, improve, and enhance living conditions and technologies has long
been part of human existence. It is this desire that leads to inventions. It is within this
context that the concept of 'development' emerged and became popular especially in the
post-World War II period although the idea of social change can be traced in the
nineteenth century in the works of sociologists such as Comte, Durkheim, Weber and
Spencer (Plange, 1996). The contemporary idea of development is closely associated
with the post-WWII reconstruction of European countries destroyed by the war, and the
strategic interests of world powers during the Cold War period that followed the war. The
idea of development also came about through growing awareness of the differences in
quality of life and the degree of 'development' and/or modernisation between the nations of
the world.

This awareness gave rise in particular to the modernisation theory which views development
in comparative terms: a nation's development is measured according to how similar to or

different it is from the industrialised nations of Western Europe and North America. This view of development was advocated through the work of scholars like Walt Rostow (1960), Daniel Lerner (1958), and Talcott Parsons (1971) in the 1960s and 1970s. Wilbert Moore (1963, cited in Hulme and Turner, 1997:34) sees modernisation as the "total transformation of a traditional or pre-modern society into the types of technology and associated social organisation that characterise the advanced" countries of the western world. Although there are various definitions of modernisation, this view enables us to make some generalizations. This school of thought consists largely of economists and sociologists who view development as a progression of growth from a traditional society to a 'high mass consumption' society as found in Western Europe and North America.  Since then, as we shall see below, the development debate has taken many turns and twists.

## 2.2 Modernization Theory

Central to the modernization debate is the view that *development* is a process that can be adopted or transferred from the 'developed' countries to the 'underdeveloped' ones. The fundamental assumption is that if developing countries were to adopt the economic, political and even social values of the developed countries this would enable them to modernize and develop. The assumption was that employing the same model that had worked in rebuilding post-World War II Europe could solve the development problems of Third World countries. In this view, certain catalysts such as monetary aid, technical and human resources (in the forms of development economists and other specialist) should be injected into, transferred to, or adopted by the developing countries to enable them to initiate the process of modernization which is also equated with westernization. The mainstream thinking in the modernisation model was dominated by a relatively simple paradigm: if the poor countries were to solve their social and economic problems, they needed `development' similar to that which had occurred in the developed countries, a development which could be measured by growth in per capita income. Economic growth was thus equated with development, which could be accelerated with the help of trade, aid and the investment of private and public capital from the developed countries. Simply put, the development of a country or society is viewed solely as a transformation and through

the achievement of economic variables such as high per capita income or Gross National Product (GNP).

The perspective that economic development occurs in stages was articulated in Rostow's (1960) famous essay; *Stages of Economic Growth: a Non-communist Manifesto* in which he wrote that a society had to pass through five stages, going from a simple traditional society to a more complex and modernized one. The final stage: 'the age of high mass-consumption' was illustrated by Western societies in their 'self-sustaining economic growth'. This process, it is asserted by most modernization proponents, can only occur if changes in internal economic structures are made to allow for the process of modernization to occur. The process of development is considered to be an 'endogenous' process; one that is solely related to internal economic structures of the developing countries. Rostow viewed traditional societies as not being committed to economic invention and innovation. This he, asserted was because it is intrinsic in their cultures, and even their social values, and their views of the physical world, and that a limited proportion of time is allocated for developing creative talent. Rostow saw economic progress as a necessary condition for general welfare, private profit making and the like.

Lerner (1958) and Parsons (1971) also contributed significantly to the sociological modernization argument which viewed societies as changing from simple traditional to more complex ones. Lerner (1958), for example, insists that the countries aspiring to develop themselves should adopt the model shown by the 'West'. His argument was that the "modernization model is one which follows an autonomous historical logic" (ibid: 61). He proposed a succession of phases of development such as urbanization, literacy and media participation from which societies developed one phase after the other with the whole process beginning with urbanization from which complex skills and resources which characterize the modern industrial economy were formed. Lerner's view of development was well articulated in his book *The Passing of the Traditional Society* (1958). In reference to the Middle East, where he based his research, he wrote that the region lacked some 'ingredients' for kick starting the process of modernization. He notably asserted that the spatial spread of communication was an important factor that

underpins economic development. In other words, for him, an extensive communication network encourages intra-national communication and induces modernization through the diffusion of ideas and bridging of isolated communities. New attitudes and behaviors he argued would emerge and individuals would make rational choices that lessened their dependence on tradition, and would therefore accept value systems that emphasized change.

For Lerner like other pro-modernists, the American context was a final stage of modernization which these so called 'traditional' societies must aim to reach. He also pointed out how the process of modernization took centuries to reach the stage at which America is at for example, admitting that such a process can be very long.

Although modernisation has been extensively criticised by many academics, it is a theory which still enjoys many adherents, in both developed and developing countries. Many development planners and policy makers in the Pacific still adhere to this model. This becomes apparent when one looks at the trends of development in the Pacific Islands and the national development programs of Pacific Islands Countries (PICS). Most development programs are still geared essentially towards economic growth, the improvement of Gross National Product (GNP) and per capita incomes with the assumption that this is the primary means to the end.

However, experiences, both in the Pacific and elsewhere, have shown that GNP is not, by itself, the means to the end. In the Pacific, Solomon Islands is categorized as a 'least developed country' (LDC) with very low GNP and per capita income. Yet compared to India, a country with a higher GNP,[15] this Pacific country does not experience the kind of poverty or landlessness experienced by India. This shows how inadequate it is to rely on economic variables, particularly in monetary terms, to measure development.

---

[15] India has the tenth largest GNP in the world at US$ 793 billion and a GDP per capita of US$964. Solomon Islands ranks 203 out of the 224 countries in the world with US$ 0.28 billion. See http://en.wkipedia.org/wiki/economy_of_India and http://www.studentsoftheworld.info/infopays/rank/PNB2.html. For poverty in India see: http://www.economywatch.com/indianeconomy/poverty-in-india.html

**2.3 Dependency Theory**

It is in this context that modernization theory has been contested especially in Latin America where dependency theory emerged. The basis of the dependency theory is that economic growth focus of the modernization school was less evident in the developing countries. A minority of people was well off, while poverty increased among the majority (Chilcote, 1984). This could not be adequately explained by the modernisation theory which blamed the traditional values of the marginalized population for preventing them integrating into the economic dynamics such as those in the developed countries.

Towards the end of 1940s, a group of Latin American economist (among them was Raul Prebisch, the founder of ECLA) working for the United Nations Economic Commission for Latin America (ECLA) criticized the traditional theory of international trade and its effects on the development of Latin American countries. Their general argument was that the "economic relations between 'center' and 'periphery' tend to increase the gap between rich and poor countries" (Blomström and Hettne. 1984:1).  In Latin America, for instance, economies did not grow; the balance of payment declined while commodity prices were falling along with labour wages (Hulme and Turner, 1990). The way out of this economic decline was thought to be industrialization. To break out of the unequal relationship with the industrialized nations, internal production was to be encouraged through local industries. The Latin American countries with great optimism under the influence of the ECLA adopted an Import Substitution Industrialization Policy (ISI).  The role of capital in the development process however, "seemed to be over-emphasized" in this process (Blomström and Hettne, 1984: 43). The ISI eventually failed as there was high dependency on external raw materials to keep local industries operational.

Raul Prebisch, like other early proponents of the dependency school (Frank, 1971; Cardoso and Faletto, 1979, Chilcote, 1984) held a general view that the underdevelopment of the developing countries must be understood in a global capitalist relationship. The failure of the ISI policy proved to them that there is an uneven global capitalist system within which the developed (centre) and developing countries

(periphery) interact and operate unequally. This relationship hinders the peripheral or underdeveloped nations from developing themselves (Wallerstein, 2004).

Andre Gunder Frank (1969), one of the key proponents of the dependency school, argued that the underdevelopment of the developing countries is a historical product of the past and continuing economic and other relations between the developed and the satellite or developing countries. Simply put, the underdevelopment of the developing countries must be understood in their historical capitalist relationship with developed ones.

Frank defines capitalism in terms of a global system of exchange which is "monopolistic and exploitative"; and that the metropolis (industrialized nations) exploited the satellite (developing countries) in this relationship (Hulme and Turner, 1990: 48). In that sense, the dependency school shifted the argument of the cause of underdevelopment in the developing countries on external factors as opposed to the internal factors of society proposed in the modernization school. This argument is reflected in how dos Santo defined dependency:

> By dependence we mean a situation in which the economy of certain countries conditioned by the development and expansion of another economy to which the former is subjected. The relation of interdependence between two or more economies, and between these and world trade assumes the form of dependence when some countries [the dominant ones] can expand and can be self-sustaining, while other countries [the dependent ones] can do this only as a reflection of that expansion, which can have either a positive or a negative effect on their immediate development (cited in Blomström and Hettne, 1984:64)

Two key assumptions were made for the development situation in Latin America and generally for developing countries: (1) the world is perceived in terms of core-periphery sectors. The 'core' being the industrialized nations and 'periphery' the underdeveloped ones and, (2) the assumption is that the two sectors are linked economically, particularly in trade and investment (Hulme and Turner, 1990). It is at this point of linkage that the periphery is marginalized, denying development to take place in the periphery.

The dependency school was not homogeneous. Discussion will be made briefly on one of the several perspectives in the dependency school: 'the world systems theory' which was made famous by Immanuel Wallerstein. Wallerstein (1979, cited in Chilcote, 1984) identified two types of world systems: (1) the world empire and civilization of pre-modern societies, and (2) the world economy which is connected by market exchange. He argues that a completely new type of economy was formed in northwestern Europe in the late 15th century. This creates a new form of world system. He defined World System as a "unit with single division of labour and multiple cultural systems" (cited in Chilcote 1984:96). He proposes that the world is divided into three categories of core states, semi-periphery and periphery. The strong state mechanisms in the core (industrialized nations) enable the core to enforce relations of unequal exchange over the periphery. The essential feature of the capitalist world economy, he argues is that the production is targeted for the market with the objective of maximizing profit. This is where he claimed, development is inequitable resulting in the underdevelopment of the peripheral countries. This is also where he converges with Andre Gunder Frank's arguments for underdevelopment of the peripheral areas. The emphasis of the dependency theorists is on the whole economy as the unit of analysis and that the development process of the developing nations cannot be seen as particular stand alone parts but one which has a global relationship (Chilcote, 1984).

In short, the dependency argument is centered on the global capitalist system within which the developed and developing countries interacted and operated unequally (Wallerstein, 2004). The inequality of the global capitalist operation therefore hinders the peripheral/developing nations from developing themselves. The developing countries cannot autonomously develop themselves because they are subjected to the decisions on economic and political strategies for domestic and foreign policies done in the developed countries. The objective of the dependency school is to break this unequal global capitalist relationship to enable the developing countries to develop themselves.

**2.4 Alternative Development Views**

While the modernization and the dependency theorists were arguing over the causes of underdevelopment in the developing countries and how they should be addressed, another group of writers were drawing inspiration from different sources. Understanding development from a wider perspective is what most alternative development theorists advocate.[16] 'Alternative development' (AD) proponents have been critical of the fact that development discussions have heavily focused on 'right' economic policies and programmes that they have failed to address directly what they intended to which is to improve the living standards of the poor. To address the development 'crises' in the developing countries many alternative development proponents believe that 'humans' must be the subject and focus of the discussions (Hulme and Turner, 1990).

A commonly held view by many AD proponents is that the top-down or neoclassical approaches of many development programmes have had little positive impact at the local or rural level where majority of poor people tend to reside in developing countries. The idea that it is sufficient to deal with the macro economic processes and allow or wait for the positive outcomes to trickle down to the local levels has not been very effective at the local level in most developing countries. Furthermore, development is not a linear process of change and development must be addressed within its particular social environment or context and worldview of the people who are engaging in the process (Gegeo, 1994). Also there is concern on the lack of equal distribution of wealth and income from development through 'economic growth' policies and that any form of development is successful only if the benefits are 'distributed equally to all in need of it, reduces poverty, protects the environment and ensure its sustainability' (United Nations Development Programme, 1996).

---

[16] Among many others Dudley Seers, Cernea, 1991, 1985; Chambers 1974, Gran; 1983, Stöhr and Taylor, 1982 are one way or the other associated with this group. Welchman Gegeo is a Solomon Islander who associated strongly with the arguments of indigenous knowledge and development in Solomon Islands. Others are strong critiques of the mainstream development theories; among them were Wolfgang Sachs (1992), Jan Nederveen Pieterse (1998), Ivan Illich (2005). One must also note that the presentation of the discussions on the development theories does not imply a continuum from one school to another. The different development schools rose almost simultaneously. The presentation is to provide a logical understanding on the different views of the major schools.

AD proponents advance basic criteria to measure what should be seen as development that satisfies those who are involved or who have opted for it. For example Dudley Seers a key AD proponent, believes that true development occurs if three basic questions are answered positively: (i) what has been happening to poverty? (ii) what has been happening to unemployment? and, (iii) what has been happening to inequality? (cited in Friedmann, 1992). He believes that if any of the situations or all three are growing worst, it would be wrong to call this 'development' even if per capita income doubled for a given country.

Likewise the Swedish Dag Hammarskjöld Foundation backed by some key AD theorists[17] proposed that the following key questions need to be answered if there is to be genuine development: "development for what, development by whom and for whom and development how" (Nerfin, 1977:10). The Foundation proposes that alternative development should be 'needs oriented', geared toward meeting both material and non material human needs; 'endogenous', i.e. coming from the people themselves; 'self reliant', implying that each society relies on its own strength and resources; 'ecologically sound', meaning rational approaches towards the use of the natural environment; based on 'structural transformation', as an integrated whole which there is no single part of development and that each society must search for its own strategy (ibid: 10). The general argument here is that if social or economic development is achieved it must result in a clear improvement in the conditions of life and livelihood of ordinary people. The AD proponents clearly incorporate a moral dimension to understanding and applying development. Development should be a process which places humans in the core of the debates and that the goal is to distribute the benefits to a larger group of people.

AD encompasses a variety of development perspectives and thinking about development, including the 'people-centred approach' (Cernea, 1991 in Gegeo, 1994), the 'participation and empowerment' approach (Chambers 1974, Gran 1983, Cernea, 1985) and 'development from below' (Stöhr and Taylor, 1982). One must however bear in mind

---

[17] The Dag Hammarskjöld Foundation was established in 1962 in memory of the second Secretary-General of the United Nations. Some of the Alternative development theorists and advocators referred to here were Rodolfo Stavenhagen, Fernando Henrique Cardoso and Johan Galtung.

that the practice of 'participation and empowerment', 'development from below', 'people centred' or 'bottom-up approach' is highly rhetorical in many cases. In Solomon Islands like many developing countries, the state is the custodian of power and it makes laws and development policies from the top. At the local level chiefs, community leaders or landowners often hold the power to influence local developments. Therefore, power and decision-making at the local level can still be seen as 'top-down'.

Nonetheless, calls for empowerment of the local people are central to the AD views. It has yet to be clearly shown who should be empowered or how the empowerment process should be carried through. Often community leaders are the primary contact point for groups from outside who aim to help the local people. In such case 'local elites' can capitalize on this situation that the needy may be left without benefits intended for them or the community at the first place. This has been evident in large-scale development programmes in Solomon Islands. Kabutaulaka (1998) for example found this to be true for the forestry sector where local landowners did not benefit from exploitation of their forests as middle men and heads of tribes or chiefs, and even political elites often gained directly from the logging agreements rather than the tribe as a whole. The point here is that local politics can be as brutal as national level politics. Therefore, one must also be careful when applying the different AD views.

Gegeo (1994) has also criticized the participatory development approach which is strongly emphasized in alternative development views. He argues that participation cannot guarantee emancipation, a state which he believes is important if development among 'underprivileged population' such as that found in the rural areas is to be long lasting. He believes underprivileged people must also be free to choose what method and knowledge they would like to use in their development process and that local people must define development from their own perspective. This raises the question of how we should then approach development at the rural community level if the bottom-up approach to development is in itself problematic. This thesis argues that humans are the active agents in economic and social development processes; therefore it is important to

analyze their behavior and levels of relationship and their influence on the rural development process.

## 2.5 Development: A Humanistic View

Placing 'humans' as central to development raises an ethical question of who should define what the concept means and how the process can be applied at different contexts to suit the basic needs of those who really need it. For a Solomon Islands villager, development may simply mean building a village road or constructing the community's water supply. Such actions may be taken with or without state assistance. What cannot be dismissed is that social aspects such as *kastom*[18] and values and how people define or view development in their given context are vital factors to be considered in the development discussions in developing countries including Solomon Islands. There are a number of development theorists who have argued for placing humans at the center of development and who emphasize social behavior and human perspectives. For instance, Todaro (1992:102) writes that,

> development is both a physical reality and a state of mind in which society has, through some combination of social, economic and institutional processes, secured the means for a better life... [the] availability of basic life-sustaining goods such as food, shelter and protection to all members of society, raise levels of living, including, in addition to higher incomes, the provision of more jobs, better education and more attention to cultural and humanistic values.

Goulet (1971) views development as an ethical choice in which utilitarian, emotional, esthetic, and other values of human beings must be acknowledged. He adds that development ethics should make both 'exploiters' and exploited to be rational about how they treat each other in this process. He argues that in this view the exploited seek rights due to them and forbids bad action from the exploiters. What is obvious in his definition

---

[18] *Kastom* is pidgin derivative for custom. However, for Solomon Islanders *Kastom* is used as a broader concept which encompasses tradition, custom and culture of a particular group. It is often used to connote a way of doing things in the past and seen as continuaty in a certain practice/s or thought from the past despite of external influences. Solomon Islanders would therefore differentiate *kastom* from 'modernity' or 'Whiteman way' as something that is unique to them before European contact. See Kabutaulaka (1998:146-149)

is that development involves 'competition' between classes or categories of people, therefore this antagonistic relationship must be broken down to allow for 'true' development to take place; true development being one which satisfies both parties.

I must acknowledge the important contribution United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) made in broadening the view on 'development' with the concept of 'human development'. In the 1990s, the social sector; that is the non- economic aspects of growth, seemed to be given increased importance and human development has come to be seen as "a process of enlarging people's choices in a much broader sense than proposed by mainstream economists" (Martinussen, 1994, cited in Bakeo, 2000). In its simple meaning, enlarging poor people's choices is increasing their opportunities for living a tolerable life. The strategies proposed go beyond income redistribution - encompassing action in the critical areas of 'gender equality, pro-poor growth, globalization and the democratic governance of development' (UNDP, 1996). It would seem therefore that despite move towards more social development, the view on development is still divided. On one hand some may see a technical and economic view of development and on the other a more social and human-oriented one. In Solomon Islands, the former seems to take precedence over the latter in government development policies (Solomon Islands Government, Department of National Planning (SIGDNP), 2006).

## 2.6 Development: 'A Pre-Conceived State of Mind'

The definitions of and perspectives on the concept of development show the difficulty in identifying the meaning and the outcomes of development, let alone the means to achieving it. Cowen and Shenton (1996:440) note that if *development* is a 'state of mind' as Todaro (1992) proposed, then development "as an intentional activity, does not merely happen but is first a state of thinking about acting in such a way as to make development happen". In their view development is a pre-conceived state of affair which an individual or a community or a country aspires to achieve or reach. In short Cowen and Shenton like Todaro, view development as a state in the future that is already being conceptualized within the mind(s) of an individual or a social group. In that way development is a highly

subjective notion which different social groups or individuals hold within their given context. Even if one sees development as a *process* or a means to *an end* it will always be subjective given that what one perceives as *development* (social, economic or political) may not be what another sees as development from his/her point of view. Therefore the means to achieving it may require different approaches in different contexts. In this thesis, how social relationships and leadership roles are demonstrated and performed in rural communities and their influence on the development process at rural level are investigated to see how these factors contribute to development and change at the rural level.

This thesis agrees with the view that 'development' as positive social and economic change is a pre-conceived state of mind within an individual or a social group. If 'development' is a pre-conceived state-of-mind, then what is this state-of -being that the local communities in the Solomon Islands would like to reach and how would they achieve this pre-conceived state that is already in their mental conceptual thinking? These questions are vital to keep in mind throughout the later chapters in this thesis as they raise the issues of 'organizing' and 'pulling together' of economic and human resources, and the values, beliefs and perceptions of a particular social group to achieve their development aspirations.

## 2.7 Rural Development

Rural development is a particular developmental strategy that has been employed by many developing countries since the 1960s. The key concern in this strategy is the development of the rural areas. In this study the definition for rural development is adopted from Chambers (1983) as a strategy to enable a specific group of people, 'poor' rural people, to gain what they need and demand, and control more of the benefits of development which are largely centralized in urban areas in most developing countries. The rural development strategy encompasses different development approaches and views as discussed in previous sections. This includes creating means to provide basic necessities of food and shelter, access to finance and good education, mechanization of agriculture and so on to raise the living standards of the rural population.

In fact much of the focus of rural development programmes is to industrialize and 'modernize' the rural areas and its population. For Solomon Islands, this is evident from the establishment of large-scale commercial agricultural and fisheries ventures, mining operations and new ones such as the Auluta Palm Oil development which is currently being proposed for Malaita Province. Many of the rural development undertakings in Solomon Islands were largely focused on improving the economic status of the whole country and the rural areas have played an important role in helping accomplish this aspiration. In Solomon Islands, 'rural development' could therefore be seen simply as a blanket for what has really been 'modernization' policy. Economic growth and technical capacity have been emphasized to the detriment of a more human approach to development.

## 2.8 Rural Development Policy and Practice: Solomon Islands

Solomon Islands is a geographically dispersed country with poor communication and transportation services. The challenge is to spread development to isolated islands and communities. Since the 1960s, rural development has been perceived as an inclusive development approach; one which tries to include the rural majority. Although this has been the aim of development for Solomon Islands[19], this is not necessarily been the reality

Various development programmes have taken place under the broad framework of rural development for the improvement of peoples' well being in the rural areas. Agricultural programmes have been common rural development initiatives, perhaps because of the perception that rural people are generally subsistence farmers familiar with agriculture. It is also because of the potential for agriculture development given that about 80-90% of arable land is customary-owned and located in rural areas. People could, therefore, cultivate and raise livestock on their own land, rather than be introduced to industries that are completely alien to them, and for which they do not have the factors of production, like land.

---

[19] See Central Planning Office, 1980; National Development Plan, 1975; Sixth Development Plan, 1971.

Most policy statements [20] support large-scale agricultural plantations or commercial fisheries. Government policy papers often point out the availability of these natural resources which can be exploited for the local market but more importantly for international trade. There has been limited acknowledgment of how different forms of investment can be encouraged in the rural areas. Yet there has been a high failure rate in most agricultural development programmes in Solomon Islands and monetary resources have been wasted with little effect on the lives of the rural people (SIGDNP, 2006).

SIGDNP (2006) asserts that inclusive growth and employment creation could increase if 'constraints' to private sector investment were lifted through "a supportive policy environment; investment in rural infrastructure, utilities and services and a supporting service for the smallholder producers and growers". But what are these 'constraints' to private sector investments in the rural areas? At least one of them which this thesis is concerned with is the poor social relationships within rural communities between and among different social groups which influences how economic development will occur at the local level. The Solomon Islands Agriculture and Rural Development Strategy (SIGDNP, 2006) rightly points out that the recent history of conflict in Solomon Islands demonstrates that social cohesion is important for development at the rural level. One way to achieve this is for local people to be more involved in decision-making in local developments programmes and most importantly to be the direct beneficiaries of these programmes. A first step in this process is to understand how social relations affect the development process. A central assumption in this thesis is that for economic development to be achieved at the rural level there must also be acknowledgment given to social relationships or cohesion in rural communities, and community leaders play a key role in seeing this developed within the rural communities.

Technical factors have all been recognized as important for successful rural development even since the colonial period. For example rural agricultural extension services were

---

[20] See a recent Solomon Islands Agriculture and Rural Development Strategy (2006) and past National Government Development Plans (Solomon Islands Government National Development Plan (SIGNDP) 1985-1989; SIGNDP, 1980-1984; SIGNDP, 1975-1979) in which the agricultural sector holds a predominant place.

established in different locations in the country to provide market information and technical advice to local farmers. Support services such as shipping services for cattle farmers in rural areas were established in the early 1980s. But this failed to accomplish its objectives due to different factors; one of which has been natural disasters such as cyclone Namu in 1986 which destroyed many cattle farms throughout the country. Another reason for the failure of the industry was that people used the cattle in their farms for Christmas or marriage parties (see *Solomon Star*, 18/9/2007), a reflection perhaps of a different worldview people hold towards development. Discussions of local people's view towards development have been observed by local commentators (Gegeo, 1994; Maenu'u, 1981). Gegeo (1994) for example points out how local people viewed development in the colonial period as an abstract notion manifested in institutions such as hospitals or public roads. Development is something that comes from 'outside' and not what is created within the indigenous communities therefore people do not identify with it. He finds that during the colonial period local people did not associate or identify with the various undertakings by the colonial government. This was evident in how people referred to projects in the colonial period as *gavman projek* (government projects). They tended to view that initiatives taken by the colonial government were not something that they owned.

This development view has not changed much today. It is still evident in how people view public utilities such as public roads and hospitals as respectively 'government property' and 'government hospital'. The lack of seeing themselves as custodians of such public structures is evident when landowners for example demand compensation for roads built through their customary land. Such a view of development Aqorau (2006); argues hinders development in many rural areas. It is also true that people may capitalize on rural development projects for their personal gains and as a means to acquire much needed money which they assumed to be available in aid related rural development projects (personal communications, 2007).

**2.8.1 Weak Institutional Capacity**

The Solomon Islands government makes an explicit statement in its rural development policies on what constitutes this process and what it tries to achieve. However, Sanga (2001) finds that there is lack of clarity on the roles, responsibilities and coordination of the different stakeholders at the international, national and local levels in this process. He concludes that rural development policy goals are extremely vague and lack clarity; that they are subject to incompetent policy management capacities, incoherent supporting national policies and thin information as access to information is limited to people who are making the policies.

The relationship between policy and institutional capacity to deliver development programmes at the local level do not match. At the ministry level, different government ministries tend to operate their own development programmes. For example, the general policy will outline the need for education development in the rural areas as well as the need for fisheries development and so forth, yet institutional capacity to implement these policies is not effective. Cross-sectoral ministerial projects do not often produce positive development results. Likewise, NGOs and other international actors have their own areas of interests and direct their financial and human resources to their priority areas. Limited human, time and financial resources are wasted or lost in such unrelated operations.

Successive governments have tried to address this problem. For example as a measure to address the poor coordination and other failures in rural development programmes, the recently ousted Sogovare led Grand Coalition for Change Government (GCCG) created the Ministry of Rural Development and Indigenous Affairs to coordinate all rural development programmes in Solomon Islands (*Solomon Star*, 19/9/2007). The ministry is manned with 50 appointed Constituency Development Officers (CDO) each representing the 50 constituencies in Solomon Islands and liaising with the government on matters related to constituency development[21]. The reason behind the setup was that this process

---

[21] Note that the 50 constituency development officers are retained by the new Dr.Derick Sikua led Coalition for National Unity and Rural Advancement (CNURA) Government which ousted the GCCG in a vote of no-confidence in late December 2007. However, the ministry has been renamed as Ministry of Rural Development and Indigenous Affairs.

will allow people to say what they want to be done in the rural areas and hopefully solve the 'identity issue' discussed previously as rural people relate with programmes to be initiated in their communities.

## 2.8.2 Key Goals for Rural Development in Solomon Islands

There are key areas that are common to both the government and other stakeholders for rural development in Solomon Islands[22]. Sanga (2001) summaries the aim of rural development in Solomon Islands based on different stakeholders approaches to rural level development as:

> (i) To improve the general well-being and standard of living of all communities of the various regions in Solomon Islands;
>
> (ii) To provide the basic services such as education, health, water supply and sanitation;
>
> (iii) To provide opportunities for rural people to access finance in order to enable them to develop their own resources; and
>
> (iv) To provide the basic infrastructure and markets to support regional development.

A recent strategic development plan for Malaita province also highlights the same development aims with additional emphasis on 'financial governance' (Malaita Province Strategic Plan, 2006). Similar areas were highlighted in a Solomon Islands Agriculture and Rural Development Strategy (ARDS) (SIGDNP, 2006) with inclusion for strengthening the provincial government in its role in the rural development process as a properly resourced and functioning local government, it is believed, will help link the rural communities and the central government, and consequently contribute to a more favorable investment climate in the rural areas.

It is obvious that in many of the development programmes for rural areas, the approaches have been highly influenced by the neo-classical economic development views which promote monetary growth opportunities through private sector investments and the like.

---

[22] See for example Grand Coalition for Change Government Policy Framework, 2006, Solomon Islands Government National Planning Department, 2006, Malaita Province Strategic Plan, 2006.

This is evident in the emphasis on large scale, economic enterprises such as mining, fisheries and logging operations which are located in different parts of the archipelago to encourage economic activities outside of the urban areas, particularly Honiara.

**2.9 The Nature of Rural Areas in Solomon Islands**

In the 1999 national census out of a population of 409,042, a total of 354,310 people (175,781 males and 169,529 females) resided in rural areas. Less than 16 % of the Solomon Islands population lived in areas defined as 'urban', three quarter (64,000 people) of whom are in Honiara alone (Solomon Islands Statistics Office, 1999).

Solomon Island villagers are largely small subsistence farmers with hardly any access to market facilities and banking services. Potential land for large commercial agricultural purposes is limited to Guadalcanal and to a few areas on Malaita and Kolombangara Island in the Western Province. Most islands are mountainous with flat land on the coast which may only stretch to a few hundred meters limiting the potential for large scale commercial agriculture. Surplus from subsistence farming can be sold at the local market if there is one within walking distance from one's village.  Further away from urban centers, the need for money may be lower and dependency on subsistence agriculture is higher.

Eighty percent (80%) of the land in Solomon Islands is customarily owned; i.e. ownership is vested in tribes (SIGDNP, 2006). This increases the complexity in acquiring land for any commercial development activity in rural areas. The fact that some islands are matrilineal, with kinship defined through women, while others are patrilineal contributes to the complex land ownership system in Solomon Islands.

In terms of infrastructures, there is a lack of proper roads, shipping services and communications throughout most part of Solomon Islands. Shipping services are provided by the private sector. Therefore uneconomical routes, which is the case for almost all parts of Solomon Islands, are poorly serviced except for some provincial centers. Consequently essential services in the main urban centers are inaccessible for

most Solomon Islanders due to geographical isolation. Telecommunication in terms of telephones and more recently Internet services are confined to some provincial centers or sub-centers. Essential services such as hospitals, clinics and schools are operated by the state and church missions. Formal employment is limited to urban centers or industrially active zones associated with mining, large-scale plantations, fisheries, and logging. Small-scale cocoa and copra productions in the rural areas are the two important sources of household incomes [23]

## 2.10 Concluding Discussion

Although a short account such as this cannot do justice to the range of views across the different development schools, some key general arguments in these broad development schools allow us to see how development discussions in Solomon Islands fit in. Two broad schools of thought dominated the development discussions in both developed and developing countries: Modernization and neo-Marxist or dependency schools. Central to modernization theory is that 'development' (political, economic or social) is an adaptable phenomenon, a condition(s) that can be transferred from the developed to the developing countries. Most modernization theorist described the process as one which follows a 'linear progression of change'. We saw this view with the "stages of growth" from Walt Rostow (1960) and *The Passing of the Traditional Society* by Daniel Lerner (1958).

However, by 1960s modernization was not traveling smoothly along this 'tradition verses modernity' road. Dependency theorists (whose views were not monolithic) began to question why developing countries although engaged in the development process for almost as long as those in the West have not been able to keep pace with the developed countries. The basic argument for dependency theorists is that the developing and the developed countries were operating within an unequal global capitalist system. This uneven relationship must be leveled if the developing countries are to have some chances of 'catching up' with the developed ones. The review of the theories shows however that for both schools, development was viewed mainly as an economic process and the

---

[23] See Solomon Islands Government, 2005/6 National Household Income and Expenditure Survey, 2006.

assumption that application of 'right' economic policies and programmes would eventually lead to development in developing countries. Modernization school only sees cultural values and practices of the developing countries as hindrances to the modernization process and that these must be do away with to enable them to 'economically' develop.

Alternative development proponents however were critical about the development views of the two former schools. Although the alternative proponents also consisted of different approaches and views, they generally call for placing the 'humans' as the subject of the development debate and that social aspects of a society must also be given attention in the development discussions.

It is within these broad theoretical arguments that the rural development in Solomon Islands was discussed. It highlights that rural development in Solomon Islands is largely a modernization approach which applies economic driven policies to enhance the standard of living of the rural people. Development was largely focused on economic growth which is also considered as an end in itself (Otter 2002). This is evident when one looks at the large commercial activities such as tuna fishing and manufacturing, mining and logging operations taking place in different areas throughout Solomon Islands.

This research however believes that for Solomon Islands, development at the rural level requires more than just 'right' economic policies and programmes. Numerous studies and reports have been done and recommendations made on how to go about development in Solomon Islands[24], some with very low or poor results. It is argued here that it is important to look at how the process can be achieved not only from an economic perspective but also through how local level social relationships can become hindrances to the socio-economic development process.

---

[24] See for example the recent Solomon Islands Agriculture and Rural Development Strategy (2006) and past government development plans (Solomon Islands National Development Plan (SINDP) 1985-1989; SINDP, 1980-1984; SINDP, 1975-1979.

Some local commentators (Aqorau, 2006; Roughan, 2006) highlight the need for developing a conducive environment for rural development to take place. They have pointed to the need for 'right attitude' from both the government and the rural people. Rural people must also see that they are an equally important partner in this whole process. Often people blame the government for not facilitating the process efficiently. However, it is assumed at this point that local people who aspire to develop socially, politically or economically must also provide a facilitative local social environments for this process to happen. One of the key concerns in this thesis is to examine how rural communities can develop socially cohesive rural communities where social conflicts are limited as people adhere to norms and values of their society, and develop a common interest in community issues to achieve their development aspirations.

Liloqula (2000), against the backdrop of the recent social conflict in Solomon Islands[25], notes that development in Solomon Islands needs to involve more discussions on norms, values, and individual identity. She points out that what is needed is for more effort to be spent in understanding each other's culture, and in that way people would be able to identify with their fellow Solomon Islanders from other tribes, ethnic groups or provinces, limiting conflict and enhancing the opportunity for successful rural development.

What is needed is to develop ways in which leadership and social capital can be improved within the rural communities. Local level leadership is assumed at this point to be an important factor in this process and where leadership is weak it is assumed that community problems that seem to hinder development at the local level will continue to be the 'hindrances' and 'internal blockages' (Roughan, 2006) to socio-economic development, preventing the latter from making its footing in the rural areas.

---

[25] From 1998-2003, social unrest which occurred mainly between the Guadalcanal and Malaitan people, almost brought the national economy to a stand still. One of the main arguments of the Guadalcanal people for engaging in the conflict was the lack of respect by settlers particularly Malaitans on Guadalcanal for local *kastoms* and land-usage and practices. See Judith Bennett, (2002); and Tarcisius, T, Kabutaulaka (2000) for a background analysis of the conflict.

Rural development in Solomon Islands has to deal with a range of issues: poverty, insufficient technology and financial capital, rapid population growth, geographic isolation and inadequate public services as well as with 'introduced' factors such as religion/Christianity, the Westminster system of governance, monetary systems which most often conflict with traditional views and values and influence peoples' views and perception on what constitutes good life (Gegeo, 1994). The rural development process is a challenge for both the government and rural people. This thesis is particularly interested in the role rural people currently play in this process with a focus on leadership roles within communities and the nature of social relationships and their influence on rural community development in Solomon Islands.

It can be summarized here that rural development in Solomon Islands will have to deal with internal community social issues as much as with the economic aspects of development for the rural development programmes to make their mark in rural Solomon Islands.

The following chapter will examine the concepts of leadership, governance and social capital in more detail.

**CHAPTER 3**

**LEADERSHIP, COMMUNITY GOVERNANCE AND SOCIAL CAPITAL**

**3.0 Introduction**

This chapter examines the relationship between leadership, governance, social capital and development, and discusses how they interact and influence each other. The chapter is divided into two sections. The first examines the concepts of leadership, governance and social capital, outlining some of the major theories that underlie discussions of these concepts. This provides the framework within which the Solomon Islands experience is located. Second, the chapter describes leadership and community governance structures in the Solomon Islands. The chapter concludes with an over-view of traditional leadership and local governance in Solomon Islands.

**3.1 LEADERSHIP**

Leadership is an imprecise, broad, emotional and a difficult concept to define (Northouse, 2001). This is because different people view it differently, resulting in highly subjective definitions and perspectives which are dependent on context. In this study leadership is treated as an 'influence relationship' between a leader which may be an individual or a small group of people who attempt to guide a group of people towards their development goal. This definition is adopted from Northouse (2001:30) who defines leadership as "a process whereby an individual or groups of individuals, influences a group of individuals to achieve a common goal". This is a contemporary definition of leadership as it views leadership more as a process of influence between the leader and the led, moving away from the past understanding of leadership as an individual trait or behavioral characteristic[26]. Central to this view is how the process entails an 'influence relationship' without which leadership may not be accepted or be seen as effective.

---

[26] See Stogdill M., R. 1974. '*Handbook of leadership*' which outlines, from different studies, the shift in the understanding of leadership from the 'trait and behavior' to the 'process view'.

The impact of leadership in any society, community or organization is profound: it is a highly sought after factor to be developed within an organization and/or a particular group who aspire for change(s). The changes in society or organizations, positive or otherwise, are often related and attributed to leadership behaviors (Chemers, 1997). Leadership is also easily portrayed as a positive social behavior. But, that is not always true. It can also be dangerous and destructive when abused in its different forms. Some world leaders like Saddam Hussein or Adolf Hitler can be also described as 'insane', 'unjust' or 'authoritarian' yet they could be described as 'successful' in influencing their country's people. This means that leadership as an influence process can be either positive or negative. This thesis is interested in the positive influences of leadership on development like creating collaborative relationships in communities as well as with external partners. However, it cannot ignore the negative consequences that poor leadership has had on development in the two case study areas. One of these is the poor social relationships which existed between different groups (churches, landowners etc) due to community leaders not working to see that people co-existed happily and participated equally in community development.

There are three main theoretical understandings of leadership according to Barker (1997). Early leadership literature regarded leadership as an *ability* or a set of *traits* or behavioral characteristics that are present naturally to make a person a leader[27]. Yukl (1981) argues that although some traits appeared widely relevant for different kinds of leaders, these are not necessarily the factors leading to leadership success. The 'context' in which leadership role is played is also important; this will therefore require a dynamic leadership style which changes according to how situation arises under different circumstances or context[28]. Simply, trait alone does not necessarily determine a capable leader.

---

[27] see footnote 26

[28] This brings about the idea of 'Situational Leadership Model' developed by Paul Hersey and Ken Blanchard in 1960s. Situational leadership theories in organizational studies are a type of leadership theory, leadership style, and leadership model that presumes that different leadership styles are better in different situations, and that leaders must be flexible enough to adapt their style to the situation they are in. (see http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Situational_leadership_theory)

The second theoretical view sees leadership as a *relational* phenomenon between the leader and the led. It is a dynamic process which is not static but involves a continuous evaluation between leaders and the followers. Hollander (1978) outlines this relationship as constituting of (i) the leader with his or her personality, perception and resources relevant to goal attainment; (ii) the followers; and (iii) the situation within which the leader and followers function. Both leaders and collaborators work together to effect change. If there is a mutual benefit for parties (leaders/collaborators) involved then leadership is said to be effective.

Popper (2004), a key proponent of 'leadership-as-relationship' view, expands further  on this view stating that leadership as relationship must allow one to look at the background and the circumstances which give rise to the process, and the changes that take place 'over time' resulting in the leadership process taking place in the present. To conceptualize leadership as relationship allows an integrative view of leaders, followers and historical circumstances on how the process comes about without giving more weight to one of the factors over the others. Popper concludes that leadership, like any social relationship, is much more complex than the traditional leader-follower relationship.

Barker's (ibid) third view on leadership is that it is a dynamic and collaborative *process* in which leadership roles are not defined. Here leadership is a group rather than individual process dominated by a designated 'leader'. This is a view that seemed to be shared by contemporary leadership theorists (Northouse, 2001).

Lassey and Sashkin (1983) propose that although leadership can be defined and understood from various perspectives, the ultimate purpose is to move a community, organization or a social group towards achievement of determined goal(s) of a group. The process involves interaction and influence between leaders and followers. This understanding is useful for this study as it treats leadership as a 'relational concern' for a particular social group in a particular social environment. This research is interested in examining the collaborative relationships between people in rural communities and their 'leaders'– i.e. people who are identified by the community as their leaders– and

stakeholders such as the provincial government, NGO representatives, International Development Aid Agencies and so on who are external to the community but are important partners to the development process. These parties interact, influence each other and contribute to achieving their aspired socio-economic development goals based on the social values and norms of the parties involved.

### 3.1.1 Community Leadership

Community leadership can be viewed as a collaborative process and relationship. This is because when 'community' is added to 'leadership' it implies that leadership is no longer held by a single person but is a shared or distributed phenomenon.

Kirk and Shutte (2004) view community leadership as a process of 'collaboration' among community people towards solving a common problem. In this view leadership is depersonalized, so that it is no longer the individual who is the central figure in a group or community change. In that sense leadership is every body's responsibility. The authors argue that institutions (e.g. churches, NGOs, development committees etc) and social groups are not static or stand-alone entities but rather that they always interact and are influenced by different factors across multiple social boundaries. In this perspective, leadership is not rigid but flexible according to different situations and places. Therefore, the potential solution to a problem is identified by involving the different stakeholders in the decision-making process.

In this study community leadership is treated as a *collaborative relationship,* where village leaders engage people into community life. In this sense, leadership is, more or less, a distributed role at different levels in the community. In rural Solomon Islands communities, different people or institutions (e.g. churches, women and men's groups etc.) are chosen to take on leadership roles and responsibilities in the community for different community issues[29]. It is an evolving relationship which changes according to situations arising in the community, more dispersed and diffused rather than concentrated

---

[29] In Chapter 4 I differentiated and highlighted leadership as 'individual' and as 'process of influence' by discussing a type of community leader called a *komiuniti sif* (community chief) in the case study region.

in one or a few hands. Community leadership is not about a single leader legitimizing authority over the community but rather generally a group process of participation and collaborative approach towards responsibilities.

The essence of effective community leadership is 'collaboration' of both local or community actors and external ones around specific needs for a specified community or region. Simply put it is about people working together in commitment towards a common goal.

## 3.2 Leadership for Rural Socio-Economic Development

Development commentators and actors in Solomon Islands see the importance of community leadership in rural development. For instance, the Central Malaita Development Trust Agency (CMDTA) (2006) believes that poor leadership has contributed to the lack of (progressive) development in Central Malaita region. This is because, CMDTA believes, leadership needed to organize the different stakeholders in this process has not been demonstrated over the years with negative consequences on the development process of this region. CMDTA views leadership as a collaborative relationship between and among different actors: rural villages/people, local chiefs, landowners, the provincial government, NGOs and the national government.

Likewise, The Central Kwara'ae Constituency Report (CKC Report) (2005) highlights that leadership is as important to consider as economic factors for development in Central Malaita. CMDTA (2006) and CKC Report (2005) show that human factors are important if not crucial to development. They recognize that humans are active agents in the social and economic development process of this region and that successful leadership in this context should be seen as a group process involving different stakeholders working to forge a relationship based on trust. The engagement of people in this process is the responsibility of all stakeholders who aspire for development and change of Central Malaita. For the different groups to work together, stakeholders must recognize their role in the complex development process and be able to mould their multiple views, perception and approaches into a single vision.

Aqorau (2006) also notes that it is not only the role of the government to facilitate development at the local level, but that the responsibility should also lie on the rural people who have customary rights over resources of development such as land, rivers and the sea. Certainly, there is obligation on rural people to make some drastic changes in how they participate in the rural development process. He concludes that rural Solomon Islanders must see that they take on partnership seriously to initiate development and change at the local level.

But why is partnership so important in rural development? Perhaps the most important reason in this context is that it helps people to set priorities for allocating limited vital resources. In an environment where factors of development (land, financial/technical capacity etc.) are limited or controlled by very few people, partnership allows different actors to come together and see what each has to offer, therefore priority areas are identified and worked on. This only works when people identify their role and responsibility to develop such relationship among the different stakeholders.

Several studies (Morse, 2004; Timmer, 2004; Sorenson and Epps, 1996; Swanson 1996) have found that achieving aspirations for positive socio-economic changes in stagnating communities can be attributed to the effectiveness of leadership demonstrated either by an individual or by a small group of core people in the community. Central to all the successful changes in the communities are leaders who are able to bring together multiple stakeholders to work towards a common purpose.

Swanson (ibid) notes that although leadership and social capital are not easily translated into simple economic models, the 'social infrastructure' capacity (e.g. social capital and leadership) of rural communities determines the degree of interaction between rural communities and the larger political economy. This relationship, she believes, influences the development process at the rural level as community people develop collaborative relationships within their own communities as well as with external potential development stakeholders for their benefit. Therefore, social infrastructure, she argues, must not be ignored as one dimension of an economic rural development strategy.

It can be concluded that how the process of rural development and change takes place depends on collaborative leadership which allows for aspired development goals to be achieved in the community 'by convening multiple stakeholders, facilitating and mediating consensus around tough issues, and thinking and acting strategically' (Morse, 2004). The question of how to define effective leadership in community development is addressed in the following section.

### 3.3 Dimensions of Effective Leadership

As stated previously the environment in which rural development takes place is a complex one with multiple stakeholders with different values, interests and approaches. For these stakeholders to work together requires particular leadership characteristics that must be developed and/or demonstrated to allow different interest groups to work together. In this research, the framework for identifying effective leadership in rural community development is based on Warner's model (2004). Warner identifies ten characteristics of effective leaders and leadership in the socio-economic development of rural areas and regions. These are: (i) vision, (ii) shared-vision, (iii) empowerment, (iv) values, (v) communication, (vi) trust, (vii) networking and strategic alliances, (viii) charisma, (ix) partnership and (x) teamwork. He argues that for leaders to be effective, they must demonstrate or foster a combination of these ten characteristics. First and foremost, he states, leaders themselves must be visionary and create an atmosphere of change to help the community follow through to achieve their development objectives. In this study five of the ten leadership characteristics from Warner's framework are adopted for further investigation. They are:

### *3.3.1 Vision*

Vision is an image of the future for which people are willing to work. Sanga and Walker, (2005:9) note that for Solomon Islanders, "a vision is about the future and what they aspire for and how they might make it happen". In development, vision enables stakeholders to identify and draw an image of the future they want to create for their community or society. For a Kwara'ae person, vision is *li'atauanga* (being able to look far ahead). To *liatau* (to look far ahead*)* means to look far beyond what others may see

and be able to say or predict what is to come. In this sense people know what to do in the present for the future. In the past if they anticipated war they prepared specific weapons and tactics for battle, or if it were famine, they would look at ways to prepare and store enough food to last them for the period of the anticipated famine. In this way people are able to change the present situation because they can control it in order to prepare for the future which they may not easily have the means to control. Robbins *et al* (2004) define vision as a clear and compelling imagery which not only offers an innovative way to improve but also develops the image of the future by 'recognizing and drawing on traditions of the society and connecting them to actions' that people can take to realize change within their community. They state that vision enables a leader to look beyond the present and see a broad picture of the aspired state of development in a near or distant future. A vision should, the authors argue, draw the attention of stakeholders into the development programme without coercion. Encompassing the views of these stakeholders can provide much needed resources to support local developments.

### *3.3.2 Shared Vision*

Shared vision carries a sense of 'commonness' where a group has a common objective or objectives to achieve. In 'organizational literature'[30], Senge (1990) describes shared vision as a picture which people in the organization carry in their mind and it filters through all levels of the organization. This he argues brings coherence to diverse activities. It is the common aspiration or sharing, Senge adds, that creates the shared-vision. He further notes that developing a shared vision enables people who first mistrust each other to work together. Warner (2004) adds that in rural economic development whether the vision for change comes from a higher governing body like the local council, the local community, or a local development committee, the sense of ownership of the vision is a key to enlisting 'others' to bring the vision to life. One can also look at shared-visions as a form of 'identity' where people have a sense of belonging to a particular group with a particular goal. To establish shared-vision among a particular group of people is difficult when trust is low or absent within a particular society or community. In Kwara'ae, *fito'ona* (trust, 'to believe someone or something') can lead people to having

---

[30] See footnote 12

*te'emanategnwae* (*te'e* = one, *manate* = thinking, literally 'one thinking'), that is they have a common understanding of what they are trying to achieve as a group because they develop trust between them. Without *te'emanatagnwae*, *rawafikuanga* (working together) will be difficult.

### *3.3.3 Communication and Trust*

Communication or 'dialogue', a term favoured by Kirk and Shutte (2004), is important when multiple stakeholders are involved in any community or local development. The authors argue that dialogue or communication is not a synonym for 'talking'. It is a more disciplined form of interaction which is characterized by people developing a collective thinking about approaching and solving their problems. In Kwara'ae this process is called '*ala'anga ani inoto'anga* (a talking/meeting of, or with, great importance). In this sense the subject of discussion is viewed as important and the people or person who talk(s) about a particular subject is/are a respected person(s). The person is trustworthy, knowledgeable of *falafala* (tradition) and has charisma which draws people to his/her leadership.

Sorenson and Epps (1996) believe that 'communication' is possibly the most important personal characteristic of an effective leader. They support their claim by arguing that effective leaders are able to express their ideas, views, orders and advice on matters of concern in an intelligible and acceptable manner to those to whom they are attempting to provide leadership. In support Warner (2004) argues that when leaders communicate their vision effectively, it can lead to higher levels of positive reactions from within the social group toward community activities because the community understands what they are aiming for. Timmer (2004) supports this view but adds that a facilitative approach by a leader is important where engagement of diverse stakeholders in creating and understanding the intentions and vision behind a particular initiative or development programme is needed. In such case, she argues, both leaders and followers are guided by the 'lets do it together' motto because they have developed trust between each other. In Solomon Islands, to gather people to 'sit and talk' about development issues is difficult. This is particularly true when different groups such as tribes, church and political groups

are divided and suspicious of each other's programmes in the community or constituency development process (personnel communications.) Also, traditionally in Kwara'ae information sharing between different tribes or groups is not common and it can be also viewed as *ru abu* (a taboo/sacred thing) because information about how ones' tribe carries out its activities are not supposed to be shared with 'others'.[31] In Kwara'ae, *ala'anga inoto'a* (a meeting or talk of importance) is not something for the wider public, except in rare occasions in which a 'foreign subject' who is present is *fito'ona* (being trusted) that the secrets of the tribe once heard will not be passed on to others who are not supposed to hear or have access to the information being shared or heard by the subject. Such traditional views must also be taken into consideration when one talks about 'pulling together' parties in rural development. What is important therefore is to develop trust among different community groups and possibly to distinguish clearly between topics being broached i.e. distinguishing between what is *abu* (taboo) and what isn't.

Fairholm (1994) notes that communication cannot occur when trust is absent. Similarly, trust requires open communication across different levels within an organization or community. He further argues that effective leadership is possible only in situations where people trust each other enough to be open and honest about their needs and the tension between those needs and organization or community needs. In the context of this study, this means that trust may need to be developed between different social groups such as church, women's and men's organizations, youth groups, landowners, provincial government, NGOs, political groups and so on in the communities to allow for free communication and sharing of ideas on development issues among different stakeholders. The notion of 'trust' is also central to social capital which will be treated later in the chapter.

### 3.3.4 Collaboration

Most local communities in Solomon Islands share certain social services such as schools and clinics. These institutions are often an extension of a particular church ministry or a

---

[31] See Lamont Lindstrom (1984). *Doctor, Wise Man, Priest: Big-Men and Knowledge in Melanesia* for analysis of knowledge sharing as a significant dimension of inequality throughout Melanesia.

government rural development initiative. In such case several stakeholders may have a direct as well as indirect interest in the development of these services. Kouzes and Posner (2002, cited in Warner, 2004) point out that the role of a leader in this context is to foster collaboration and build trust among all the stakeholders. Collaboration is the mark of shared-leadership and decision-making which includes the values and norms and culture of the different groups into the 'operational processes' of organization or community development (Fairholm, 1994). In this process the various stakeholders explore their differences and develop a joint strategy for their common development problem. They can do so if they have a common understanding of the activity they are trying to work on and what end result they can expect from this collaborative engagement.

### *3.3.5 Networking and Strategic Alliances*

Developing networks and strategic alliances with external stakeholders is an important activity for poorly deprived regions or community (Warner, 2004). Networking in this study is viewed as the connections or relationships which are created between and/or among different stakeholders particularly those external to ones' community. In this process people are aware of the external forces (political, economic and social) that are affecting development and change at the rural level. Leaders should be able to identify potential actors who can bring about a positive influence for community development and change. Ife (2002) suggests that this is important where resources (technical/human and financial) are limited within a particular region or community. He adds that effective leaders establish links with strategic groups such as key government officials, politicians, academics, NGOs representatives and so on and maintain the relationship and regularly refer to them for assistance. They form a strategic network for the community to tap into and mobilize financial and skilled human resources that are needed to move the community forward. Networking is successful when people involved in the process share a common understanding of what they want to achieve and how they will achieve it. This is based on a shared-vision which guides how different groups work to achieving their objective.

The five leadership characteristics outlined above are important in Solomon Islands context because they form a framework from which leadership can be qualitatively measured in how it influences development in a community or society. The effectiveness of this framework depends also to a certain extent on the relationships between and among different stakeholders which translates into a 'collaborative effort' in approaching the development process at the rural level. This view will be expanded on when we discuss the concept of community governance which I will now discuss below.

## 3.4 COMMUNITY GOVERNANCE

In order to understand 'community governance' it is useful to briefly look at the general concept of 'governance'. Governance, like leadership is difficult to pin-down in a single definition. This is because the concept consists of different factors and is often viewed from different perspectives. But governance can be viewed as a process, or a result of the combination of economic, political and/or administrative processes in the public and/or private sectors.

The Asian Development Bank (2004:3) defines governance "as the manner in which *power* is exercised in the management of a country's economic and social resources for development". Here governance is viewed from a power perspective. In this case it is one which is applied by the government and the rest of society– civil society– in the management of the development process of a country. This process takes places within an institutional environment (e.g. laws and regulations) in which citizens interact among themselves and with government and non-government agencies.

Lamour (1998) notes that most donors believe that development depends on the process of 'governance'. He identifies governance as referring to public sector management, accountability, a legal framework, and transparency and information circulation. Donors put conditions on aid, by demanding that these mentioned factors are present or that systems or structures are present to allow for the principles of 'good governance' to be upheld in the development process. Lamour quoting a World Bank report (1994), points out that governance is a polite way of raising the awkward issues of corruption,

incompetence and abuse of power. He concludes that the talk about 'governance' is often criticized for its vagueness, for being incoherent, based on false assumptions or 'just a word' which covers the broad notion of common sense (Lamour, 1998:4).

The Foundation of the Peoples of the South Pacific International (FSPI) (undated) views governance as a *decision-making process* and the implementation of decisions. This includes decision making at the local or community level. FSPI outlines that to understand governance, one needs to know who is involved or included when decisions are made and who is going to be affected by the decision(s), who implements the decisions, and importantly, what knowledge is available to those who make decisions. In this view governance involves incorporating different parties in the decision-making process. It is seen as an interactive-relationship between an organization and its political, economic and social environment.

It seems, therefore, that governance refers to the interrelationships between roles, structures, and processes through which decisions are made on how development should be approached at the country/state or community level.

In this study *community governance* is treated as 'group leadership'. This is a process which involves individuals, institutions and community norms and values as well as the structures within which the communities and individuals interact and make decisions around a common purpose such as their aspirations for development.

Additionally, community governance is viewed in this thesis as a communal process of decision-making within local institutions which may be informal or formal in their set-ups. This process involves stakeholders working collaboratively to make decisions about their collective well-being. In Solomon Islands this process may simply take place when people sit together and draw their concerns regarding an issue in a village meeting or in a similar setting.

Laverack (2001) argues that in a community decision-making process, the participation of community people is correlated to strong leadership. Participation occurs, he believes, when leadership is strong enough to take responsibility for developing 'cohesiveness' in a (social) group. Cohesiveness is therefore a vital characteristic which must be present in communities to allow people to work cooperatively on development issues. 'Cohesiveness' in a community implies trust and people understanding and seeing clearly the purpose of their 'coming together' (see section 3.3).

Three concepts are important in Laverack's argument: (i) that 'good social relationships' are important to the community governance process, (ii) that "leadership requires a strong participation base just as (iii) participation requires the direction and structure of strong leadership" (ibid: 138). The latter two seem to depend on the former for them to be demonstrated effectively.

The process and practice of community governance in Solomon Islands' rural communities is not an easy task. It is obviously influenced by different social issues such as strained relationships between tribes over resource ownership, multiple church groups and so on within the communities which influence the responses of different community groups to development issues. This situation is true for communities where different tribal or church groups coexist within a particular area but never sit together to address common development problems due to differences created through land conflicts or religious beliefs (personal observations).

For community governance to be effective requires more than institutional structures. Here 'institutional structures' may simply mean *kastoms* and values of a particular people in a particular social environment. In Kwara'ae for example *kwaima'anga* is a general concept or notion encompassing 'kindness or 'love'. However, someone demonstrating *kwaima'anga* in a community does not necessarily mean that issues (e.g. conflict over resources or ideological differences) between different groups are solved or absent in the society. People within the community may talk and laugh with each other in their daily interactions, but when it comes to development issues, the social division between

different groups in the society may come to surface. Mohan and Stokke (2000) warn that the concept of *community* seems to imply a scenario of homogeneity where there is a conflict-free environment. However, they state that one must take note of the social divisions within and among communities.

Therefore, deeper understanding of how people relate to and apply the notion of *kwaima'anga* for instance in rural community life is needed in addressing governance of development at the community level. Goodman (1998) argues that creating or adopting institutional structures that look after development at the community level cannot guarantee less conflict and increased community participation and cooperation. He points to the need for strong social relationships within communities as a primary factor for participation and mobilization of communities in their development process:

> Community Institutional structures are themselves insufficient to guarantee the organization and mobilization of a community. There must also be a sense of cohesion amongst its members, a concern for community issues, a sense of connection to the people and feelings of belonging manifested through customs, place, rituals and traditions (cited in Laverack, 2001:139)

As discussed above, the daily interaction between people within rural communities should not be viewed by 'outsiders' as a substitute or sufficient for effective community governance in rural areas. Different social groups in rural areas must work to embrace each other more fully to allow for development to take place smoothly at the rural level.

Much literature has addressed the importance of 'social cohesiveness' by linking it to the idea of *social capital* (Falk and Kilpatrick, 2000; Woolcock, 1998; Narayan and Pritchett, 1996). Where trust is built from good social networks and norms, it is argued that there are also higher chances for democratic and sustainable good community governance as it develops a sense of "civic engagement" (Mohan and Stokke, 2000: 255) within the community population as well as between or among other communities.

## 3.5 SOCIAL CAPITAL AND PARTICIPATION

Some development commentators (Narayan and Pritchett, 1996; Brohman, 1996; Woolcock, 1998) recognize that both social and economic factors underpin the development process of a society in general. Simply, social and economic factors must be reconciled to allow for a holistic development process, one which sees an increase in 'participation' and cooperation of people for the success of the socio-economic development of a community or society (Narayan and Pritchett, 1996). Participation is defined here as the willingness of different social groups to work cooperatively and contributes to decision making on development activities.

Other commentators (Bowles and Gintis, 2000; Woolcock, 1998) discuss social capital as a vital social factor to be considered in development discussions in poor communities. Good social relationships are indications of high social capital which is reflected in the degree of trust and participation in community or civic activities.

Social capital has been defined as encompassing "the norms and networks facilitating collective action for mutual benefit" (Woolcock, 1998:155).  This is similar to Putnam's (2000) understanding of social capital as the "connections among individuals-social networks and the norms of reciprocity and trustworthiness that arise from them" (cited in Durlauf, 2002).  Social capital is also about "trust, concern for one's associates, a willingness to live by norms of one's community and to punish those who do not" (Bowles and Gintis, 2000: F419). Another view of social capital is that it is "an attribute of individuals and of their relationships that enhances their ability to solve collective action problems (Ostrom and Ahn (2003: xiv).

What is common in these definitions is the idea of connection or networks in a community and the importance of shared norms and trust. The latter, according to Ostrom and Ahn (ibid), is the key link between social capital and successful collective action and without it social capital and collective action cannot develop.

In this thesis social capital is treated as the relationship between people or social groups and the positive effects (or otherwise) that these relationships have on the local development process. Good social relationships are those that enable development to take place within a complex social context as people understand each other and solve problems through a community-built-spirit in which people have concern for each other. Trust is central to these relationships. In this study peoples' understanding of *trust* was gauged using a hypothetical approach i.e. respondents were asked about how they would act in a likely scenario toward community issues or person(s). This was complemented with questions on beliefs about cooperation and reciprocity in one's community.

In Solomon Islands societies, practices such as *wantok system*[32] may create a sense of belonging and concern for community issues and well-being as people share limited resources and vital information with those whom they identify with whether through language or other social factors such as religion or the place of tribal origin. The question then arises as to how it can be useful or whether it can, for community development. Some people may support its usefulness for development whilst others do not. Those who do not support it usually comment on the 'one way' personal loss which people who are perceived by their *wantoks* or communities' people to have the means to support this system usually experience in this process[33](personal observations). This may also influence how people respond (cooperatively) to development issues. People may hold back and wait to see whether they will benefit or otherwise in any communal initiative and perhaps may be reluctant from the outset to contribute to community initiatives.

---

[32] *Wantok* literally means 'one talk' referring to people who speak the same language or have the same or similar identity. *Wantok system* advocates cooperation among those who speak the same language. The concept is also contextual. Two Solomon Islanders in Fiji may call themselves wantoks, although they may come from different provinces in Solomon Islands..

[33] What I intend to say here is that some people may be over reliant on people who they think are well-off (e.g. financially) that they may not bother to work to achieve or acquire what they want to achieve or gain that 'wantok system' become a 'one-way' loss to a person who supports his/her wantoks rather than a reciprocal beneficial system as it should have been.

In the Kwara'ae community context people refer to the concept of *rawafikuanga*[34] when they recognize the benefits of working communally or expect to gain mutually from a proposed activity. *Rawafikuanga* can be demonstrated at the household level where children are expected to help their parents in their family food garden in return for being fed. Or when someone calls a group to repair his or her broken thatched house, he or she is in *falafala* (tradition) expected to give something in return for the help people offer him or her in repairing his or her home either by giving them food or helping them later when his or her help is needed. According to Kwara'ae *falafala* he or she should not be called for help, he or she is expected to offer his or her help freely and willingly when he or she sees the need, from his or her own judgment, to help his or her friend(s). The initiative should come from him or her without coercion. Two people in conflict may not demonstrate *rawafikuanga* unless they reconcile with the help of a 'respected' or neutral person accepted as a mediator. The indigenous notion of 'cooperation and participation' is important for this thesis as it influences how people respond to their leaders as well as to community activities.

There are other avenues which rural communities can utilize to develop and further common interests. For example, it is usual to find several communities sharing a primary or secondary school or health centers. These organizations are established at a central location in which different communities can come together for a common purpose like education and health services. These communal organizations can be seen as strong intermediaries for several communities as they serve different people from different communities. They thus become 'natural players' in building social capital through a common participative development medium of education or health. Local women's organizations and church are also examples where social networks can be developed among or within communities (see sub-section 3.6.1). In this process people interact with each other and develop values and norms through cooperation or *rawafikuanga* in the rural community level. These rural based institutions are in some cases, one must note,

---

[34] In Kwara'ae *rawa* is translated as work. *Rawa'a* is the process of doing work manually in the food garden or similar context. *Fiku* means come together or unite. *Rawafiku'a* means to work together; *rawafikuanga* connotes the action of manually working together. Here I related it with the notion of 'cooperation'.

the only avenue for rural people to come together and perhaps help to create good social relationships with each other. I must stress here that gathering of different tribes, communities and similar groups rarely occur in Solomon Islands communities, unless an event such as feasting or marriage takes place. One must also note that in areas where modern forms of communication (telephones and internet) are absent community institutions such as schools, clinics, churches and so on must be acknowledged for their role in creating social networks and building social relationships in the rural communities.

Good social relationships are vital for development. Communities must be able to develop a certain degree of it among the different stakeholders to allow for development to take place smoothly. Good social relationships must be natured and balanced overtime to allow socio-economic development to diffuse into communities or societies. This requires all stakeholders in a given society to work together to achieve it. Societal goals such as those aimed at improving the well-being of the people are not achieved individually, but through interaction of all individuals. Coleman (1990, cited in Castle, 2003:1209) notes:

> It is a fiction that society consists of a set of independent individuals, each of whom acts to achieve goals that are independently arrived at, and that the functioning of the social system consist of the combination of these actions of independent individuals… individual do not act independently, goals are not independently arrived at, and interests are not wholly selfish… even though self-interest is an important motivator, it does not preclude, indeed it may require, participation in groups.

To build improved social capital within rural communities in Solomon Islands may also require a shift in the people's perception of the place of youth and women in development in the rural areas. Youth and women are generally seen as having lower status than men. In fact traditionally youth[35] are hardly involved in community decision-making. Scales (2003b) found that youth participation in Solomon Islands rural

---

[35] I use the term 'Youth' to refer to unmarried men and women.

development was low and community support for youth in many rural areas is weak. In many communities decision-making is still largely associated with the 'big-man' view where elders and men wield more authority than youth or women. Scales adds that youths are not supported by their community elders and feel neglected in the community development process. Consequently this results in low social capital and poor youth leadership within many rural communities with negative consequences on local development processes.

Gegeo and Watson-Gegeo (2002) found that forging good relationships between the youth and elders in a community development process is possible through the use of indigenous concepts such as *fa'amanataanga;*[36] a process which involves elders teaching youth about how things are done in traditional Kwara'ae communities. Simple acts such as joking openly and friendly teasing help to downplay status and ease tensions between the parties (village elders and youth) allowing such groups to sit together and learn from each other.

What is important in the above experience is that it demonstrates that there are opportunities within Solomon Islands communities which can be utilized for forging a strong social relationship among the different groups in the rural areas. This research views (as identified in Chapter 1) that forging good social relationships between different groups in the society and communities is an important factor in an environment where different societal groups are at present not working cooperatively in the rural development process which negatively affects it.

Some local commentators and development organizations (Sanga, 2007; Central Malaita Development Trust Agency (CMDTA), 2006; Malaita Province, 2006) have called for creating a 'community spirit' among the different groups in Central Malaita. Sanga

---

[36] Gegeo and Watson-Gegeo (2002:387-8) define the term in general Kwara'ae usage as "teaching of abstract knowledge and skills". In a more specific and specialized use, they refer to the term as "counseling in which intellectual instructions, interpersonal counseling and conflict resolution occur simultaneously, serially or independently". In Kwara'ae this process involves an older person with a person younger than the counselor. A younger person is seen as not fit to counsel an older person as the former is perceived as having limited experiences and knowledge of life.

(2007) strongly believes that only through *ofuofua* (cooperation or unity) will stability and the right 'environment' for development be created. A 'right' environment will allow the different groups (church, political groups, tribes etc.) to work together in the development process of their communities and/or the Central Malaita region generally. What Sanga proposes as *ofuofua* relates to the need to build 'trust' and the spirit of community cohesiveness through traditional norms and values people hold in their communities. It is by forging trust between the different groups, Sanga believes, that they can come together and work cooperatively in the development process of Central Malaita region. But social units like tribal groups or church groups can sometimes serve to exclude and deny as well as include and enable. It is therefore important that appropriate tools be developed or enhanced (in the case of *ofuofua*) to foster unity. People's networks rather than only tribal groups should be seen, then, as part of the wider set of relationships and norms that allow people to pursue their goals, and also serve to *ofua* (bind/unite) society together.

I have so far attempted to describe some key understanding about the concept of leadership and social capital. It is within this broader concept that community leadership was discussed. Further, attempt was made to show the importance of community governance as a 'group leadership' process where different values, practices and institutions and actors are taken into consideration in decision-making in rural community development. I conclude with the concept of social capital which is described simply as relationship between humans and the influences of these relationships on how people (re)act in rural development process.

The following sections will discuss traditional governance in Solomon Islands. It also examines the leadership role of women in traditional societies in Solomon Islands. The chapter concludes with a discussion on local governance in Solomon Islands

### 3.6 'Big Men' and Chiefs: Traditional Governance in Solomon Islands

Traditional governance structures and forms of leadership in the Solomon Islands are diverse. There is no single traditional leadership system for the entire country, a

reflection of the country's cultural and ethno-linguistic diversity. For our purposes, traditional governance will be discussed under two broad categories of 'big men' and 'chiefly systems' which are also broadly related to the Melanesian and Polynesian groups in Solomon Islands. The focus is on the roles that these traditional leaders play in society.

The stereotype of the Melanesian leader as 'Big Men' is one of the less fortunate legacies of ethnography in Oceania (Ross 1976). This term is now widely used in both academic and the public discussions of leadership in the Melanesia despite its misinterpretation of the leadership structures of the diverse Melanesian groups.

Sahlin's (1969) comparative study on Melanesia and Polynesia leadership structures is perhaps the most debated of leadership studies in Oceania. A major difference between the Polynesian and Melanesian chiefly 'models' is how the Melanesian 'Big Man' is seen as a result of the "creation of followership" rather than ascription which is of the Polynesian category. He notes that the Big Man must be prepared to demonstrate that "he possesses the kinds of skills that command respect-magical powers, gardening prowess, mastery of oratorical style, perhaps bravery in war and feud" (ibid, p.290-91). In short, he describes the traditional leadership system in Melanesia in general as one achieved through what he called " economic extortion" (ibid: 293), giving away gifts to possible or intended followers and expecting reciprocity either through material gifts or gain of leadership status or position.

Hogbin (1964:64) similarly notes that for an intended Big Man to win support it is essential that he be "forceful, even-tempered, tactful, industrious, a good speaker, and an able organizer or a warrior or magician even". 'Wealth' measured by number of pigs, size and number of food gardens, number of workers or wives and similar comparative measures are listed as the primary qualifications to be recognized as a Big Man.  To gain political influence over the population for an aspiring Melanesian leader then is simply a matter of distribution of wealth to the population at large. This is done, Sahlins (ibid) argues firstly by extracting wealth from close supporters and then re-distributing it. This supposes that an aspiring Melanesian leader will work toward gaining favour rather than

through having the population support him at the first place as is believed to be the case for the Polynesian leadership system.

Such rather 'caricatural' comparative analysis of the roles of traditional leaders and the leadership structures in the two ethnic areas in Oceania has been widely criticized-mainly because of its generalization and rigidity compared to the diversity of leadership structures in the Pacific. Feinberg and Watson-Gegeo, (1996:30) argue that even in the seemingly rigid structured leadership formation in the Polynesian groups, the prime function of the traditional chief (*ariki, ali'i* etc.) is to ensure the welfare of his followers. Likewise, the Melanesian Big Man has the obligation to take care of the welfare of the people for whom he has responsibility.

The big-man system has always been used to describe the leadership system in Solomon Islands. In fact Marshall Sahlins' famous *Poor Man, Rich Man, Big Man, Chief: Political Types in Melanesia and Polynesia* article was heavily based on evidence from Solomon Islands and Papua New Guinea. However, the 'big man' leadership description is a broad generalization of the various leadership structures and practices existing in the archipelago and that one must be careful about these generalizations. On islands like the Shortlands a Melanesian chiefly system existed in the society. Likewise in Melanesian New Georgia, Florida Islands (Nggela), Lau Lagoon and Sa'a on Malaita there are also chiefly systems (Bennett, 1989).

Even in areas where chiefly structures are seemingly absent, leadership within communities is categorized according to different roles that different people have to play in a given society. For example, generally leadership within Malaitan traditional societies can be categorized into three broad groups: spiritual, warrior and chief who are commonly (mis) interpreted as 'Big-Man'. These three categories formed the leadership structure of all societies or descent groups and are found throughout Malaita. Although these positions may slightly differ in the major ethnic groups, the roles they play are similar in most cases.

What is important in both leadership categories is the continuous support they have to offer to their followers. As Feinberg and Watson-Gegeo, (1996) state both leadership systems work in maintaining order in their own society, allocate work to different people and verify that what has been carried out is completed and achieved. In other words both systems have the same purpose: to cater for the welfare of the people and maintain order in society.

### 3.6.1 Women as Traditional Leaders

In Solomon Islands, women's role in traditional societies at the household level generally combined the roles of housewife, mother, family breadwinner and backbone of the kinship group, be it family or clan (Pollard, 2000). Women are expected to work in the family's food garden, prepare food as well as raise and care for the children and the elderly. Young girls are expected to learn to do this work at an earlier age than boys. Their mothers teach them at home and in the gardens. This prepares a girl for her future role as a mother. A girl's role and how she should relate to her men folk are also taught at an earlier age. She must also demonstrate she can abide by the norms and values of her society before she can be seen as being ready for marriage. If she cannot fulfill her role in her married life, she becomes a subject of condemnation and gossip mostly from her husband's kin (Pollard, 2000).

At the community or tribe level, in matrilineal societies where kinship rights over land and other resources are inherited and defined through women, they can be influential behind their men folk although they often do not hold the direct power or authority to make decisions on important factors such as land. This is true in places like Guadalcanal and Savo (Hogbin, 1964) where women can be the heads of tribes but have a limited and indirect form of authority over men who act as spokespersons for a tribe for instance. However, both men and women's role are complementary in many social issues or activities.

Maranda (1974:200), observing the role of both men and women in Lau on Malaita, notes that although there seems to be a delineation of gender roles in this Melanesian society,

the role of both sexes are "intertwined and complementary". This is true in both matrilineal and patrilineal societies in Solomon Islands. Keesing (1977) makes a point in saying that the notion of 'gender inequality' as seen from a western perspective may not be that of a Malaitan society for example. Therefore, referring to women as inferior to men may not reflect the truth of gender roles in the traditional Melanesian setting as Maranda observed with the Lau of Malaita. It may be true to an extent that women do not have a primary say in most tribal or societal affairs, but both women and men have a part to play in their society which are equally important for the welfare of their people and society.

Public forms of decision-making processes in the Pacific (especially in those most easily observed by 'outsiders') lead to the view that men dominate the local decision-making process in the communities. But this is not the case in all the Melanesian societies. Nash (1974) notes that in relation to leadership and gender responsibilities in Nagovisi, on Bougainville, women have certain rights not only to the discussions in lineage, but also with regards to pig distribution, land use and compensation settlement.

A rare mention of women appointed as chiefs was cited in Bogesi (1947, cited in Scales and Teakeni, 2006) for the Bughotu language area of Isabel[37]. Such cases are rarely mentioned in academic literature. Isabel is a matrilineal society in which lineage is inherited through women. This does not mean that women hold the power to key resources and societal wealth but they do play a part in decision-making.

For Malaita, Gegeo (1996) notes that women could not serve as *aofia, araha, alafa* (chief) (a title of office with almost equal connotation to *ariki* of Tikopia). Hogbin (1964) in his studies on the Kaoka society on Guadalcanal and the To'obaita on Malaita also observed that women tended to be excluded from participating in vital ceremonies such as offering of pigs for dead ancestral spirits. However, women can have leadership responsibilities in their tribes usually over other women by demonstrating their competence in organizing marriage, feast or maintaining the village in order.

---

[37] Isabel is one of the provinces in Solomon Islands with a matrilineal kinship system.

On Bellona, Monberg (1996) finds that in terms of land ownership, women were never given the right over land, but a wife of the *matu'a* (landholder) has informal non-sacred authority and enjoyed a certain social respect from the community. Women on Bellona can also take a role of mediator during feuds between clans although this role was not formalized in the leadership structure. Despite this non-formalization of female mediators, the choosing of such woman may have been based on certain acceptable characteristics. As Boggs and Gegeo (1996) notes for Kwara'ae, the choice of such people is based on the concept of '*inoto'a,* a man or women who is socially and politically important, or an elder who deserves respect, respects others, and looks after others' needs.

Many of the characteristics discussed above are incorporated into how communities view women's (leadership) role in community governance and development today. Among other factors, Christianity influences how women behave and respond to community issues. In churches women are given responsibilities to perform pastoral and counseling roles to young men and women and other older women in the community. Additionally, women who aspire to take on leadership roles and/ or are seen fit for taking on leadership responsibilities in communities must also display certain characteristics such as kindness or trustworthiness and so on to be accepted as a leader. People use the concept of *inoto'a* to identify who is fit (or otherwise) to hold leadership responsibilities in the community. In community wide issues such as village law and order problems or land disputes women are not included in these issues although they can share their views perhaps through a village/tribe meeting or in a similar setting. The final decisions on such matters still rest with the village men. This is true even often in matrilineal societies where kinship passes through women (Maetala, 2007).

The next and final section of this chapter examines local governance as it relates to development in Solomon Islands.
.

**3.7 Local Governance in Solomon Islands**

One of the ways in which development at the local community level has been pursued through or structured around is the 'local governance structures'. Local governance has been used to refer to local government. For instance Turner (2003) uses the term to refer to the 'formal' local level government such as the 'Area Councils'[38] abolished in Solomon Islands in 1997 but it can and also should be used to refer to a range of 'informal' community structures and processes (Scales, 2005).

Scales (ibid) sees local governance as the realm of 'informal' structures which are not recognized by the government but are formed and active within rural communities. In this discussion, local governance will also include the norms and values held by community people, their attitudes towards their 'community leaders' and how they view their role as well as the roles of specific groups in development at the local level. The roles these groups play to facilitate development at the local level is important to this section.

There are differing views about the efficiency and effectiveness of both the formal and informal local governance structures for implementation of development programmes at the local level. Schoeffel (2003), for example, is pessimistic about the formal local governance institutions', including the provincial and local councils, capabilities to take responsibility for local developments. She argues that in many Pacific Islands including Solomon Islands, decentralizing the larger centralized governance system may not guarantee that 'good governance' will be practiced at the local level. Problems such as corruption and misuse of resources encountered at the national level are also present at the local level. She concludes that any proposed governance system for local development purposes must be adopted with caution.

Others (Wairiu and Tabo, 2003; Scales, 2006; 2003a; 2003b) hold a more optimistic view that the informal governance systems which already exist at the community level can be utilized as a medium for local development process. The very fact of their existence is

---

[38] Before they were abolished in 1997, Area Councils' role is restricted to management of community assets such as schools, health centres, water and sanitation. Provinces provide the councils' budget and staff.

important as a potential tool for development, and the areas which these structures have been used in the local development process should be further strengthened. Scales (2006) in particular calls for the empowerment of the local people and the utilization of the existing structures such as the local village committee and the traditional norms and values people hold towards local leaders. He argues that these structures and features of local communities are cost effective and may not need much technical input to allow them to be used as a medium for local development programmes. It makes more sense, according to him, to use existing 'social infrastructures' such as values, norms and practices in societies and leadership structures than introducing any other form of structure or values into the local level development process. The latter may not be readily accepted by the local people or may be too expensive to be created and operated at the local level.

However, one must also note that development processes at the local level can be manipulated by so-called 'local elites'; those who may have an upper hand in local issues because of their 'status' or position in the community or society. An example may be landowners who control certain resources or areas which may be needed for programmes or activities that could benefit all. For example in constructing a public road on a customary land, two possible scenarios may arise which can be disadvantageous to non-landowning groups. Firstly, landowners may ask for a form of royalty or 'rent' for the construction of the road on the land they claim rights over. Secondly, the construction of the road may be disputed between or within the landowning groups resulting in the project being halted or abandoned thereby affecting non-land owning groups negatively. This illustration may seem simple, but in reality this is how power is often exercised at the local level with a negative consequence on local development.

One must therefore be careful about using 'local governance' as a medium for rural development programmes: power at the local level is divided according to different matters of importance in the community. For example Scales (2003a) notes that community wide issues (e.g. education and health) are separate from land governance as land ownership is vested in tribes which can possibly lead to problems as shown above.

The division of power at the local level is also linked to the heterogeneity of the villages in terms of religion (e.g. multiple church denominations) or tribal identity (e.g. having more than one tribal group within a particular community).

In order to better understand the details of local governance we will examine five important and common structures in most rural communities: (i) village committees, (ii) chiefs, (iii) Church, (iv) women's groups and, (v) youth organization.

Scales (2003a) writes that for most communities in Solomon Islands, there is a thriving culture of *komitis* (committees) that undertake various governance functions: the school committee, water-supply committee, village committee and health committee are central to almost all community developments in Solomon Islands. Scales notes that the committees have diverse capacities, ways of choosing leaders, as well as participation, representation and decision-making processes. The various village committees play a central role in the development of initiatives in communities as most development programmes are planned through these committees.

Chiefs are influential at the community or constituency level and their powers range over a variety of issues. Their degree of influence depends on what type of chief (i.e. inherited or appointed) they are and on the issues of concern. If an issue is to do or related to tribes (e.g. landownership) appointed chiefs do not have the power to get involved unless they are part of that particular tribe. When it comes to village-wide issues, appointed chiefs have greater influence on the community people as such chiefs are chosen by the majority of the villagers for their personal leadership attributes such as being trustworthy at the household or community level[39]. People develop respect for such community chiefs and the community can easily accept their leadership. They are involved in different community activities where their power is exercised at different levels within a given community.

---

[39] See chapter 4 for discussion on 'appointed community chiefs' in Central Malaita.

But the role and influence customary or inherited chiefs have on larger development activities can also be significant. For instance in relation to commercial logging operations, Kabutaulaka (1998) finds that (customary) chiefs play an important role in influencing decision-making in tribal groups or among land owners. They are also the target during negotiations for agreements and concessions and in the distribution of wealth acquired in logging. In this way they possess more power in accepting or refusing logging operations than the state. Kabutaulaka also found that they are often the ones who gain most from such activities as they deal directly with the external parties and may at times never pass on the benefits to their tribe or community.

Chiefs can also combine to form a 'council of chiefs' (CC) which is composed of chiefs from a particular region based on language or tribal groups[40]. In most instances CCs deal with customary land matters and hold local land or genealogical related courts outside of the formal legal court systems. Another role played by CCs is the recording of local traditions and languages of a particular region or clan(s) in order to preserve the cultural values of a particular group. In this case these structures and governance processes have no connection whatsoever to the formal governance systems and operate without their support. When there is support e.g. financial, for a certain 'project', and most likely from a donor agency, it is only for a limited time after which such assistance ceases.

Church is central to most if not all communities in Solomon Islands. Certain churches particularly the five major ones in Solomon Islands– Anglican, Catholic, South Seas Evangelical Church (SSEC), Methodist and Seventh Day Adventists (SDA)– may have area-based groups over regions based on government boundaries such as wards or districts, constituencies or some may create their own 'zones' for operation according to number of villages or proximity in distance and so on. Typical of these structures are the SDA 'Dorcus group' (a women's group), 'Regional Associations' for the SSEC or 'Parish' for the Catholics and Anglican churches. These organizations form a network of

---

[40] On Isabel Province, the Council of Chiefs is made up of the chiefs of all the tribes throughout the province with a paramount chief as the head of the Council. This is one of the well-organized and successful Council of Chiefs in Solomon Islands.

villages and consequently create solidarity within these groups. In this instance church can be viewed as a medium for building social relationships enhancing social capital

Since missionaries began Christianizing the islands, tradition has been incorporated into Christianity and vice versa. This relationship also influences how people respond to church related activities (Whiteman, 1983). In fact church based activities are held with high regard in most communities. For instance when church feasts are planned people respond positively as is shown in food gathered for church feastings. Church gatherings are some of the largest gatherings in Solomon Islands communities. People respect the principle of working together based on Biblical teachings and in their submission to this teaching they are committed to involvement in various church activities. People adhere to Christian values and reflected in how people work together or respond positively to programmes related to church.

Many schools and health centers have been traditionally operated by church missions (Bennett, 1989). At present the administration of these church 'ministries' is conducted from Honiara with sub-provincial offices facilitating and coordinating field operations. In some places these are the only activities that are visible in a particular area or region because the central government is out of reach and therefore appears irrelevant to many rural people.

Women and youth groups are also important organizations in villages. Most women's organizations in the village are centered around or related to the church. It is common to see church women's group making welfare related visits to other communities sometimes taking with them material goods and food items such as clothes, sugar, rice and tea to share with older people in other communities. In the well organized women's group like the SDA Dorcus group the practice described here is central to its *raison d' être* and that is to reach out and help others who are materially deprived or sick and need immediate help. In fact it is difficult to detach women's organization from church ones as women's organizations are often formed through churches. This was confirmed during the

fieldwork for this research: women from the same church formed women's saving club or trade stores.

Youth groups are divided between those associated with church activities or village-wide social groups. Those related to church are mostly confined to religious outreach programmes which involved other youth groups from other communities. Those that are related to the community social groups such as the local sports clubs generally involve all the youth from the community and perhaps include those from neighboring communities forming sports teams which may participate in constituency or provincial level tournaments. Soccer and netball teams are the most common sporting activities. Funds for supporting teams in organized tournaments may be collected from members or is earned through the teams' helping out in someone's food garden or building or repairing someone's house in exchange of money which is used for the team's registration fee in tournaments.

Youth involvement in other areas of village is very low. Although factors such as decision-making in the village may be classified as 'consensual' which could mean a majority of people showing of hands to support a proposed idea, youth (both sexes) may not be present in community meetings (Scales, 2003b). Traditional values, whereby older men are guardians of 'wisdom' and 'power' in Melanesian societies, may be seen as under threat if youth and women are allowed to speak on public issues. This may have been a reason for not including or recognizing women and youth role in local governance. But most importantly efforts for including youths in community governance issues are low and almost lacking in some or most communities. This is sometimes reflected in poor social relationships with the community at large and can be a negative factor as youth participation may be low in community activities and poor social relationships issues become problematic for the community development process.

## 3.8 Conclusion

In this chapter, I attempted to draw the link between three concepts: community leadership, community governance and social capital and their influence on rural

development. From a broad discussion on leadership, the concept of 'community leadership' was drawn, pointing out the latter as a collaborative relationship where leadership is depersonalized and diffused throughout the community as people identify common problems and have a shared-vision in addressing identified issue(s). This collaborative approach to leadership is a desirable factor in the rural development process when dealing with different actors who hold different views and approaches which may limit the chances for enhancing the development process unless they are forged into a single view. This understanding is supported by local development actors and commentators (e.g. Sanga, 2007, CMDTA, 2006, CKCC, 2005) in Central Malaita who see the need for a collaborative spirit among the various actors in the development of this region. The effectiveness of leadership in this process is an important factor to identify in how it influences development at the local level. Because the notion of 'leadership' is difficult to quantify, this study has adopted a framework which allows one to identify the relationships that are important to sound rural development. The five dimensions of effective leadership in the framework are: vision, shared-vision, communication and trust, networking and collaboration. For this framework to be effective it also depends to a certain extent on how the relationships between and among different stakeholders are forged into a common view which translates into a collaborative effort in approaching the development process at the rural level.

Additionally, community governance is understood as 'group leadership' through which different actors and institution collectively make decisions in community development which could potentially lead to increasing participation of people in the rural development process as views of different actors are taken into consideration. It was also shown that principles and practice of community governance today are rooted in *falafala* (tradition), and that community values such as *rawafikuanga* are held in high regard when people understand their importance in facilitating development. These are important concepts to consider when one talks about rural development in Central Malaita.

With social capital, this chapter has also emphasized that good social relationships are central for rural development as when people develop a sense of 'community-cohesiveness' it diminishes the chances for 'conflicts' to occur, thus enhancing community participation in development activities. It was also shown that social capital and participation in community processes are also related to 'strong' leadership which takes responsibility to see that social cohesion is developed and maintained within the community. There are indigenous practices and contemporary forms of institutions which rural people can adopt or use to forge good relationships among people. Particular mention was made of community initiatives such as schools and health centres which naturally bring rural people together increasing their contact with each other and the potential for developing good relationships with each other. In an environment where modern forms of communication are limited, such community institutions are vital in developing social relationships in the rural areas.

In the final section I attempted to outline how ('informal') local governance in Solomon Islands is a medium through which rural development has been carried out in the absence of formal government systems. Particularly, leadership roles played by chiefs, church, women, youth and various village committees and organizations are important in development at the local level. *Kastom* and Christianity influence much of the practice of local governance and how leadership is being carried out in rural communities. Rural development is indeed a momentous engagement with people; therefore, their behavior towards the process is important to be considered in rural development in Solomon Islands.

In the following chapter, the historical background on the key causes of change on Malaita will be outlined with the objective to describe how Central Kwara'ae Constituency fits in the development discussions of Malaita.

**CHAPTER 4**

**THE CASE STUDY ENVIRONMENT**

**4.0 Introduction**

This chapter provides an over-view of the area covered in the case study particularly
Central Kwara'ae in Central Malaita and includes a brief historical account of socio-
economic development in Malaita Province. The objective of this chapter is to highlight
the key causes of change on Malaita and how Central Kwara'ae fits into the historical
changes taking place on the island. The focus is on how leadership–traditional leadership,
political and community leadership–at different levels of the society influences the
development process on the island and Central Kwara'ae communities today.

**4.1 Development on Malaita:  A Historical Perspective**

Malaita is one of the nine provinces in Solomon Islands. With a population of 121, 297 it
is the most populated province in Solomon Islands making up for about 30% of the
country's total population (Solomon Islands Statistics Office, 1999). Malaita is a
patrilineal society where the rule of primogeniture is applied. The first-born male child in
the family is entitled to the properties of his father or is entrusted with the leadership
within his immediate family. In the case where the male child is born from a leading tribe
family, this child is regarded as the head of his tribe.

There are eight main distinctive languages spoken throughout the island (Tryon and
Hackman, 1983). These languages roughly form the distinctive ethnic groups on Malaita.
Generally Malaitans are described or recognized according to their local languages and
dialects[41].  Therefore, people may speak of a *Kwara'ae* or *Kwaio* person and so on to
identify a person. Although neighboring languages are comprehensible to two

---

[41] Are 'are, Dorio, Kwai, Kwaio, Kwara'ae, Lau, Langalanga, and North Malaita which is divided into four
main dialects namely To'obaita, Mbaelelea, Mbaeguu and Fataleka (see Tryon, D.T and Hack, B D.1983
for detail study on Solomon Languages)

neighboring groups, those further away or at the opposite ends of the island may not understand each other.

Auki Town, the administrative center of Malaita Province, is a product of the colonial government dating from the early 1900s (Boutilier, 1978). The township has some visible infrastructure such as roads and telecommunications, a magistrate court, banks and shops providing basic goods and services. There are three main public roads which run to the North, South and East of the Island. However, for a good number of the population movement is restricted to outboard motor engines, dug out canoes or, even worst still by bush tracks.

The lack of any major economic activities on the island was often pointed to as a push factor causing people to move to other islands. Gagahe (2000) reports that from the 1986 National Census Report that 17,665 Malaitans moved towards economically active zones either in neighboring Guadalcanal or in the Western Province in search of paid employment. This number has increased over the years. The practice began during colonial times as the colonial administration required all able males to pay head taxes (Bennett, 1987). It resulted in many Malaitans, men especially, leaving the islands in search to work mostly in the coconut plantations on Guadalcanal or Western province where large plantations are located. Most Malaitans stayed in these locations.

Tribal membership is strongly bounded in custom and culture through blood relations. Land signifies the 'wholeness' of a tribe: it has a spiritual significance and provides identity (Maenu'u, 1981). Malaitans today, like many indigenous peoples elsewhere, do not easily welcome 'foreign' agents to utilize their resources. This is often true in the cases where extraction of natural resources is involved. Land (ownership/usage) is often a sensitive issue and difficulties in dealing with internal conflicts between and within tribes with relation to large-scale development is common on Malaita and itself a hindrance to development on Malaita and Solomon Islands generally (Aqorau, 2006; Burt, 1994; Maenu'u, 1981). Although activities like logging, done by mainly Asians, on

the island, logging operations usually do not operate without causing conflict and divisions among and/or within tribal groups and communities.

Developing Malaita is viewed by certain commentators as one of the ways to achieve long term political stability in Solomon Islands. Aqorau (2006:7) recently commented "the development of Malaita in particular is especially important in the equation of the long-term solution to some of the socio-political development problems facing Solomon Islands". Naturally because of its larger population and underdevelopment, the proportion of Malaitans migrating to Honiara is greater than other islands. Yet many 'hindrances' to development on Malaita are related to internal conflicts between and within tribes and communities in relation to land. Therefore, proposed plans for any large-scale economic activity can take long to come to fruition or, as in most cases, are abandoned due to many related social complexities on the island.[42]. One such example is the Bina Harbour Free Port project which has been on the drawing board since independence in 1978.

## 4.2 Causes of Changes on Malaita:

### *4.2.1 European contact*

The history of socio-economic development and change on Malaita, like in other parts of the archipelago is tied to traders, missionisation and colonialism (Bennett, 1987; White, 1983). Contact with European traders was however limited compared to other islands such as Isabel, the Western Solomons or Makira. Bennett (ibid) concludes that this is explained by the attitude of the locals, who do not easily welcome 'strangers' on their island. Much of this is also related to the headhunting or cannibalism which was widely practiced on the island in the early European contact. Therefore strangers were regarded as potential enemies.

---

[42] The present government is engaging in land recordings between different tribal groups in East and Central Malaita regions where the proposed oil palm plantations and a duty free port are to be established. Tribal land recording is important, as there are different tribes who share or make claims on the different areas for these large projects. This process of land recordings and acquisitions could take several years to complete.

Historically, Malaita was also said to have limited natural resources of economic importance for trade between the natives and the Europeans, unlike other islands (Bennett, 1987:265). However, there was plenty of manpower available on the island. Traders and black-birders exploited this situation luring many Malaitans to work in plantations in Australia and Fiji (Corris, 1973).

## 4.2.2 Government and Mission

Colonialism and missionisation were the most influential factors in social change in Solomon Islands. In the church mission centers, local native pastors, teachers and catechists were chosen to work along side European priests and missionaries. Communities were obliged to look after these people by helping build their houses and making their food gardens. This developed a new perception on leadership and perhaps new form of 'bigmanship' in the communities. The legitimacy of the person in such positions as pastors or catechist and (Christian) priest is now based on the Christian biblical teachings rather than from the *akalo* (ancestral spirits). The Christian Bible has become the new source of spirituality where *mamana'aga* (divine truth) comes from. The traditional sources of spirit power or *akalo* are not acceptable according to the biblical teachings and principles. The traditional religious structures were altered, such that the *fata'abu* or the *waneni'foa* are no longer important or needed in the communal context in Malaita today. Instead local people trained as pastors and catechist or bishops are taking the leading role in the religious functions of the communities today[43].

During colonial rule, with few exceptions, the operations of schools and clinics or hospitals were largely left to the church missions. Participation by the locals in these introduced institutions led to many traditional leaders giving up their usual practices in the traditional communities and their leadership role in the community become marginalized. For example, a prerequisite for gaining employment in the mission stations as a teacher or catechist was that, apart from being fluent in the local *pidgin*, one had to be a converted Christian (Bennett, 1987). Consequently, traditional *fata'abu* (priest) lost

---

[43] Christianity is widely practice throughout Malaita with small animist communities still existing in some interior parts of the island.

their positions as catechist or pastors became the new spiritual leaders in the communities. In short, Christianity greatly influenced the practice of traditional culture in the Malaitan society, especially social structures.

In the late 1920s the colonial government established village Headmen in many rural communities throughout Malaita and other islands. These people acted as the colonial administration's representative in villages. Headmen made sure that the District Officers' (DO) orders, who were all Europeans, were carried out. The connections to the colonial government legitimated the village Headman's role as new community leaders (Cochrane, 1970). Villagers were called upon to work communally–under the supervision of the Headmen– in constructing and maintaining roads and meeting houses, and keeping their village clean. They had to work one day per week for the government on communal projects (Bennett, 1987).

Historians (see Judith Bennett, 1987) view the World War II and thereafter as the climax of social change on Malaita. After the war many Malaitan men moved to Guadalcanal to join the post-war labour recruitment to clean up the war debris and build the administrative capital in Honiara. In that process they learned about and were exposed to the monetary economy as well as to new forms of 'cultures' mainly from the American soldiers with whom they had daily contacts in the labour camps. This post-war contact with *waetman* (whitemen) was different from those in the pre-war plantation contacts. The Americans, unlike the British colonial administrators, allowed the 'natives' to live with them and eat the same food and wear the same clothes as them in these camps. This changed the perception of the locals towards the British who, generally, treated the natives as inferiors.

This, among others, led to the emergence of a proto- nationalist or a 'socio-political movement' called the *Ma'asina ruru*[44] (brotherly rule) on Malaita in the 1950s (Gegeo,

---

[44] *Ma'asina ruru* spread to many parts of Solomon Islands but was later suppressed by the colonial government and leaders imprisoned. Tara (1990) used the term 'socio-political movement' to refer to "a movement which has organized its followers to gain political status and recognition in a changing social

1994, Bennett, 1989). The leaders of the *Ma'asina ruru* Movement considered the colonial government's approach as demeaning, depriving them of their right to be represented in the colonial governing body or to form one of their own. The paramount objective of the members of the Movement was to take charge of the development of Malaita and the Solomon Islands as a whole. They sought decolonization from the British rule. In preparation for this, the whole of Malaita was organized under nine chiefs representing the nine districts or regions of Malaita. Five of the chiefs were trained school teachers and one was born and educated in Australia from an indentured labour parent in Queensland (Gegeo, 1994). Communal farms, compilation of genealogies and land recordings were carried out to prepare for the new socio-political and economic autonomy. New communities called 'towns' were developed attracting people living inland to the coast. This movement was an important phase in the Malaitans' aspiration for socio-economic and political development. It was the only time in history in which the whole of Malaita was united under a single objective: to take charge of the development of the island.

The resistance by Malaitans to colonial rule led to the establishment of the first formal District Council in the Protectorate. The Malaitan Council[45] was formed with first ever native councilors serving in this formal local governing structure (Malaita District Annual Report, 1955).

Since colonial times, rural people see the government as the primary provider of social services such schools and hospitals. In more recent times, there has been small but growing private sector development activities such as coconut oil and soap production, eco-tourism, shipping services and the like which are initiated by individuals and communities on different regions and communities on Malaita. What is also noticeable on Malaita is the role of NGOs and development aid agencies which become actively

---

environment where people suddenly find themselves without power and status" (p.42). The same meaning holds in this paper.

[45] After the colonial government suppressed the Ma'asina Ruru movement, it however responded to the movement's demand for political autonomy. In 1953 the local council was officially declared and was later adopted in the Western, Eastern and Central Districts of the British protectorate. See Gegeo (1994:71-2) for discussion on this subject.

engaged in community development activities. Some work directly with communities in areas of youth empowerment (e.g. Save the Children Fund Australia) and village infrastructure development such as access roads to villages and water supply and sanitary projects (e.g. Community Sector Programme/AusAid).

## 4.3 Social and Economic Development in Central Malaita

Central Malaita includes the East, West and Central Kwara'ae constituencies and the Aoke/Langalanga constituency. This region is the most populated of the province with 41,624 people, accounting for 34 % of the total Malaita population of 122,620 (Solomon Islands Statistics Office, 1999). The Kwara'ae group is the largest ethno-linguistic group on Malaita and perhaps throughout Solomon Islands.  Central Malaita has relatively developed infrastructure with roads, an airport and seaport. However potential agricultural lands which are located in the interior and on the West and Eastern parts of the island are yet to be linked by roads to the market at Auki.

To date, development within this region has focused mainly on social services such as health and education, but economic activities have been limited to trade stores, small agriculture activities such as vegetables, honey and piggery (Central Malaita Development Trust Agency (CMDTA), undated). Development has been highly dependent on government with support from international aid donors and few NGOs and church based organizations. For many Central Malaitans, 'rural development' seems elusive as no economic initiatives have been undertaken since colonial times. This situation has led one of the most prominent Malaitan academics, David Welchman Gegeo (2002) to describe Malaita as one of most deprived provinces in terms of economic development despite having the largest population in the country.

CMDTA (undated) suggests that true development for Central Malaita would be one which builds a person holistically, i.e. spiritually, morally and physically. The report highlights that rural development for this region must be seen as a partnership process, a grand effort by all concerned. The report points out that despite the partnership built over the years between the region and the national and provincial government, churches,

NGOs, aid donors and the private sector, the major problem is the lack of coordination of the development efforts of these actors resulting in duplication of roles and inefficiencies leading to little improvement in spite of a huge spending budgets used by these groups. For example the four constituencies within Central Malaita alone receive a direct monetary injection of SI$4 million[46] annually via the Rural Constituency Development Fund (RCDF) of the four Members of Parliament. This amounts to a total of $16 million over a four-year parliamentary term for all four MPs. This is a substantial amount of money which if managed and utilized properly should have produced a tangible development of the region.

The CMDTA report suggests eight 'remedies' to the lack of economic development in this region: (i) developing right human attitudes, focus and approaches towards development; (ii) provision of a viable economic environment; (iii) decentralization of economic activity; (iv) coordinated partnership; (v) promotion of self-reliance; (vi) human resource development; (vii) financial empowerment of rural social groups, unions and associations, and (viii) government and business economic spin-off projects (p.3-5). Of these eight 'development remedies' the report highlighted the attitude of people towards development as the most crucial aspect to address in that the people must see that they own, and take the lead in this process.

The Central Kwara'ae Constituency Report (2005) also highlights the need for strong leadership and foresight by all local leaders in the development of the Central Kwara'ae Constituency which is one of the biggest constituencies in the Central Malaita region. The report assumes that any development in Central Kwara'ae will consequently affect its neighbouring constituencies and points to the need for a strategic approach to social and economic development in the Central Kwara'ae in the light of limited financial resources. Therefore, priorities are given to areas of most need such as education and health, infrastructure and telecommunication. Simply put, the best way forward is to 'pull together' limited financial and technical resources to help develop the region (Central Malaita Credit Union Limited, 2007). The CMDTA (undated) believes that in this

---

[46] SBD $100 is equivalent to US$14.29 (see Solomontimesonline.com)

process the spirit of networking, collaboration and coordination of the Central Malaita region is in itself a strategy to success in this region and that leaders at all levels must see this as their priority role. Thus the need to encourage cooperation between various actors is vital to achieving development objectives of the region.

## 4.4 THE CENTRAL KWARA'AE CONSTITUENCY (CKC)

### *4.4.1 Population*

As mentioned above, the Central Kwara'ae Constituency (CKC) in which the fieldwork for this research was carried out is the largest constituency on Central Malaita and in whole of Solomon Islands. With 114 villages, the constituency comprises of two 'wards' (political boundaries): wards 2 and 29. According to the 1999 national population census in 1999, there were 15,181 people in CKC (Solomon Islands Statistics Office, 1999).

### *4.4.2 Language*

There are two distinctive but mutually comprehensible languages in the constituency. One language is *Kwara'ae*, which is spoken by a larger proportion of the people in the constituency including the two villages chosen for this study. The second is *Langalanga,* which is confined to a few villages along the coastal area but is also spoken at Radefasu, one of the case study villages in this study.

## 4.5 Traditional Governance and Leadership: Kwara'ae

Social organization in traditional Kwara'ae society has three strands of authority which can be generalized as, (i) *fata'abu* (a spiritual leader), (ii) *aofia* (the political leader) and, (iii) *ramo* (warrior). The *fata'abu* is the medium between the society (or the people) and the gods (or the spiritual world) (Alasia, 1997; Watson-Gegeo and Gegeo, 1996). A *fata'abu* is not an ascribed position but one which is *filia* (divinely chosen) by the tribe's *akalo* (ancestral spirit). A person to be chosen as a *fata'abu* must also fulfill certain criteria: being a male from a leading tribe, and having been involved or assisted during his adult life the reigning *fata'abu* in sacrificial activities at least once.

The *aofia* is a civil or secular office which is an equivalent of a chief. The position is achieved through the ability to exert influence over a defined group of people. This is through the acquisition and distribution of wealth through feasting (Alasia, 2003). The *aofia* consults the *fata'abu* on nearly all matters affecting the community and who posses more *mamana'anga* (divine power, truth) than the *aofia*. The *ramo* or warrior chief is either an achieved position through demonstration of bravery in tribal fights or *filia* like the *fata'abu* by the *akalo* of the tribe. The social structure is not as clear-cut as described above but rather involves a continuous interaction between the three authorities (Alasia, 1997). An individual can be an *aofia* as well as a *ramo*. It is also possible, although rare, for all three positions to be held by a single person.

Individuals who hold these positions play a significant role in the society or within tribal groups. Leadership is determined not by ideologies, but rather by an individual demonstration of the ability to lead through possession of certain criteria such as 'personal wealth', 'physical strength' or by 'divine choosing' all of which are embedded within the custom of the tribe. What a leader implements are not his[47] own policies or ideologies, but rather the society's or tribe's. A person is accepted to take on leadership because he has knowledge of the culture and custom of the group, is able to demonstrate *falafala* i.e. the appropriate ways of doing things according to custom. Thus, competition for these positions is between individuals rather than ideas or policies. One has to uphold the *falafala* of the tribe to be continually accepted and supported by the society.

### 4.6 Community Leadership, Governance and Development Today

Governance structures and processes and leadership roles at community level in Solomon Islands today is a complex fabric of different factors (see Chapter 3). Wairiu and Tabo (2003) state that the Church/Christianity, modernity and the cash economy and the modern system of governance influence how people view governance and leadership in many rural communities today. They also explain that these factors enter in collision with traditional practices of governance in rural communities. Traditional norms and values or

---

[47] In Kwara'ae it is rare to hear of women holding any of the three top leadership positions described here. The researcher was only told of female *fata'abu* existing in the past in some Kwara'ae tribes in particular. However, the researcher was unable to verify this.

more commonly referred to as *kastoms* are still influential in how people behave and do things in the communities. In fact these factors combined create unique forms of governance structures and processes in Solomon Islands.

Most people in Central Kwara'ae communities who hold leadership roles in development initiatives or in the community are chosen or elected by the community people through voting by a show of hands or by general consensus at a village or church meeting. The community knows these people and interacts with them within the community environment. The interface between established community institutions such as schools, clinics and micro-finance institutions and the community-body is the space on which rural development process takes place. The leaders are in the central role of making this process to function at the local level.

In a traditional context, leading members of clans or tribes held these leadership roles. In traditional times being a member of a landowning group or a head of tribe was important prerequisite for being a leader. Today other personal qualities such as a high level of education have taken precedence in choosing community leaders in Central Kwara'ae. Someone with a good education background is seen as being able to take on responsibility for his or her community's development. Personal status is still important, however, people measure it using slightly different or in most cases 'introduced' variables such as formal education, owning a permanent home, and physical assets, having been exposed to urban and monetary environment and so on .

It is worth noting at this point that although there is a strong sense of 'community', the communities themselves are very heterogeneous which makes leadership within rural communities today a complex task. For example within a given community, one is likely to find several tribal or clan groups co-existing as well as more than one church group. There are also complex and varied socio-economic and political networks which community people have to deal with. People tend to associate within their identified groupings either at the church, political, tribal or dialectal level. In some cases, these

identities can be very strong creating divisions in peoples' response to community work or development process in general.

### 4.6.1 'Komiuniti sif'

To understand what rural communities in Central Kwara'ae see as a 'community leader', it is appropriate to look into what can be described as a *komiuniti sif* (community chief). The title of 'chief' is used on many village leaders in Central Kwara'ae even though the person who is called a 'chief' (*sif*) in these communities may no longer be a person from a leading tribe or clan as in the traditional context. It must be noted that the term 'chief' is used loosely here and that it is not equivalent to *aofia* as described in the previous section.

White and Lindstrom (1997) in their edited book *Chiefs today: Traditional Pacific Leadership and the Postcolonial State* describe this clearly: the transformation and perhaps in most cases the 'inventions' of such titles as 'chief' are common in the postcolonial Pacific Island States. Often this has served to legitimize the traditional roles of 'bigmen' in the newly formed political independent states. In other cases it arises because of the need to fill the vacuum or 'lack of leadership' in a society or community.

Perhaps due to the socially complex situation in Central Kwara'ae villages today, traditional governance and leadership functions may not be appropriate although some aspects of it is incorporated in how leadership is performed in the communities. In Central Kwara'ae specific tasks for village development are the responsibility of selected people that the community consider capable of performing the job. Such people after being elected are referred to by the community people as *komiuniti sifs*. The role such people play varies from one community to another. But the following local newspaper editorial article gives some indication of the activities of a typical *komiuniti sif* in contemporary rural communities in Solomon Islands:

> Plays a judiciary role in the settlement of land disputes and between tribes, settlement of village problem, settlement of sexual and murder crimes, settlement of village law and

order problems, appeasement of warring parties, advising police officers or government on village matters, advising visitors and tourists on cultural values, cooperate with church leaders and people in elections and authority on custom laws and rules (*Solomon Star, 2006*)

*Komiuniti sifs* can be very influential in the community matters. Normally a recognized head of the tribe still deals with issues such as land or resources usage pertaining to clans or tribes. But this varies from one community to another. These are issues that the *komiuniti sif* may not get involved in. If the *komiuniti sif* is a member of the land-owning group in the community, he may be required to sit in meetings regarding land within the community boundaries. But he may not do so if he is not of the landowning group. In short, governance power at the village level is divided according to different issues.

Leadership within rural communities today is influenced by both religion and *kastom* or *falafala* (tradition). For example in the Bible, women are viewed as helpers to their men folk. Like wise, in the Kwara'ae *falafala* that is seen as right and should be upheld as a traditionally acceptable practice or relationship between the two genders. In other words, people assimilate Biblical values into those of *kastom* to explain and apply development issues. Therefore a *komiuniti sif* who is at the fore of decision-making in the community may need to understand or perhaps take into consideration different factors that may be related to religion and some *falafala.* This is true for almost all the communities within the constituency. Furthermore, leadership at the community level may also be influenced by different factors such as ethnicity, new migrants, church affiliations and politics rather than the old traditional factors which may relate directly to clan or kinship. This brings about a whole new set of challenges for community leadership as community leaders now deal with much more complicated situation at the local level. These different roles and responsibilities at the community level underpin the institutional structures upon which development at the local level functions. Scales (2005) describes these structures and processes as 'informal' and at times as overlapping in their roles and development responsibilities at the community level.

Politics at the constituency level is one of the key factors which influence how community people conceptualize and respond to development at the community level in CKC. We will now discuss this.

### 4.6.2 The Politics of Development

On Malaita as in other provinces, the Member of Parliament (MP) has much influence on the development process at the village or the constituency level. This is because monetary and material allocations given as partly aid projects are forwarded through the constituency MP who then channels the money down to the community through a selected village committee if there is one within a community. Otherwise an individual (e.g. *sif*) who is responsible for a given project in the village will take responsibility for a particular development activity. Also a substantial amount of funds is allocated as rural constituency development fund (RCDF)[48] each year for the four-year tenure of the MP. How this fund is spent wholly depends on the discretion of the MP: some have used it as a source of power to control development at the local community level within their constituency[49].

In Central Kwara'ae Constituency, a rivalry has developed between two political groups within the constituency. One group supports the present MP and the other the runner up candidate in the last two national elections, who has since won the provincial seat for Central Kwara'ae and now holds the Premier's post for Malaita province. Evidence of divisions between these two groups can be seen in rural communities as well as in the provincial centre of Auki. These groups tend to work separately in development

---

[48] Former Prime Minister late Solomon Mamaloni established the Rural Constituency Development Fund (RCDF) in 1989. The rationale of this fund was for MPs not to only 'talk' on the floor of parliament, but also direct providers of development services to their people at the constituency. The recently ousted Grand Coalition for Change Government led by Manasseh Sogavare increased the fund in 2006 from $400,000 pa to $1million pa per constituency. This money is wholly administered by the MPs.

[49] Paia, (2003) discusses in detail the political influence in constituency development in West Makira Constituency, Makira province; He found that the MP uses the RCDF to manipulate voters to pay his way into the parliament.

programmes in Central Kwara'ae. At present there is a governing structure called the Central Kwara'ae Constituency Congress (CKCC) comprised of supporters of the present MP from different communities and headed by the MP which makes decisions on development activities in the constituency communities. Under the CKCC there are different committees responsible for different areas of concern, like education, women's affairs, and agriculture. A similar body, the Central Malaita Development Trust (CMDTA), was formed under the leadership of the provincial Premier who is the provincial member for one of the wards in Central Kwara'ae. Its (CMDTA's) coverage area includes the neighbouring East Kwara'ae constituency.

Constituents, to describe people of the opposite groups, commonly use terms like "voters and non-voters". The term "voter" refers to those who voted for the current MP and the "non-voters" for those who did not. People are sometimes reluctant to involve themselves in development projects that are related to one or the other political group. Constituents are reluctant to get involved in a development initiative unless their politically affiliated organization or group leads it. The current MP admits that his supporters do not want community-wide projects such as clinics, schools or water-supply to be implemented in villages as 'non voters' may also benefit from it (Fono, 2007). This is a leadership problem and one which affects the development process in Central Kwara'ae negatively (personal observations).

### 4.6.3 Women in Leadership

Recent studies carried out on women's role in development in Solomon Islands including Malaita shows that women are heavily involved in welfare related activities (Scheyvens, 2003). This means that their primary concern is to help provide their households with daily food and perhaps a small income through small sewing projects or vegetable marketing. The study also shows that church activities top the list of the women's activities in the rural areas.

A report on the status of women in the neighbouring constituency (East Kwara'ae) also shows the same results (Kwalu, 2002). It also found that women were highly involved in

church activities compared to other village activities. However, this does not limit their involvement in other community-wide issues. This report stated that the poor involvement of women at all levels of the community is often blamed on the strong patrilineal nature of the Malaitan society. In their own sphere of influence, particularly at the household level, the report says that women are often more 'participative in nature' making it conducive for successful implementation of their individual initiatives.

Some women in Central Kwara'ae also voiced a similar sentiment. Women were found to participate more in church activities, but they lack the will to get involved in other non-religious development activities (personal communications, 2007). As well as blaming patrilineal factors as hindrance to leadership in non-religious activities, women in Central Kwara'ae refer to their lack of formal training as their reason for not getting involved much in other planned community activities (per.com, 2007).

### 4.6.4 Church Leadership

Church is an important institution in many if not all communities on Malaita and for Solomon Islands as a whole. A statement by local church catechist who was recently elected to the Malaita Provincial Assembly in February 2007 reflects this:

> You go in all villages you see this thing [church]. You go in all the communities, in all the four corners of our Islands, west to east, north to south, you see no *bae* (traditional sacred shrines)*,* our *bae* is the church. The whole nation is dominated by this [church] (per., com., 2007)

The Church plays a very influential role in the governance of village communities today. Its widespread physical presence in the Solomon Islands communities demonstrates its importance in almost all the rural communities. Church leaders such as pastors, catechist and priests are often very much respected in the Central Kwara'ae communities and can also hold other village responsibilities apart from church roles. For example a church pastor may also be the youth coordinator in the village or a community 'chief' (see also

chapter 3). A brief over-view of the case-study community is presented in the following section.

## 4.7 OVER-VIEW OF THE CASE STUDY COMMUNITIES

The fieldwork for this report was carried out in two rural communities in the Central Kwara'ae Constituency namely Radefasu and Kilusakwalo. The two villages are located in wards 2 and 29 of the Central Kwara'ae constituency. Like many rural communities in Solomon Islands, these communities have since colonial times worked to improve their socio-economic development. This is evident in the different institutions such as schools, and clinics, infrastructures e.g. roads that have often been the centre of interest and discussions of the local people. The quest of the people is for *tua lai ngwae lea* or *aliafuanga* (wholeness)[50], 'living life to its fullness and satisfying to ones' existence'. This aspiration for a good life is often found missing in many ways for the people as development expectations were often not forthcoming as anticipated. A brief description of each case study community follows.

## 4.7.1 KILUSAKWALO COMMUNITY

Kilusakwalo is located 5 kilometers from Auki, the Malaita province administrative town. The community is accessible by road and is composed solely Kwara'ae speakers who practice *Kwara'ae* custom. There is nonetheless a high rate of intermarriages with other ethnic groups within Malaita as well as from other provinces. The community is one of the largest (population of approximately 900) in the Central Kwara'ae constituency and Malaita province itself.

---

[50] *Tua lai ngwae lea'a* literally translated as 'the living of a good man' or 'to live like a good man'. This definition shows that for a Kwara'ae person who aspires to achieve something good measures his objective or goal in relation to what he sees another person has or possess. The similar case can be related to how people perceive 'development'-they would make reference to what others achieve such as a permanent house, attaining good education etc. as their objective to attain. *Aliafuanga* refers to a complete state of affair, one completing a process or achieving his prime objective. Gegeo (2002) refers to the end of this *aliafuanga* process as the *'gwau mauria',* the end of ones aspiration or pinnacle state where one aspires to have where his needs are met or continually being met in this state for his existence contributing to what one sees as 'good life'.

The community was established as a result of people moving toward 'greener pastures' influenced by Christian missions and colonialism. Kilusakwalo village was established as a result of the building of a school during the colonial period to educate people who were converted to Christianity. The acquisition of the land from the primary landowners was made around the early 1950s (pers., comm., 2007). Another factor that influenced the growth of the community at this time was the establishment of the colonial government administrative centre at a nearby location of Aimela before it was moved to the present location at Auki[51].

The community has good access to basic health services, education, banks and other financial institutions such as credit unions, telecommunication i.e. phones, newspapers, radio and air and sea transport all of which are located at Auki. The community has a school, clinic, micro-finance institution and several individual money-generating projects. Many people from the community migrate to urban centres in Honiara or other economic centres in the Solomon Islands to find paid employment. Others find paid work or run small family businesses in Auki. A good number of people are still practicing subsistence farming as a primary source of food production and livelihood.

**4.7.2 RADEFASU COMMUNITY**

Radefasu is 7 kilometers from Auki. Its current population is about 500 people. Founded in the early 1900s the community was later became a South Seas Evangelical Mission (SSEM) centre in the late 1930s where 'heathens', converted to Christianity, established their new home to get away from their traditional pagan practices (per., comm., 2007). Over the years, the church has played a vital role in the development process of this community although the village is no longer a church mission centre.

In 1950s a new wave of settlers of Langalanga people moved into the community from their artificial islands in the lagoon. Radefasu, therefore, became bilingual, with both *kwara'ae* and *langalanga* now spoken and intermarriage occurring between the two groups. There are two churches in the community, with SSEC followers mostly consists

---

[51] see Gegeo (1994) for a detail study on the Malaita Council

of the Kwara'ae speakers (Rade-*tolo*)[52] and the Catholic with mostly langalanga speakers (Rade-*asi*). Land dispute have kept the two communities apart in partaking in community work for a long time (International Federation of Red Cross, 2005)

Radefasu is accessible by road. Telecommunication by way of telephone is available in the village but there is no electricity. The community has a good water supply system with basic health services provided by the local area health centre and by the provincial hospital at the provincial capital Auki. People also have access to the banking services and credit unions in Auki. Subsistence farming holds an important place in the community's' livelihood. Small house hold income based agriculture activities such as piggery, cocoa, copra and forestry have also been established by the villagers targeting the local market. Between 2000 and 2005, a total of SI$248,000 in cash and building materials were given by various aid donors via the MP to the community for various community projects from water-supply to school buildings (Central Kwara'ae Constituency Report, 2005).

**Table 4.1 Population of communities under study**

| Village | Household | Population |
|---|---|---|
| Radefasu | 33 | 500 |
| Kilusakwalo | 45 | 900 |
| Auki Township | ----- | 4,022* |

Source: National Census Report, 1999* and field estimates

**4.8 Conclusion**

In this chapter, an attempt was made to draw out the key historical causes of change on Malaita province. It was within this discussion that the context for social and economic changes in Central Malaita was presented. The chapter highlighted that social and

---

[52] 'Rade' is simply the short form for 'Radefasu'. The suffix 'tolo' is used to refer to the Kwara'ae people who are seen as people 'inland' or from the 'bush'. 'Tolo literally means 'bush' or 'further inland' in kwara'ae. The suffix 'asi' is the kwara'ae term for 'sea' or 'ocean'. This term is used to refer to the Langalanga people as they live mostly on the coastal fringes and artificially built islands in the langalanga lagoon. They are referred to sometimes as 'salter-water people' as they depend a lot on fisheries activities as their source of livelihood and income.

economic changes in Central Malaita were related to the key historical causes of changes: church/missionisation, colonial government and European contacts on the island. These factors influenced the perception of people towards leadership–political leadership, community leadership, traditional leadership etc. – resulting in efforts by local people to adapt to changes as in the *Ma'asina ruru* in the formal governance of the island or the role *komiuniti sif* plays in the contemporary rural communities in Central Kwara'ae. The latter parts of the chapter dealt with the different factors that influence the change of community leadership and governance behavior and styles in Central Kwara'ae today and how in turn these factors influence development at this level.

In the following Chapters 5 and 6, the field data for the thesis is presented.

## CHAPTER 5

## CASE REPORT I:  KILUSAKWALO COMMUNITY

### 5.0 Introduction

This chapter presents the findings of Kilusakwalo community (KC) based on qualitative data. To recap this study intends to answer the following research question: How do community leadership and social capital influence rural development in Malaita Province?  Data for this study was collected in two communities in Central Kwara'ae Constituency using qualitative research methods of in-depth interviews, observations and personal communications and related documents.  This chapter (and the following, Chapter 6) has three parts. Part 1 presents the community-wide views on community leadership under two sections: section 1 provides an account of community leaders and villagers' interpretation of leadership as it affects development. Section 2 presents the views of both community leaders and villagers on the effectiveness of community leadership in the development process of the two communities using the framework outlined in Chapter 3. Part 2 of the chapter investigates the practice of community governance. It (1) focuses on the assessments of both community leaders and villagers with respect to how leadership is demonstrated, and (2) examines the views of people on community decision-making and participation in specific community organizations. Part 3 investigates how social capital, which is translated as 'social relationships' and networks in the communities, influences the responses of people to community development in the specific organizations looked at in this research as well as from a community-wide view. The interpretation of the data is left to Chapter 7.

### 5.1 LEADERSHIP IN KILUSAKWALO COMMUNITY (KC)

This section provides an account of KC people's interpretations of leadership as it affects development. These accounts are based on interviews conducted in KC. The range of responses included those who did not associate leadership with development, those who related leadership with development and those who viewed leadership as an individual

attribute. Out of the 15 people interviewed at KC, 10 respondents held leadership roles in the community and five (5) respondents were 'ordinary' villagers[53]. Two (2) villagers found it difficult to relate leadership with development. They did not see a clear connection between leadership and development. One of them thought that development comes only through monetary means.

Three villagers did not differentiate 'leadership' from a 'leader' and gave several descriptive terms and phrases to describe this relationship as: "a person who loves people and is committed to work for our community" (Inter., K12)[54]; ... "love [ing] and kind... open up to the community (Inter K04); ".... high interaction with the community or close to the people" (Inter., K02). One community leader associated leadership with trustworthiness:

> My view of a leader is a person who is trustworthy... you can decide on anything for anybody to do, but if you are not trusted it will be very difficult. I believe very much that a person who is trustworthy can have strong leadership... a person who has this thing called trustworthiness is a good community leader. This is a kind of person that people will follow (Inter., K 11)

Three community leaders associated leadership with 'talk followed by action and leading by example'. To them leadership is not just about 'talking' but also acting out what has been said before the people. One of them noted, "Leadership is about showing example through work" (Inter., K09). Another asked rhetorically: who do we expect to do the work for us?" He answered by saying that "It is us [communities] here in the rural level [who] must work to help ourselves; we can not look to the government, NGOs and like that. Yes they are part of us, but it is us who must work first before anything meaningful can happen here [rural level] (Inter., K12). Another defined leadership in community development as "taking the lead in our development, doing the planning and helping ourselves carryout the plan" (Inter., K11).

---

[53] I will use 'Villager' to refer to people who do not hold leadership responsibility in the community

[54] Translates as Interview Number 12 at Kilusakwalo

Three villagers saw being 'visionary' as an important leadership characteristic for development at the rural level. One remarked: a "good community leader is one who has vision for the community, and works to bring improvement for our people" (Inter., K03). In this process these respondents believe that the community must get its act together to achieve whatever vision was to be created. One believed that leadership was about "setting priority for a better quality of life for the community" (Inter., K06) which he noted was not being been done well in his community. Another suggested that:

> Leadership is being visionary, seeing our future and working with the community to set out plans for our development. Being visionary is important; we know where we are heading because we are guided by it (Inter., K07).

## 5.2 Dimensions of Leadership in KC development

The preceding section described the views of respondents on what leadership in development was. This section presents the views of KC respondents with respect to the five dimensions of effective leadership outlined in Chapter 3. Field questions were designed to capture the view of respondents in relation to these 5 dimensions. These five dimensions were chosen in order to better identify the extent to which leadership is effective (or otherwise) and how it influences development at the community level.

### *5.2.1 Vision and Shared Vision*

The literature on leadership stresses on the importance of shared vision in creating a sense of ownership over plans to achieve a particular goal. With a shared vision people are more likely to work to see that the objectives are achieved to fulfill their goals. All ten community leaders interviewed claimed to have a vision for their community. They articulated this in the following terms: "I have it (vision)... what I want us to see is change. I mean we cannot live like we are in the past...." (Inter., K12); "My aim for the school is to develop the kids holistically, that is we develop every aspect of life" (Inter., K09); "I have a vision for the community, by having a vision it helps me to do my work plan for the community" (Inter., K10).

Two villagers supported the claims of leaders having personal development vision and added that community leaders implemented what the community proposed for them to carry out. One noted:

> Most leaders do things as they are asked to do by the community, although they do share their personal ideas at times in the village. But most times they carry out what we in the village ask them to do. It is like we put our thinking together and these people (leaders) direct us in the work (Inter., K01).

The local school principal endorsed this view and added that his personal vision was incorporated in the wider community vision for the development of the school. Another villager commented that the community at large helped to create the community development vision.

Three villagers were critical and pointed out that not all development visions were shared to the community at large or developed with the help of the people. One commented;

> Although some leaders do have a vision for the community, not every leader shared their plans openly. Some people tend to keep what they know for themselves. I think the community needs to sit together and do a good plan, I think we need some sense of direction which we as a community help to design (Inter., K05).

Another pointed out that the lack of shared-vision impacted negatively on the development process as people did not share a common development goal. He referred to the local micro-finance center to illustrate his point: " the consequence of the lack of shared vision on the (credit) scheme is that it is very slow in reaching other communities and the people in our own community as they do not understand the purpose of this initiative" (Inter., K06). The respondent believed that visions and plans for development in the community must be made clear to the community people.

*5.2.2 Communication and Trust*

Communication is important for building trust within and among different social groups. Trust occurs when people openly communicate across different levels within and outside of the community. Both leaders and villagers claimed that dialogue between different parties on development issues took place. Another group, mostly ordinary villagers, was critical of the current process and would like to see it improve.

One woman leader identified communication as important to create a common understanding within her group:

> Sometimes we get women to come in one place and I would put my thinking forward, what I want us to do. When I share an idea, they add their ideas to that and if the women agree for us to carry out the plan, we will do so... ... in this way I believe we build trust to carry out our project as we become a part of close group I believe that is how our different community groups should operate (Inter., K12)

Another community leader, discussing the sanitation project he was responsible for, noted that the project progressed well as a result of him bringing together people to share their ideas and agree on a common approach (Inter., K10).  Another community leader claimed that information gathered from workshops attended or other sources (i.e. NGOs, donor partners) that the community needs to know were normally shared to the community during village meetings  (Inter., K09).

A villager corroborated this view saying that information on issues of concern was shared with the community from different sources. As a result people were aware of what development concerns needed attention. One villager mentioned the 'Church congregation' as a key medium for information exchange in the community. Another noted that members of various village committees sometimes share personally with people in the community the development plans for the community (Inter K11). The same person added that in "that way the community influences the development plans when they interact with their leaders". One community leader claimed that general village meetings were held when the community's consent on certain ideas were needed.

Other villagers were, however, critical of how seldom information was being shared between the community and their leaders on important development issues. One noted that information on certain activities in the community was only being shared once or twice a year or when people initiated activities in the community. Another identified the importance of information sharing in relation to community developments and added that information sharing should be everybody's responsibility. One claimed that when information is not clear people were reluctant to participate in community work as some may be suspicious about the intended development plans:

> The leaders experience poor turnout in any development activity every time their plans are not explained properly to the community... I think some people do not see the importance of sharing information; we need to make clear to all people what we want to do here [in the community] so that we all know what is going on in the village (Inter., K05).

One villager pointed out the need for instilling trust in the community:

> [W] hen programmes are not explained clearly to the community members they will also (be) quite reluctant to work. You know we here are people of different tribes and families and languages, so people are easily suspicious, so our leaders must clearly state out what they want us to do. Some people can easily dispute what we plan here in the village... that is why we need to make things clear to the whole community (Inter., K07).

Two villagers were critical about insufficient interaction with external stakeholder:

> In my view we have not 'talked' with different people outside our community who can help us, we need to relate to different people, NGOs, church groups. I think that is also influential to our community development (Inter., K09).

> … we are part of a 'family' (system) what is happening here is influenced by those outside our community, our leaders have not considered that well… the people here must share with others in the other communities whether on Malaita or other province or even overseas, that is what we should do… [if] we share our plans to people they will help us

when they know we have a need. If we stay like this and don't make the effort to share our problems who will know (our problems), who will help us? (Inter., K02)

### *5.2.3 Collaboration*

Collaboration is involving and understanding the views of different actors who are important for the development process of a community. Strategies for solving problems are shared and people work together toward a common objective. This occurs when people understand what they are trying to achieve or solve. One community leader sees 'collaboration' as 'participation' between different groups:

> [W]e need to participate more in community development. That is all of us in the community as well as those in other communities. You see here, the school, micro-finance, churches, sport teams we share them or they affect us all. What we should work for is to make a common understanding that these are our resources and we need to improve on them to benefit us all... I as a community leader, I'm weak in this part. But I see this is the best way for us. (Inter., K09).

Two villagers and a community leader identify the need for the community and their leaders to "sit together" and develop ideas on what to do and how to do them. They emphasized the need for outlining and rationalization of development from a wider worldview and creating practical work-programmes for the community:

> In my view, these days we need to be practical, I mean how can we move forward when we have no 'map' to follow. We are like going into the *masu'u (forest, bushes)* without knowing our *tala* (road). You see things are much more complex these days, our leaders and all of us must look at things happening in *ofasi* (overseas) and the things (happening) here in the Solomons. They affect us here (community), we must include them (consider) in our plans, our leaders must look from that angle (Inter., K12)

> Some or most people don't give their views in how we should go about development. I think we should gather the people together and make 'one big talk'. In this way I believe we can take the view of this man, or that woman or youth into our community

development plans. We gather everyone's view and build our programmes from the views of all of these groups (Inter., K01)

[I] have come to a stage where I think enough of talking... we should do the work... I think we know the problem, if we do not address it well, people will be poor. I think its enough of 'feeding chickens in the computer, enough of feeding pigs in the lap-top' (i.e. planning), it's good that we feed them in the right places (i.e. implementing programmes) We have a lot of information already; we must do the work now. I think to do this we need a whole community support to work with those who come to help us (external stakeholders)... some people don't see the importance of us working together, we leaders (must) work to build that relationship between different groups, in that way it will help us to work better (Inter., K10)

One villager referred to the benefits of collaboration the community have at the local school:

The school has developed a working partnership with the church (SSEC). In this case I think it's good, because they (church) have good connection with people outside Solomon Islands (overseas), we have benefited a lot in terms of materials for kids and volunteers who come to help us. If you talk to our community leaders now some don't know how such relationships can be created. I think we as a community with our leaders need to work to develop this area (Inter., K08).

### *5.2.4 Networking and Strategic Alliance*

Two villagers see networking as the only means to gather much needed resources that the community do not have. They proposed that the community must take the lead in this process:

We may want to do things ourselves, but we can only work to a certain limit… we need to gather support. This is our role as rural communities. We must not wait for people to come and say, ' hey! here you go Kilusakwalo, we have this for you to help you', No!

We must *kwate ae eta eta*[55]. Only in that way I believe we can move this community forward. Our community leaders must see to this area, this is important for our development but I observe that our leaders are weak in this part... (Inter., K05).

When you are in a position to ask people to do something but you do not have the money, it becomes a weakness..., you cannot address things that you want to do. In this case we need to find financial sources that can help us in this area; this is where we can have access to such resources for our benefit (Inter., K11).

A villager stated that networks were already in place and that it requires the responsible people to "develop more networks by talking to more NGOs, the provincial government and other people from the village who are living in Honiara" (Inter., K09). Another villager was critical about how people were heavily depended on the Member of Parliament without taking initiative to help themselves:

[We] have been so heavily relied on Fred (MP), why have we gone into such mentality? We should standup and 'try our luck' out there. I believe if we organize ourselves we will find sources that will help us (Inter., K 12)

A woman community member talked about the lack of established women networks in the village and blamed the provincial government women's division for not coordinating with the village women;

For us here, we are close to the provincial center compared to most villages, but that does not mean that we have good access to information to other women's group in Honiara. I blame this on the Women's desk officer at Auki. I think they need to do their work like what *Save the Children* is doing for the youth in our communities… if they do that we might have more contacts with those (women) in Honiara (Inter., K11).

---

[55] In Kwara'ae this is translated as *'putting one's feet in front'* as in the process of making a first step to move or walk in a forward direction. The phrase is used when referring to someone or a group taking the initiative in doing a planned work or an activity.

One villager claimed that development at the community level is *ad hoc* and that their community leaders failed to develop beneficial external partnerships:

> In most cases community leaders do not follow any set guideline(s) in development activities - that is one weakness in this community. We need something like a plan to follow, that way I believe we will know what we want to achieve; this is what we want to do , how do we achieve this or that or where can we get help from? Something like that, a guideline... our village committees now they just wait for funding or people to come up with some help and then try and standup and do the work... I think creativity is what we don't have; we need to stand up and find out the possible sources for help (Inter., K01).

 A villager remarked that community leaders did not create good networks with outside stakeholders who would help them in the community development process. Another remarked that lack of good networking was evident in how community leaders tend to adopt 'old activities' that had been unsuccessfully tried out in the past to be implemented at the community level:

> My observation of our leaders in the community is that their work only reaches this level. They need to move to another level. I said this because the same things I saw the old people in the past were doing is what they are trying to do today... our leaders need to move forward [in their thinking]... talk to more people outside... work to build relationship with 'outsider' who can help us in that way you gain more ideas to adopt in our community (Inter., K13)

## 5.3 COMMUNITY GOVERNANCE

This section aims to answer the following questions: How are development organizations governed in Central Kwara'ae communities? What leadership roles are played; by whom, how and why? How might these roles influence community development? The purpose of this section is to narrow the focus of community-wide assessments of how community governance and leadership influence development at the local level. Specified community organizations were identified and examined to see how leadership roles are performed within them and how communities collaborate with different stakeholders for their

benefit. Another reason for investigating these organizations was to see how people view the 'appropriateness' or otherwise of the structures for their community development and to scrutinize community participation in decision-making and/or simply attendance to community work organized through these organizations. In this research, as stated in Chapter 3, 'community governance' is viewed as 'group leadership'. This is a process which involves individuals, institutions and community norms and values as well as the structures within which the community people and individuals interact and make decisions around a common purpose such as their aspirations for development. The two community organizations selected in KC are: (1) a Community High School and, (2) a Micro-Finance Centre.

### 5.3.1 Kilusakwalo Community High School (KCHS)

At the time of the study the high school infrastructure, namely classroom buildings and staff-houses, were being expanded. New permanent buildings had already replaced the old traditional thatched buildings. The recent expansions resulted in the school being upgraded to a senior high school accommodating students up to Fifth Form level. KCHS was claimed to be the fastest growing school in the Central Kwara'ae Constituency (pers., comm. 2007)[56]. The total student intake at the school is about 550 students. Children from communities several kilometers away were also enrolled at the high school. They commute by public transport to school each day. Other children live with families in the community during the semester and return to their villages during holidays or weekends.

The school is what can be called a 'mission' school, meaning it is an extension of a particular church ministry. In this case it is operated by the South Seas Evangelical Church (SSEC)[57] and is not a government run institution. However, teachers are seconded under the government teaching service structure, and the government provides their salaries and other essential allocations. The SSEC Education Authority is the policy

---

[56] Reads as 'personal communications, 2007'

[57] SSEC is one of the three biggest Christian Churches in Solomon Islands. The Church operates few Christian schools around Malaita.

body of the school. The education secretary, based in Honiara, visits the school at least once a year to meet with the administration and the school board (Inter., K09). The administration reports to the education secretary through the principal. The school board is answerable to the school principal but in most cases the relationship is seen as being interactive as the principal is accountable also to the community as they make key decisions on the school development (Inter., K11).

The up-keep of the school is largely the responsibility of the community and many aspects (e.g. fundraising drives, construction of buildings etc.) of the school development are largely determined by the community's decisions.

### *5.3.1.1 Leadership roles within KCHS*

The community school has three levels of development operations: policy; administration and community. There is no clear-cut boundary and the process is an integrative role played between the three groups. At the policy level, the SSEC education authority policies are designed for implementation at the community level. The director and secretary of education represent the SSEC church at the policy level. The secretary visits the school once a year from Honiara and reports to the SSEC director of education on the general status of the school The Church education authorities also work to secure funding from external sources for the school in consultation with the local school board. They also links the school to overseas sister schools. This school has a sister school in Australia.

At the administration level, the school principal is the chief-administrator of the school's daily operations with the support from the deputy principal and the teaching staff. The principal is accountable to the SSEC education authority as well as to the community. A key link within the structure at the community level is between the school board chairman and the principal as the chief administrator of the school. The school chairperson described his role as:

[The] role you play is: you make sure that your position as a chairman you keep the group together (school administration and community). Otherwise, if the community falls out, the support we need from them will not be there (Inter., K09).
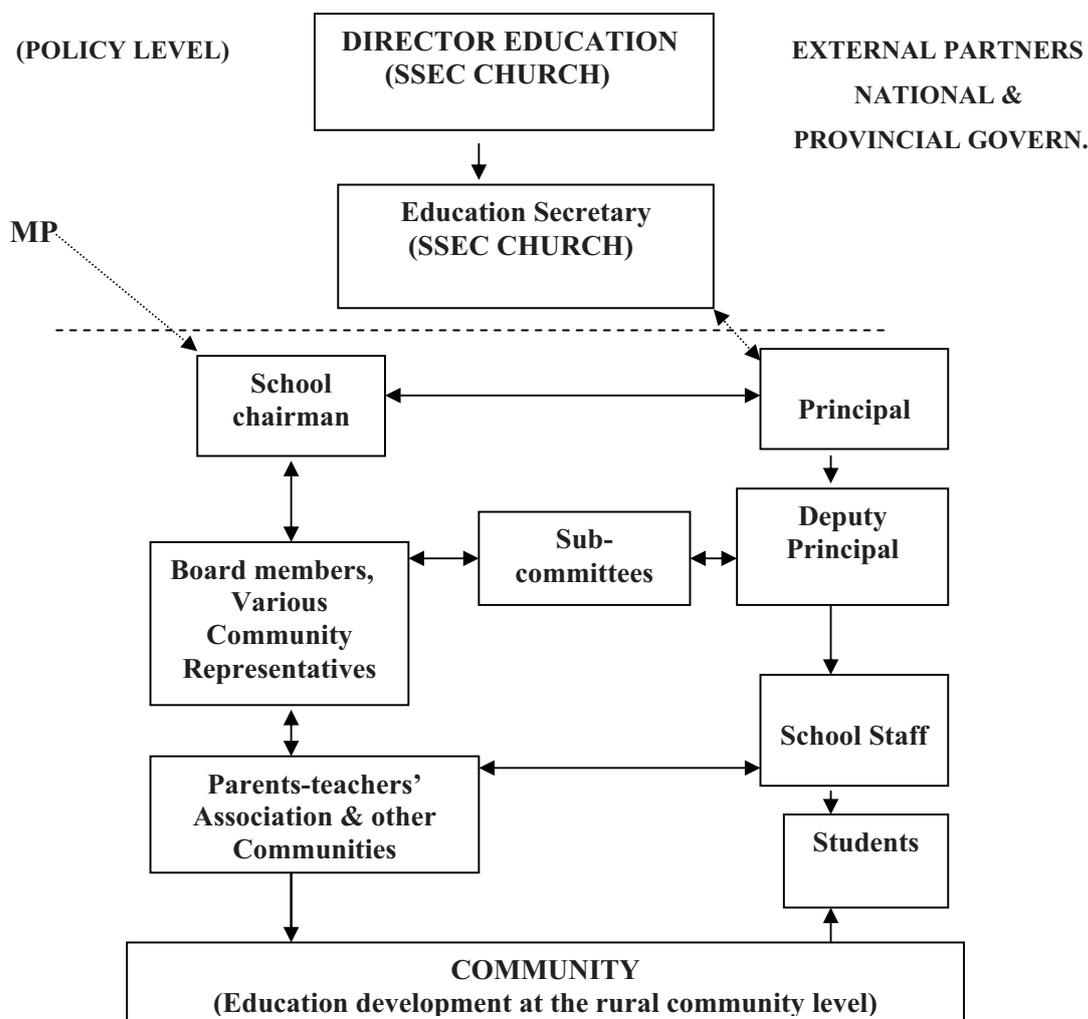
**Figure 5.1. Kilusakwalo Community High School Structure**

Although the board and the chairman do not part-take in the daily administration of the school, they influence the development of the school through development policies, rules and regulations for the school operation in consultation with the principal. That is, the immediate policies, regulations and development decisions to achieving the wider SSEC

vision for education are made by the board and in cases where there is a major development initiative within the school the chairman has a responsibility to rally support within the community and other important education stakeholders (Inter., K09). The parents elect the board members from the Parents and Teacher's Association (PTA), and the board appoints the chairman. The Principal makes these appointments known to the Education secretary. The members of the board are appointed every two years with representatives from surrounding communities (pers. comm., 2007).

### 5.3.2 Kilusakwalo Village Micro-Finance Rural Resource Centre (KVMFRRC)

A second major recent development at KC was a community micro-finance center known as Kilusakwalo Village Micro-Finance Rural Resource Centre (KVMFRRC).  This initiative was established under a pilot project by the Credit Union Foundation Australia (CUFA) in conjunction with AusAid (Micro Finance Institution (MFI)) Project Implementation Outline, 2004). The key objectives of this centre are to act as a 'catalyst' where savings clubs and credit unions can be formed, facilitation of small loans and provision of educational advice on various sources of micro finance available for rural communities (MFI Project Implementation Outline, 2004).

The KVMFRR acts as an information centre from which coordination of micro-finance information are processed and transferred to the various community savings club that are registered under the centre (Inter., K12). The upkeep and the continuous existence of the centre depend on the establishment and registration of local saving clubs. The centre has a local coordinator, a chairperson, and eight other representatives from community-wide representatives within KC (women, youth, church and school representatives).

A MFI advisor is also seconded by the CUFA to visit the rural centre, conduct information sessions and distribute other necessary information (MFI Project Implementation outline, 2004). Printed information sheets, guidelines and an operation manual were initially provided by CUFA. The operational stocks or resources are to be locally provided through registration fees and operations manual and stationary sales.

At the time of the study, there were eight local savings club established as a direct result of the formation of the centre. Figure 5.2 shows the structure of the organization.

### 5.3.2.1 Leadership roles within KVMFRRC

KVMFRRC has a strong link with its external partners, CUFA, AusAid and the Solomon Islands Credit Union League (SICUL). These three external partners played a significant role in establishing the institution. The policies and operation regulations were developed as part of a pilot project under CUFA in 2004. The requirements for the implementation of the credit institution were not designed through direct input by the local community, but rather came in a ready-made package for implementation at the community level. This was after the community chiefs and the people identified the need for access to financial sources. As a result the local community chiefs and elders were instrumental in providing needed infrastructure for the initiation of the project (pers., comm., 2007)

The role of CUFA/AusAid is to provide a support team to guide and train the local KVMFRRC staff. As stated an MFI advisor seconded from SICUL regularly visits the centre to conduct information sessions, maintain and distribute information (MFI Project Implementation Outline, 2004). SICUL is responsible for drawing up work programmes and find donors to fund the micro-finance programme.

The KVMFRRC has a management team with a local chairperson, treasurer and secretary. The board is composed of five members' representative of different groups in the communities, namely; youth, women, church, school and a community-wide representative. The various representatives are a church pastor, a local schoolteacher, a retired nurse, a community youth worker and a village 'chief' (Inter., K09).

The center committee which includes the management team and the board is responsible for drawing up their programme-training, awareness, education, helping establish new clubs, budget, time-tables which are submitted to SICUL for funding

**EXTERNAL PARTNERS**

```
┌─────────────────┐
│   CUFA/AusAid   │          (Solomon Islands credit Union League)
└─────────────────┘
                             (Central Bank, Solomon Islands)
-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------
        ┌──────────────────────┐
        │   Local-Coordinator  │
        └──────────────────────┘
        ┌──────────────────────┐
        │   Centre Committee   │
        └──────────────────────┘

┌──────────┐  ┌──────────┐  ┌──────────┐  ┌──────────────┐
│ Chairman │  │ Treasurer│  │ Secretary│  │ 5 community  │
│          │  │          │  │          │  │ rep. Members │
└──────────┘  └──────────┘  └──────────┘  └──────────────┘

┌────────────────────────────────────────────────┐
│            8 Registered saving clubs            │
└────────────────────────────────────────────────┘

┌────────────────────────────────────────────────┐
│        Registered Community Members,            │
│     (Rural community Financial Empowerment)     │
└────────────────────────────────────────────────┘
```
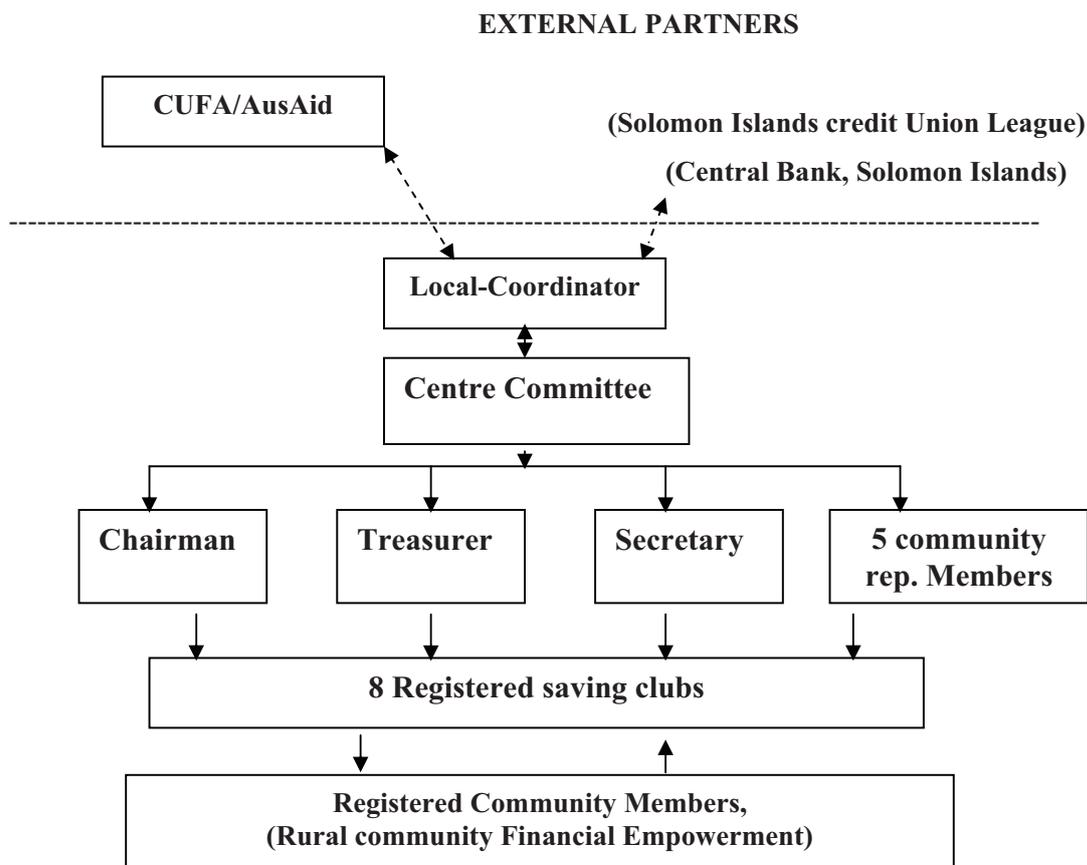
**Figure 5.2. KVMFRRC Organizational Structure**

The community representatives in the board are responsible for sharing information with the community groups they represent on the developments and potential benefits of the MFI (pers. comm., 2007).

The overseer of the centre is the local coordinator, and is the key link between the external partners and the institution - providing information to external partners on the status of the centre, as well as gathering information to be distributed at the center. The coordinator's role is to help set up centres around Malaita; visit savings clubs in other communities; conduct education/awareness programmes in communities, and attend workshops (pers. comm., 2007).  The co-ordinator reports to SICUL on the status of the centre. Under the management team come the eight registered saving-clubs from different community groups. These individual clubs have a management body of their own headed

by a chairperson. The chairmen/women are directly responsible to their registered members. They have the responsibility to report to the local MFRRC management team on their progress and to order new resources such as account books from the centre. The MFRRC management team is responsible for continual progress and information sharing on the Micro Finance concepts to the interested parties in KC and other surrounding communities. All the roles played by the community people are voluntary.

### 5.3.3 Community Views and Responses

This sub-section intends to answer two questions: (1) how do people view the decision-making processes within these community organizations, and (2) what degree of participation do community people display within these organizations? The aim of the questions were to find out people's views about decision-making but also for me to investigate their responses by way of participation within the two organizations and what possible factors might have hindered people from responding positively to community activities organized in these organizations. Also it is important to look at whether these community structures are relevant for facilitating rural community development and what role leadership played in the effectiveness of these structures.

### *5.3.3.1 Community views on Decision-Making*

Two villagers viewed decision-making in both organizations as 'top-down' i.e decisions being made from the 'top levels' to be implemented at the community level. In relation to the school one remarked: "A lot of decisions are made from the top and the bottom populace are implementing them" (Inter., K02). Another said: "A lot of decisions do involve the community, but most times decisions are transferred from the top level and the people do not take part in designing the programmes at the school" (Inter., K05).

With reference to the micro-finance scheme a villager noted that: "All decisions are made by the board, the community are involved very little in decision-making" (Inter., K07. Another noted that "... only the leaders of the (credit) scheme have some idea of the initiative. Consequently, when they ask for suggestions from the community we do not know what to contribute" (Inter., K08).

One villager claimed that specific tasks are set for each stakeholder in the school and that these different community groups carry out their responsibilities accordingly. In that way the community as a whole is not really involved in the decision making in the school. According to one villager "the community only participates in decision-making when it comes to labour. For administration of development, planning - all these things are made by the school authorities" (Inter., K03).

One villager was content with having community representatives in the organizations' committee. In relation to the micro-finance center he remarked: "Because the set-up involves representative from various community groups, the whole decision-making process involves the whole community; that is elders, women and youth" (Inter., K06). The micro-finance centre coordinator claimed that representation through different groups in the centre committee made the members feel they are well represented. He further claimed that committee members meet with their various groups before attending meetings at the centre (pers. comm., 2007).

Another view given by a villager was that the community was involved in decision-making for the school during school or village general meetings. In this way he said he felt that the community influences the decision making process. Another villager noted that it is unlikely that community ideas would not be taken into consideration for community development. The school principal complemented these views:

> What I see is that decisions have been influenced by the community. You are part of the community and if you make a decision which is not of their liking, they will not really follow you. Therefore, the community or a large proportion of the community must appreciate your decisions (Inter., K11)

### 5.3.3.2 Community Participation

An examination into the views of both the community leaders and villagers on community participation in the two organizations produced various responses. Two villagers observed that people responded well to activities in both the school and micro-finance centre when they understood the purpose for doing so:

The community has a high participation rate (in school activities) when they understand the proposed development plan or the planned activity (Inter., K02).

When people understand the purpose for doing an activity they work willingly and have no problem with interaction with other communities or NGOs in the school... information is important, we cannot expect people to just come and work if they do not understand what we are doing.... there are things that we need to do to make people willing to work here [community]... I think people need to understand the wider issues of rural development, I mean we need to know where we come in this whole process. You see the government is talking about 'bottom-up approach' [development], but how do you think its going to work when we do not work that way now in our village activities. This is where we should start, in these small village organizations (Inter., K01)

Two villagers and a community leader stated that they do not have problems with other communities. Surrounding communities at times provided much needed resources such as manpower and trees for timbers used in the construction of school buildings:

For communities that are close by, people are tied close in participating in developing the school. These communities have contributed a lot with this community developing schools for example by offering trees for timber, providing labour in the construction of the school building (Inter., K05).

What I see is that our relationship with other surrounding villages is very good. When it's time to work at the school, people respond well. I think we need to strengthen this area more. I think our community leaders must continue to work with chiefs in the other villages to encourage people to come together like this. Not only in the education activity, but in other activities as well, like the church, sports and similar areas (Inter., K10).

The view of the school chairman was that:

At the school, generally speaking, the community (KC) is very cooperative, that is my view as the chairman. I have not got any big problem with the support we have from the community in the school development. In other areas I think it depends too on how the

committees rally people to give support - sometimes I see people will look to people who lead the activities here in the village... people know who they see as good leaders then they will follow, it's like that in our community. I would say that someone with strong leadership can rally support for anything to be done here, I think that is key to any successful project. That is what we want to do with the school (Inter., K09).

Another community leader remarked that the response is very good and that he did not have a problem with the people when they call for work at the school. The school principal further supported this as:

I find with this community (KC) they really work well, when it comes to education. They are very much concern about education, so when you ask anything to be done or for them to be part of in the development of the school, they contributed largely to it (Inter., K11).

These claims were verified through observations during fieldwork in KC. The community people, particularly men, responded in good number to work in constructing one of the new permanent classroom buildings (pers.observ. 2007).

With respect to the local micro-finance, both community leaders and villagers highlighted two obstacles to people participating in the initiative: (1) lack of knowledge about the initiative, and (2) political interference.  With reference the former, three villagers pointed out that both local initiators of the project and the community did not have much idea on how micro-finance schemes operate. This was a similar story with the surrounding communities who were also interested in the initiative; consequently the initiative did not operate as it should. One of them claimed that the

people who operate the centre have insufficient knowledge of their responsibility and it influences the outcomes of the initiative  To me it is like the 'blind leading the blind' and we are going nowhere. (Inter., K07).

With respect to surrounding communities, another villager said:

>Most of the (surrounding) communities do not understand the idea... there is a need for education in this area so that we know how to operate micro-credit schemes... this is a good set-up, but we need to know how we can operate this. (Inter., K08).

The lack of knowledge by the community on the concept was also evident in the comment of this villager;

>They (center management team) need to educate the community more on the scheme... I have a very limited understanding on how the schemed works (Inter., K07).

Similarly, a chairperson of one of the member-saving clubs highlighted the need for educating the community and the members:

>The failure of the initiative is due to the ignorance of the members on the concept of credit union... the rules of the initiatives have not yet understood well by the members... we need education for the members to understand the concept (Inter., K 13)

The local coordinator of the initiative pointed out the need for more information sharing between the stakeholders, both with external and internal community groups. From the interview and personal conversations with the coordinator, it was pointed out that community people have not participated well in the initiative in terms of feedback on how the initiative should be operated and what areas they would like to see improve to their benefit. The external partners were also less responsive in terms of information sharing. The Central Bank of Solomon Islands was the exception given as an institution which has been giving information through the MFI. The coordinator admitted that the

>understanding of the community is not very good, it is "poor', and more awareness and education programmes are needed to increase people's understanding on the concept of microfinance (pers comm., 2007).

Another hindrance to participation in the initiative was political interference which began at the inception of the center. Politics at the constituency level was branded against the

initiative such that different political groups in the community were reluctant to work together or fully participate in the initiative[58]. Two villagers remarked:

> Political influence has disturbed the growth of this activity since its establishment. The leaders' inclusion of politics has caused the institution not to be well known within the community... the people here are separated in two groups in voting (national elections) so this is a sensitive area and I think we need to leave that out (politics) when we try to move the village forward, but some people do not see it that way (Inter., K08).

> The general performance of the initiative is not really good due to political interference. Some people think that the set-up was only for those who do not support Fono (MP) so the supporters of our MP are not giving much effort or attention to the center (Inter., K06).

## 5.4 SOCIAL CAPITAL

As stated, this study views social capital as relationships and networks developed among community groups such as churches, political groups, land owners, women, youth and men's organizations, and development NGOs who develop connections and live by norms and values which encourage 'working together' in the community development process.

A recurrent theme from the interview data was the concern about poor participation of the different social groups in community development. In voicing this issue, the respondents outlined three aspects in particular. First was the concern about poor attendance with respect to community activities; secondly, respondents highlighted the problem of lack of youth participation and thirdly, the respondents raised the problems associated with the different social groups i.e. church, youth, tribal groups, men and women – and their participation in  development in the community.

---

[58]  See Chapter.4 section on "Politics of development". In this section I discussed how political issues at the Central Kwara'ae Constituency was separated into two opposing groups of the current National Member of Parliament and another group  headed by a Provincial Member who is also the Premier of Malaita Province. These groups were reluctant to work together in many community programmes.

With reference to attendance to community work one villager observed that during proposed community work, attendance was poor (Inter., K04). A supporting view by another was: "sometimes villagers did not turn up in good number on working days" (Inter., K03). A general reason given by these respondents was that people lacked the concern for community issues.

With youth participation, a community leader noted the concern of poor youth involvement in community development process. He observed: "The youth, which comprise approximately 60% of the community, are not fully committed in the development activities (of the community)" (Inter.K02). Another community leader identified this as one of the key areas that the community must address if it wants to move forward:

> They [youth] can become a problem... so when you address community development problems, one must consider them... that's what I think we must take into consideration if we want the community to move forward (Inter., K11).

Another community leader reportedly identified this same problem and claimed to work to be working to develop a 'communal mentality' among the youth in the community. He remarked: "...especially with the young people, I try to bring their minds together so that they understand *rawafikuanga*" (Inter., K10). The claims of poor youth participation within various development initiatives at KC were further supported by one KC youth worker at a Save the Children workshop held in one community which the researcher attended (pers observ., 2007). This community worker observed that youth at KC were more involved in sports activities rather than to other kinds of community activities.

Two villagers highlighted that people did not understand the concept of *rawafikuanga.* They pointed to political division in the community which seemed to stop people from working together in community issues. A woman leader similarly said that participation and collective actions in development of the community or constituency was related to

people's understanding of the concept of *rawafikuanga* as well issues of constituency politics:

> What I see or have come across is that some people want to do things that benefit only them; they do not have the mentality of community but of individualism. I think it is our leader's role to try and work with the village people to understand the benefits of us working together. Here in the community and I think in Central Kwara'ae political issues tend to overshadow what we do in our communities... supporters of Fono [the current MP] will want to see projects he initiated to be successful, the 'non voters' [those who do not vote for the current MP] will not care to see these things to move forward because they do not support him [MP] (Inter., K12).

Further comparative reference was made to the roles of men and women in terms of participation. It was noted that women were more responsive than men or youth in community work. According to one villager: "sometimes women turn-up in higher numbers than men in community work" (Inter., K03). Participation was also related to the church. It was pointed out that the relationships between different churches were poor. A villager observed that when projects are led by one church, those from another church might decide not to participate in their project (Inter., K02). Another said that churches only build barriers. He thought that people should have a sense of community responsibility rather than seeing things in separate categories such as 'church groups' and develop relationships on trust for each other (Inter., K15).

Separation also occurred between different land-owning groups. A villager noted that "tribal solidarity" (Inter., K01) in land issues in KC did hinder participation between the people. Another villager also illustrated this:

> Disunity caused by tribal conflict over land boundaries is a challenge for leaders. The community is made up of different tribal groups. This is where unity as a tool for pushing development activities is affected... the challenge is on the leaders' ability to unite these groups together for development activities that are planned for the community (Inter., K05).

This section concludes the field report for KC. The following chapter presents the findings for Radefasu Community (RC).

# CHAPTER 6

## CASE REPORT II: RADEFASU COMMUNITY

### 6.0 Introduction

This section reports on the findings for Radefasu Community (RC). To recap, the research attempts to answer the following research question: How do community leadership and social capital influence rural development in Malaita Province? The sample group for RC was made up of a total of eighteen (18) respondents. Twelve (12) hold community leadership roles and six (6) were ordinary village respondents.

### 6.1 LEADERSHIP IN RADEFASU COMMUNITY (RC)

This section considers the perceptions of RC villagers and community leaders on leadership, and on how decision-making processes influence development in the community. In the literature review, leadership is defined as an influence process exerted by leaders on their followers towards achieving a common goal. Both villagers and community leaders in RC expressed various perspectives and opinion on what leadership is from a development perspective. Three villagers related leadership to 'organization' and to pulling community people together: "Leadership is about bringing people together (Inter., R07); "Leadership is pulling people in the community together" (Inter., R08); "Leadership is about organizing the community in the different activities in the village" (Inter., R03). One villager stated that leadership was about sharing of information with all the community people about the development plans or vision for the community. Another added that this was important so that people can articulate their views on the plans.

Two villagers related leadership to phrases such as 'showing good example' or 'showing the way':

> Good leadership is like showing the way... showing a good example and people will look high on the leader for that and people will follow the leader (Inter., R08).

A community leader should act what he proposed, he should be at the front of all community work they planned and be aware of programmes that are happening at the province or national level. I see this is weak with our (community) leaders (Inter., R11).

Respondents from a focus group interview described leadership in the following way:

A community leader who has responsibility in our development must be knowledgeable in the work he/she is carrying in our community. One must understand the work of the national or provincial government... know the work of NGOs and work to develop strong relationships with these groups, know how to write out proposals for projects, be confident to approach people who have the resources such as finance, or skills that can help us. From these characteristics we think leadership is being knowledgeable and taking responsibility in the community development. Leadership is being at the front of all our community work (Focus group).

A woman leader related leadership with 'servant hood' and 'commitment'. She said that commitment was one of the most important factors in community leadership. She suggested that when one took on leadership one must be committed as community leadership is voluntary. Two villagers related leadership to "transparency and accountability" (Inter., R02).

One community leader highlighted that the community can only move forward if a leader has a clear vision to abide by:

Leadership is having a vision for the community. For me a good community leader is a person who has a vision for his community people and work to achieving it... someone who understands the government work up there at the national level and who works with the church, youth and elders and women in the community to move us forward (Inter., R08)

**6.2 Dimensions of Leadership in RC Development**

The preceding section outlined the views of the respondents on leadership in the development process. This section presents the different dimensions of leadership in RC using the framework outlined in Chapter 3.

*6.2.1 Vision and Shared Vision*

In Chapter 3 shared vision was said to create a sense of 'commonness' where a social group has common objective/s to achieve. Participants in the focus group in RC identified that a community leader who shares his/her plans openly to the community inspires a shared vision. At an individual level, all twelve community leaders claimed to have a vision in their respective development activities. Two villagers also confirmed this claim. One villager stated that the fact that the leaders have plans of activities to do in the village and ask people to do various community tasks is evidence that they have something to achieve (Inter., R01).

One villager supported the view that their community leaders do have visions for the community development but pointed to 'hindrances' within the community which distracted them from achieving their visions. Another villager thought that the community was not supportive of the leaders in their work:

> The leaders in the community do have vision for the development of our community, but as always there are few challenges which can distract and 'destroy' the vision of the leaders away from the development goal (Inter., R03).

One villager was critical of these claims and pointed out that the present community leaders have "no clear vision" for RC development. He pointed to the fact that community leaders at RC did not implement new plans and ideas, and that they needed to look beyond the village in their development view:

> They should have a global mentality in them... they should not think that they are only living in Radefasu village... they should link to the world through creativity... what I see is that those who have good plans to share do not have a chance to play their part because

of our community leaders have not invited them to share with them. We need to create an environment where we can work together in this village (Inter., R04).

Two villagers noted that development visions and plan for the community were fragmented because different village groups worked separately without a proper plan or consensus in community-wide development. This point was illustrated as along these lines:

> Each community groups has its own committee-the school has its own, the village has its own committee and the church... it seems that these three institutions have not worked closely together. I have not seen these groups work together here in the community, sharing their development ideas. This would be a good thing; if they did it this development we are after would take place at the education level, village level and the church... I don't think that my village has worked well to improve our community - both outside and within church there is no cohesion that I see with the village activities... I see no cohesive partnership between say church and the community, I think this contributes to how poorly development in our village is taking place (Inter., R07)

> I think our leaders fail to put our ideas together. The truth is that we never sit together to make our development plans. This group works by itself, that group does its own work, it's like that here in the village... you see we here are different, I see that as a hindrance (to development) (Inter., R11).

During the focus group interview the participants made the following criticism:

> We have a problem of vision, because some [leaders] may claim to have the idea to do things, but they never share them with the community, in that way it does not mean anything for us. We think the village leaders should make a combined effort to draw out our future. We need to share our ideas with all the people in the village but also at the provincial level as well as with NGOs and groups like that (Focus group).

Another villager believed that creating a shared vision should begin from the provincial level:

> You see the villages are not here by themselves; we also depend on the government. The people never sit with government or at the province to discuss our future... nothing like that is happening to us here... we work by ourselves, no help from the province or national government. Their [government] plans are not our plans, how do you expect us to move forward... if we are only working for this same thing (development), then we should have a common understanding on development so that we know what we are working towards (Inter., R06).

### *6.2.2 Communication and Trust*

The nature of communication and information sharing in RC development is described in different ways. Two villagers saw information sharing as a personal obligation as well as a community responsibility. They saw it as a vital factor for the community development process:

> I share my personal ideas with the leaders because if I don't tell them what to do there will be no progress in the development of our community. I believe through communication and information things will be transformed [in this village] because people will understand each other more when we talk about the plans for our development (Inter., R02)

Another remarked:

> As a community member, I always work to share development ideas with the community leaders. We all know that leaders themselves cannot perform or fulfill all the ideas that the community needs (Inter., R03).

All eight villagers were concerned about 'internal factors' which hindered information from being shared in the community. They identified the lack of community support for capable people to take on the leadership role in the community. They pointed out that opposition from within the village was a hindrance to sharing of their development ideas

with the rest of the community and the lack of trust by community elders in their leadership roles. A former village chief shared his experienced as;

> I have shared with some people e.g. landowners, elders in the village, emphasizing youth projects, as young people are the future of our community. I have tried to share this with certain people, but yet some older people have been talking (negatively) against such things. They seem not to trust us, I don't know why (Inter., R11).

Another villager claimed:

> I have more ideas for our community development, but opposition is the only hindrance that keeps me from sharing my ideas. I have a lot of ideas. I have a good education background and vision for my people. I help to work in developing my community, but the problem is that opposition 'brought me down' and some people do not believe what I want to share. We have a lot of issues outstanding to address with the landowners. I believe we need to address this before we can move forward (Inter., R04).

> ... … we should listen to each other and respond to different groups such as the land owners and other people or women.... then we can understand each other here in our development plans. We need to take everybody's view and not sit back and do nothing. The responsibility is ours and our community leaders must relate well to all the people in the community as well as to those at the provincial government, NGOs, churches in our constituency. In that way we know what we are working for. Now you see these groups do things of their own without consulting each other (Inter., R01).

One community leader experienced that poor consultation can be detrimental to potential or identified development plans for the community:

> Sometimes the community will disagree with those of us who are in leadership, whether at the school, clinic or other initiatives one looks after... we put some priorities but the community will not easily accept our ideas, they may have their own ideas. But, when we 'come down' (consult the people), those who disagreed in the first place will come and work with us (Inter., R09)

### *6.2.3 Network and Strategic Alliances*

Both community leaders and villagers saw the need for building strong linkages with potential development partners. However, not all the villagers and the community leaders were sure about these sources and potential development partners. Generally, respondents (both leaders and villagers) felt the need to work with NGOs. Two villagers saw the need for connections between the provincial and national governments to be strengthened and representatives to come down to the village level to work with them:

> People from the national and provincial governments should come to the village level. They should come and identify what resources are available at the village level. If they remain up there, then nothing will happen here [village/rural level] (Inter. R03).

> I want to see that we build a relationship with the government. We own land, before any development comes in, we need to prepare land and then work with the government to develop our areas. The government works as a facilitator for the development that will be happening in our community or Malaita. Government may send in specialists like those in the agriculture, or other areas that we need, they send them in… that is what I want the government to do and we work with them, in that way we are helping our selves (Inter., R04).

One villager added that facilitating networks was a community leader's role:

> Our community leaders must take the initiative to create more partnership with the other people [stakeholders] outside of the community… they cannot sit down and wait for things to happen I think if they want to make an impact this should be their primary role (Inter., R02).

One community leader identified that networking was important but voiced his ignorance of the work of the NGOs:

> That is what I really want to know [NGOs]. If I could find out and work with them that is good. I know that some NGOs are willing to help, but I have no knowledge of where to contact these groups (Inter., R10).

One villager added:

> I think the community leaders are not aware of this important factor [networking] - that is why we have not performed well in developing our community… I think the community leaders don't know the importance of these things [networking] (Inter., R08).

One community woman leader was concerned about the lack of relationship with the National Council of Women in Honiara which is the responsible body for women in Solomon Islands. She expressed the village women as not *kwatafa*[59] about the sources which can be beneficial to their development.

### *6.2.4 Collaboration*

The ability to work together and find a shared strategy to solve community and regional development problems is an important leadership skill. Responses regarding this leadership dimension vary. One community leader remarked:

> Cooperation between different communities seemed to be same as that within the community... in general a large group of people do not follow what we say. Anyway, although most people are not willing to work with us, we continue on. That is how I see it … even if we talk and the larger proportion of the people do not listen, we continue, few of us who respond positively, this is my view on the development here in my community. (Inter., R09)

Three villagers saw the need for including the views and opinions of different groups into decision-making in the community development. This was illustrated in the following quotes:

> I think our leaders should take the view of the different people who have an interest in our development process…The province should develop some plans to bring people in the rural areas together and draw out what we want our communities to achieve… look at

---

[59] Kwara'ae term for 'being clear about something' or being literate. Someone who is *kwatafa* is someone who knows or possesses knowledge about something or for doing something, i.e. who has a 'clear' understanding of a particular issue.

how close we are to Auki, but we have not utilize this distance factor for our good. But I see some people in the constituency (Central Kwara'ae) are seeing the importance of partnership. For example we have the credit union at Auki; I know some people from this community have a share in that, that is good because we do not have the money ourselves so we share with other people like that. The same idea can be utilized in our province or within our village but in different areas (Inter., R11).

... … before anything can happen, we should come together and put one mind and talk together. Working alone you cannot do anything - unless we group together and we talk and put things into action. If we don't come together and talk together it (development) would not happen here. All our leaders must sit together and work on this, this is what I don't see being done well here and I think it contributes to the poor status of our community today (Inter., R07)

## 6.3 COMMUNITY GOVERNANCE

The previous section reported on the nature of leadership in RC development process. This section focuses on two community organizations, namely; the local community high school and a community health center. The central purpose of this section is to describe the process of community governance in RC development process which in the literature review was viewed as 'group leadership' and as being about rural people collaborating with different actors for their benefit. This section focuses on the structures and processes of governance as well as on leadership roles. The decision-making process and participation within the organizations are also examined.

### 6.3.1 Laulana Community High School (LCHS)

The local school started as a basic primary school in 1962, from a joint effort by people from RC and other surrounding communities. The school began from classes one to three. It was operated by the South Seas Evangelical Mission (SSEM)[60] until 1970 when the government took over the administration of the school (per., comm., 2007).

---

[60] SSEM is now known as the South Seas Evangelical Church (SSEC) one of the largest Christian churches in Solomon Islands.

In 2003, after more than 40 years of its establishment, the primary school was upgraded to become a community high school. The policies and decisions for development of the school is solely the community's responsibility. This means that neither the government nor the provincial authority have a direct say in the development of the school. Their primary role is the provision of teachers who are seconded or posted under the education authority through Malaita Province. Both the primary and high school have a total of 445 students with 20 teaching staff. At the time of the study, a second two-storey permanent classroom was built to cater for the increasing student intake. Financial allocations from the Rural Constituency Development Fund (RCDF)[61] and other financial sources which were directed through the MP contributed to the expansion of the school. Most of this fund was used in the upgrading of the school to community high school status. During the period 2000-2002, a total of SI$28,000 was channeled to the school through the MP (Central Kwara'ae Constituency Report, 2005). Figure 6.1 represents the structure of the school organization.

### 6.3.1.1 Leadership roles within LCHS

There are two levels within the structure; 1) the administration and 2) the school board comprised of community representatives. The principal is the head administrator of the school with the assistance of a deputy principal. The principal also liaise with the provincial government and aid agencies for different development projects for the school (Inter., R10). The principal is answerable to the school board on the matters relating to educational aid and project proposals to be submitted to aid donors through the Ministry of Education. The principal is also answerable to the Ministry of Education regarding the use of aid money allocated to the school. The Malaita Provincial Education Authority appoints the teaching staff whose salaries and other allocations are the responsibility of the government. Teachers are answerable to Malaita Province Education Authority. They are also represented on the school board and assist in community activities such as fundraising drives for the school (Inter., R10).

---

[61] See footnote 47 Chapter 4

The second level in the structure is the board. The school board representatives are appointed by the parents and teachers association (PTA) every two years (per., comm., 2007). The Principal and one staff member are also in the school board along with representatives from surrounding villages. The board is responsible for all the decisions for the school development.  The chairperson is the head of the board and is one of the signatories for the school bank accounts. He is also the link between the administration and the community.

The role of the chairperson is to: link all stakeholders together; make sure the administration and parents implement the task mandated to them successfully; advise board members, administration and staff on issues of community participation; seek external assistance-financial or material needs for the school; consult with Education Authority on issues affecting the school, and attend workshops on school development matters (per., comm., 2007)

In addition there are three sub-committees which have different responsibilities. One subcommittee looks after 'disciplinary' matters of the school. This is made up of the school chairman and other community members and staff members. The positions are not permanent and it depends on the issue of concern which the sub-committee is looking into. For example when an issue has to do with any of the teaching staff, the principal may sit in the committee but this may not be so if the issue relates to him.

These sub-committees are answerable to the school board which makes final decisions on the matter (Inter., R10). The board is described as the "voice of the community" (Inter., R05) as representatives within RC as well as in the surrounding communities makes decisions that directly influence the school's development. The board members are responsible for sharing information with their various communities of the plans of the school. The chairperson related that the "response from the communities to education development will depend on how well these representatives influence their people" (Inter., R10). All the positions described are voluntary.

(External Partners)          ▾Government/ Aid Donors, NZAid, EU

**Constituency MP**

```
                                    (sub-committees)
┌─────────────┐                                      ┌─────────────────┐
│ Chairperson │◄────────────────────────────────────►│ Principal and   │
└─────────────┘         ┌──────────────────┐         │ Head master     │
                        │ • Disciplinary   │         └─────────────────┘
                        │ • Academic       │                 │
┌─────────────┐         │ • Fundraising    │         ┌─────────────────┐
│ Board       │         └──────────────────┘         │ Deputy          │
│ Members     │                                      │ Principal       │
└─────────────┘              ╭─────╮                  └─────────────────┘
                             │ PTA │                          │
                             ╰─────╯                  ┌─────────────────┐
                                                      │ Teaching        │
                                                      │ staff           │
                                                      └─────────────────┘
                                                              │
                                                      ┌─────────────────┐
                                                      │ Students        │
                                                      └─────────────────┘
┌──────────────────────────────────────────────────────────────────┐
│                          COMMUNITY                                 │
│          (Education development at rural community level)          │
└──────────────────────────────────────────────────────────────────┘
```
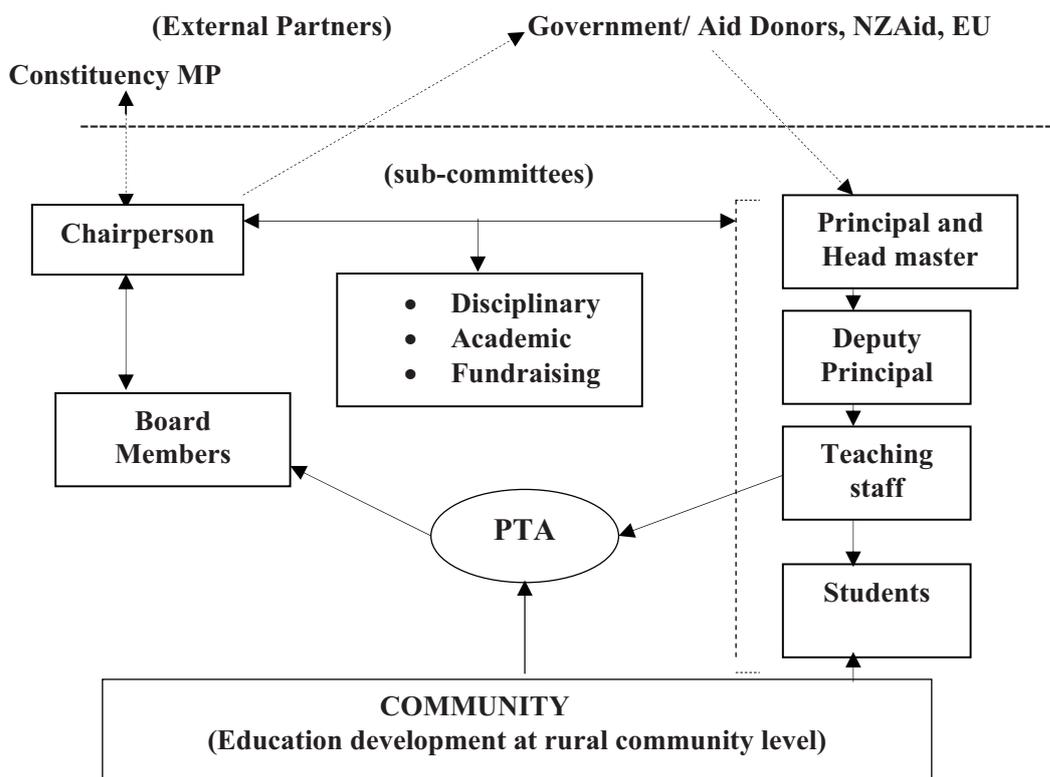
**Figure 6.1. Laulana Community High School organizational structure**

## 6.3.2 One'oneabu Community Health Center (OCHC)

The One'oneabu Community Health Center serves about ten communities. It is one of the recent developments within the area. Due to the high cost of traveling 6 kilometers to the provincial clinic at Auki for basic medical services and with the increasing population within the area, the idea of having an accessible clinic came into reality in 2002. In 1997 the British High Commission, through the Constituency MP, provided $55,000 for the initial work on the clinic (Central Kwara'ae Constituency Report, 2005).

A registered nurse and about four other assistant nursing staff who are locals themselves operate the clinic. Medication supplies are received from the medical store at Auki. Major patient referrals from the center are transferred to the provincial hospital at Auki. The structure of the health centre is shown with the diagramme below.

(EXTERNAL PARTNERS)                    PROVINCIAL HOSPITAL (AUKI)

**Constituency MP**

---

```
        ┌──────────────┐              ┌──────────────┐
        │ Chairperson  │              │  Registered  │
        │              │              │   Nursing    │
        │              │              │   Officer    │
        └──────┬───────┘              └──────┬───────┘
               │                             │
               ▼                             ▼
        ┌──────────────┐              ┌──────────────┐
        │   Clinic     │──────────▶   │   Nursing    │
        │  Committee   │              │    Aides     │
        └──────┬───────┘              └──────┬───────┘
               ▲                             ▲
               │                             │
        ┌──────┴─────────────────────────────┴───────┐
        │              COMMUNITY                      │
        │ (Health Development at the Rural Community  │
        │                  Level)                     │
        └─────────────────────────────────────────────┘
```
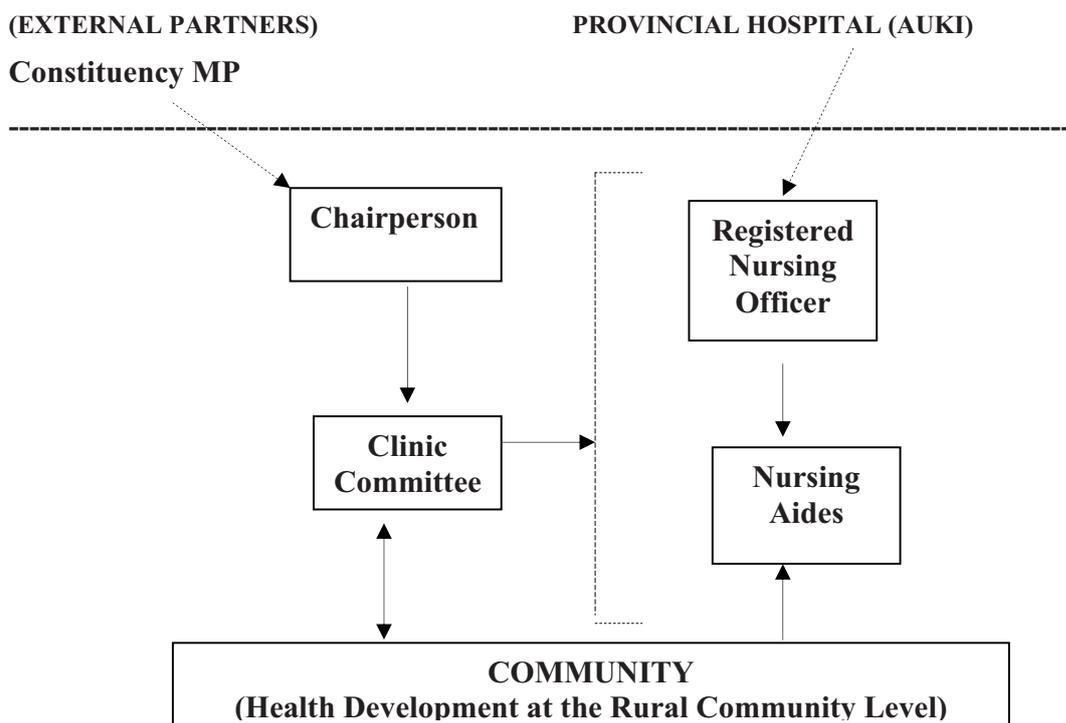
**Figure 6.2. One'oneabu Clinic structure**

### *6.3.2.1 Leadership roles within OCHC*

The health center is a simple structure. However the key leadership roles within the structure can be outlined as follows: the chairperson organizes and plans the activities at the centre such as maintenance of building and general upkeep of the compound, and organize meetings for any further expansion or related activities. Any plan for expansion is done with the registered nursing officer who then informs the health authorities in Auki of the proposed plans. The authorities at Auki either endorse or reject the plan. If a plan is endorsed, the provincial government is also informed for possible support through funding or networking with potential external assistance such as the national government or aid donors. The committee members are present in meetings as representatives of other communities and have the responsibility of sharing information after the meetings to the communities that they represent.

The provincial health authority at Auki provides the resources such as medication and the registered nurse for the center. However, the community is responsible for all the upkeep of and any development concerning the center.

### 6.3.3 Community Views and Responses:

This sub-section intends to answer the following questions: (1) How are decision-making processes viewed within the governing structures? , and (2) to what degree do community people participate in the structures? These questions aim to better elucidate what factors influence the degree of participation of people in community development process and the role leadership plays in the effectiveness of these institutions.

### *6.3.3.1 Community Views on Decision-Making*

All community leaders and villagers interviewed felt that decision-making within the two structures were representative of the community and its stakeholders, and that the communities were involved through their representatives in the committee. A villager noted: "The whole decision making process involves the community because... the representatives live with the people... and they understand each other" (Inter., R03). Three villagers also felt that the process of decision-making was good as information is shared to the community on different development issues relating to the organizations:

> The community is involved in the decision-making process. For example if we want to do fundraising-drives, the school board and the fundraising committee meet first and they agree on any form of activity then afterwards the members will inform the community (Inter., R02).

> We (community) work with the committee at the clinic, the members must come back with the decisions to us after they meet or decide on something (Inter., R01)

A further probing with other people from the nearby communities in this area proved to support these claims (pers., comm., 2007). However, one villager was critical that the community people were not so concerned about the decision-making process, but rather they only wait for the work to be called. In other words, if they have a representative in

the board, they do not care much about the decision/s. Another villager believed that people did not take much notice of decision-making and he thought that they never rationalize the importance of it; therefore they tend to depend on the committees whether at the clinic or school to make decisions. He remarked: "I think partly the community do not see the importance of this but also I think they do not care much about it" (Inter., R03). Another made a similar observation in relation to the health center:

> I don't mind whether I contribute or not (to the decision-making), because I trust the people have made good decisions for the expansion of the (health) centre (Inter., R07)

### *6.3.3.2 Community Participation*

The measurement of people's responses by way of participating in planned development activities for both organizations was not easy. Both community leaders and villagers tried to do this by assessing the attendance of people at work set by the boards at given times, and to assess to what degree different groups such as men and women were present at these different working times. In relation to work attendance, various villagers noted that people did not attend well to plan activities at the school and the health center. As one remarked: "during school working days, attendance would not reach its maximum, [in fact] the attendance is not so good" (Inter., R02). At a village meeting held at RC to decide on the work to be carried out at the school it was observed that attendance was poor to the extent that the meeting has to be called for the next day (pers. observ, 2007). A similar response was observed on the next day. As a result only a handful of village people decided on the work to be carried out at the school. Field research assistants reported similar observations noting that parents and guardians failed to collect timber for the school buildings, resulting in laborers having to be paid to do the work (pers. observ. 2007).

The school chairman confirmed these observations and lamented the lack of commitment shown by parents and stakeholders in the work set out for them (Inter., R10). The deputy principal noted that "as a result of such poor response from the community, major work in terms of infrastructures such as classroom buildings and staff houses were built by

carpenters who were 'paid to' do the work because attendance to work was poor" (per.,com, 2007). A school board member from another community close by also made a similar observation about the slow response of community members toward the school activities. Another identified too that their community members were over-dependent on them to carry out work at the school and were often absent from activities planned for the school (pers. comm., 2007).

With reference to the health center a villager remarked:

> I think at times we (community) fail to work with the committee. I saw that attendance for work at the clinic could be poor. Men send their wives to come and help out but when we need to do some carpentry work or some heavy job like that, women can't do that. I think we need to support the work there at the health centre (Inter., R07)

The health center chairperson noted that his committee was not performing well:

> I worked with the centre for seven years since its establishment. The problem with the committee is that we do not know how to work with community. I think the members don't know their work well... (they) don't have the knowledge or thinking of further improving the center... we try to organize for some people to come on Tuesdays (community working day) but still the turnout is poor. I blame this on the committee members; they are not doing their work - that is why work attendance is poor (Inter., R06)

Another community worker remarked:

> In general, for example at the health centre, a large group of people do not respond well... even when we try to talk to them (people) a big part of the community people do not listen... this is really sad because we are pulling ourselves backward (Inter., R09)

## 6.4 SOCIAL CAPITAL

In this study social capital is understood as the degree of relationship between different groups in a community in their participation in community development programmes. Both community leaders and villagers pointed out the lack of good social relationships between different groups such as schools, churches and political groups at RC. A community leader remarked; "the biggest challenge for me is that at most times people do not help me in my work" (Inter., R09). In support a villager remarked, "community leaders always experience poor response from the community in community work" (Inter., R03). One villager identified that collective action in community work as poor:

> What I see in this community is that on the issue of *rawafikuanga*, only a small part of the community is active... [W] orking together does not work well here... that makes the situation here incomplete; if we work together I believe we can do anything here (Inter., R07).

One villager remarked that the community was not supportive of those who have the skills to carry out community work:

> People would complain (unnecessarily) against those who have the skills. They have the ability to carryout the work in community development activities, but some people complain a lot. This is the main problem which hinders any skillful and good educated (potential) leaders from taking part in the community activities (Inter., R04)

Several reasons were given by villagers for the low participation in development activities. One highlighted the ignorance of the people about the concept of *rawafikuaga*. As a consequence they did not take part in community development: "only few people who understand *rawafikuanga* work well here, others who do not understand that, do not work well. In my view, *rawafikuanga* is not demonstrated in this community" (Inter., R08).

Two villagers related the matter of low participation to the lack of a common understanding among different parties on community issues. This was especially between

the landowners and the community as a whole. Landowners were not able or willing to make compromises for the sake of proposed development plans resulting in a detrimental effect on the community-wide development process. One villager proposed that all that was needed was for the whole community to find compromises for solutions and to implement the given tasks.

> One of the challenges that I find is that when we want to do some development activities, people will start to talk about land. We have been trying to do things here in the village, but still people are talking about things (land) like that... in my view, if we get together and do the work, it (development) will work well... this is currently weak in this community (Inter., R11)

At RC, two ethnic groups co-exist: the Rade-*Tolo* and Rade-*Asi*. A group within the Rade-*Tolo* claimed to be the primary owners of the land upon which RC is located.  This group within the Rade-*Tolo* has been the key decision-makers on any development to be taken place in the community (pers. comm.., 2007). There have been inter-marriages between the two groups but rights are still genealogically interpreted back to a small group within the Rade-*Tolo*.  Responses from both within the land owning group and the community in general demonstrated the concern that land related issues impacted negatively on the development process of the community.  One respondent from the Rade-*Tolo* noted that "the land owners do not look at the positive side of development activities and how development brings positive effects for all of us" (Inter., R04). One respondent (a landowner) explained why the landowners did not easily accept development activities within the community. He reported that there was lack of trust because of unproven fears within the land owning circle that different groups will use their land if community-wide activities are encouraged in RC. He gave an example of a planned Red Cross community project which was eventually abandoned:

> The Red Cross was trying to build a big community hall in this community, but some people disputed that plan, some did not understand the plan, but I believe the big part of it has to do with land. Landowners fear that people who are not supposed to use it will use

their land. When the building is completed, different people will also come in and use it. I think that is what we fear (Inter., R08).

Various responses from the community people pointed out that they do have plans for developing the community, but they were sensitive to landowners' responses to their plans. Some of the respondents claimed that this hindered their contribution to the development process of the community. One respondent pointed to the lack of strong leadership within the community to rally these groups together. He believed that this resulted in poor development status of the community:

> Now you see in the community today, it looks poor because people who take leadership are uneducated and have narrow experience and are weak in character, that is why in my view, as a result of this, the village is not awake, it is like we are sleeping… a lot of good people are in the village but they make excuses. I think working together is what is missing here. We need someone with strong character to work in uniting our different groups in the development of our community. We help each other by building a strong relationship with each other. I believe the landowners can take a lead in this area, and then everybody will be comfortable to work with them. (Inter., R03).

This section concludes the presentation of the field data. The final chapter analyses and provides concluding comments on the research findings.

# CHAPTER 7

# ANALYSIS AND CONCLUSIONS

## 7.0 Introduction

This chapter will analyze the data presented in Chapter 5 and 6. The purpose of this chapter is to describe the relationships of the findings on leadership, community governance and social capital to development at the rural community level. This chapter has three objectives: (1) to carryout a comparative analysis on the data from the two case communities; (2) to outline the major findings of the research and make a discussion of the findings in relation to existing literature and (3) to provide an overall conclusion on the research findings.

## 7.1 LEADERSHIP FOR RURAL DEVELOPMENT

Four (4) categories of respondents were identified under this section: (1) those who did not associate leadership with development, (2) those who associated leadership with development, (3) those who saw leadership as a process and (4) those who identify leadership as trait and behaviour. Thirty-one respondents[62] identified leadership with development with only two villagers out of the thirty-three (33) respondents who took part in this research found it difficult to relate leadership with development.

Respondents in both communities described leadership both as an individual factor, focusing on traits and behavior and as a 'process of influence' by an individual or a small group of people in the community. They identified traits and behavior such as *"trustworthiness"*, *"high interaction with people"*, *"openness to community"* or *"showing example"* as important to being an effective leader in the socio-economic development process of the communities.

In Chapter 3, we saw that leadership was defined as an 'influence process' between the leader(s) and followers toward achieving a common goal or goals. In both communities

---

[62] I will use '*Respondents*' to include views from both leaders and ordinary villagers.

the respondents recognized this relationship and used phrases such as *"organizing and pulling"* the community together, *"information sharing"* or *"showing the way"* to give it meaning. In both communities leadership was also seen as a role in which a 'leader' puts him or herself at front of the group to *"pave the way forward"* for the community.

Respondents from both communities also thought that leadership in community development is about developing a vision. Two villagers thought that this is important as it helps to guide the community towards what it is working to achieve. Respondents in both communities added that vision for community development should be designed and created by all parties in the communities. This was expressed in phrases like: *"the community should sit together and plan for the community development"*; *"we need to draw a map for the community development"; "... we need some sense of direction which we as a community help to design".* They indicated the need to strengthen the role of external actors such as NGOs, provincial government etc. to help achieve the development vision of the community.

In both communities the ability of a leader to take charge and inspire the community was important for a leader to be seen as effective in his or her responsibilities to realize change. This was shown in the phrases like *"... setting priority on the better quality of life", "... seeing our future and working with the community to set out plans for our development", "... taking the lead in our development, do the planning and help us carry out the plan," "... pulling people in the community together", "... be at the front of every community work that the community planned and be aware of programmes that are happening at the province and national levels".* Respondents supported the need for strong leadership within communities as well as at the constituency level to move development forward. In RC, both community leaders and villagers made reference to the poor knowledge of leaders about the potential networks that the community may capitalize on for its own development. In KC a similar sentiment was voiced and respondents added that community leaders must work to facilitate this process. Community leaders in both communities admitted their incompetence in facilitating this process.

The study found that in both communities poor leadership is reflected in low community participation in community work. 'Some' community leaders appeared ignorant of the importance of their role in facilitating collaborative relationships with external partners which would be beneficial to the rural communities. Although individuals claimed they had vision for the communities, evidence for shared-visions was lacking. This was further supported in that different groups in the community such as the church, youth and political groups did not collaborate and/or participate readily in community and constituency programmes. In KC although individual leaders claimed to have a vision in their area of responsibility, how this vision was connected to a well reasoned and integrated set of goals was not clearly shown and respondents related that information gathered by community leaders over the years was never translated into working programmes. Respondents in both communities felt that an important leadership role in development was the ability to *"organize"* and *"pull people together"* in community activities. Respondents believed this process should involve both the communities and their external partners to find where they can play an effective role in the local development process. People expressed the need for enlisting and gathering the support of key stakeholders in the development process of the communities.

## 7.2 Dimensions of Leadership for Socio-Economic Development

In the review of literature I drew five characteristics of socio-economic development leaders which I thought were appropriate to use as a framework in the Solomon Islands context. These were: vision, shared vision, collaboration, and networking and strategic alliances.

### *7.2.1 Vision/shared Vision*

In both communities there was a general agreement that individual leaders do have a vision for their community. In KC respondents viewed the communal setting as being influential in the development of vision for the community; i.e. that what community leaders carry out was the idea of the community people as a whole. In RC, this view was not clearly put forth by respondents due to the lack of social cohesion in the community

which decreased the chances for the community to *"sit together"* to develop a common view.

In both communities, respondents saw vision as a key factor for their community development as it guided the community towards its aspired future. In RC respondents lamented the uncoordinated approach to development in the community as different social groups: church, school, landowners were seen to work independently of each other. Community leaders at RC were blamed for not being able to *"pull the community together"* and to create a shared understanding for their community or constituency development. Respondents saw this as the failure of the community leaders to perform their responsibilities.

### *7.2.2 Communication and Trust*
In both communities respondents were aware of their development needs and they participated when information was shared and the community understood the purpose of doing a particular activity. In both communities, communication and information sharing between external stakeholders such as the provincial government, national women's organization were low. In KC a respondent highlighted this concern and added that keeping in contact with potential external stakeholders was important for their community development.

Respondents saw information sharing as a community obligation. But they were disappointed over the lack of continuous dialogue over development plans and issues. Landowners at RC reportedly hindered this process of dialogue between community groups. The landowners were seen as being suspicious of non-landowning groups or of those intending to take on leadership role(s) in community activities.

### *7.2.3 Collaboration*
Collaboration is the mark of shared-leadership: a process where the views of different stakeholders are accommodated and decisions are made as a group. This process is built on trust without which the different groups may not be able to develop a common view

on development. At KC a community leader identified collaboration as a form of 'participation' where different people take part in developing a common understanding in the various development activities in the community. A KC villager pointed out the poor relationship the community has with different stakeholders in particular the provincial government. Respondents saw the need for strengthening the relationship between the communities and the provincial government.

In both communities, people interviewed expressed the need to consider the views of the different community groups: church, landowners, neighboring communities, women/men and youth groups and so on in development planning. They wished to see the different groups *"come together"* and work on an agreed plan. Respondents articulated the need for more proactive response from the community leaders in bringing the different groups into the development process. RC respondents noted that collaboration was particularly important where resources were limited. A community leader at RC referred to a recent development of a micro-credit scheme at Auki as an example of a collaborative process in which limited financial resources were shared for mutual benefit of the Central Kwara'ae people. In KC a villager highlighted the need for community leaders to view development at the local level from a global perspective as external issues influence development at the local level.

Villagers in both communities were frustrated by their community leaders' lack of creativity to develop new ideas or plans for the community. A villager in RC highlighted the need for clear strategic outline of what the community wanted to achieve and how to achieve it. At KC a community leader felt that lack of strategic planning has resulted in community leaders being overloaded with information but lacking working programmes to benefit or put good use the information that they have acquired over the years. This was, one villager claimed, due to the leaders failing to develop a collaborative approach to share their acquired knowledge with others who can help them to develop working programmes in the community.

*7.2.4 Networking and Strategic Alliances*

At KC respondents recognized the limitation of the community in solving its development problems without working in partnership with different actors who have resources that are needed. Respondents at KC saw that they were weak in building partnership and network within their community and with external partners. One villager said that the community should not wait for help to come to them, but that the community should take the lead in developing networks with potential partners. A RC villager believed that community leaders should take the initiative to establish networks with potential external partners. One RC leader admitted that he has no knowledge of NGOs or other actors that the community can tap into for the benefit of his community although he acknowledged that such partnership could lead to greater positive development in his community. At KC a villager noted the high dependency on their member of parliament for development assistance. He claimed that this attitude led to people not working to fulfill development plans of their own. He added that what the community needed was to think out their plans together. One woman at KC blamed the poor relationship between the provincial government and community women on the provincial authorities for not doing their work to develop partnership with local community women's groups. She claimed that there was no set approach to develop a network with the government therefore limiting the chances to create this in the rural community. A woman at RC blamed the poor networking in her community on poor knowledge on how and where to develop these networks. She blamed this on illiteracy and low levels of education attained by women in the community.

I have so far presented the over-view of respondents using the five dimensions of effective leadership framework discussed in Chapter 3. Below I will attempt to present an analysis on the key dimension of leadership that is believed to be important in the rural development process in these two communities.

**7.3 Evaluation of the Dimensions of Leadership promoting Rural Socio-Economic Development**

The five dimensions of leadership discussed above are about how leaders 'mobilize' others to get extraordinary things to happen in the rural communities. In all five dimensions 'collaboration' seemed to entail the other four dimensions in the development process of the two communities. Collaboration entails building partnership, establishing cooperation between and within different community actors and stakeholders which are important for the positive development of the communities. In both communities, as indicated by the responses, collaboration within the different community groups (land owners, churches, women, etc) was seen as important to develop a sense of 'community cohesiveness' over development issues. Both community leaders and respondents in the communities identified this as a weak area both within and with potential external partners. Several respondents insisted on the poor relationship that the two communities have with the provincial government despite their proximity to the Malaita province administrative center of Auki.

Collaboration also entails trust building through continuous dialogue between and among different actors. It is about developing a shared-vision in which people work in partnership to realize goals that are commonly shared. Although vision for development of both communities were reported by some respondents to be influenced by the community at large, other respondents complained on the lack of working together between different social groups such as churches/church groups, schools, community, landowners etc. within the communities. What arose from the data is that both communities lack an integrative and strategic development plan for their communities which some respondent believe negatively influences their community development process as community did not have a sense of direction of its future.

In short, community leaders who are effective are seen as those who are able to develop a collaborative relationship between and among the different groups internally as well as with those external to the communities to realize their common development goals. The environment which local leaders work in involves both internal and external actors and

stakeholders. In this case collaboration is important where ideas, values and norms of different groups are taken into account in development planning and programmes of the communities.

## 7.4 COMMUNITY GOVERNANCE AS 'GROUP LEADERSHIP'

To recap the purpose of the section aims to answer the following questions: How are development organizations governed in Central Kwara'ae communities? What leadership roles are played; by whom, how and why? How might these roles influence community development? The purpose of this section is to narrow the focus of community-wide assessment of how community governance and leadership influence development at the local level. The research focused on four separate organizations within the two communities: two (2) community high schools, a community credit scheme and a community health centre. A general characteristic of these initiatives is their collaborative nature and the partnering of local organizations with external partners. This is a demonstration of a collaborative process with a relationship in which development at the rural level can be directed. For KC the community school was developed with the help of the SSEC education authority. But there is also government participation through the provision of teachers and their salaries.

In both communities, the four organizations' boards and committees were said to be highly representative of the people. What was important was the leadership role local chairpersons within this organizations played within the structures as the connection between administrative levels who facilitate the daily processes of the various activities and the role the community representatives (i.e. committees and boards) play in the progress of these organizations.

In both communities respondents were content with the process of decision-making within the four organizations. However, responses from the people by way of participating in organized work did not correspond to how people view the relevancy of the organizations to rural community development. At RC, responses by people to planned activities within the school was seen as poor. This was blamed on a lack of

commitment from the community people and the stakeholders. For KC the response at the school was good. At KC, an extreme variation was shown in how people participate in the Micro Finance Centre (MFC). Community response to the MFC programmes was low. This was blamed on the management teams and the community's lack of knowledge about the initiative's functions. The Micro-finance management team admitted their weakness in not educating the people about this particular activity.

At RC the link between the government and the school is weak as compared to the health center. It must be noted this is also determined by the nature of the organization. In this case the clinic needs continuous support from health authorities at Auki. However, the important point is that the strength of these organizations lies in the forging of these external relationships which the local people have identified for their community well being. The success of these organizations depends on this collaborative relationship where the community and their leaders share a common understanding of achieving their development goals through improving access to finance, health and/or education services.

Leadership roles identified within the four organizations observed in this study were voluntary. However these simple organizations are focal points where the diversity of the community converges into working for the common good. One of the reasons also for investigating these initiatives was to see how people viewed the 'appropriateness' of the structures for their community development and to scrutinize community participation in decision-making or attendance with respect to community work organized through these organizations. The respondents' views on the decision-making process in the four organizations showed that decision-making was not shared throughout the communities. In other words, community people did not make much effort in contributing to decision-making within these organizations. It was also evident that people were too dependent on the board and committee members to make decisions for them. Community leaders reported that people tended to depend on them to make decisions for the whole community. Some community leaders pointed out that the community was at times reluctant to contribute ideas on how to improve on these organizations.

People's response to community work in these organizations also varied. At KC cooperative work at the school was good. This was not so in the other three organizations. Some respondents point to poor leadership from community leaders to develop motivation and a spirit of participation among people.

## 7.5 SOCIAL CAPITAL

In both communities, respondents identified the importance of building good social relationships to develop a sense of cohesiveness in the community in its development process. Two key challenges did hinder the process within both communities. These were: 'low community-wide participation' in development activities and 'land issues'. In the case of KC, community-wide participation was evaluated by respondents in how different social groups of youth, women and men participated in allocated work or decision-making in community. Youth were categorized as participating less in most activities. A community leader at KC noted that the need of this particular group must be addressed if socio-economic development was to progress well in the community as these groups could be volatile and might cause social problems in the community. Another community leader noted his own efforts to try encouraging youth groups to learn how to work together in community development activities.

In RC, the issue of low community-wide participation in development activities was blamed on several factors. One was poor understanding of the whole process of rural development and where rural communities fit in this process. Some people did not relate the various organizations such as schools, clinic and microfinance with the concept of rural development. They saw these organizations as 'just another community activity' which has no relation to the national government's rural development programme. This influences how people responded to community work with some simply not attending to any planned activities at RC. Another reason given was the loss of traditional practices in communal activities. In this case the traditional Kwara'ae concept of *rawafikuanga* (working cooperatively for mutual benefit) was ignored by many people within the community. Consequently this affects the general response of the community people to get involved in community work.

Another challenge identified was the issue of land ownership and usage. KC respondents said that tribal groups tended to stick together and that, consequently, land issues were not discussed openly with the community. Landowners tend to keep away other stakeholders preventing them from presenting their views on how development activities are planned or done at the rural level.

At RC, a similar situation seemed to be preventing potential development initiatives from being established in the community. A landowner highlighted that some of the landowners were fearful of allowing their land to be used for development activities because 'non-landowning groups' may also have a stake in the initiatives and might control and benefit from it. Respondents pointed out that internal oppositions mainly from land owners to non-landowning groups … "*is a hindrance that keeps us from sharing ideas*"; ... "*the problem is that opposition 'brought me down' ... 'some people do not believe what I want to share*". Respondents also voiced the lack of trust between different community groups: ... "*people (landowners) have been talking negatively about what others want to do in the community*". One respondent at RC pointed out that the ... "*(landowners) seemed not to trust us*". What was obvious was that different parties in both communities never attempted to combine their efforts to approach development collaboratively at the local level; a more logical approach in an environment where resources are limited. But this was a reflection of a wider issue of a generally low social capital in both communities. In RC land disputes stood out as the key impediment to building a socially cohesive community which was also a reflection on poor leadership in both communities. This consequently reflects on community-wide participation in development activities in both communities.

## 7.6 DISCUSSIONS

This research supports the views of studies by Sorenson and Epps (1996) and Swanson (1996) that social infrastructures which include leadership and social capital are important factors to consider in stagnating rural communities. Swanson (1996) highlights that abstract social phenomena such as leadership and social capital are rarely considered in development programmes as they are viewed as 'soft' factors in economic

development process. However, she argues that if these social infrastructures are "acted upon, nurtured and mobilized" they can facilitate the process of economic development within a given context. This study highlights that at present leadership and social capital within the communities examined are very weak or low and have a negative effect on the development processes of the two communities. There is a need for local communities to strengthen development related leadership and community leaders must learn to develop a collaborative partnership between different actors in rural development process in the two communities and possibly Central Kwara'ae generally. Conflicts between tribes, political groups, churches and land-owning groups which lead to poor social relationships have been shown here to hinder different groups in the communities from gathering support from and enlisting other stakeholders into the development process of the communities. This negatively influences the development process within the two communities, as people do not *"sit together"* to build or develop a common concern or understanding within their communities over their development aspirations.

On governance, the organizational structures of the four organizations observed within the two communities seemed appropriate for development process in the communities. However, they do not guarantee a strong or positive participation from the people. Goodman (1998, cited in Laverack, 2001:139) argues that established governance structures and processes within the community may not be sufficient to create organization and mobilization of constituents into community development processes. He notes that there is also need for social cohesion and a concern for community issues demonstrated by the people. In other words people must see the importance of working in cooperation and collaboration with each other. In an environment where this characteristic is absent, this can be a major hindrance to the local development process.

The issue was shown in the study in how landowners and church groups and even local political groups tend to divide people in the development activities within the two communities leading to negative consequences on the local development processes. Sanga (2007) points out that the spirit of *ofuofua* (co-operation/unity) is needed in Central Malaita generally for social stability. This should, he argues, reduces social risks

and created a right environment for entrepreneurship where people expect success in corporate enterprises and other developmental endeavors in Central Malaita.

The study also showed how local organizations were established with the help of a church ministry or aid donors and NGOs. But there was weak collaboration and partnership between the communities and external actors in the four organizations investigated in this research.

Woolcock (1998) made reference to the importance of the balance between inter/intra-community social relationships and external linkages to key stakeholders and actors in any community development process. This process must also be balanced over time for successful economic development in poor communities to take place. The relationship between the external partners and the local communities must be further strengthened if development in this region is to show some positive effects on the lives of the rural people. Local community leaders must work to identify potential external stakeholders and develop more collaborative relationship with different actors which the communities can benefit from. Some respondents identified this as a vital role of their community leaders to play and that the communities could not wait for 'outsiders' to initiate the process, but it is the communities' obligation as one respondents puts it to *kwate ae eta eta* (to take the first step) to initiate this process.

There is need for a shared vision and strong leadership which inspires people to work in achieving their common goal. Laverack (2001) notes that in community decision-making process, participation of community people in this process is highly related to strong leadership which takes responsibility to develop a degree of cohesiveness in different social groups. Good social relationships are important within the community governance process to make it effective and leadership requires a strong participation base just as participation requires the direction and structure of strong leadership, a characteristic that seemed to be poorly demonstrated by the community leaders in both communities.

Wairiu and Tabo (2003) recently drew attention to the need to limit the *ad hoc* approaches to development in rural Solomon Islands communities. Respondents at KC also raised this issue. They felt that development at the rural area is an *ad hoc* process where community leaders wait for problems to arise rather than projecting long term to identify factors which will enable the community to achieve its development aspirations. Respondents suggested that community leaders must work in commitment to achieve the long-term development goals of their communities. Different groups in the community and society must also sit together in creating the communities' development vision.

Whilst the Wairiu and Tabo (ibid) report point to factors of 'tribal relations' and 'church' as avenues for community to gain access to the modern governance systems, this study found in the two communities that church and tribal solidarity are two leadership development challenges that community leaders must deal with in their development processes. Social relationships between different groups in the communities are worrying. Issues of land in particular seem to divide community groups preventing them from working in partnership with each other. In a general sense social capital within the communities was very low as indicated by the (1) lack of community-wide participation in community activities, (2) people's lack of a deep concern for community issues and (3) the lack of trust land owners display towards non land-owning groups wishing to take on responsibility in development issues.

Coleman (1990 cited in Castle, 2003) argues that societal goals for development are not about individuals working alone, but that participation is central to any successful development outcome. According to him, society must see the importance of collective action and work to build connections among individuals. In other words developing high social capital is important in a complex social environment such as the one in this study to allow for any form of development to take its root at the rural level. People need to build trust among them and allow development issues to be discussed widely.

Poor youth participation in community wide issue was a problematic area found in this study. Respondents note that such area must be addressed if development at the rural

level is to be successful as such group can be very volatile if their needs are not met adequately. Scales (2003) found in a country-wide youth study carried out in Solomon Islands that youth are often left out (intentionally) in community decision-making thus they feel neglected and may resort to other means to engage themselves in. Quite often they turn to violence and criminal activities with negative consequences to local development processes. While this extreme scenario was not seen in this study, several respondents seem to share their concern 'quietly' on this issue, and that they would like to see more effort to be made from within the community with support from the government to engage youth in productive activities in the rural communities.

The Central Malaita Development Trust Agency Report (undated) recognizes that developing a right human attitude, focus and approach towards development is important for Central Malaita. This study also supports this view and adds that leaders at the community level must take the initiative to create a collaborative development environment within rural communities. In other words development process at the constituency level will only reflect how people work in collaboration within the villages. The Kwara'ae concept of *rawafikuanga* must be developed within and among the different groups-women, men and youth groups, churches, landowners, political groups-within the communities and at the constituency level to create a conducive environment for any social economic development to proceed within the two rural communities or central Malaita for that matter.

## 7.7 CONCLUSIONS

### *7.7.1 Implications for Research*
The findings of the study point to the need for further attention to be given to the following questions: Would replication of the study in more than two communities support the findings on the importance of leadership and good social relationships in rural development on Malaita? How would several countrywide studies compare to this Central Kwara'ae case study? How would the 'informal' local governance structures be effective in rural development process in Malaita or Solomon Islands? How would

leadership in communities be improved? Is there a possible mechanism(s) or framework to encourage cooperation between different social groups in rural areas?

 The study showed the need to strengthen collaboration and cooperation between the different stakeholders in the development process at the rural level. More studies into how social capital influences rural people's response to rural development process could increase our understanding about how social issues relate economic ones for successful rural development in Solomon Islands. There is also need to see how the relationship between local leaders and the local governing structures and processes can be strengthened in their relationship with the external stakeholders as a means for rural development in Solomon Islands. Such studies may contribute to how effective development programmes are within rural areas. It may also prove whether it is leadership within the community that is not effective or whether existing  governing structures are not conducive or whether stakeholders that are not performing as they should be to create a conducive climate for development to take place in the rural areas.

### *7.7.2 Implication for Practices*

The findings of the study have highlighted key leadership characteristics in the process of rural development in Central Kwara'ae. In a practical sense to improve development leadership in these rural communities, the areas highlighted in the study must be addressed. Collaborative relationships must be built within and among different stakeholders in rural development process at Central Kwara'ae. The study also showed the implications for governance as structures within which decisions were made and the participation of the communities as the response of the community towards development would be measured. The study showed that while these structures were seen as relevant and representative of the people's voice in their development process, in both communities, people's response to development activities within the various initiatives were still quite low. This highlighted the need for reconciling both structures and leadership process within the rural communities in any rural development programmes in these communities. In other words, both the governance structures and the individuals'

leadership performance should be taken into consideration in rural development programmes in Central Kwara'ae communities.

There was also a concern about the low social capital within the communities which was reflected in the general low participation and poor social relationships evident in both communities. Concern for community issues was low in both communities. The study shows that rural communities are complex social systems themselves; therefore it is important to take note of the different social issues and their influences on economic development process at the rural level. In short economic development in rural areas will also depend on good social relationships and community leaders have a responsibility to see that this issue is taken into consideration in the development process at the rural level. If we over-emphasize the importance of economic development without taking note of the local social issues highlighted here, we may risk loosing out on the goal we are aiming for.

## 7.8 Concluding Comments

Two final observations can be made. Firstly, rural development in Central Kwara'ae will have to deal with poor leadership within the communities to improve on the development process of the constituency. Development governance structures themselves are not guarantees for a good participative response from the community. There is also need for strong and effective community leadership.

Secondly, the study has shown the importance of considering social capital in development theory and discussions in Malaita. With that in mind, it is important to address internal community issues such as land disputes, political rivalry, and weak *rawafikuanga* to develop strong social capital in the communities. It was assumed at the introduction of the study that local communities must demonstrate good social relationships to create a conducive environment for socio-economic development to take place. The study shows that this factor was not developed and natured in the two communities. Generally, social issues such as land ownership, relationships between church and political groups were shown to hinder the development process in the two

communities. Although a conflict free society may only exist as an 'utopian' concept, problems of poor relationships between community groups can be minimized once community people decide to take the initiative to address them. Some degree of social regularity is necessary to sustain social life which should influence development positively. Communities must learn to demonstrate and prove that they can work together in 'little things' such as simply attending work at the local clinic or community school before they can work at addressing bigger development issues and problems for the community or constituency. Development at the rural area is not a one-person issue to address. It is a societal goal which needs a combined effort by all citizens with a common purpose. This is where effective community leadership is important to foster a collaborative spirit and effort among all stakeholders in the society.

Without adequate attention given to such factors, the rural development process at the Central Kwara'ae may run the risk of experiencing slow or in an extreme case, lack of, development. Particularly at a time when "bottom-up approach" to development seemed popular in the Government's development policy, it is a matter of urgency that issues highlighted in this study are examined in more detail in the rural development process in Solomon Islands. As this study shows, there is a need to consider community leadership and social capital in the rural development process to create some positive results and improve in the development process in the two case study communities.

**7.9 Researcher's final remarks**

In conclusion, I have benefited from the experience of examining leadership and social capital and their influences on development at the rural level through the eyes of a Solomon Islands rural villager who will be returning to his country shortly. This study will help me better appreciate the influence of leadership and good social relationships on my community development process, and hopefully, can provide some experiences and directions in this area with my fellow villagers.

# REFERENCES

Alasia, L., S. 2003. *Fata'abu*: The Voice of God. Institute of Pacific Studies, USP and USP-center Institute of Solomon Islands Studies, Solomon Islands Writers' Association. Honiara.

Alasia, S. 1997. Party Politics and Government in Solomon Islands. *State Society and Governance in Melanesia. Research school of Pacific and Asian Studies*. Discussion Paper 97/7. ANU. Canberra.

Apter, E., D.1965. The Politics of Modernization. The University of Chicago Press. Chicago.

Aqorau, T. 2006. *Critical times still ahead for Solomon Islands. Pacific Islands Report.* (Online) *http://archives.pireport.org/archive/2006/February/02-16-com.htm* (accessed: 19.3.07)

Asian Development Bank (ADB). 2004. Governance in the Pacific: Focus for Action 2005-2009. Pacific Studies Series. ADB. Manila.

Australian Council for International Development (ACFID). 2004. Report: Solomon Islands NGO Leadership Training 2002-04. Centre for Democratic Institutions (CDI), Solomon Islands Development Services Exchange (DSE), Australian Council for International Development (ACFID).

Bakeo, M., R. 2000. The Crisis of Post-Independence Development in Vanuatu. (Unpublished MA in Development Studies thesis). Centre for Development Studies, University of the South Pacific.

Barker, R., A. 1997. How Can We Train Leaders if We Do Not Know What Leadership is? *Human Relations Vol., 50, No 40.*

Bennett, A., J. 1987.Wealth of the Solomons: a History of a Pacific Archipelago, 1800-1978.Univeristy of Hawaii Press. Honolulu

Bennett, J. 2002. Roots of Conflict in Solomon Islands. Though much is taken, much abides: Legacies of Tradition and Colonialism. *State, Society and Governance in Melanesia. Discussion paper 2002/5*. Research of Pacific and Asian Studies. ANU, Canberra.

Blomström, M and Hettne, B. 1984. Development Theory in Transition-the Dependency Debate and Beyond: Third World responses. Zed Books, London.

Boggs, T., and Gegeo W., D. 1996. Leadership and Solomon Islander's Resistance to Plantation based Political Economy: Roles and Circumstances. In Feinberg, R., and

Waston-Gegeo A., K.1996 (editors). *Leadership and Change in the Western Pacific: Essays Presented to Sir Raymond Firth on the occasion of his 90th Birthday*. London School of Economics Monographs on Social Anthropology 66.Athlone Press, London. Pp 272-297

Boutilier, J., A.1978. The Government is the District Officer: A Historical Analysis of District Officers as Middle Men in the British Solomon Islands Protectorate, 1893-1943.Royal Roads Military College, London.

Bowles, S and Gintis, H 2000. Social Capital and Community Governance. *The Economic Journal 112 (Nov)* F419-F436. Blackwell, Oxford.

Brohman, J .1996. Popular Development: Rethinking the Theory and Practice of Development. Blackwell, Oxford.

Bryman, A. 2004. Social Research Methods (2$^{nd}$ Edition.) Oxford University Press. Oxford

Burt, B. 1994. Land in Kwara'ae and Development in Solomon Islands. *Oceania 64* (publisher unknown) (online) Massey University database: http://kea.massey.ac.nz/search/](Accessed: 21.12.06)

Cardoso, F.H and Faletto, E. 1979. Dependency and Development in Latin America. University of California Press, Berkeley.

Castle, N., E.2003. The Social Capital Paradigm: Bridging across Disciplines-An overview. *American Journal of Agricultural Economics 85 No. 5: 1208-1210.* American Agricultural Economics Association.

Central Malaita Credit Union, 2007 (unpublished information)

Central Malaita Development Trust Agency Profile (CMDTA) (undated) (Unpublished)

Cernea M., M. (Ed.). 1985. Putting People First: Sociological Variables in Rural Development. Oxford University, New York.

Chambers, R. 1983. Rural Development: Putting the Last First. Longman, London.

Chemers, M., M. 1997. An Integrative Theory of Leadership. Lawrence Erlbaum Associates, Mahwah, New Jersey.

Chilcote, H., R. 1984. Theories of Development and Under-development. Westview Press, Boulder and London.

Cochrane, G.1970. Big Men and Cargo Cults. Clarendon Press, Oxford.

Corris, P.1973. Passage, Port and Plantation: A History of Solomon Islands Labour Migration 1870-1914.Melbourne University Press, Australia.

Countries of the World, Gross National Product (GNP) Distribution, 2005 (online) http://www.studentsoftheworld.info/infopays/rank/PNB2.html (accessed: 19.10.07)

Cowen, P., M and Shenton, W., R.1996. Doctrines of Development. Routledge, London.

Durlauf, N., S. 2002. On the Empirics of Social Capital. *Economic Journal. 112 (November) F459-F479*

*Economy of India* (online) http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/economy_of_India (accessed: 23.12.07)

Emaranda, K., E.1974. Lau, Malaita: "A Women is an Alien Spirit". In Mathiasson, J., C. *Many Sisters: Women in Cross-cultural Perspective*. Free Press, New York.

Fairholm, W., G. 1994. Leadership and the Culture of Trust. Praeger, Westport Connecticut.

Falk, I., and Kilpatrick, S. 2000. What is Social Capital? A study of Interaction in a Rural Community. *Sociologia Ruralis Vol 40, No 1*. pp 88-110. Blackwell Publishers. (Online) http://www.blackwell-synergy.com/links/doi/10.1111/1467-9523.00133 (accessed: 20.12.06)

Fono, F. 2007. A Perspective on Constituency Development in Solomon Islands. *Pacific Economic Bulletin. Vol. 22, No 2. 2007*. Asia Pacific Press.

Foundation of the Peoples of the South Pacific International (FSPI) Governance Programme (undated) (online) http://www.fspi.org.fj (accessed: 4.9.07).

Frank, A., G. 1971. Capitalism and Underdevelopment in Latin America. Penguin, Harmondsworth

Frank, A., G.1969 (reprinted, 1992). The Development of Underdevelopment. In Wilbur, C.K and Jameson, K.P (Eds.) *The Political Economy of Development and Underdevelopment (5$^{th}$ Edition)*.McGraw-Hill, New York, 119-150.

Friedmann, J. 1992. Empowerment: The Politics of Alternative Development. Blackwell, Cambridge.

Gagahe, K., N. 2000. The Process of Internal Movement in Solomon Islands: The Case of Malaita, 1978-1986. *Asia-Pacific Population Journal vol.15 (2)*. *Pp 53-75*. ESCAP, Bangkok.

Gegeo, D., W. 1994. *Kastom* and *Bisnis*: Toward Integrating Cultural Knowledge into Rural Development in the Solomon Islands. (Unpublished PhD dissertation). University of Hawaii, Hawaii.

Gegeo, W., D. and Watson-Gegeo A., K.2002. Whose Knowledge? Epistemological Collisions in Solomon Islands Community Development. *The Contemporary Pacific vol.14 No.2 (Fall 2002) 377-409*. University of Hawaii Press, Hawaii.

Geoffrey, M., W., and Lindstrom, L (Ed.). 1997. Chiefs Today: Traditional Leadership in the Postcolonial State. Stanford University Press, Stanford.

Goldman, I.1970. Ancient Polynesian society. The University of Chicago Press, Chicago and London.

Goulet, D.1971.The Cruel Choice: A New Concept in the Theory of Development. Atheneum, New York.

Gran, G. 1983. Development by People. Citizen Construction of a Just World. Praeger Publishers, New York.

Hassall, G.2005. Resources and Conflict in the Asia Pacific Region. Conflict in the Pacific: Challenge for Governance. *Pacific Economic Bulletin vol.20 No.1 May 2005.Asia Pacific Press.pp192-99*

Hogbin, H, I.,P. 1964. A Guadalcanal Society: The Kaoka Speakers. Holt Rinehart and Winston, New York.

Hollander, P W. 1978. Leadership Dynamics: A Practical Guide to Effective Relationships. The Free Press, New York.

Household Income and Expenditure Survey 2005/6. Provincial Report. (Part Two). Solomon Islands Statistic Office, Department of Finance and Treasury, September-, 2006. Honiara.

Hulme, D. and Turner, M., M.1990. Sociology and Development. Theories, Policies and Practice. Harvester Wheatsheaf, New York.

Ife, J. 2002. Community Development. Community Based Alternatives in an Age of Globalization (2nd Edition.) Pearson Education Australia Pty Ltd, Australia.

International Federation of Red Cross (IFRC), 2005. Solomon Islands: From Risk Assessment to Community Actions. Geneva.

Kabutaulaka, T., T.2000. Beyond Ethnicity: Understanding the Crisis in the Solomon Islands'. *Pacific News Bulletin, May.*

Kabutaulaka, T., T1998. Deforestation and Politics in Solomon Islands. In Lamour, P (Eds.) 1998, *Governance and Reform in the South Pacific*. National Centre for Development Studies Research School of Pacific Studies and Asian Studies, Australian National University, Canberra.

Keesing, R., M. 1977. *Ta'ageni*: Women's perspective on Kwaio Society. In Strathern, M (Ed.) 1977. *Dealing with inequality: Analyzing gender relations in Melanesia and beyond*. Cambridge University Press, Cambridge. Pp33-62.

Kilpatrick, S., and Johns, S. (undated). Leadership for Rural School-Community partnership. University of Tasmania. Australia.

Kilpatrick, S., Falk, I., and Johns, S. (undated). Leadership for Dynamic Learning Communities. University of Tasmania, Australia.

Kirch, V., P.1984. The Evolution of the Polynesian Chiefdoms. Cambridge University Press, London.

Kirk, P and Shutte, A., M. 2004. Community Leadership Development. *Community Development Journal 39 (3): 234-251*. Oxford University Press.

Kotter, P., J. 1996. Leading Change. Harvard Business School Press, Boston.

Krathwohl, R., D. 1993. Methods of Educational and Social Science Research: An Integrative Approach. Longman, New York.

Kwalu, A., R. 2002. *Status of Women in East Kwara'ae. Report based on Needs Assessment Workshop-Nafinua Village, East Kwara'ae, 28* Nov 2002 (unpublished Report).

Lamour, P.1998. Introduction. In Lamour, P (Ed.).1998. *Governance and Reform in the South Pacific.* State Society and Governance in Melanesia. NCDS Research School of Pacific and Asian Studies, Pacific Policy Paper 23. ANU, Canberra. Pp1-20.

Lassey, R. W and Sashkin, M. 1983. Dimensions of Leadership. In Lassey and Sashkin (Eds.) *Leadership and social change (3rd Edition).* University associates, California.

Laverack, G. 2001. An Identification and Interpretation of Organizational Aspects of Community Empowerment. *Oxford University Press* and *Community Development Journal vol.36, No.2 April 2001. Pp134-145.*

Lerner, D. 1958. The Passing of the Traditional Society: Modernizing the Middle East. Free press, Glencoe, Ill.

Liloqula, R.2000. Understanding the Conflict in Solomon Islands as a Practical means to Peacemaking. *Development Bulletin 53 November, pp 41-3*

Lindstrom, L. 1984 Doctor, Lawyer, Wise, Priest: Big-Men and Knowledge in Melanesia. *Man, New Series, Vol.19, No.2. (Jun., 1984), pp.291-309*

Lincoln, S Y and Guba, G, E. 1985. Naturalistic Enquiry. Sage Publications, Beverly Hills

Maenu'u., P., L. 1981. *'Bib-kami na 'ano':* Land and Land problems in Kwara'ae. USP Center, Honiara.

Maetala, R.2007. Matrilineal Land Tenure Systems in Solomon Islands: The Cases of Guadalcanal, Makira and Isabel Provinces. Honiara, Solomon Islands. (Draft copy)

Malaita District Annual Report.1955. (Publisher unknown)

Malaita Provincial Government. 2006. *Iumi Tugeta Bildim Malaita*: Malaita Province Strategic Plan 2007-2017. Malaita Province, Solomon Islands.

Merriam, B., S. 1988. Case-study Research in Education: A Qualitative Approach. Jossey-Bass Publishers, San Francisco.

Miles, B., M and Huberman, M., A.1984. Qualitative Data Analysis: A Sourcebook of new Methods. Sage Publications, Beverly Hills.

Mohan, G., and Stokke, C. 2000. Participatory Development and Empowerment: The dangers of Localism. *Third World Quarterly Vol. 21, No2. pp 247-268.*

Monberg, T. 1996. The Bellonese: High, Low-and equal: Leadership and Change on a Polynesia Outlier in Solomon Islands. In Feinberg, R., and Waston-Gegeo A., K.1996 (editors). *Leadership and Change in the Western Pacific: Essays Presented to Sir Raymond Firth on the occasion of his 90th Birthday*. London School of Economics Monographs on Social Anthropology 66.Athlone Press, London. Pp187-204

Morse, W., S. 2004. Smart Communities. How Citizens and Local Leaders Can Use Strategic Thinking to Build a Brighter Future. Jossey-Bass. San Fransisco.

Narayan and Pritchett, L.1996. Cents and Sociability: Income and Social Capital in Rural Tanzania. Policy Research Paper 1796.World Bank, Washington, D.C.

Nash, J 1977. Gender Attributes and Inequality: Men's Strength and Women's Talk among the Nagovisi. In Strathern, M (Ed.). 1977. *Dealing with Inequality: Analyzing Gender Relations in Melanesia and Beyond.* Cambridge University Press, Cambridge. Pp150-173.

Nerfin, M.1977. *Another Development: Approaches and Strategies*. The Dag Hammarskjöld Foundation, Uppsala.

Northouse, P., G. 2001. Leadership: Theory and Practice (2nd Edition). Sage Publications.Inc, California.

Ostrom, and Ahn, K., T (Eds.). 2003. Foundations of Social Capital. Eward Elgar, UK.

Otter, M. 2002. Development Planning for a Divided Society in a Failed State: the Case of Solomon Islands. *Development Bulletin 60*

Paia, L.2003. The Politics of Rural Development in Solomon Islands: A Case study of Constituency Development Fund (CDF) in West Makira Constituency (WMC). (Unpublished MA in Development Studies thesis) USP, Suva.

Parsons, T.1971. The Systems of Modern Societies. Prentice-Hall, Englewood Cliffs, New Jersey.

Patton, Q. M. 1990. Qualitative Evaluation and Research Methods (2nd Edition.). Sage Publications, California.

Plange, N.1996. The Science of Society. Exploring the Links between Science, Ideology and Theories of Development. Fiji Institute of Applied Studies in Association with the Department of Sociology, University of the South Pacific, Suva, Fiji.

Pollard, A., A. 2000. *Givers of Wisdom, Labourers without Gain. Essays on Women in the Solomon Islands*. Institute of Pacific Studies, The University of the South Pacific and the University of the South Pacific Centre in Solomon Islands, Suva/Honiara.

Popper, M. 2004. Leadership as Relationship. *Journal for Theory of Social Behavior 34 (2)*. Blackwell Publishing, Oxford.

Richardson, M. 1999. Community Governance: Resource Kit. Christchurch City Council, New Zealand. (Online) http//www.google.com/search?hl=en&lr=&q=%22clarke%22+%22Community+Governance+Community%22 (accessed: 21st.11.2006)

Robbins S., P., Millet B., Waters-Marsh T. (Eds.). 2004. Organizational Behaviour (4th Ed). Pearson, NSW.

Rostow, W. W. 1966. The Sages of Economic Growth: A Non-Communist Manifesto'. Cambridge University Press, Cambridgeshire.

Roughan, J.2006. *Strengthening the quality of village life* (Online) http://www.solomonstarnews.com/?q=node/10971) (Accessed: 19. 10.06)

Sahlins, D., M. 1969. Poor Man, Rich Man, Big-man, Chief: Political Types in Melanesia and Polynesia. *Comparative Studies in Societies and History, Vol., 5 No.3 [Apr., 1963], pp285-303.*

Sanga, F., K. and Walker, K., D. 2005. '*Apem Moa' Solomon Islands Leadership*. He Parekereke, Institute for Research and Development in Maori and Pacific, Wellington.

Sanga, F., K. 2005. Pacific *Leadership: hopeful and hoping!* Address to the University of the South Pacific- NZAID Regional Symposium on Pacific Leadership, 7-9 July 2005, Suva, Fiji.

Sanga, J., W .2007. Land Ownership. (Unpublished paper on Land and Development in East-Kwara'ae Constituency).

Sanga, J., W. 2001. An Initial Evaluation of the Solomon Islands Regional Development Policy. (Unpublished MA Public Policy) Victoria University of Wellington, NZ.

Scales, A., I. 2005**.** State and Local Governance in the Solomon Islands: Building on the Existing Strengths. *Pacific Economic Bulletin, 20(2): 140-7*

Scales, I and Teakeni, J. 2006. Election of Women in Solomon Islands: The Case for a Local Governance Approach. *The Journal of Pacific Studies, vol., 29, No.1. May 2006. Pp 67-84*. USP, Fiji.

Scales, I. 2003a. *Solomon Islands up-date: Crisis and Intervention. Seizing the Policy Initiatives for Governance in Solomon Islands*. Presented by the State, Society and Governance in Melanesia Project.  RSPAS and Pacific Policy Project, APSEG.

Scales, I. 2003b. Youth in Solomon Islands: a Participatory Study of Issues, Needs and Priorities. Final Report. Hassall and Associates, Australia.

Scheyvens, A., R. 2003.   Church Women's Groups and the Empowerment of Women in Solomon Islands. (online) http://findarticles.com/p/articles/mi_qa3654/is_n9277434 (accessed: 20.12.06)

Schoeffel, P and Turner, M. 2003. Local Level Governance in the Pacific. *State Society and Governance in Melanesia discussion paper 2003/7*. Research School of Pacific and Asian Studies. ANU, Canberra.

Senge, M., P. 1990. The Fifth Discipline. The Art and Practice of the Learning Organization. Random House, Australia.

Shuster, D., Lamour, P., and von Strokirch, K (Eds.). 1998. Leadership in the Pacific Islands: Tradition and the Future. National Centre for Development Studies, Research School of Pacific and Asian Studies, The Australian National University, Canberra.

Situational Leadership Theory
(online) http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Situational_leadership_theory (accessed: 6 .10.07)

Solomon Islands: Sixth Development Plan 1971-1973. Honiara, Solomon Islands.

Solomon Islands Broadcasting Corporation (SIBC) *World Bank Approves Millions of Dollars for Agriculture and Rural Development Strategy* (online) sibcnewsonline.com.sb (accessed: 12.09.07)

Solomon Islands National Development Plan (SINDP) 1975-1979, Vol. 1, 2 and 3, Central Planning Office, Office of the Chief Minister, Honiara.

Solomon Islands National Development Plan (SINDP) 1980-1984 Vol. 1, 2 and 3. Central Planning Office, Honiara.

Solomon Island National Development Plan (SINDP) 1985-1989, Central Planning, Honiara

Solomon Islands Government, 2002. Solomon Islands Human Development Report-Building a Nation, Volume 1. Main Report.

Solomon Islands Government, Department of National Planning (SIGDNP), 2006. Solomon Islands Agriculture and Rural Development Strategy (ADRS): Building Local Foundations for Rural Development (Draft Discussions). Department of National Planning and Aid Coordination with Support from AusAid, the European Commission and the World Bank.

Solomon Islands Human Development Report 2002: Building a Nation (vol.1) Main Report. Government of Solomon Islands

Solomon Islands Statistics Office, 1999. Report on the 1999 Population and Housing Census: Analysis. Solomon Islands Government, Honiara.

Solomon Islands Statistics Office, 1999. Report on the 1999 Population and Housing Census: Basic Tables and Census Description. Solomon Islands Government, Honiara.

Solomon Star News , issues 236 (25.5. 06): 4. *"Government focuses on rural areas"*.

Solomon Star News*, "Cattle Project" (online)* http://www.solomonstarnews.com/?q=node/15316 (accessed: 18.9.07)

Solomon Star. *"New Minister Pledges to take up Challenges"* (Online) http://www.solomonstarnews.com/?q=node/15342 (Accessed: 19. 09. '07)

Sorensen, T and Epps, R. 1996. Leadership and Local Development; Dimensions of Leadership in four Central Queensland Towns. *Journal of Rural Studies Vol. 12 No. 2* pp 113-125. (Online Massey University database) http://kea.massey.ac.nz (accessed: 21st.11.06).

Stark, N. (Undated). Effective Rural Governance, What is it? Does it matter? Rural Governance Initiative. (Publisher unknown)

Stogdill M., R. 1974. Handbook of Leadership: A Survey of Theory and Research. New York: Free Press.

Stöhr, W., and Taylor, D., R (Eds.). 1981. Development from Above or Below? The Dialects of Regional Planning in Developing Countries. John Wiley and Sons, Chichester.

Sullivan, H., Downe J., Entwistle, T., and Sweeting, D. 2006. The Three Challenges of Community Leadership. *Local Government Studies Vol., 32 No. 4*, 489-508. Routledge Taylor and Francis Group. (Online) http://taylorandfrancis.metapress.com (accessed: 21st 11.06).

Swanson, E., L.1996. Social Infrastructure and Economic Development. In Rowley, D., T and Sears, W., D (eds.) 1996. *Rural development research: A Foundation for Policy*. Greenwood Press, Westport.

Tara, T., K. 1990. A Social-political Pressure Group: A study of the Moro Movement of Guadalcanal. *O'o, A journal of Solomon Islands Studies Vol.2 (2). Pp 42-62.* USP center, Honiara.

The Central Kwara'ae Congress Constitution, 2004. (Unpublished)

The Central Kwara'ae Constituency Report, December 2001-December 2005. 2005. (Unpublished)

Timmer, V. 2004. Community-based Conservation and Leadership: Framework for Analyzing the Equator Initiative. *CID Graduate Student Working Paper No.2.* Cambridge, MA: Science, Environment and Development Group, Center for International Development, Harvard University. (Online) http://www.cid.harvard.edu/cidwp/grad/002.htm. (Accessed: 15. 10.06).

Todaro P., M. 1992. Economics for a Developing World: An introduction to principles, problems and policies for development (3rd Edition.). Longman, London and New York.

Tryon, T., D and Hackman, D., B.1983. Solomon Islands Languages: An Internal Classification. Pacific Linguistics-Series No.72. Department of Linguistics, Research School of Pacific Studies. The Australian National University, Canberra.

United Nations Development Programme Human Development Report 1996. Economic Growth and Human Development: Overview (online) http://hdr.undp.org/reports/global/1996/en/pdf/hdr_1996_overview.pdf (accessed: 19.10.07)

University of the South Pacific- Pacific Institute of Advanced Studies in Development and Governance Leadership Programme (Online) www.governance.usp.ac.fj/project_networks/leadership (accessed: 20. 9.07)

Wairiu, M., and Tabo, S. 2003. Assessing Community Perspectives on Governance in Solomon Islands. *RETA 6065, Assessing Community Governance Perspectives on Governance in the Pacific, a Report for ADB*. Environmental Actions Network of Solomon Islands (ICANSI), Honiara.

Wallerstein, I. 2004. World-Systems Analysis: An Introduction. Duke University Press, Durham and London.

Walsh, C. 2005. TERS: The Essential Research Skills. Amokura Publications, Suva.

Warner, W., J. 2004. Leadership for Regional Economic Development. (Unpublished Master of Business (Research)). Division of Business and Enterprise. University of South Australia.

White, M., G. 1997. The Discourse of Chiefs. Notes on a Melanesian Society. In White, M., G and Lindstrom, L.1997. *Chief Today: Traditional Leadership and the Post Colonial* State. Stanford University Press, California, pp229-252.

White, M., G and Lindstrom, L.1997 (editors). Introduction. Chiefs Today. *In Chief Today. Traditional Leadership and the Post Colonial State*. Stanford University Press, California, pp1-18

Whiteman, L., D. 1983. Melanesians and Missionaries. An Ethno-historical Study of Social and Religious Change in the Southwest Pacific. William Carey, Pasadena, CA.

Woolcock, M. 1998. Social Capital and Economic Development: Toward a Theoretical Synthesis and Policy Framework. *Theory and Society 27*. pp 151-208. Kluwer Academic Publishers, Netherlands. (Online) http://www.springerlink.com.ezproxy.massey.ac.nz/content/rj58534767m2j644/fulltext.pdf (accessed: 20.12.06).

Yin, K., R. 1994. Case Study Research: Design and Methods (2nd Edition). Sage Publication, Thousand Oaks.

Yukl, A., G. 1981. Leadership in Organizations. Prince-Hall, New Jersey

# APPENDIX A

# THE RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

## Introduction

This section will describe in detail the research (methodological and philosophical) assumptions and methods used in this study. The first part of this chapter discusses the two philosophical assumptions about reality and knowledge and the rationale for using the given research methodology. The second part outlines the research methods utilized and the technique used in data analysis.

## Philosophical Assumptions

There is an unresolved argument regarding what 'reality' (ontology) is and what should be seen or accepted as 'knowledge' (epistemology). The argument is based on how these phenomena are measured in the social world. Walsh (2005) identifies two competing inquiry paradigms: one views reality as objective and measurable. Another assumption holds that reality is subjective or socially constructed and that it will not be easily seen as a 'whole'. Patton (1990:37) describes these debates as all opposition between (1) logical-positivism, using quantitative and experimental methods to test "hypothetical-deductive generalizations, versus (2) phenomenological inquiry, which uses qualitative and naturalistic approaches to inductively and holistically understand human experiences in context specific settings".

These assumptions are important to note as they can have an influence on the research methodology. Walsh (2005:89) defines methodology as the "researchers' general position on research purposes, thinking and theory formulation, which result from their philosophy, ontological and epistemological assumptions, disciplinary orientation, and paradigm". Methodologies also influence research design and choices of research methods.

The underlying philosophical assumptions of this research on the nature of reality (ontology) and the nature of knowledge (epistemology) are that, (1) reality is 'socially constructed' (subjective) and reality will always only be partially known and (2) knowledge is created from living within a social environment and experiencing by doing certain activity within this environment.

From this philosophical viewpoint, the local reality and knowledge of the nature of leadership and governance and social relationships at the rural community level in the Solomon Islands is what people socially constructed in their sphere of social existence i.e. within their village communities. What people live with and experiences in their daily existence is therefore accepted as the people's 'reality' and 'knowledge'. In short, this research approaches reality and knowledge from a post-positivist perspective, taking on the paramount objective of qualitative research that is to "understand the *meaning* of an experience" (Merriam, 1988:16). What is important in qualitative research is to understand the depth of meaning of a particular social system. With this philosophical view, the end result of the study was designed to be a 'thick description'. Consequently, direct quotations from the field data are used as expressions of the constructed reality and knowledge of the respondents.

This study is interested in understanding the 'relationship of leadership and good social relationships to rural development in Solomon Islands'. The study is interpretive because it depends on the literature for theoretical background to the research question and also information is gathered from small groups of people in their context through a form of interviews, direct observation and analysis of documents on the phenomena in the research process. It is interested on the function of personal interaction of people within their communities and their perception on the phenomena central to this investigation. The data therefore is collected from a phenomenological point of view.

**Methodology**
As stated this research seeks to understand 'the relationship of leadership and good social relationships to the rural development process in two rural communities in Central

Kwara'ae, Malaita Province'. Consequently this requires an in-depth examination of the two chosen communities for this study. As such case study research strategy is deemed the most suitable for this particular study. Yin (1994:13) notes that case study is an empirical inquiry strategy that "investigates a contemporary phenomenon within its real-life context, especially when the boundaries between phenomenon and context are not clearly evident". The case study method is therefore appropriate for this research because the focus of the research is contextual; that is 'leadership and governance and social relationships' factors within the two rural communities are to be studied within their social context of occurrences.

Secondly, a case study strategy is suitable for a particular study depending on the research question posed within a proposed study. Yin (1994:1) notes that generally, case studies are preferred strategy when "how" or "why" questions are being posed. Therefore, it is believed that the case study strategy is appropriate in answering the research objectives outlined in Chapter 1.

Merriam (1988) similarly notes that the decision to use case study as a research strategy is based on three vital considerations. She identifies these factors as "the nature of the research question, the amount of control on the variables in the case and the desired end product- that is a holistic, intensive description and an interpretation of a contemporary phenomenon" (ibid: 9). These vital considerations are taken note of by the researcher in adopting a case study approach in this research. The research questions are designed to capture 'how' leadership as a process and social relationships of people is demonstrated in two rural communities and 'what' effect(s) these factors have on the overall development process of these communities. The researcher cannot control how leadership or (good) social relationships are demonstrated; therefore the research will rely on the 'perception' of the people who interact and being affected by these factors within their communities. Consequently, the end result of this study is intensive descriptions of the views of the community people on this process.

Thirdly a case study approach was used because the phenomenon under study could be seen as what Smith (cited in Merriam, 1988: 9) called a "bounded system" or "interpretation in context" as described by Cronbach (1975, cited in Merriam, 1988:10). In this research, two rural communities in Central Kwara'ae Constituency on Malaita Province are seen as single phenomenon or entity ('the case') in this research, qualifying the use of the case study as a research strategy.

**The Case Study**

Krathwohl (1993) notes that case studies are bounded by a particular programme, time period, or set of events or institution. The focus of the case is described in relation to the context surrounding it.

According to Merriam (1988:11-13) four characteristics are essential in describing a case study:

- Particularistic: the case study's focus is on a particular situation, event, program, or phenomenon. Case study concentrates attention on a particular group of people who confront specific problems. It takes a holistic view of the case under scrutiny.
- Descriptive: the end product of a case study is a rich 'thick' description of the incident or entity being investigated- a literal description of a situation or incident or entity being investigated.
- Heuristic: the case study makes clear to a reader the phenomenon under study. It brings about discovery of meaning, extends the reader's experience, or confirms what is known.
- Inductive: the case study relies on inductive reasoning; as such " discovery of new relationships, concepts, and understanding, rather than verification or predetermined hypothesis, characterizes qualitative case studies" (p.13)

The four characteristics outlined above were applicable in this particular study. This study is *particularistic* as it focused on two rural communities as areas of the field research focus. It was developed from data which was collected with a holistic view of

how rural communities demonstrate 'leadership and governance' and view social relationships and their influences on the development process within their social environment. As most qualitative case studies' end products are rich description of the phenomenon under study, this research was also designed to achieve such an end. The research result therefore, is a *'thick description'* of leadership and governance characteristics, processes and structures of the communities in this study. The study is *heuristic* in the sense that it illuminates the phenomena of leadership and governance and social relationship processes and/or factors in development within the communities studied. The findings were then discussed in relation to the existing literature. This study was *inductive* as it tried to discover new social relationships and understandings rather than seeking to confirm relationships from a predetermined hypothesis.

## Research Methods

Yin (1994) identifies six sources from which qualitative case studies may collect evidence. They are: documents, archival records, interviews, direct observation, participant observation and physical artifacts. A good case study therefore would use several sources as outlined above. He notes that the most important advantage presented by using multiple sources of evidence is that lines of inquiry converge at a certain point allowing a researcher to check for validity of information; a process known as triangulation. Yin adds that this allows the researcher to address "a broader range of the historical, attitudinal and behavioral issues" (ibid: 92) that are related to the case under study. This research utilized the following research methods to collect evidence:

## Interview data

Interviews are essential sources of case study as most case studies deal with human factors. Yin (1994:85) notes that "human affairs should be interpreted through the eyes of specific interviewees, and well-informed respondents can provide important insights into a situation". One of the main reasons of selecting interviews as the main data collection technique was to collect 'rich data' on the phenomenon under study and that its flexibility makes it suitable for this study. The research questions were used to formulate an interview guide which was used by both the researcher and research assistants.

In order to maximize opportunities for the researcher to gather information through the eyes of the respondents, open-ended interviews were adopted. According to Yin (1994), open-ended interview is where key respondents or more precisely informants are asked for factors of the matter of investigation and their opinion about events or insights into certain occurrences. Two groups did the interviews for this study. The first group consists of four (4) local research assistants who were selected for the work. The researcher carried out the second set of interviews.

A pilot study was done between December 2006 and January 2007. At this time, open-ended interview questionnaires were tested with several people at Radefasu and Kilusakwalo communities. Field questions were slightly refined for clarity and simplicity for understanding after the pilot study. The final data collection and field administration processes was carried out between May and June 2007.

Field research assistants were identified during the pilot study period. The basic qualifications for being a research assistant were: long time community worker either in youth, school or women's organization, a high school leaver's certificate and willingness to work odd hours. The assumption was that people with such background would quickly understand the purpose of the research and work effectively on the field. The four research assistants selected according to the criteria were two (2) local school teachers and two (2) community youth workers who have had some basic trainings and took part in basic community social research in the past. The key terms and concepts in the questions were translated in to the local Kwara'ae dialect with help of the research assistants. This allows for a common understanding of the key terms and concept when carrying out interviews.

Open-ended questionnaire used in this study was framed in three parts. First, questions gauge the general perception of the community people on the nature of leadership in a community-wide development process. Secondly, questions asked about the nature of leadership within specific development initiatives in the communities, namely two community high schools, a micro-finance institution and a community health center.

Thirdly, respondents were asked to make assessment of the effectiveness of the governing structures of these initiatives. This was aimed at gauging the views of the respondents on how relevant these governance models were in their community development processes with a particular focus on their views on community participation in these structures and social relationships demonstrated within these initiatives from the community-wide development view. The research assistants used a single set of open-ended questionnaires for interviews in both communities (see Appendix A). All the interviews were hand written as there was only one tape-recorder used by the researcher. Assistants were asked to go over written interviews as soon as interviews were over to check for clarifications on issues raised in the interview sessions. A couple of the people interviewed by the assistants were re-interviewed by the researcher to check for credibility of the written data. They proved to be consistent in their content.

The four research assistants completed a total of eighteen (18) household interviews. Eight (8) were completed for KC and ten (10) for RC. The sample selection in this process was 'simple random' sampling using a village household list to identify households/community person to be interviewed by the research assistants.

The researcher did the second sets of interviews. Eight interview sessions were held at RC between May 30 and June 20, 2007. Of these eight, two were chairmen respectively of the local school and the community health centre. Two others were members of initiative boards and one community youth worker and the principal of the local school. Two women leaders were also included.

A focus group interview was also held at RC. Eight (8) participants attended this session. This group comprised of two (2 women) teachers from the community school, three (2 women and 1 man) from the church youth group and three (3 men) community youth worker. The session lasted for about three and half hours. The session was guided by three questions designed in relation to the research problem. The participants were asked to make an analysis of their village's strengths and weaknesses in terms of the resources they think are available or otherwise in their community. Secondly, attendants were

guided to reflect on the future they aspired to have and how they would achieve it. Thirdly, respondents were asked to identify means to solving some of their identified development weaknesses and challenges. After completing this process, participants were asked to asses and share their view on the effects of leadership and social relationships in the context of their community and constituency development process. This focus group process was designed to allow participants to recall the events and general behavior of their community leaders in the recent past towards development in their community as well as that at the constituency level. Krathwohl (1993) points out that focus group interviewing can be 'messy' and facilitator may not easily control the discussions. This problem was contained by separating the participants into their distinctive groups i.e. school teachers, youth workers and church representatives to discuss issues and then later on presented what the smaller groups have discussed. This also allows the researcher to collect an 'organized data' which can be analyzed later on. Both written notes and tape-recorded information from these discussions were collected and analyzed with the interview data.

At KC, the researcher completed seven in-depth interviews between May 14 -29 with people responsible for the development initiatives namely the local school and the micro-finance center. The respondents are: the local coordinator and the chairperson of the micro finance center; the chairperson of the local school board; the principal of the local school; a board member in micro finance center; a board member of the school; and two women community leaders and members of the initiatives themselves.

In both communities all interviews were voluntary, and administered by the researcher following the interview guide. The sessions were held mostly in the late afternoons or in the evenings with those who were living in the village. Interviews with other stakeholders i.e. school teachers/principals took place during their lunch hour. The interviews were taped recorded with the consent of the informant being sought before doing so. Interviews range from thirty minutes to an hour and a half.  All interviews were done in pidgin except when concepts and terms need to be related or translated to the local dialect. In the latter case, a research assistant helped to relate the concepts in the local

dialect. The collected data were transcribed with the help of a local transcriber where local concepts or terms were used by some respondents. In such case the researcher tries to keep the original meaning of the word or term.

The technique used in the study for selecting interviewees in this group was 'snow-ball sampling'. Patton (1990) noted that this approach is used in cases where locating information-rich key informants or "critical cases" is necessary. Bryman (2004) however pointed out the downside of this technique in that it may be unlikely that the sample will be representative of the population. However, the technique was deemed appropriate because of the nature of the problem under investigation, i.e. leaders and the roles they play in relation to development at the community level. This sort of information may not be identifiable by an outsider but rather by the community people themselves. Because leaders were assumed to be identifiable by their own community people, the first contacts were used to make recommendations on whom next to be interviewed. The first people interviewed were deemed to be leaders in their community and these respondents become the key informants. It was from these individuals that the snowballing process started. The sample size increases as one interviewee recommends another and so on. Most of the key people in the development initiatives taken as cases in this study were identified through this process.  In KC, three informants namely, the coordinator of the micro-finance center, the principal of the community high school and a community women leader were the first contacts in the process. At RC two people were used as first contacts. They were the principal of the local school and a board member of the community health center.

An incident of re-interviewing also occurred at KC where a household that was sampled under the simple random sampling group interviewed by the research assistants was also recommended for interviews through the snow balling process. In this case the researcher re-interviewed this person and supplemented the data collected by the research assistant but were recorded as 'researcher's 'interviews and not the 'assistants' interview data. In this particular case, the respondent was most willing to be re-interviewed.

Two development agencies in Auki were also included in the interview data collection process. They were: Save the Children and the Community Sector Programme, an AusAid funded community development programme. These two institutions were chosen because of their long time affiliation with the surrounding communities in their development programmes. Several informal conversations were also held at Auki with several people at the provincial government and people from other villages in Central Kwara'ae.

A final point to take note of with relation to interview data presented in Chapter 5 and 6 . In Chapter 5 and 6 some of the evidence were referenced as 'personal communications'. This implies two things: (1) that the researcher after an in-dept interview converses with the particular interviewee in a particular area that needs clarifications and (2) that during informal conversations with villagers, a particular point was raised in relation to the area of interest and its was accepted on the grounds that the researcher has seen relevant to be included as research evidences for the study.

**Documentary data**

Yin (1994) lists documents as letters, memoranda, minute of meetings, reports, newspapers and articles appear in the media and the like. He points out that documents should not necessary be accepted as literal recordings of events that have taken place but should be used only to "corroborate and augment evidence from other sources" (ibid: 81). This is because as Patton (1990) identifies documents may be subject to errors and they may be incomplete and inaccurate. He adds that sometimes only certain aspects that the person who makes the documentation wants to include in the report will be made (e.g. positive aspect). The contents can be highly varied with some having great details while others may not be so. He concludes that documents may not be produced for research purposes, and one must be careful about using them.

However, Patton (1990) points out that documents are 'behind-the-scene' information which may not be available through observation and interviews. They can also form the basis for investigation with the authorities. In this study for example, historical data was

helpful in providing background information on the development of the specific initiatives investigated. The researcher has taken note of these warnings in that documents used in this paper are critically analyzed for their relevance to the research problem. Most documents obtained for the research are used as background information to the development initiatives in the two communities.

Documents used in the study included forms of data not gathered from interviews and personal observations such as 'Central Kwara'ae Constituency development reports', 'Malaita Province development reports', 'local schools minutes of meetings', 'newspaper articles' and 'relevant internet documents. These were used to supplement the material gathered in the interview. The researcher collected most of these documents during the fieldwork from the communities. Others were collected over the course of the research.

**Table 1: Respondents and Participants by position**

| Position in community | Male | Female | Total |
|---|---|---|---|
| Chairpersons/coordinators of community Initiatives | 4 | | 4 |
| Members of Initiatives | 4 | 1 | 5 |
| Teacher/principals | 2 | 2 | 4 |
| Pastors/catechist* | 1 | | 1 |
| Village chiefs* | 2 | | 2 |
| Member of landowning groups* | 2 | | 2 |
| Church worker | 1 | 2 | 3 |
| Youth worker | 3 | | 3 |
| Women Initiatives/groups | | 3 | 3 |
| Ordinary villager/respondent | 6 | | 6 |
| **TOTAL** | **25** | **8** | **33** |

---

* Note that some community leaders were interviewed by the Research Assistants such as the village chiefs/pastor/landowning members. Note too that couple of leaders held more than one leadership roles or relate to more than one of the groups outlined in table above; therefore they shared their insights from

**Direct observation**

Paton (1990) identifies data from observation as consisting of "detailed descriptions of people's activities, behaviors, actions, and the range of interpersonal interactions and organizational processes that are part of observational human experience" (p.10). New dimensions in understanding the context or the phenomenon being studied are believed to be formed through this method (Yin, 1994).

Bryman (2004) points out that one of the problems with studies on social behavior is "how people say they are likely to behave and how they actually behave may be inconsistent" (p.165). Furthermore, he notes that people may mis-remember aspects of the occurrence of certain forms of behavior. What to observe is determined by several factors. The most important pointed out by Merriam (1988) is "ones' purpose in conducting the study in the first place" (p.89). The research questions in Chapter 1 guided the observations that were carried out in the two communities.

Direct observation was also deemed relevant for this study because the focus was on assessing the social behaviour of a particular social group. In this study observation was done to identify the responses of the community people to community development activities. This was purposely to make corroboration to what respondent in the interviews might say and what they actually do. For example in both communities, many respondents complained about the poor participation of people in community work. The complains were related to how people actually respond to work within the local schools, health center and the micro-finance center. Observation was also done on the community-wide responses to village development activities in general.

The four research assistants were given the task to observe particular areas of interest to the problem of study under the different social groups in the communities. In RC a

---

different responsibilities they held, providing rich information on the problem of investigation in this research. Several informal discussions were also held with local people and their views have contributed to the evidence used in this study. The table therefore serves only as a guideline for the reader on key people interviewed and spoken with during the fieldwork. Informal conversations and observations were also done at Auki with various people from CKC.

research assistant made specific observations on the responses of youth in the community-wide activities and in the school and clinic development work. The second assistant observed the community-wide behavior of community leaders toward development, how they work to organize the community and the responses of community participation in development activities at the school and the clinic. A similar approach was used in KC. The two research assistants carried out this process. Each one was given a logbook and pens for recording purposes. They were engaged from late February to late June 2007.

The second observation data was collected by the researcher between mid May to late June 2007 was also used in the analysis of this study.   Both the research assistants' log records and the researcher's observations were analyzed. The data from the observations were referenced as 'personal observations' in Chapter 6.

'Behavior sampling' was used in the observations. Bryman (2004) notes that in this technique an entire group is watched and the observer records who is involved in a particular kind of behavior. In this research the whole community was taken as the sample in the observation method.

**Data Analysis**

The purpose of qualitative enquiry is to produce findings: the process of data collection is not an end in itself. Consequently, the data must be analyzed, interpreted and the findings presented for some sense to be made of the data captured through the fieldwork (Patton, 1990). However, analyzing the complexity of the evidence captured through the research methods is difficult in qualitative research. Yin (1994:102) explains that this is, "because qualitative case studies have no solid formulae for social scientist to adopt".   Patton (1990) notes that in this case judgment and creativity must be applied as each case study is unique therefore, the analytical approach used will be also unique. He further notes that; "qualitative analysis ultimately depends on the analytical intellect and style of the analyst" (p.372).

However certain key steps developed do allow for the systematic analysis of data. Miles and Hurberman (1984:21-22) propose three steps or flows of activity in analyzing qualitative data.

- Data reduction: this is the process of selecting, focusing, simplifying, abstracting, and transforming the "raw" data that appear in writing up field notes which is done through out the course of the research lifetime.
- Data display: a researcher needs to organize information so as to allow for conclusion drawing and action to be taken throughout the course of the research.
- Conclusion drawing/verification: From the beginning of the research to the end of it, the researcher searches for meanings, noting regularities, patterns, explanations, possible configurations, causal flows, and propositions. These factors must also be tested for their validity.

Data collection and analysis are concurrent processes in qualitative research (Merriam, 1988). As a result, the analysis from the documentary data, interviews and observations were incorporated in this process. The inductive data analysis was done on both the document data and interview data where patterns, themes and categories of analysis emerge from the data. The research objectives in this study form the basis for data analysis with applications following the three-step process suggested by Miles and Hurberman outlined above.

Overall, the two overriding considerations in this study were to make sense of the collected data and report it in an acceptable manner. Consequently, the concerns with trustworthiness and particularly issues of validation, generalizability and ethics will be discussed in the remaining part of this chapter.

**Trustworthiness**

The issue of trustworthiness in qualitative data is problematic as compared to a well-designed quantitative research. This is due to the fact that qualitative research is based on different assumptions about reality (ontology), a different worldview and a different

paradigm (Merriam, 1988). Merriam (ibid: 166) concludes that "in any event, the basic question remains the same: To what extent can the researcher trust the findings of a qualitative case study?" In this study the question of trustworthiness is viewed from a qualitative perspective. The question is perhaps 'how does one view reality?' or 'how does one accept the data, analysis and the findings of the study?' Lincoln and Guba (1985) argue that reality is a multiple set of constructions. They add that the validity or truth of the study rest on the investigator showing that he has represented these multiple constructions adequately. Therefore consistency must be applied from the data collection period through to reporting of the study.

Merriam (1988:166) notes that the validity of a qualitative research deals with how one's "finding match reality". For that matter, the obligation of a qualitative case study researcher is to constantly work to capture and portray the world as it appears to the people in it. How data is collected and its analysis and interpretation is important in looking at the validity of the research. Conclusions of the research must be based on the field data rather than personal interpretations. The data collected must be relevant to the problem and the purpose of the thesis.

According to Merriam (1988:169-70) there are six strategies that can be used to check validity (i) triangulation, (ii) checks, (iii) long-term observation, (iv) peer examination, (v) participatory/ collaborative models of research and (vi) the researcher's biases.

In order to increase validity this study 'triangulated' data by using different types of data collection methods (i.e. interviews, documentary, and observation). In that way flaws of one method can be tested from another angle. In this study the data collected from the three methods were crosschecked when responses from respondents were in doubt or needed further prove or clarification. Additionally, the researcher engaged local research assistants in a 5-month observation period (Feb- June 2007) which for this study was categorized as long-term observation of the phenomenon under investigation. Questions were designed with the interviewee at mind and kept as simple as possible. The documents used in the data were verified with people of authority in the specified

development initiatives focused on in this study. Interviews were written up just after conducting them so all information was remembered and researcher bias avoided.

Reliability deals with the issue of consistency of results of the study should it replicated. But the notion of reliability is problematic in social science as Merriam (1988) points out essentially because "human behavior is never static". Guba and Lincoln (1985) further support this by proposing side stepping reliability for internal validity, as one cannot achieve reliability without achieving validity at the first place. These authors noted that what a qualitative researcher should towards is for the result to make sense to the particular audience the research is intended for. These issues were taken into consideration by the researcher when designing the research.

Generalization of findings in qualitative studies, let alone case studies is problematic. Patton (1990) relates this to the small sample size which does not allow for case studies to be easily generalized to a larger context. But this problem arises because people tend to view this from a quantitative perspective (Merriam, 1988 and Yin, 1984). Therefore, one may need to re-conceptualize his perspective when examining generalization in qualitative research. In that case as Merriam (ibid) observed "it is the reader who has to ask, what is there in the study that I can apply to my own situation and what clearly does not apply?" (p.177). Therefore in the case study it is up to the reader to apply the findings of the research. The researcher is only presenting the result forming a basis upon which further research can be replicated.

Lincoln and Guba (1985) adds that a case study researcher can improve the generalizability of a qualitative research by providing a thick description so that anyone else interested in transferability has the base of information appropriate to the judgment. The researcher has taken heed of these two latter propositions. Consequently, the findings of this study have been presented as a thick description of the nature of leadership and governance in rural development in two Central Kwara'ae communities of Radefasu and Kilusakwalo.

**Ethics**

Like all research involving humans as subjects, the researcher was attentive to the ethnical manners in which the research was carried out. From data collection to reporting of the data, the researcher was careful about how data was collected and how the information was used. Before interview sessions, the purpose of the research was briefly explained to the respondents. As pointed earlier, the data was obtained from respondents who voluntarily agreed to be interviewed. The interviewees were told of their confidentiality in the reporting of the research. This was displayed by using codes for the interviewees throughout the reporting and analysis section of this research. Taped and written data were also treated as confidential. Finally, a research reference letter was obtained from the supervisor before leaving for the fieldwork. This was presented to community elders of the two communities before initiating the data collection process.

**Summary**

The methodology deemed relevant for the study was a case study approach. The methodology was designed from a philosophical assumption that reality is a socially constructed phenomenon. The data for the study was collected by way of interviews, documents and observations done by both the researcher and local research assistants. The data was analyzed using the three step techniques proposed by Miles and Hurberman (1988). The analyses steps are: data reduction, data display and conclusion drawing/verification. The issue of trustworthiness was also covered. In this case the extent to which the results of the study can be trusted depends on how the researcher works to portray reality throughout the research process. The validity of the research rests on the researcher in the research process from data collection to the reporting of the findings of the study by taking note of the multiple constructions of the phenomenon under scrutiny. This was done through triangulation of data and long-term observation in the two communities. It was also noted that generalizability in qualitative research was for the reader to make and not the researcher as the presenter of the study findings. It is up to the reader to see what is relevant to ones context. Finally, the research was ethically carried out through out the research process.