

meetings should rotate amongst members. This would stimulate the members to concentrate and contribute to the group.

#### **4.7 Problem Identification and Solving**

The problem was basically an outcome of lack of short-term evaluation of group and association activities. The women rarely reviewed their activities. Divergent opinions and views were in most cases ignored or crushed undemocratically. As such submergent feeling burst out in form of low participation and in some cases, resigning from the group. In other cases, women used the presence of “outsiders” as a chance to air their disappointments.

Thus, women were encouraged to promote transparent structures and to evaluate themselves on short-term basis. Openness and dialogue were also encouraged.

#### **4.8 Communication and record keeping**

There was lack of communication within and between groups. Groups and the Area Women Development Association did not communicate. Too much information was withheld at the top whilst those at the grassroots did not communicate with their leaders. This resulted into lack of co-ordination in the area. No one knew what was happening at any time.

For instance, the area women development association was not aware that one of its groups had run for two years without a chairperson. Yet the Area Development Association and the group were located closely to each other. Elections were conducted during the attachment period.

Secondly, record keeping and accountability was poor from the top to the bottom level. No records were kept orally or in written form. As such accountability was poor. Meetings were very infrequent with no record of what the previous meeting was about.

Congregating became necessary only in cases of asking for assistance or organising an outside tour. Even in such cases, only a few individuals would be called upon.

In dealing with this problem, the women were encouraged to promote openness and transparency. This was the only way to facilitate dialogical communication.

#### **4.9 Project Identification and use of local resources**

Women relied heavily on external resources, assistance and initiative. Secondly, their main focus was on high income generating projects. These projects often require external resources.

For instance, several women groups wanted to go into broiler chicken rearing. Their main reason was that there was abundant market for these chickens in Katete. Yet this area does not have electricity. Lamps would require fuel thus they needed money for this. Secondly, these chickens require special feed, medication and warmth. One of the major problems in Kampini is water. Instead, these women could rear the traditional chickens that they already keep. Secondly, these chickens are accustomed to the environment in terms of feed and the weather.

Women were urged to look within their immediate environment when identifying projects. They were also encouraged to promote the use of local resources and reduce on external reliance.

During this programme, it was ensured that the women, themselves, were in the forefront. The students only acted as the facilitators. They only intervened when asked to by the women or to give a suggestion. The adoption of such changes takes time. As such no results could be concluded upon by the end of the attachment.

## **CHAPTER FIVE**

### **DISCUSSION**

#### **5.1 Introduction**

This chapter is an analysis on the Kampini Women Development Association (KADWA) in relation to sustainable development. It gives brief general information on KADWA. The chapter is divided into five parts. The first shows the objectives of KADWA and ascertains whether they have been met. The second part looks at the communication structure of KADWA. The third part examines the economic activities and the fourth part reviews the relation between KADWA and external sources. The last component of this section analyses the link between KADWA and the general community.

It aims at establishing the nature and pattern of development strategies pursued by the women association. It also aims at indicating the concerns which arise in examining the effectiveness and sustainability of these strategies. These issues are raised in the context of the on-going concerns of achieving sustainable development.

The discussion stems from the assertion that ultimately, any strategy of sustainable development must seek to satisfy the livelihood goals of participants and to restructure the various aspects of life in such a way as to facilitate the satisfaction of the goals aimed at.

#### **5.2 KADWA meeting its Objectives**

This section provides an assessment of progress towards a particularly long-standing objective of KADWA - "to develop." According to the women, development meant:

- a) the ability to generate income by improving the business of agriculture.
- b) have access to water and transport.
- c) have enough food for their families.
- d) send their children to school and to afford all health services.

These objectives had not been met up the time the attachment ended. It also appeared that there were more constraints than hope to achieving these goals. The women did not seem confident to achieve these goals. The major reason given was lack of finances. They complained that they had not been receiving aid from external agents. Their counterparts in other areas had been given hammermills and had boreholes constructed. Each time KAWDA handed in a project proposal, DWA turned it down claiming that it was not properly written. The women mentioned that they had written proposals on boreholes, hammermills, fertilisers and sawing machines.

(C. Musamba: Personal Communication,1998).

Furthermore, the women explained that they lacked income generating projects that would enable further investments. As a result of insufficient income, they still faced problems in feeding their families, sending their children to school, affording health and transport services.

The women seemed confident that they would prosper if only they could be given finances or came up with lucrative business ventures. The women seemed to attribute most of the problems they faced to lack of money.

It appears that this constraint has hindered a lot of progress in the association. A lot of ideas expressed by women during the attachment could not be realized as long as finances are inadequate. It also seemed that KAWDA's starting point in development was economic. Economic benefits and empowerment appeared to be the main concern of the women. They believed that economic progress would boost development in other aspects of life such as the social and culture.

The four other levels identified are the communication structure of the association, economic activities pursued and the relationship between the association and other organisations.

### **5.3 Communication Structure and Pattern of the Association**

To understand the communication structure of the association, it is imperative to look at its organisational structure. The association is made up of four groups. Administratively, the association is run by seven members, made up of one representative from each group, a treasurer, secretary and chairperson. This executive committee is the link between the groups and the District Women Development Association, which is the mother body of all area associations in each district.

In analysing this structure, the following communication problems were observed:

- a) The executive committee rarely communicated with the women on the group level and on the other hand, it never communicated with the DWDA concerning the groups.
- b) The executive committee decided on behalf of the whole association. This minority group became the basis of prioritizing needs in the association.
- c) In many ways, the executive committee behaves like a watchdog for the ADWA than the groups. The executive committee seemed more familiar with the ADWA than the groups. For instance, the executive committee knew more about ADWA's objectives and history than the groups.
- d) Members were rarely informed of the deliberations of external meetings nor the use of resources at the association's disposal. For instance those "selected" to attend training on Training for Transformation or Training of Trainers rarely gave feedback to those at home. Instead, they became active when visited by the TOT monitoring teams from Chadiza.
- e) There is substantial uncertainty regarding how the election of representatives should be conducted. Evidence showed that most of the executive members were self-imposed. That is, they secured these positions by virtue of being early adopters of the association idea, older age and the possession of better social and economic

status. There was a case where the secretary of ADWA asked her young sister to sit in for her because she got married and moved to Lusaka. It was arranged by the executive committee that this woman should take over each time she came back to Kampini. The same young sister was selected by the executive committee as the literacy instructor, and yet she could hardly read or write. She had been paid for being a literacy instructor. In the same vein, a chairperson of one group insisted that her daughter be chosen to be the community health worker because she was the founder member of the association. The same chairperson was thinking of choosing her daughter to replace her when she retired because no one else fitted.

- e) Poor record keeping at both the group and AWDA levels. As such no follow ups or evaluation could be done.

The main concern here is the communication environment which is poor and lacks participation of the majority in the decision making process. The possible problem could be that the executive committee has actually created a block in the communication channels of the system. The observation has serious repercussions. Firstly, information on the various opportunities open to the women at the grassroot level never reaches them or if it does, it gets there in a distorted form. For instance only a few women were aware of the availability of cement for the toilet project. This was because those who represented the women on the Water and Sanitation Project did not give their fellow women a feedback. On the other hand, the initiators of the project were not aware that the project had failed to take off as planned.

The second problem was that external intervention was usually misdirected because information derived from the grassroot level was misrepresented. For instance, fertiliser had been a priority need for ADWA in regard to Kampini association needs. But the majority of the women in the groups were more concerned with improving water quality and supply.

The third problem was that efforts in improving the association were usually misdirected. For instance ADWA continued dealing with Kampini Area Women Association even when it was almost dissolving at the grassroots level. ADWA was unaware of the numerous organisational and operational problems that the association was facing. A good example was of Tikondane group existing without a chairperson and meetings not taking place for a period of two years.

Lack of a proper communication structure and participation affects the pace and performance of any development organisation. This is because it limits commitment and involvement within the association. The majority of the women do not feel empathetic towards the association since they are deprived of the chance to discuss, debate and express their views about the association. The lack of this power overflows to aspects of implementing that which has been adopted.

It is not a big surprise that several projects have failed to take off or continue. Examples of these projects are: the toilet, tree planting, dish rack and rubbish pit. The majority of the women did not have a say in deciding and planning what was best for the association.

For all these reasons, it is essential to promote forms of communication that not only challenge the monopolistic set-up but also strive to democratize and decentralize them. A basic requirement of the forms is that they should facilitate dialogue.

The requirements of participation are a constant influence on the outcomes in the decision-making process and access to necessary information for women to reach their decisions. Thus in this context, there is need to develop a face-to-face decision-making process in order to evade the inequalities of minority dominance.

It can be concluded that to a large extent, lack of active participation and proper communication systems are the forces at work within the association which make it

exceptionally difficult to focus on the general interests of the association. Therefore, until some measures are undertaken for effective participation of the groups, no view can be formed as to the order of priorities chosen and the appropriateness of the assistance made available to the association.

#### **5.4 Economic Activities and Prospects for Sustainability**

Economic empowerment was the most paramount goal declared by women in the association. This section analyses some of the factors related to the appropriateness and effectiveness of the economic activities pursued by the women as an association. Certain areas already stand out as in need of detailed investigation. A tentative diagnosis and possible solutions to these problems are offered.

To understand the economic problems faced by these women, it is essential to grasp their traditional economic activities. The activities pursued by women are basically agricultural by nature. On an individual level, they grow crops such as maize, groundnuts and small quantities of beans. They also keep livestock such as pigs, goats and chickens.

At the association level, women's efforts are concentrated on growing cotton, sunflower and maize. They also keep pigs. They have embarked on these projects basically to earn and raise their incomes. Apart from these activities, they, sometimes, provide labour for hire in cultivating, weeding and harvesting. These are the most common means of earning a living in Kampini area.

But there are many economic problems associated with these ventures. First, the women complained about lack of inputs such as fertiliser and pesticides. Lack of water was another hindrance. There is lack of proper water irrigation systems. The woman largely depended on the rain season for their farming activities. This limited the agriculture activities to the rain season only.



Also, lack of markets and low prices for these commodities was a great set-back.

Interviews with members of the executive committee revealed that they knew where to get the market for the products. Yet, association members explained that they never knew where and how much was realized from the sales. In the case of lack of markets, these products mysteriously disappeared and no one from the executive committee would give any explanation.

These disincentives mentioned by women are a familiar scenario in agriculture business today, particularly where traders and markets are unregulated, where locally, competition is weak or non-existent. Incentives to produce more are dropped and this closes the circle of low output - high marketing cost - low producer prices - low output. This issue has to be tackled from the angle of diversification and creation of new markets by innovating new demands.

But the problem does not end with the market and price factors. While it can be true that market and price affect any economic business, poor planning, projections and foresight worsen the situation. The student observed during the attachment that no records existed on projects attempted and the results. Secondly, there were no records of past, immediate or future plans. This implied that most of the activities pursued were not planned for. As a development association, women should to be more creative-oriented in business. But for them to succeed in this direction, planning should be seen as an integral component in the association. It is clear that their current business ventures have the following implications:

- a) engaging in a widely grown crop in that specific area
- b) no competition for the products on sale
- c) the products dealt in need special conditions under this unpredictable weather pattern and the nature of the seed (high yielding varieties).
- d) the products depend more on external than internal markets.

In addition to these constraints, the women, both on individual and group levels, lack ownership of productive resources such as land. On the same levels, these women lack assets that would enable them gain access to business services such as credit. This makes continuous investments in the economic ventures an impossibility.

It is worthwhile to explore, briefly the motives and pressures behind this overall practice of promoting cash crops as means of earning income. From the information obtained during the attachment, it seemed women were convinced that their development depended on increases in the income levels. With money, they could improve their living standards. It was common that for any plans that came up, money was the first requirement. Secondly, the women seemed convinced that the money they were looking for was not within the Kampini community but outside such as in Katete.

Indeed, it was observed that very few business transactions took place in Kampini. There was no public market and most of the exchange was on private arrangements between people. The reason might not be principally lack of money and market within the local community but an oversupply of similar products. This makes competition and exchange impossible.

Given these observations, we must look at how to sustain the local conditions so that women can achieve their desired goals. This concern raises the need to expand the concept of income generation. Economic development should not be purely based on agriculture. It should include other means. There is need to maintain and promote local earning possibilities.

The fundamental concern and suggestion here is the need for women to diversity their economic activities. They should engage in both on and off farm activities. Secondly, focusing on the external market brings with it the problems of transport and accessibility of roads.

Under the current situation, women should diversify and initiate “new needs” in the community. For instance, Kampini is currently far from self-sufficiency in food security. This has contributed to the deterioration in the nutritional status of the community. If advances are made in the efficiency of subsistence food production, this would be a source of major benefits such as improved nutrition and reduced insecurity of small farmer livelihoods. If this proves possible, it would facilitate a general rise in the economic benefits. For instance garden vegetables are very rare in Kampini. So if women exploited this and made vigorous campaigns about the importance of these vegetables to health, this could improve on the current limited diet. Dilapidating homesteads were a common feature in Kampini. Women could take up a rehabilitation project by charging for the service rendered. This could be an activity that can go on throughout the year because it is insusceptible to weather, does not require complicated skills and relies on local techniques.

The above concern is closely linked to project identification. At present KAWDA is being encouraged to develop income generating projects. The tendency has been to aim too high. For instance, as at AWDA, the executive was convinced that the most appropriate project it could operate was rearing of broiler chickens. They claimed that these chickens had a market in Katete. KAWDA had even lodged in a proposal to DWDA for finances. Looking at this idea retrospectively, these chickens need special care in terms of warmth, food, water and transportation. All these requirements are impossible to find in Kampini. Why not rear the village chickens which are immune to disease and are adapted to the local conditions.

The fundamental suggestion is that women should adopt an “area development” approach. This should involve integrating and synchronizing of sectors within the local community. This would also be an attempt to redress the imbalance and over-dependence on the conventional agriculture activities.

## 5.5 Relationship with External Agents

KAWDA is linked to various organisations. The most prominent being the government departments of Agriculture, Veterinary, Community Development and the Council. It is also linked to Non-governmental Organisations such as the Lutheran World Federation, KEPA-Zambia, NORAD and the German Volunteer Service. However, these organisations use different strategies in working with the women development association. While the government departments tend to operate directly with the women, most of the Non-Governmental Organisations do so through a central system. That is, they collaborate at the district level through the ADWA.

The analysis of these relationships is done from two perspectives. The first one looks at the relationship from the angle of the association. The second one attempts to analyse the role played by these external agencies in the association.

Historically, locally organised associations have looked up to external agencies as sources of both financial and material support. This is as a result of the previous development approaches which emphasized top-down strategies in development. Indeed, the earliest external agencies in Eastern Province operated a "handout" system. In Kampini, the founders could still remember how those Finnish ladies distributed long strolls of chitenge and cotton material when teaching sewing skills, how money was given to them to buy flour and fertilisers and many other experiences. These expectations are still strong. Women seem to be convinced that the impetus to development is external assistance.

This attitude entrenches dependence on external initiatives, and thus facilitates top-down planning and implementation of development programmes. The women should be encouraged to use more of the local resources and initiatives. For example, it was observed during the attachment that the association rarely used the local human power in solving some of its' concerns. For instance, every woman was affected by the high incidence of diarrhoea cases in the area. The community health worker, who was a

member of the association could be utilised to sensitize the community on preventive measures. Instead the women complained about lack of health facilities and personnel.

Though there is strong evidence that in the early stages of developing such associations, the absence of external assistance would bring inequalities and inefficiencies, external assistance should not be the pivotal aspect in achieving local development. Instead, it should be utilised to supplement where local efforts and resources leave a gap. For instance most of the women complained that their yields were increasingly poor because they could not afford fertilisers anymore and that DWDA had let them down in that aspect. And yet going through the records compiled at the district level, all associations were being encouraged to use manure. This compost was very much available in Kampini because of the numerous pigs that are reared and whose waste pose a health hazard.

Any strategy of sustainable development should discourage any systems that promote dependence. Progress has been made in this direction by organisations such as KEPA-Zambia when it changed its approach from being a donor to a partner in development. This is an attempt to allow people to design their own development and take full control of the planning and implementation of the development programme. In such a case, the external agency's role is reduced to that of a facilitator than an authority of the development process. The introduction of such a measure will probably not be popular in a rural community but it appears to be a necessary measure if the problem of dependence has to diminish.

KAWDA cannot fully boast of having received direct assistance from any of the government departments or agencies, but has indirectly benefited from the trainings on Training for Transformation (T for T), Training of Trainers (T O T) and several seminars on information and communication. The problem has been the resistance in implementing what has been learned from these training sessions. One of the reasons given by women interviewed is that at the moment, they preferred material over this qualitative assistance.

This negative attitude towards qualitative assistance could be explained by these women appreciation of quantitative and material assistance.

On the part of external agencies and departments, there has been a growing tendency of imposing development packages for women. The women are not consulted in the planning of the projects but are expected to participate in the implementation of these projects because it is for their benefits. In most cases, such projects fail. In the case of Kampini association, the toilet project initiated by the Water and Sanitation Project failed to take off because people did not know about it, they were not consulted and in their view, they preferred boreholes to toilets. Afterall they were satisfied with their traditional toilets. Those who had undergone training on toilet building were not confident. As a result, no toilet had been constructed but some cement had gone missing. No one had come to make a follow up of this project.

Another example is that of the Tree Planting Project by the agriculture department. The department distributed fruit and forest trees for planting. The women association was a benefactor. The seedlings dried up in their packages because no one could take full responsibility. The women association had not been consulted, instead they were ordered to plant the trees.

These examples show what happens when people do not participate in the identification, planning and implementation of projects. What seems important to development agents might not appeal in the same way to the target audience. One essential element in self-management lies in designing of local projects in close consultation with the local human resource. Another dimension of this problem is that the lack of follow-up and evaluation of the projects imposed from outside on the women. This has led to failure to learn from past mistakes on the part of the target audience and poor planning on the part of the initiators.

With so many organisations involved in the promotion, facilitation and servicing of women associations, there is clearly a risk of duplication and lack of co-ordination. In general, there has been limited effective co-ordination between various agencies and departments. In order to realize consolidated and sustainable development, the various extension services, at the technical, managerial and economic levels are important. The degree to which these services are effectively decentralized and co-ordinated is a major factor in solving the problems faced in the development association.

### **5.6 Relationship with the Community**

The association did not have strong links with the community in general. Women looked at the projects they initiated as purely for women's benefits. As such the women never involved the general community in their activities. Good examples are the toilet project and the homestead rubbish pit project initiated by the students during attachment. For the toilet project, the main opposition came from some traditional chiefs who complained that they had not been informed about such a project. For the homestead rubbish pit, male involvement, which was very central to the success of the project, was very minimal. The men explained that activities initiated by the association were purely for women. These reactions are as a result of the kind of relationship that has prevailed between the community and the association.

The concerns in the foregoing discussion are vital and need to be taken into consideration if the development of the association is to be sustainable. In the coming chapter, some recommendations have been suggested in relation to the concerns tackled.

### **5.7 Limitations of the Attachment**

The attachment had several limitations. Firstly, it was difficult to move from one area to another because of lack of transport. Secondly, the weather was unfavourable. Due to heavy rains, some roads became impassable thus making certain areas inaccessible. There was also lack of co-ordination between the students and the development worker. Funding

for the attachment was also inadequate. The students failed to cover some costs especially in transport and accommodation.



## CHAPTER SIX

### CONCLUSION

Women's development is among every country's priorities today since the declaration of DAWN. In this era of "another development", locally and grassroot based development is the main approach. The main demand of this approach is effective participation by all in the development.

KAWDA can offer the possible means for women to actively participate in development. It could also be an effective channel through which women's self-management could be promoted. KAWDA could be the appropriate venue for women to express their individual and group concerns in development. At present, the ability for KAWDA to facilitate such endeavours seems far from perfect.

Though KAWDA's efforts have not been entirely successful, to analyse them and the various factors that hinder sustainable improvement provides clues as to how future intentions might be pursued. The formation of the association and groups through democratic representation has not been fulfilled. Participation has simply not been strong enough in an environment where decision making and participation are heavily skewed. This has led to failure in overcoming pressures from outside. This has given some external sources the strength not to allow divergence from their preconceived ideas or not to trust untutored groupings to make their own decisions.

It is apparent that although there has been relative success in organising women for developmental purposes, the success has scarcely touched the majority of them. The association has almost risen to the point where it is not self-sustaining and can only be kept going by repeated transfusions of external aid. This is a matter of particular concern for an association aiming at sustainable development.

Finally, the sustainability emphasis in this report is not a rejection of the vitality of the activities and existence of KAWDA. It is aimed at highlighting present concerns for future considerations. As commonly experienced and observed, development associations do not blossom and succeed at once but will take long preparations, experiments and continuous evaluation.

## **6.1 Recommendations**

In view of the preceding discussion, the following recommendations are suggested;

### Communication

- 1) Objectives of each particular group should be clearly defined, understood and specified. Leaders should be evaluated on short term basis by members of the association.
- 2) Women should identify charismatic personalities amongst themselves to mobilise and promote active participation of all members.
- 3) There should be more use of traditional and group based communication systems in and amongst groups. Song and dance could be used to get, store and disseminate information, thereby curbing the problem of illiteracy amongst women.
- 4) Promotion of open discussions, debates and decision-making systems so as to allow full participation and accessibility to information and choices. This would promote a sense of equality.

The association needs to publicise itself effectively in order to crush some of the negative sentiments expressed about it.

### Economic Activities

- 1) The concept of “project” should be redefined. Emphasis should not be on money - oriented activities. Instead, it should be broadened to include qualitative aspects of life, such as campaigns to improve hygiene standards.
- 2) Women should look at development from within their immediate environment. Efforts should be focused on tapping local human and natural resources. This would help in reducing the levels of dependence and unawareness.
- 3) Projects initiated should be relevant to the prevailing situation in the society. In this case housing, balancing of diet and hygiene.
- 4) Need for diversification of economic activities to overcome the prevailing overdependence on stagnating or deteriorating agriculture business.

### Relationship with external sources

- 1) Concerned external sources should work with specific groups within the association in order to identify and improve on specific problems.
- 2) External sources should promote the idea of “partnership” in development than “donors” with the women association. The women in the association should be encouraged to contribute to their own development. This would reduce women’s dependence on external sources and also improve self-awareness and promote self-reliance.
- 3) External sources should undertake proper research on the women before initiating any project.

- 4) Simpler concepts and language should be used to educate women about development. Efforts should be undertaken to make these concepts more practical by localising them.
- 5) Representatives from DWDA should spend more time with the women at the group level in order to understand women better. Emphasis on dealing with women through the association executive committee should be reduced.

#### Relationship with the Community

Though the association is predominantly “a female environment”, there is need to involve the general community and specifically men in development projects. Kampini is a culturally sensitive community. Lack of male involvement has greatly contributed to the low performance of the association.

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