

**RURAL FOOD SECURITY POLICY AND DEVELOPMENT GROUP  
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**RURAL FOOD SECURITY IN TANZANIA:  
THE CHALLENGE FOR  
HUMAN RIGHTS, DEMOCRACY AND DEVELOPMENT**

**RURAL FOOD SECURITY POLICY AND DEVELOPMENT GROUP**

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## ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS

CBO	Community-based organisations
CMEWU	Crop Monitoring and Early Warning Unit
DMU	Disaster Management Unit
ERB	Economic Research Bureau
FAO	Food and Agriculture Organisation
FGD	Focus Group Discussion
FSD	Food Security Department
ICTSD	International Committee for Trade and Sustainable Development
IDS	Institute of Development Studies
IDSWSG	IDS Women's Study Group
IFI	International Financial Institution
IRA	Institute of Resource Assessment
LARRI	Land Rights Research and Resources Institute
MDB	Marketing and Development Bureau
MAC	Ministry of Agriculture and Cooperatives
MCDWAC	Ministry of Community Development, Women's Affairs and Children
NGO	Non-Governmental Organisation
PMO	Prime Minister's Office
PRA	Participatory Rural Appraisal
RFS	Rural Food Security
SES	Socio-economic status
SGR	Strategic Grain Reserve
TFNC	Tanzania Food and Nutrition Centre
TGNP	Tanzania Gender Networking Programme
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
URT	United Republic of Tanzania
WFP	World Food Programme
WRDP	Women's Research and Documentation Project
WTO	World Trade Organisation

The Rural Food Security vision is of a people-centred poverty-free society, based on full and equal access to food and nutrition for all, and to the resources necessary to achieve the same; control over key resources; full participation in decision-making on policy-making, implementation and monitoring; and the strengthening of sustainability and self-reliance from the grassroots to the national to the global level.

## 0. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

1. Given the significance of food security issues in Tanzania, Oxfam decided to support a study of the issue of rural food security (RFS) in Tanzania. The study consists of three main aspects:
  - literature review and annotated bibliography for each country
  - research at all levels (i.e. *up and down*) in selected rural locations, and at the institutional level of policy-makers and practitioners in each country
  - dissemination of the results of the overall study and field research by means of a public communications strategy.
2. The literature review and annotated bibliography has been completed and awaits publication and dissemination (Mbilinyi and Manda 1998).
3. The research was designed to be policy-oriented action research, and was carried out and completed in 1998. The major focus was on field work in Ngorongoro and Shinyanga Rural Districts, backed up by institutional visits and resource person interviews in Dar es Salaam, Shinyanga, Arusha and Ngorongoro.
4. A series of feedback workshops have been held at community and district levels, and internally involving Oxfam, IDS and the RFS research group, to share results of the research/animation process and to get feedback. The National Feedback Workshop held in April, 1999 provided an opportunity to present the findings to a wider audience, including policy-makers, practitioners and activists in government, international development agencies and NGOs.
5. The overall research project had *three main objectives*:
  1. to deepen understanding of the range of factors which undermine or improve food security within rural households;
  2. to identify specific and achievable policy changes which if implemented will strengthen the food security of rural households; and then
  3. to engage with relevant policy makers in order to promote and realise these changes, in conjunction with a public communications strategy.

The *specific research objectives* were:

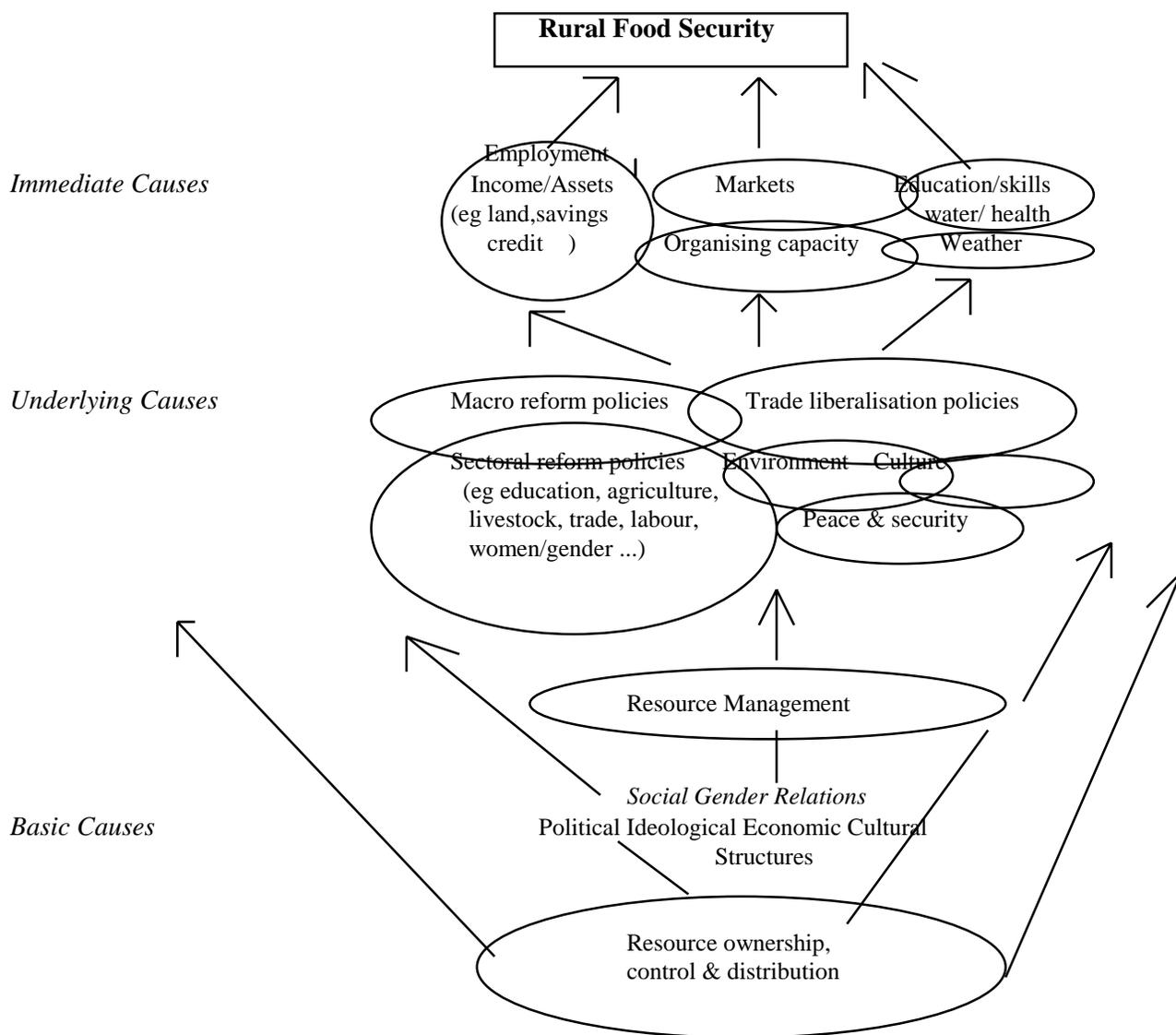
1. to identify achievable policy changes concerning (1) land, (2) markets, trade and prices; (3) savings and credit; (4) education/skills; and (5) (self) employment and incomes, which would improve household food security, from grassroots perspectives; and
2. to examine how communities, households and individuals assess, analyse and act on their own behalf concerning the situation and conditions of household food security.

The *focus* of the research was on smallholder farmers, livestock-keepers and traders, analysing, from *their* perspective, policy and development concerning food security. A basic *assumption* underlying the entire research programme was that economic reforms associated with Structural Adjustment (SAP) and liberalisation had heightened poverty and food insecurity at household level among the majority of smallholder farmers and livestock-keepers.

6. The **concept of rural food security** which was adopted by the RFS study emphasised both adequate food supply and food self-sufficiency *and* access to food. Access to food in turn depended on food *entitlements*, i.e. the extent to which different groups were entitled to food as a result of structures of power and social relations at all levels. Food was understood to be a *human right*, and access to adequate food a citizenship right which governments *owed* their citizens.
7. Changes in the *policy environment* associated with economic reforms have tended to undermine rural food security among the grassroots poor, according to many reports and analyses. Poverty has increased, as have the costs of living, in turn associated with the rising costs of education and health associated with cost-sharing. Smallholder producers no longer have access to key support systems such as producer goods subsidies, minimum producer prices, and soft loans. Smallholder farming and livestock-keeping has become a part-time activity for many women and men, who are forced to seek additional cash incomes from off-farm activities. This, in turn, reduces the amount of time available to farm and process food, thus undermining food security at the household level. Women have been empowered by their increased access to and control over cash, but this has led to increased work for them and growing gender conflict in the household. Some men have reacted by adjusting to a more egalitarian relationship; others have become more abusive in a desperate attempt to maintain patriarchal domination, in spite of the decline in male income and viable employment.
8. The research explored feasible policy changes at the immediate and underlying levels of causation, as shown in Figure 1, with a focus on land, markets/trade/prices, savings/credit, education/skills, water, peace/security; and (self)employment/incomes from grassroots perspectives. The research connected these changes to systems and policies of resource management which are represented here as part of basic causes. These factors were found to cut across macro, meso (institutional) and micro levels of analysis, and to have been documented by practical organisational experience as well as research as being key determinants of household food security. They all pertained to macro and sectoral policy reforms directly and/or indirectly.
9. A policy-oriented action research approach was adopted in the RFS process, involving villagers in an assessment of the food security situation at community and household level; analysing causes; and planning actions/strategies to overcome priority problems. A variety of methods were used, including Participatory Rural Appraisal (PRA) techniques such as wealth ranking, mapping, and VENN diagrams in Focus Group Discussions. Interviews were held with key informants, especially to learn more in-depth historical information about food security and its causes/problems. Structured interviews were carried out with a total of 433 women and men situated in three villages in each district, 279 women (199 Ngorongoro, 80 Shinyanga) and 234 men (105 Ngorongoro, 129 Shinyanga).

10. The RFS research team consists at present of four researchers employed by the University of Dar es Salaam: a sociologist in the Institute of Resource Assessment (IRA), Dr. Claude Mung'ong'o; an economist in the Economic Research Bureau (ERB), Timothy Nyoni; and two gender studies activists working in IDS, Prof. Marjorie Mbilinyi, team coordinator, and Bertha Koda. The UDSM researchers worked with village animation teams consisting of district and ward/village level animator/enumerators (see Acknowledgements). They provided local grounding and expertise, and represented strategic linkages to local institutions and communities.

**Figure 1 Rural Food Security Conceptual Framework**



**Source:** Revision of frameworks found in Khogali 1998, TGNP 1993: Figure 1, p. 18; Based on RFS Planning Workshop (August 1998) and field work.

11. In terms of the general objectives, the research/animation process succeeded to:
- deepen an understanding of the range of factors which undermine or improve food security within rural households--although much more emphasis was given to problems than to strengths by community participants and the facilitators themselves;
  - identify specific and achievable policy changes which if implemented would strengthen RFS at household level--though more emphasis was given in FGDs to strategic recommendations at the meso and micro level of institutional structures and/or systems, than to macro policy level; and
  - engage with relevant policy makers and practitioners at district level, in particular, in order to promote and realise these changes.
12. Concerning the specific research objectives, all five factors--land, markets/trade/prices, savings/credit, education/skills, and employment/incomes--were validated as significant in the pursuit of rural food security. Additional factors were added in Ngorongoro: water and peace/security. Concerning the second research objective-- the question of how communities, households and individuals assess, analyse and act on their own behalf concerning the situation and conditions of household food security-- we found that people had clear ideas of the components of household food security, and of the different levels of causation which explained the problems and opportunities which affected RFS. Most actions seemed to have been taken at the individual household or boma level, with the exception of the land crisis in Ololosokwan, Ngorongoro District. In the case of land, villagers had been forced by circumstances to organise themselves, sometimes successfully, and to work with partners locally, nationally and globally. However, other community initiatives were identified, including 'traditional' forms of mutual assistance to support people living in poverty, and more modern efforts to organise and secure needed resources.
13. Several constraints and limitations have been identified, concerning the research process itself, as well as the implications of the RFS process for future actions. The following constraints were given special emphasis at the Arusha Feedback Workshop in November 1998:
- coping with villagers' high expectations for external support
  - conflict over resources eg NGOs, RFS, villagers
  - corruption of local NGOs/CBOs by international organisations
  - security and threat to peace, especially in Ngorongoro
  - government not likely to have the political will to support the policy recommendations, given the conditions set down by IMF/World Bank
14. Villagers prepared a set of action plans intended to map out strategies to overcome specific problems which they had prioritised themselves. They also agreed upon a set of policy recommendations which were presented and discussed at the District Feedback Workshops in Shinyanga and Loliondo. These were synthesised at the Arusha Workshop in November 1998, involving the RFS group, IDS and many Oxfam staff members from the regions concerned and other locations; and are presented below.
15. Several institutions, both national and international, are involved in issues of food security generally. Some of the major national institutions are situated within the Ministry of Agriculture and Cooperatives (MoA). These include the Food Security Department (FSD)

which is responsible for monitoring of the food situation in the country and manages the Strategic Grain Reserve. The other is the Crop Monitoring and Early Warning Unit which monitors trends in food production and food supply, forecasts future trends in food production, and predicts impending food shortages in specific locations. The FSD works closely with Marketing Development Bureau (MDB) to monitor food security. The MDB collects information on prices and on supply of grains and disseminates them to the media. Apart from the institutions within MoA there are others such as the Disaster Management Unit in the Prime Minister's Office, the Growth Strategies Division in the Planning Commission which coordinates the formulation of policies and strategies for rural development including rural food security. The agriculture and extension systems are expected to provide basic supportive services to agriculture. In general these institutions lack resources and manpower due to changing economic policies.

16. International institutions include the World Bank which has supported the extension programme in staff development and provision of vehicles and other operational inputs to agriculture at regional, district and village levels. Other institutions are the United Nations FAO and UNICEF. UNICEF has funded the Child Support, Protection and Development Programme which adopted an integrated approach to food security, health and nutrition. The Tanzania Food and Nutrition Centre has been coordinating this programme in the districts of Mpwapa, Kibaha and Shinyanga. The World Food Programme (WFP) has two units which are directly involved in rural food security. These units involve themselves mainly in food relief provision to refugees and communities hit by disasters. WFP collaborates closely with international NGOs such as Oxfam in Ngorongoro and Save the Children in Lindi and Mtwara.
17. NGOs carry out other activities related to food security, besides provision of food relief. For example, the philosophy of CARE International and CARE Tanzania is to work and empower marginalized groups and households to enable them to improve their livelihoods. Food security as a concept and project is defined within the realm of household livelihood security. One of the major actors in the food security problematique is CARITAS Tanzania which is managed under the auspices of Tanzania Episcopal Council. CARITAS Tanzania is active in Shinyanga District where it has facilitated a variety of activities such as credit schemes for women and youth, which contribute directly to enhanced food security. Ngorongoro District is marked by a large number of local indigenous NGOs and CBOs. These include KIPOC, SADA, LOSODEI, NGOPADEO and OSEREMI.
18. In **Shinyanga Rural District**, the major economic activity was agro-pastoralism, along with trade (especially among women in all three villages, Iselamagazi, Ikonokelo and Ng'wamanota) and gold mining (among men in Ikonokelo Village). More than half of the households were considered poor and very poor. A food secure household was defined by villagers as one with enough maize, bulrush millet or sorghum in store to last the year, or with enough money, livestock or other assets to be able to purchase food. The most common causes of food insecurity were land shortage, lack of water, incessant drought, lack of farm credit, destructive birds, poor cultivation techniques, decreasing soil productivity, lack of reliable markets for crops and livestock, and misuse of available food.
19. In **Ngorongoro District**, the major economic activity among villagers was pastoralism in all three villages, Endulen (NCAA area), Malambo and Ololosokwan; which was combined with

food cultivation, especially in Endulen and Ololosokwan. Food security depended upon several different sets of factors:

- enough milk and maize flour; good nutrition; and food aid in case of famine
- ability to produce enough crops for food and cash; owning enough animals for milk and meat
- access to enough productive resources such as: productive land, modern agricultural production techniques (cultivation, livestock-keeping), modern techniques of land management in semi-arid areas, inputs and implements for agricultural production and cattle keeping
- Access to adequate social services such as: medical care, relevant education, water for domestic and livestock use, better houses
- Adequate economic infrastructure such as: food stores and techniques of storage of food; transport and communications
- Enough employment and incomes to enable an individual to live comfortably
- Competitive markets for livestock, milk and other commodities.
- Good social relations: equitable gender relations; peace and security

Women, men and youth had different concepts of the key causes of food insecurity, in many cases, which affected the way that they prioritised problems and planned strategies of action.

## **20. POLICY RECOMMENDATIONS ON RURAL FOOD SECURITY POLICY AND DEVELOPMENT**

(as adopted by the Arusha Feedback Workshop on 21 November 1998; and revised at the National Feedback Workshop in Morogoro, 15-16 April 1999)

### **INTRODUCTION**

1. Having understood that Rural Food Security, from a grassroots perspective, refers to access and control over adequate food and nutrition, as well as the resources necessary to acquire food: land, water and other natural resources, markets, employment and incomes, health, education/skills training, peace and security, savings and credit, and the means to produce efficiently in an environment which benefits the producers themselves and their community;
2. Having recognised the negative impact of globalisation, debt, economic reforms and increasing poverty on Rural Food Security, and the need to (a) democratise the decision-making process concerning macro, meso and micro policies; (b) develop and implement an alternative people-centred development strategy which prioritises sustainability of human and natural resources; and (c) eradicate poverty; and
3. Having realised the significance of policy coordination, implementation and monitoring to ensure accountability, transparency, consistency and credibility;

### **THE VISION**

4. The Rural Food Security vision is a people-centred poverty-free society based on full and equal access to food and nutrition for all, and to the resources necessary to achieve the same; control over key resources; full participation in decision making on policy-making, implementation and monitoring; and the strengthening of sustainability and self-reliance from the grassroots to the national to the global level.

the following recommendations are made:

**RECOMMENDATIONS:**

5. To lobby for (a) changes in the policy-making process at all levels, so as to ensure full participation of all sectors of society, beginning with the grassroots; (b) democratisation of structures of decision-making in government and civil society, with transparency, accountability and legitimacy; and (c) the promotion of human rights
  
6. To lobby for review, reform and implementation of development policies which focus on the poor, especially those in semi-arid areas, so as to ensure that there is: (a) full democratic participation; (b) direct benefits to the grassroots; and (c) the grassroots' increasing access to and control over resources, with particular attention to gender and class differences. The key sectors for attention are:
  - (i) land and natural resources, including wildlife conservation and mining;
  - (ii) farming and livestock-keeping;
  - (iii) marketing and pricing, taxes and subsidies;
  - (iv) education, health and water;
  - (v) savings and credit;
  - (vi) roads and communications;
  - (vii) security, law and order; and
  
7. To strengthen and build capacity for self-organisations at all levels among grassroots and other likeminded groups (eg women, youth, poor, landless, pastoralists) so as to be able to act on their own behalf to realise the necessary policy changes related to Rural Food Security.

### Chapter 3

## RESEARCH AND ANIMATION PROCESS

### Rural Food Security Group

#### LOCATIONS FOR RESEARCH

Field research was carried out in two regions of Tanzania, Shinyanga and Arusha, as shown in Table 1 below. The criteria for selecting village locations were developed by participants in the Planning Workshop (August):

- where Oxfam works
- locations facing food shortages
- capable of providing examples for proposed research/action in East Africa
- the presence of local partners at district and community level, in a position to provide follow-up and to participate fully in advocacy activities; and
- locations with parameters/factors noted in the research objectives.

Ngorongoro villages were selected by the Planning Workshop; whereas the research team selected the Shinyanga villages after consultation with local authorities and Oxfam staff.

*Table 1 Sampling Frame*

	<b>Arusha</b>	<b>Shinyanga</b>
Districts	Ngorongoro	Shinyanga Rural
Divisions	Sale, Loliondo, Ngorongoro	
Communities/ Villages	3 locations involved with Oxfam/ local partners in each of the above divisions: Malambo, Ololosokwan & Endulen	3 locations involved with Oxfam/ local partners: Ikonokelo, Ng'wamanota, and Iselamagazi.
Organisations	Aigwanak Trust, elders; women's organisations; KIPOC; Ngorongoro Conservation Authority.	YADEC, a youth organisation; CARITAS; CARE; Save the Children Fund.
Official institutions	Regional, District authorities, including ward and village leaders	Regional, District authorities, including ward and village leaders
Key Informants	elderly smallholders, traditional & village government leaders, articulate persons, market traders, local partner leaders/members; women and men, old & young	elderly smallholders, leaders, articulate persons, market traders, transporters, local partner leaders/ members; women and men, old & young
Individual interviews	224 (approximately 74 in each location); 119 women, 105 men in rich, middle, poor households; pastoralists and cultivators	209 (approximately 70 in each location); 80 women, 129 men in rich, middle, poor households; cultivators and livestock-keepers

Oxfam works actively with local partners in both regions; its first food relief activities were in Ngorongoro and both locations experience food shortages. Market forces have become relatively strong in each place, and land conflict was especially pronounced in Ngorongoro.

Smallholders, including pastoralists, faced growing stress in maintaining their livelihoods as smallholder producers, in the face of growing market pressures, rising costs of living, and the inroads of big tourist interests in the case of Ngorongoro. Gender relations were quite different in each place, and levels of class polarisation also varied.

### **Institutions**

Several institutions or organisations were identified to visit at the national level, i.e. in Dar es Salaam and/or Arusha before field work commenced in September. The criteria for choice included those which were local national partners to Oxfam in land, debt and other issues; responsible for food security issues; potential allies in the proposed advocacy campaign (part of follow-up activities); knowledgeable about food security issues. They included the following: the land coalition, LARRI led by Hakiardhi, and the Gender Task Force, led by TAWLA; CARE, Save the Children, ELCT in Arusha, Food Security unit and Marketing Development Bureau (MDB) in Ministry of Agriculture and Cooperatives; FAO; WFP; Disaster Management unit within PMO; Poverty Alleviation unit within Vice President's Office; Strategic Grain Reserve and Crop Monitoring and Early Warning System (CMEWS) in MoA; Tanzania Food and Nutrition Centre; CSPD programme within UNICEF; relevant departments in the Ministry of Finance and the Planning Commission; UNDP, World Bank, IMF, East African Community (Arusha); African Economic Research Consortium; ESRF; REPOA.

## **RESEARCH DESIGN**

The approach used in this research was *policy-oriented action research from grassroots perspectives*. This best met the expectation for a study which would provide clear recommendations concerning ongoing development programmes of Oxfam and its partners (which address the needs and interests of the poor, women, youth, disempowered cultural groups and other disadvantaged groups at community level) and provide specific recommendations for advocacy work. Such research also enhanced the theoretical and policy-oriented advocacy work of the Institute of Development Studies (IDS), the main partner in the research endeavour, which has provided institutional and administrative support. The study has also built on the combined strengths and experiences of members of the research team.

### **Researchers and The Institutional Base**

The research team consisted of four researchers employed by the University of Dar es Salaam: a sociologist in the Institute of Resource Assessment (IRA), Dr. Claude Mung'ong'o; an economist in the Economic Research Bureau (ERB), Timothy Nyoni; and two gender specialists/activists working in IDS, Prof. Marjorie Mbilinyi, team coordinator, and Bertha Koda. Mbilinyi and Koda have participated in participatory research before, have been active in gender advocacy work and are members of the land rights coalition, KATAA/LARRI through their respective organisations, the Tanzania Gender Networking Programme (TGNP) and IDS Women's Study Group (IDSWSG). Mung'ong'o has experience in using Participatory Rapid Appraisal techniques, which were incorporated into this research (Mung'ong'o 1998). Nyoni is a member of NERUDET.

The UDM researchers worked with village animation teams consisting of district and ward/village level animator/enumerators in Ngorongoro (Justin ole Kereri, Mariam Ole Moita, James Moringe, John Saitabau, Namindi Julius, Jeni Joseph, Lucy John) and Shinyanga (Exaud

Lyimo, Pauline Maganga, and Mary Bitegeko, all District Agriculture Extension officers). They provided local grounding and expertise, and represented strategic linkages to local institutions and communities.

IDS has a long history of engagement with policy issues, most recently as co-sponsor of the Leadership Conference which reassessed lessons learned during the efforts to implement *Socialism and Self Reliance* policies in the 1960s and 1970s (December 1997). The Director, Prof. Ibrahim Shao, participated in two recent workshops concerning the 'new' Europe-Africa Approach to Food Security in Harare and Dar es Salaam, has carried out extensive research on agriculture and credit issues, and is especially concerned about policy issues pertaining to rural development. All three institutes, IDS, IRA and ERB, cooperate together in the ENRECA programme to enhance research capacity among younger scholars and share a research orientation towards policy work. This research has therefore contributed to strengthen cooperation and joint work among the three institutes.

### **Data Collection Procedures**

There were three data collection phases in the research process, the first planning and orientation phase (July-August 1998) carried out in Dar es Salaam; the second familiarisation phase based on Participatory Research Approach (PRA) in the field (September), and the third phase which added individual interviews to PRA techniques in the field (October). These are outlined in Table 2 which presents the workplan.

*Planning and orientation activities* (Phases A and B in Table 2) included several that have already been reported on here: i.e. preparation of the literature review and annotated bibliography, the planning workshop, preparation of a study packet on key issues pertaining to rural food security, and the preparation of the research proposal. The orientation workshop for researchers was held on 17-18-19 August 1998; a study packet on participatory methodology, especially pertaining to analysis of macro, meso and micro policy issues was prepared for this workshop. Institutional visits were carried out in Dar es Salaam during the second half of August, in order to familiarise researchers with key issues and an understanding of the institutional systems and structures which influenced rural food security at all levels. Contact was also made at this time, and later on, with relevant partner organisations who would be potential members of the follow up food security campaign.

The PRA techniques used in the *familiarisation phase (field work phase 1; phase C in the workplan)* included: key informants, mapping with focus groups, walks to specific sites of relevance to the research objectives, focus group discussions with specific groups/categories of persons; VENN diagrams, again with focus groups (see the district reports for detailed discussion). In Ngorongoro, focus groups also began to develop action plans around strategies to overcome priority problems. Feedback workshops were conducted in each community to share key findings with local participants and authorities, and receive comments, corrections, additional information and to plan strategies of action and recommendations together.

An *interim feedback workshop* was held at IDS during 2-3 October, 1998, involving two key Oxfam personnel (Silas Likasi and Modhakkir Katakweba) and the researchers, to assess the key results of the research carried out thus far, reexamine the research objectives, and make whatever adjustments were necessary in the workplan for the next phases of the research. This also provided significant input into the planning process for lobbying and advocacy, and

development activities of Oxfam. One of the major outputs of the interim workshop was the structured interview schedule which was used in each location for individual interviews.

Structured interviews were conducted with smallholder producers and small traders in each of the four communities in each region during *field work phase 2/D* in October/November. Focus group discussions continued, and preliminary action plans were refined with local partners. Local partners, local animators/enumerators and the researchers carried out a preliminary analysis of research findings, and prepared a set of flipchart reports and plays which were presented at *district feedback workshops* in Loliondo and Shinyanga. The district feedback workshops provided an opportunity for villagers, with the involvement of researchers and local animators, to articulate the key outcomes of the research--which included achievable policy changes to improve food security-- to district authorities *and* Oxfam. Additional recommendations were incorporated into the final reports from each district, as well as corrections and other additional information.

A second set of preliminary district reports were prepared by each district team and presented at the *Preliminary Feedback Workshop in Arusha, 20-21 November 1998*. Some 15 people took part in this workshop, including the four researchers, the Director of IDS, 9 Oxfam staff based in Tanzania and a Programme Officer from Oxfam-Kenya.<sup>1</sup> Detailed comments were provided for each district, and then the workshop deliberated on the policy recommendations. A synthesis of district-level recommendations was adopted by the workshop, to be presented below. The workshop also analysed the villagers' plans of action, and considered the possible directions to be taken – given the focus on realisable policy changes. These issues will be discussed below. Recommended strategies to follow-up local NGOs were discussed at length, along with specific strategies. Oxfam expectations for these final reports were presented, and the agenda for the National Feedback Workshop was agreed upon, along with the list of expected participants. Provisional agendas were also prepared for the April workshop and for the National Lobbying Workshop in July 1999.

### **Report Writing And Dissemination**

There have been a whole series of reports written during every phase of the research process, in order to enhance the feedback process. A preliminary summary report was presented at the *preliminary feedback workshop in Arusha* towards the end of November '98. Detailed data analysis and report writing followed the Arusha Workshop, in preparation for the *National Feedback Workshop* in April '99 (Table 2). Cross-tabulations were used to explore the interaction among key factors, as outlined in the expectations, with attention to differentiation according to gender, district, and household economic status. Human interest stories have also

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<sup>1</sup> Prof. Marjorie Mbilinyi, RFS Coordinator, IDS, Dr. Claude Mung'ong'o, RFS Researcher, IRA; Bertha Koda, RFS Researcher, IDS; Timothy Nyoni, RFS Researcher, ERB; Prof. Ibrahim Shao, Director, IDS; Emmanuel Kallonga, Country Representative, Oxfam-Tanzania, Arusha; Thomas Barasa, Programme Officer, Oxfam-Kenya, Nairobi; Jackson Mutazamba, Ngara Refugee Programme, Oxfam; Grace Magwenga, Programme Officer Gender, Oxfam, Arusha; Emmanuel Mushongi, Health Educator, Ngara Refugee Programme, Oxfam; Simon Amery, Emergency Manager, Oxfam, Igunga Floods Programme; Samuel M Jonathan, Oxfam, Shinyanga; Silas Likasi, Public Policy Officer, Oxfam Arusha; Anne Lema, Programme Administration Manager, Oxfam Arusha; Jeremiah Akonaay, Project Manager, Igunga, Oxfam.

been presented, using ‘cases’ and life histories, to bring the research process alive and to give flesh to the issues raised. The writing of this final report was carried out during April, May and June, with inputs from the National Feedback Workshop.

The final report is conceived to be a lobbying tool, and will be ‘launched’ at the *National Launching Workshop* in July 1999. The core participants will be those who took part in the National Feedback Workshop in April 1999. However, participation will also be sought from key policy makers in government and the NGO community, and members of the mass media. The main objectives of this workshop will be:

- (1) to launch the information acquired from the RFS programme about the rural food security situation and recommended policy changes to improve the situation
- (2) to publicise RFS issues and policy recommendations (need for sensitisation and press briefings)
- (3) to sensitise different stakeholders including the government and international development agencies.

The report will be published in book form, as recommended by participants in the April ’99 Workshop, in order to disseminate the information contained as widely as possible. However, more popular versions of the material will also be prepared and disseminated in both Kiswahili and English, using a variety of forms: posters, brochures and popular booklets in Kiswahili and English--the latter focused more on an international audience and to partners from outside of Tanzania. Radio and TV programmes will also be organised to disseminate the suggested policy changes as widely as possible. Publications and dissemination activities will be vital inputs into the advocacy activities which are also included here.

## **ACHIEVEMENTS AND GAPS IN THE RESEARCH PROCESS**

### **General objectives**

In terms of the general objectives, the research/animation process succeeded to:

1. deepen an understanding of the range of factors which undermine or improve food security within rural households--although much more emphasis was given to problems than to strengths by community participants and the facilitators themselves;
2. identify specific and achievable policy changes which if implemented would strengthen RFS at household level--though more emphasis was given in FGDs to strategic recommendations at the meso and micro level of institutional structures and/or systems, than to macro policy level; and
3. engage with relevant policy makers and practitioners at district level, in particular, in order to promote and realise these changes.

Concerning the first objective, participants readily defined the meaning of RFS in broad terms, which included the existence of adequate food supply as well as necessary factors to secure this supply (see *district reports*). Information gained from outside the village often proved

useful, in delineating power structures at district and national level which impinged on the community, although in all cases members of the community had made references to them.

The second objective, the identification of *achievable policy changes*, was indirectly achieved, in that most participants were quick to make specific recommendations at the level of institutional support and/or action; eg build more water reservoirs; increase the number of livestock or crop exports who work closely with the local community. These were then reinterpreted by the researchers to mean a call for an agriculture and livestock policy which served the needs of small-scale cultivators/livestock keepers, a policy recommendation consistent with the stated needs and recommendations of the villagers. The focus by communities on action plans represented a capacity-building measure which will contribute to the policy-making--as well as planning--process.

The policy-making process was negatively influenced by a *widespread lack of trust in government* and its political will--or lack of it-- to act in support of pastoralists, which was found in every village in Ngorongoro. The perceived process of discrimination against pastoralists, and in Malambo, a series of attacks on women and youth by FFU in response to the killing of a District CID officer by armed Somali gangs, had led to a high level of awareness and organisation. NGOs and CBOs were found everywhere, at various levels of competency in meeting the needs of members and clients, but providing 'schools for learning about democracy'.

Certain obvious issues were raised with district policy-makers and/or practitioners in formal and/or informal discussions during field work. However, public dissemination of these issues was emphasised at the *district feedback workshops*. Village leaders and villagers attended from each community, with village animators and Oxfam representatives. They shared recommendations and plans of action during the first day, and came out with a shared understanding of priority issues. These issues, and recommendations and plans of action, were presented to district leaders of government and NGOs, and other invited organisations, on the second day. The outcome of deliberations at the district feedback workshops in Ngorongoro and Shinyanga have been synthesised in this report.

*Capacity-building* among members of the community (leaders, village animators, villagers) and the research team was another major achievement, resulting from the animation process itself. Analytical and planning skills were used and developed. Villagers labeled the entire activity a training workshop, said this was the first exposure they had ever had to animation work of this kind, and requested that similar workshops be held in the future. Village animators, including the district animator, and the 'national' facilitators/researchers, became more adept at a variety of skills: listening, analysis, working as a team, making clear statements and translations with as little elaboration as possible.

Some, but not all, participants, were able to recognise the link immediately between problem--strategy/action--policy recommendation. Many found it difficult, however, to make abstractions of this nature, which is partly a reflection of the failure of government at all levels to involve citizens in the policy-making process. Follow-up is called for to help develop analytical and planning skills necessary, especially among women and those without a full primary education. These are valuable resources to enhance local organisational capacity, especially among women, youth and the poorest households who tend to be the most marginalised and least powerful segments in the community.

The flexibility adopted by researchers to adapt to local conditions, demands or needs was essential, and enhanced the relevancy of the project for local communities. Rapport and trust between researchers and members of the community steadily increased from the first day to the last. One indicator of this was the kind and amount of information which they were willing to provide, including highly controversial issues such as land conflicts in both districts.

However, it must be emphasised that the initial response to the research project was *not* one of trust, at all. Villagers in each place were openly cynical about the possible benefit that they would acquire from participation. Although they remained skeptical up to the end, villagers acknowledged the fact at the close of community feedback workshops that this was the first experience they had ever had of researchers who shared the results of the research process with the community, before departure. Bolstered by the additional fact that Oxfam had a record of follow-up activity, they looked forward to *concrete, visible outcomes* from the process.

Researchers in both districts emphasised the major limitation or challenge of this moment in time--that *people's expectations are very high for follow up*, a point with which the researchers agree. The research activity has raised hope that material support of some kind will be forthcoming. This is built into a process of this nature, with recommended strategies and plans of action. The assurances which we received from the Oxfam Country Representative that Oxfam was committed to a follow up activity were repeated to villagers at the CFWs, and by Oxfam representatives at both district feedback workshops. *The challenge, therefore, is for Oxfam to keep its commitment.*

### **Other Limitations**

A variety of other limitations arose during the research. *Language* was a major constraint, especially in Ngorongoro where many people were not fluent in Kiswahili. Neither researcher knew KiMaasai, and were dependent on simultaneous translation by district and village animators and other villagers. A quick pace was developed to cope with translation needs on all sides, but some information will have been lost and errors of interpretation made. The use of VIPP methods to record key ideas which were displayed publicly helped to ensure reliability and validity, however; errors were noted immediately by villagers and corrected on the spot.

*Lack of adequate time* to carry out in-depth animation work was another limiting factor. Despite the shortage of time, all planned FGD activities were carried out, and more (plans of action), but there was less time for key informants than expected. This was especially felt in Ngorongoro, where more time was spent in FGDs because of the work in three groups: women, youth and male elders.

The October feedback workshop agreed with the researchers' suggestion to drop the fourth 'non-Oxfam' village in each District, and concentrate instead on the three pre-selected locations. The main consideration was time. Three weeks was barely sufficient to work in three villages during September and again in October; the fourth week in October was devoted to preparations and administration of the district workshop. The main purpose of the fourth village was to act as a kind of control, a location in which Oxfam has not been active.

In response to the perceived need to build capacity in planning and speaking, an additional day was added to the district workshops when village representatives and animators met alone with Oxfam representatives and the facilitators/researchers to share plans of action and recommended strategies, and agree on a common set of policy recommendations. These were the

main agenda items for the second day, when villagers presented their plans and recommendations to Oxfam and leaders of government and NGO institutions/organisations at district level.

The expectations that we would work with local NGO/CBO partners during the research process was not realised, especially in Ngorongoro, although some of the village animators were members of local organisations in their personal capacity. Most local organisations were perceived to be problematic in one way or another by some segments of the community, especially women who were usually not involved as full participants. Present yes, in the community, and often providers of services, but distant, especially for women who were excluded from the decision-making process. Moreover, few or none had active, ongoing women's programmes.

Informal information suggests that local NGOs/CBOs faced problems of transparency and accountability, that were partly rooted in the kind of top-down bureaucratic organisational structures and leadership styles adopted. A follow-up research/training activity is called for, to carry out an *organisational review process with local NGOs/CBOs*, while helping to link them more closely to all segments of the community. This will be necessary if they are to act in a meaningful capacity as local partners to Oxfam in future work.

Another limitation was the inability to *include a substantial number of the poorest household members in FGDs, or to ensure that their views were heard and set the direction of problem-identification and recommendations*. This was mainly the result of time limitations and logistical problems, and may have been most marked in Ngorongoro. The one-on-one interviews helped to offset this shortcoming, by ensuring that a representative sample of the poorest households were included.

### **Reflections On The Research Objectives**

All five factors--land, markets/trade/prices, savings/credit, education/skills, and employment/incomes--were validated as significant in the pursuit of rural food security. *Additional factors* were added in Ngorongoro: water and peace/security.

Concerning the second research objective, the question of how communities, households and individuals assess, analyse and act on their own behalf concerning the situation and conditions of household food security, we found that people had clear ideas of the components of household food security, and of the different levels of causation which explained the problems--and/or opportunities--which affected RFS (see district reports). Most actions seemed to have been taken at the individual household or boma level, with the exception of the land crisis in Ololosokwan, Ngorongoro District. In the case of land, villagers had been forced by circumstances to organise themselves, sometimes successfully, and to work with partners locally, nationally and globally.

### **Methodological Limitations and Data Quality<sup>2</sup>**

The reliability of any data largely depends upon the accuracy of the methodology used to collect them. Although the questionnaire interviews were not part of a census some data distortions characteristic of censuses were observed. Crop production figures, sizes of farms owned or cultivated at any one particular season, livestock numbers and information on age are

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<sup>2</sup> Most of this section is extracted from the *Shinyanga* report (Mung'ong'o and Koda 1999).

most suspect in these interviews. Information on crop production, farm sizes and age of respondents suffer more from problems of respondent recall and incomprehension rather than deliberate manipulation. For example, many farmers could not easily quantify their production since crops are hardly harvested at a single stroke in any one season.

Secondly, the problems of vermin and loss during harvest and processing for storage are universal in the sample villages, making accurate quantification an impossible task. And thirdly, the concepts of modern measurement such as kilogrammes, acres and hectares are not commonly used in the day to day agricultural practices in rural Shinyanga or Ngorongoro. For example, not only are farm plots rarely planned and hence measured, many farmers find it difficult even to conceptualize the difference between an acre and a hectare.

On the other hand, information on livestock numbers was more often than not manipulated and understated. The reason for this response has its historical roots in the bad experiences these villagers have had in their relationship with the state. Animal taxation policies instituted in the district have made the Wasukuma and Wamaasai distrustful of the state and feel insecure with its policies.

The association of this study with Oxfam also affected its objectivity. In Shinyanga, the elders tended to over-emphasize the prevalence of poverty and helplessness in the sample villages by understating their "wealth", apparently to ensure access to whatever food aid might materialize from the study. Similarly in Ngorongoro, wealth ranking was a highly contentious issue among women, in particular, because of the perceived connection between wealth location and the possibility of receiving food relief this coming season. The fact that we were using an Oxfam vehicle and that reference was often made to Oxfam in the study meant that the research team was considered part of Oxfam. Every villager tried their level best to impress upon the team that the villagers were poor and needed immediate help. The conclusions in this study are, therefore, drawn with these limitations in mind. In all cases efforts have been made to verify the sources and identify possible areas of error.

### **Qualitative and Quantitative Data**

The research teams were also faced with different, sometimes conflicting information, derived from PRA techniques and the structured interviews. In Endulen Village, Ngorongoro, for example, several women spoke eloquently on the problems of patriarchal cultural values and practices, and their negative impact on rural food security. The majority of other women appeared to share the same position, along with many men. However, the responses in the interviews were generally complacent about 'culture', with the majority of women and men saying that specific cultural practices (such as female circumcision, child beating, polygamy) were not a problem at all.

Of course, one interpretation of these differences is to say that a self-selective process occurred in participation in focus group discussions, such that the more articulate, critical and activist people were over-represented there. The interviews may therefore reflect the more general opinion of a majority of villagers, whereas FGDs reflect the points of view of potential activists and organisers – often the cutting edge of change in society.

Another explanation is that people were more reluctant to speak openly against local culture in one-on-one situations, as compared to a group discussion. Certainly in Ngorongoro there was a strong sensitivity towards the possibility of having one's views or statements

reported to ---- to who? Husbands? Traditional elders? Government leaders? Influential others? The social dynamics are not clear and need more study.

Doubts on the validity of findings drawn from qualitative methods are often raised by investigators using conventional quantitative techniques. These doubts include the ability of the investigator to see through the eyes of other people and interpret events from their point of view. Questions are raised as to whether a researcher can really provide accounts from the perspective of those whom he/she studies, or if he/she can evaluate the validity of his/her interpretation of those perspectives. And then there is the important question of objectivity. How does a researcher using qualitative methods avoid his/her cultural values and personality from influencing the content of the description of a community he/she studies?

On the other hand, similar questions can be posed to more survey-oriented research techniques and tools, such as structured interviews, and to the most objective measures adopted. Each requires choices to be made as to what to focus on and what to exclude, how to measure specific variables and/or factors, and how to analyse and interpret the findings.

These are difficult questions to which no simple answers are available. Each researcher handles them according to the dictates of the relevant research problem and research environment. In the context of the PRA techniques used in the present study such doubts were constantly in the back of the researchers' minds. Efforts were made to get as thorough an understanding of the local community as possible before any PRA exercise could be done. In Shinyanga, the comprehensive experience the local collaborators had gained during many years of agricultural extension work in the district was a useful resource in this respect. The familiarity, trust and rapport built by our counterparts with local people enhanced the study – but also may have biased it, because of their specific location in local society (politics/economy). Village animators in Ngorongoro were selected from among the most educated youth in each location, and would seem to be extremely well placed to ensure the reliability of RFS work. On the other hand, by virtue of their positioning within the local community and also within specific NGOs and other groupings, local animators may bias how others respond to the process, and their own interpretations of replies.

All this notwithstanding, all of the resulting data from PRA techniques was evaluated during community feedback workshops in all the sample villages. Also much of the qualitative data and agricultural information from the interviews have been corroborated with data from the documentary sources mentioned above.

