

The socio-economic impact of poverty reduction in Lesotho: A
survey of poor households at Taung in the Mhale's Hoek district, Lesotho

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DECLARATION

I, the undersigned hereby declare that the work contained in this dissertation is my original work and has not been previously submitted in any academic institution before.

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DATE

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DEDICATION

This work is dedicated to my two sisters, Moroesi and Rethabile,
as well as, their families. My mother, Masello and sweetheart,
Mabatho, deserve boundless love. May God bless them all and
add more days to their lives.

ABSTRACT

This is a dissertation on the socio-economic impact of poverty reduction in Lesotho. The major thrust of the study was to address the problem of low community participation inherent in development activities. This was triggered off by the high incidence of poverty in Lesotho. The researcher had prior belief that this was a result of low levels of community participation. The study was meant to contribute to knowledge and test research hypotheses and theories. It was proposed that various programmes or initiatives can improve the socio-economic condition of the rural poor through enhanced community participation.

Interviews, questionnaires and focus group discussions were used to elicit data from the respondents. Qualitative and quantitative techniques were employed in the collection and analysis of data. The research focused on three villages in rural Lesotho. These are Liphiring, Majapereng and Qhalasi, all found at Taung in the Mophale's Hoek district. Also, development professionals in government and voluntary agencies were consulted for information. The total sample of 158 respondents was used for the study.

The results of the study indicate very low levels of socio-economic development in the three villages. Unemployment was found to be at the head of all malaises. It is strongly demonstrated that government programmes have failed to ameliorate the situation. The failures of subsistence agriculture and limited non-farm activities have led to greater dependence of the villagers on government aid. The study has noted poor organizational capacity resulting in political conflicts in the villages. In addition, the study unearthed poor co-ordination and lack of collaboration between government and other development agents in the anti-poverty project. Finally, the study uncovered that programmes respond poorly to villagers' needs. The majority of households are of one mind that government programmes need to be restructured in order to better serve their needs. In the main, the study has noted very little achievement in poverty reduction. This research has shown that this resulted from low levels of community participation and poor implementation of policies by the government.

LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS

BOS	Bureau of Statistics
CBOs	Community-Based Organizations
CPI	Consumer Price Index
DMA	Disaster Management Authority
EU	European Union
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
GEAR	Growth, Employment and Redistribution strategy
GOL	Government of Lesotho
IFIs	International finance Institutions
I-PRSP	Interim Poverty Reduction Strategy
LHWP	Lesotho Highlands Water Project
MODP	Ministry of Development Planning
NGOs	Non-Governmental Organizations
NREP	National Rural Employment Programme
ODA	Overseas Development Agency
PPP	Purchasing Power Parity
PRSP	Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper
RDP	Reconstruction and Development Programme
RLEGP	Rural Landless Employment Guarantee Programme
SAPs	Structural Adjustment Programmes
STDs	Sexually Transmitted Diseases
TWG	Technical Working Group
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
WFP	World Food Programme

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08/11/2003-16/11/2003

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CHAPTER ONE

1.1.1 Introduction

Poverty reduction has been discussed in development literature for over 40 years. This is evidenced by voluminous publications on poverty recently (Sartaj Aziz cited in Sapsford & Chen, 1998). It was realized that a better understanding of poverty dynamics is required for reducing the malaise. The concept of poverty presupposes the inability of people to acquire the necessities of life such as food, shelter and clothing. In chapter two, the concept is defined more elaborately. Since poverty is open to several interpretations by different people, a few definitions of the concept are given (Killick & White, 2001).

This dissertation is a descriptive and explanatory study on the socio-economic impact of poverty reduction in Lesotho. This first part of the dissertation presents the general background of the research, the problem statement, describes its significance and presents an overview of the methodology. The chapter approaches conclusion by addressing the delimitations of the study, defining some special key terms and stating how the dissertation is organized.

The research attempts to evaluate the socio-economic impact of poverty reduction in Lesotho. It makes an assessment of efforts undertaken by government, voluntary agencies and other agents of change in the socio-economic development of the Basotho. Moreover, this research seeks to find out how much these development agents have achieved in poverty reduction. The research concentrates on the contribution of rural public works programmes (PWWs), commonly known as 'Fato Fato' and other initiatives aimed at improving people's lives. In addressing these issues, the study focuses on rural areas because such locations are often associated with the worst poverty conditions. Information is elicited mainly from three rural communities in the Moleleke's Hoek district, namely, Liphiring, Majapereng and Qhalasi.

1.1.2 General Background of the study

It is indicated that since independence in 1966, the GOL has been implementing programmes and projects to foster economic growth and reduce poverty (MODP, 2000). This source reveals that more attention was paid to the rural areas where 80% of the population lives. It is further explained that through Five-Year Development Plans, interventions focused mainly on service provision and the development of the economic infrastructure. This source states that nine poverty assessments were carried out between 1991 and 1997 in conjunction with the

World Bank, United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) and indigenous institutions. Moreover, it is highlighted that these assessments provided an extensive poverty profile in terms of income, expenditure and access to social services. This evidence shows that at the close of 1999, the GOL formulated an Interim Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper (I-PRSP). The Technical Working Group (TWG), made up of the government, civil society and other major stakeholders, was established to prepare the I-PRSP. It is revealed that in December 2000, the I-PRSP was completed and the TWG set on the task of preparing a full PRSP. This strategy was finally completed in November 2003. The above statements show that poverty reduction was seen as evolving from enhanced economic growth.

Lesotho is a poor Southern African developing country that needs poverty reduction strategies. According to the World Bank (1999), Lesotho's real per capita GDP measured in Purchasing Power Parity (PPP) was US \$ 1,860¹ in 1997, placing the country among the world's 50 lowest-income countries. Moreover, it is indicated that the country ranks 127th out of 174 countries on UNDP's Human Development Index. This evidence further highlights that its social indicators lag behind when compared to those of other developing countries with similar per capita incomes. Poverty trends for 1986/7 show that the depth and severity of poverty have worsened. Gay & Hall (2000) state that in Lesotho, households are regarded as poor when they earn less than M 80.00 per household per month, while the destitute have less than M 40.00. This source discloses that 58.8% of the people were categorised as poor while 34.7% constituted the ultra-poor. It is explained that this situation got worse in 1990 when 68% of the population was regarded poor. The poverty profile for Lesotho shows that nearly one-half to three-quarters of Basotho households may be considered poor and more than a quarter are ultra-poor. The poverty Mapping Exercise conducted by Sechaba Consultants in 1993 showed that 71% were defined as destitute (MODP, 2000).

Poverty studies conducted in Lesotho concur that the mountains and Senqu Valley are poorer than the foothills and lowlands in terms of the incidence, severity and depth of poverty (May et al, 2002). Gay & Hall (2000) stated that households that rely on mining remittances from South Africa are relatively better-off. However, they argue that during the 1990s, many Basotho miners were retrenched from the South African Gold mines. For instance, this source shows that 122,000 Basotho migrants worked in the South African mines in 1986. The same

¹ US \$ 1,860 = R 11 025.15 = 11 025.11 Maloti. This is because 1 Loti = 1 South African Rand

source shows that in the first half of 1999, the numbers had decreased to 65,000. As a result, the vulnerability of remittance-dependent households increased. These authors explain that this speeded up rural-urban migration to cities such as Maseru where informal activities and shack settlements have mushroomed. Moreover, they point out that this has led to the deterioration of agriculture. These authors show that the whole scenario was compounded by limited social welfare services provided by the government. They argue that as a result, more than half of the population were trapped in poverty, and this situation has continued to grow worse over the last ten years despite the economic boom of the 1980s. Nevertheless, the GOL argues that a considerable number of rural residents get poverty relief from PWPs (MODP, 2001).

It is revealed that the poverty gap increased markedly between 1986/7 and 1994, pushing many people further below the poverty line (MODP, 2000). These sources also show that the population is characterised by the most unequal distribution of income in Southern and Eastern Africa, with a Gini-Coefficient of 0.6. The evidence further reveals that the declines of public expenditure on social services, rising costs of urban infrastructure and a slow decentralization process have undermined any prospects for redistribution in Lesotho. It was found that many remote parts of the country, particularly the mountains, have limited access to basic services.

The evidence further shows that Lesotho experienced a sharp economic downturn during the late 1990s. Gay & Hall (2000) argue that the economic decline in 1998/99 was also caused by reduced Lesotho Highlands Water Project (LHWP) exports and the destruction of the economic infrastructure that followed the political conflicts of September 1998. For instance, it is indicated that the GDP fell by 7.7% and the balance of payments position deteriorated markedly during the fiscal year 1999/2000. This source explains that all these events raised the poverty levels in both rural and urban areas. It is maintained that as a result, the country had to use accumulated foreign exchange earnings to pay for imports (MODP, 2001). In addition, the same source discloses that foreign reserves dwindled by US \$70 Million² in December of the financial year 1999/2000. The substantial outflow of capital resulted in a massive increase of imports and declining exports of Mohair and Wool. These authors project that the high incidence of poverty could worsen infant and adult mortality, life expectancy and

² US \$ 70 Million = R 414.93 Million = 414.93 Million Maloti

unemployment. For instance, nationwide surveys conducted by Sechaba Consultants in 1991 and 1994 show that unemployment is the major cause of poverty in Lesotho (MODP, 2000). The unemployment rate was estimated at 40.5%, leaving many people depending on poor subsistence agriculture and informal activities. For instance, it was found that 60% of the people in Maseru's Hoek worked in agriculture (BOS, 2002). It is further maintained that the rapid growth of the labour force does not correspond with the absorptive capacity of the economy. The source also notes that only 36% of young people are able to enter the work force every year and a few are absorbed by the formal sector.

The Relationship between macroeconomic performance and poverty reduction

Much evidence shows that Lesotho experienced economic boom from the 1980s to the mid 1990s (Gay & Hall, 2000). This source notes that the period 1981-1986, was characterised by good growth and economic stability brought about by a cautious fiscal policy. It is explained that during the same period the construction under the LHWP and the thriving manufacturing sector contributed positively to the economy. These authors state that these developments brought employment opportunities for many Basotho. Also, it is indicated that Structural Adjustment Programmes (SAPs) implemented from 1988 benefited the economy. Moreover, the same source unveils that the GDP grew at an average of 6.3% from 1988 to 1997 and the country produced a surplus of 2.1% on average from 1992/93 to 1997/98. The most advantageous aspect of the economy was that inflation dropped by 18% in 1991 to 9% during the same year, allowing growth to progress from 3.5% to 4.5% for six consecutive years (Phororo, 2000). It is also maintained that gross international reserves increased markedly from M 2 671 Million to M 3 041 Million. According to the World Bank (1995), Overseas Development Assistance (ODA) to Lesotho averaged US \$ 104.7 Million³ per year between 1990 and 1993. Both May et al (2002) and Bigson & Levin (2001) assert that such exponential growth of the economy was more than enough to reduce poverty in 1994/5.

The macroeconomic climate of the 1980s and 1990s depicted above shows that the country achieved enormous growth. However, Gay & Hall (2000) and the MODP (2000) argue that much of the generated wealth did not benefit many people and they continued to be poor. They hold that instead, rapid growth benefited only a small fraction of the population because of a skewed distribution of wealth. For instance, these sources portray that the national

³ US \$ 104.7 Million = R 620.61 Million = 620.61 Million Maloti

income benefits mostly the richest 10% of the population while the majority continue to suffer. It is further revealed that the unequal distribution of income is flanked by low people's participation in the economy. These writers argue that less emphasis was placed on other development indicators such as health, education and life expectancy. As a result, efforts devoted to poverty reduction ended up in failure. This means that most of the generated growth was not used for poverty reduction.

Poverty Reduction Policies

Available evidence shows that the GOL is fully committed to market reform and economic liberalization with a view to create an environment conducive to private sector investment and growth (MODP, 2001). The information elicited shows that this was done primarily to facilitate the implementation of policies, projects and programmes designed to reduce poverty. This source also exhibits that the improvement of tourism and redesign of PWPs ranked high on the government's development agenda as it was thought that inequalities and poverty would be reduced. It is further uncovered that between 1991 and 1994, the government in collaboration with aid agencies produced three poverty reports. Both Gay & Hall (2000) and MODP (2000) concur that the government adopted poverty reduction as its highest development priority.

All the sources cited above demonstrate that a poverty assessment conducted by the World Bank in 1995, provided an extensive profile in terms of income, expenditure and access to social services. It is further disclosed that the GOL formed a Poverty Action Plan (PAP) and the Lesotho Fund for Community Development (LFCD) in 1999 to support projects that would benefit the poor (MODP, 2000). This source indicates that through these projects, a considerable number of job opportunities were created in some rural and urban communities. Another milestone was that since 1995, the government introduced free primary education to all schools, starting with Standard One pupils in order to respond to the plight of destitute children nationwide. Again, in an attempt to show more commitment to poverty reduction, World War II veterans or their widows were first provided with a monthly pension since February 2000 (Gay & Hall, 2000; MODP, 2001).

1.1.3 Problem Statement

The high incidence of poverty in Lesotho calls for well-defined and participatory poverty reduction. In many developing countries, masses of people derive their poverty from inadequate participation in the economy (Mullen, 1999). As a result, the poor benefit

minimally from the economy. This study contends that if the poor do not participate actively in the planning, design and evaluation of programmes, efforts committed to their empowerment are most likely to fail. Therefore, the problem under investigation is weak community participation in development activities. The high incidence of poverty in Lesotho could be a function of limited community participation.

This research investigates the socio-economic impact of poverty reduction in Lesotho. It is contended that the socio-economic empowerment of the poor must rank supreme in efforts aimed at poverty reduction. Ideally, it ought to tally with the livelihood strategies of the poor. The following are the sub-problems the research seeks to resolve:

- ❖ Lack of co-ordination between governments and other agents of change in the anti-poverty project. This weakens the significance of the multidimensionality of poverty.
- ❖ Policy makers and development professionals often do not know how the poor experience and perceive poverty. Interventions may not tally or add to the livelihood strategies of the poor, thus lessening the rigour of anti-poverty processes.
- ❖ Anti-poverty interventions do not always correspond to the needs of the poor as they are sometimes imposed. This weakens community participation.

1.1.4 **The aim of the study**

The central aim of the study is to show that comprehensive and sustainable poverty reduction could only be achieved if the poor are allowed to participate actively in the economy. In order to achieve this purpose, the following are the overarching objectives of the study:

- Explore the socio-economic impact of poverty reduction in Lesotho.
- Examine the participatory approaches employed in poverty reduction.
- Determine the relationship between unemployment, income and poverty in the rural areas of Lesotho.

1.1.5 **Research Questions**

The study is guided by the following research questions:

- What effects has poverty reduction had on the lives of the rural poor?
- To what extent has poverty reduction in Lesotho been participatory?
- How are the government, organs of civil society, communities as well as, voluntary agencies involved in poverty reduction?

- What poverty reduction initiatives are adopted in Lesotho?
- How do the people experience and perceive poverty in Lesotho?

1.1.6 Hypotheses

1. Various programmes can better the socio-economic condition of the rural poor in Lesotho.
2. Community participation can enhance poverty reduction in the rural areas of Lesotho.

1.1.7 Professional Significance of the study

The researcher hopes that the completed study will contribute to professional knowledge by highlighting on different strategies and policies employed in poverty reduction. This would possibly be of great value to the GOL, NGOs and other organizations involved in policy formulation and implementation of development programmes. Many Basotho would also benefit from the information relating to poverty dynamics in the country. Furthermore, the results would contribute to the understanding of poverty as a multidimensional phenomenon, thereby improving the recently formulated PRSP. Finally, the findings may add to previous poverty studies conducted by researchers and statistical organizations in the country.

1.1.8 Ethical Considerations

Social actors engaged in the anti-poverty project often fear criticism from government or other organizations about the effects of their efforts in empowering marginalized and poor sections of society. It is therefore necessary to consider the moral norms surrounding their preoccupations. This gives an assurance that the consent and advice of government officials, private organizations and villagers will be sought before data collection. Moreover, the researcher will ensure that the identity, safety and freedom of the respondents to participate in the research are respected. Furthermore, the information they will provide and their anonymity will be kept confidential. Finally, the researcher will not subject the respondents to a situation of physical or psychological harm and measures intended for the reduction of potential risks will be provided (Goddard & Mellville, 2001).

1.1.9 Overview of the Methodology

In this research, both qualitative and quantitative perspectives were employed in the collection and analysis of data. The research mostly relied on the use of the qualitative perspective for the exploration, description and explanation of poverty. The researcher strongly believed that when used together, these approaches would enrich the study in terms

of reliability, validity and comparability. Moreover, purposive and snowball sampling techniques were employed to locate and identify the target population from which the sample was going to be drawn. The proportionality of the sample was not a major concern for the researcher provided that it well and sufficiently represented the population in the three villages. The researcher was mainly concerned with the robustness of the data collected and not necessarily large numbers of respondents consulted. Furthermore, the demands of the study required the researcher to use a questionnaire and some in-depth interviews. A few key informants in government service, voluntary agencies and community projects were consulted for responses. In order to achieve the intended goal, the questionnaire was administered to the poor rural households. The researcher bore in mind that many rural people might be illiterate. Hence, he sought help from some of the villagers for the filling in of the questionnaire. Finally, the researcher chose to use descriptive statistics because he was aware that some numerical applications would help to enrich the analysis. Descriptive statistics helped the researcher to summarise the data from the questionnaire.

1.2.0 Delimitations of the study

As shown earlier on, this research seeks to establish what has been achieved in the socio-economic development of the Basotho. The study attempts to measure the impact of various programmes and projects on the rural poor. It does not attempt to describe poverty measurements or monitoring systems but explores the contribution of government institutions, private voluntary agencies and other organizations involved in poverty reduction. Put in a different sense, the researcher seeks to find out what various institutions have already achieved in the anti-poverty project up to now. As such, the overarching mission of the study is to determine how the rural poor participate in development activities. This is because the theory that guides this research states that poverty results because some people do not participate as active members of their society (Oyen, Miller & Samad, 1996).

1.2.1 Problems and limitations of the study

This part of the dissertation deals with the problems that the researcher encountered when doing field work. It sheds light on problems that influenced the research process and the manner in which such impediments were dealt with.

The interview process was replete with unanticipated problems. One outstanding commonality was that most of the key informants did not receive the researcher warmly. This

was probably because they had already figured out what he had in store for them. The researcher perceived that he was regarded as somebody who had been deployed by the government to check on their progress. This was a general trend at most of the institutions visited, particularly government ministries. It was therefore very difficult to collect data at these places as some respondents simply turned down the agreement to be interviewed.

Moreover, in some of the institutions, officials refused to provide the researcher with reports or other reference materials to supplant the failed interviews. Even after being assured incessantly that the data was strictly going to be used for research, these respondents would not co-operate. Instead, they postponed the proposed interviews for more than three weeks. Nevertheless, respondents from voluntary agencies, Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs) and other independent private bodies were co-operative and willing to assist the researcher. Under these circumstances, the researcher struggled for more than a week to reach the intended number of interviewees. He feared that the inadequateness of the data collected would negatively affect the validity, reliability and results of the completed study. Nonetheless, the targeted number of interviewees was finally reached.

Also, most of the key informants were not willing to be tape-recorded and this forced the researcher to reformulate the interview strategy adopted previously. More detailed field notes had to be written for each interview to supplant the proposed transcription. Other interviews such the one held with rural road workers at Liphiring could not be tape-recorded due to the noise made by machinery (see photographs 1, 4 and 5 in Appendix D).

The researcher also encountered problems when conducting focus group discussions. Most people in two villages did not arrive punctually at the agreed rendezvous. This greatly hampered the performance of the researcher because he had to reformulate his schedule. It was only in one of the villages where participants were punctual. Some village chiefs who had agreed to convene meetings greatly delayed the process even though the times for commencement had been clearly stipulated. Although all meetings were to start at 8.00 am, a delay of two hours was the norm. Even when the discussion had already started, some participants arrived late and this greatly distracted the tone and motion of the process.

Some chiefs appeared reluctant to be part of the discussions whereby villagers were asked to give their own opinions about development in their villages. The researcher thought that this

was caused by their lack of confidence or a feeling of mistrust in outsiders. In the same way, it appeared that some chiefs feared that villagers would rebel against them whenever burning issues were raised. In one of the villages, this tended to limit democratic participation. A group discussion lasted for about two-and-a half hours but the response rate was not encouraging. One reason for this could have been that a participant who was chosen to nominate speakers used bias. Also, he did not allow some of the villagers to speak and this caused a row. The researcher had to intervene for the success of the discussion. It was evident that many speakers from both sexes could not participate freely. Women were particularly passive and this tended to hold down the robustness of the group discussions. The researcher's main worry was that limited information would be elicited from the respondents. In order to prevent this, the researcher frequently had to intervene so as to allay the fears of the chiefs. For instance, in one village, some of the people were accusing the chief of autocratic rule and exploitation of the subjects. The researcher managed to stop an imminent revolt and seriously warned the participants of the intent of the exercise. This problem prolonged the focus group discussions. Also, the intensely hot summer weather tended to reduce the endurance and participation of the villagers. Some of them were already offering to leave but their chiefs continuously asked them to keep their patience.

As the three villages are greatly distanced from each other, the researcher had to walk for six to eight kilometres. This is because they are not connected by a network of roads. More specifically, the rough terrain and rugged topography surrounding some of these villages made the researcher to be late for meetings.

Finally, in one village, a group discussion did not go well because the chief failed to inform subjects prior to the meeting. The researcher was therefore perplexed because people were scattered all over the village and most of them had gone out drinking. The researcher had to traverse the whole village looking for people to recruit for the discussion. At last, the discussion progressed though some of the people had to be sent away for disorderly conduct due to heavy drinking. Besides, as the discussion went on, many people complained about the absence of the chief but the researcher assured them that that would not affect the discussion negatively. Some of the people had to be brought to order most of the time. They wanted to speak all at the same time and that brought about much confusion. The researcher had to use a lot of patience to bring the discussion under control. This taught the researcher that rural people are generally unorganized and difficult to control. At last, the discussion generated

much valuable information. However, it was the most time-consuming of exercises undertaken in all the three villages.

1.2.2 **Organization of the dissertation**

This dissertation is divided into five chapters. The first chapter consists of the introduction or purpose of the research. It deals with the general background of the study, the problem statement and the professional significance of the problem under investigation. Also, this chapter provides a general overview of the methodology. Finally, it deals with the delimitations and key terms used in the study. In the second chapter, the literature is reviewed. First, an overview of how the chapter is organized is given. Second, the theoretical and empirical literature is reviewed according to its mode of organization. Third and final, a summary of previous research findings and how they relate to the study is provided. The third chapter focuses on the methodology employed in the study. To start with, a description of the general methodology is provided. Again, the research context, participants and instruments constitute the content of this chapter. Also, the procedures followed, analyses done and a general summary of the methodology are provided. The fourth chapter concentrates on the findings of the study. Initially, an overview of the chapter is given, followed by the presentation of results. In chapter five, the results are discussed, summarised and organized in terms of how the problem statement was posed. Finally, conclusions, implications for policy and recommendations bring the chapter to a close.

1.2.3 **Definitions of Key terms**

Absolute poverty: The highest condition of being poor, a situation whereby poverty has become chronic and pervasive (Becker, 1997; Khusro, 1999).

Capabilities: The basic capacities which enable people to function (Gordon & Spicker, 1999).

Deflationary Pressures: Decreasing the general price level (Stiglitz, 2002; Sapsford & Chen, 1998).

Deprivation: Lack of welfare understood in terms of material goods and resources needed for well being (Chelliah & Sudarshan, 1999).

Destitution: A total or virtually incomplete absence of resources, usually indicating extreme poverty (Gordon & Spicker, 1999).

Entitlements: Ways in which individuals or households command resources; right to use resources; support systems one can depend on such as family or clan relationships (Gordon & Spicker, 1999).

Gini-Coefficient: The most widely used measure of income inequality (Alcock, 1997).

GNP: It is the total value of goods and services produced in a country, including foreign exchange. The difference between GNP and GDP is that the latter excludes foreign exchange earnings (Gordon & Spicker, 1999).

Human Development Index: A yardstick used to compare living standards between countries; a composite of GNP per capita, life expectancy and educational attainment (Mittelman & Pasha, 1997; Handelman, 2003).

Incidence of poverty: Also, referred to as the headcount index. It is a poverty measure that shows the number of people below a given poverty line, expressed as a percentage of the population (May et al, 2002).

Livelihood: It refers to the capabilities, assets and activities required for a means of living; adequate stocks and flows of food or cash to meet people's basic needs (Carney, 1998).

Participatory Poverty Assessment: A method used to include poor people in the analysis of poverty with the objective of enabling them to influence policy. The poor are enabled to identify the root causes of their poverty (Robb, 2002; Fine, Lapavitsas & Pincus, 2003).

Poverty gap: the average income shortfall of the poor. It is the product of the headcount and the average distance of the poor below the poverty line. It is expressed in absolute terms or as a proportion of the poverty line (Alcock, 1997).

Poverty line: A threshold, in terms of income or wealth below which a person is considered to be poor (May et al, 2002).

Poverty Trap: A situation whereby people are locked into poverty for long periods of time (Barett & Ben, 2003).

Purchasing Power Parity: The number of units of the country's currency required to buy the same amount of goods and services in the domestic market as a dollar in the USA (Thirlwall, 1999).

PRSP: A national strategy drawn up by governments of low income countries. It targets government's expenditure on measures to reduce poverty (Panos, 2002).

Relative poverty: It defines poverty in relation to standards that exist elsewhere in society or between different people (Khusro, 1999).

Safety nets: Various transfer programmes meant for redistributing wealth and mitigating risk in poverty reduction (Chambers, 1993).

Security: Absence of one or more factors that enable individuals and families to assume basic responsibilities or enjoy fundamental rights (Gordon & Spicker, 1999).

Social capital: The level of social cohesion found in communities. It entails processes between people which establish networks, norms and social trust. It also, helps to facilitate coordination and cooperation for mutual benefits (Holland & Blackburn, 1998; Erika McAslan in Desai & Potter, 2002).

Social exclusion: It means being detached from the social order. People who are socially excluded do not participate in institutions of society. This concept replaces the narrow monetary approach to poverty (Saith, 2001).

Trade liberalization: The removal of quotas or tariffs in order to allow free trade (Stiglitz, 2002; Mandle, 2003).

Value chain analysis: It describes many activities involved in the production, distribution and consumption of goods and services (Kaplinsky & Morris, 2000).

Welfare: State of well-being; provision of benefits, goods and services to ensure well-being (Gordon & Spicker, 1999).

CHAPTER TWO

2.0.0 The Review of Literature

2.1.1 Introduction

Many people in Lesotho associate the prevalence of poverty, *inter alia*, with low levels of employment, education and income (BOS, 2002). This section explores what academic researchers have already postulated on poverty. As such, various definitions and conceptualisations of poverty are highlighted. Moreover, the effects of globalisation on poverty form a crucial aspect of this chapter. Also, the contribution of rural PWPs in poverty reduction is assessed with reference to the case studies of India and South Africa. The researcher believes that these would provide useful information on poverty reduction in Lesotho. Furthermore, the role community participation in poverty reduction constitutes another fundamental aspect of this chapter. In addition, some mainstream theories of poverty are reviewed. The experience and perception of poverty in Lesotho are dealt with towards the end of the chapter.

As highlighted in chapter one, the framework for this research evolves from the possibility of low community participation in Lesotho. This research is informed by Lakshman cited in Oyen, Miller & Samad (1996) who holds that success in poverty reduction rests on active and meaningful participation of the poor in development activities. Thus, this research seeks to test the validity of neoclassical theory of poverty, political economy theory and the participatory approach. The primary application of these theories is to generate a better understanding about the vulnerability, capabilities and social capital of the poor. More importantly, the research aims to find out how these theories attempt to provide a pathway out of poverty. The theory that best supports the contention of this research is the participatory approach (Oyen, Miller & Samad, 1996).

2.1.2. Definition of poverty

Poverty means lack of necessities needed to sustain a person's life. For instance, Narayan (2000) cites being short of housing, food and land as factors that indicate poverty. This means that poverty entails lack of access to multiple needs and it is a matter of physical deprivation. Therefore, if some people have a serious lack of certain material possessions, it means that there is inequality in society. However, it would be erroneous to equate poverty with inequality. This is because inequality exists within different social classes. It depends on the quantity and nature of resources one has. It is therefore implied that the efficiency of

poverty reduction rests on a comprehensive transfer of resources to the poor. Also, it is understandable that poor people are socially isolated and lack of resources makes them have a low standard of living. Poverty is also defined in terms of income and consumption based on the poverty line (Livi-Bacci & De Santis 1999; May, 2000; Thirlwall, 1999). This definition includes both individual and social welfare. In this case, poverty is understood as a situation of low welfare and being unable to meet one's basic needs. In a nutshell, it is apparent that impoverishment results from lack of resources. As a result, the poor benefit minimally from development activities because of low participation.

2.1.3 Conceptualizing poverty

Poverty is conceptualized as a multidimensional phenomenon (May, 2000; May, Woolard & Klassen, 1997). These authors argue that alienation from kinship ties in the community leads many people into poverty. Food is regarded as one of the factors assessed in judging whether people are poor or not. For instance, the authors put forward that the quality of food and the duration of its absence can help in reaching a conclusion about the poverty status in a household. People who go without quality food for a long time are regarded as poor according to this conception. However, this statement is flawed because some people may eat poor quality food and yet remain rich. They may do this because of personal preferences. The sources cited above further demonstrate that the facets of poverty include dilapidated housing conditions, insecure employment and use of inefficient forms of energy. Again, it may be argued that assessing people's well being mainly on what they do not have is inadequate. It is also vital to establish what the poor have since they are in a better position to describe their situation than anyone else. Besides, they know their multiple needs very well (World Bank, 2000). The information gathered from this source teaches that the poor ought to be given power and voice so that they could describe their situation. As a result, their vulnerability and isolation will be eased. This also means that poverty analysis requires a better understanding of the capabilities, livelihood patterns and the asset base of the poor. In addition, the determinants and manifestations of poverty need to be observed critically when poverty assessments are made.

Poverty is also understood as both an absolute and relative concept (Becker, 1997). Khusro (1999) maintains that poverty in developing countries can be referred to as absolute because it is chronic and pervasive. These authors argue that in these countries many people are trapped perpetually into poverty. However, this view does not take into account the movement in and

out of poverty as observed by Krishna (2003). They further point out that people could be judged poor based on how they are compared with others. They contend that poverty can be judged from people's participation in the economy. For instance, a poor peasant may be prevented from attending a school meeting because he or she lacks money for transport. As a consequence, shortcomings of this nature make them lose opportunities to challenge or influence decisions and policies that affect them.

2.1.4. Causes of poverty

As indicated earlier, poverty has many facets and this makes it easy to identify and distinguish between its major causes (Killick & White, 2001). However, these authors assert that it would be erroneous to generalize about poverty because it takes different forms in many contexts. Also, they show that the poor belong to various categories, follow diverse livelihood strategies and own different assets. It is apparent that some aspects of poverty could easily be missed out by analysis due to its multidimensionality. One also recognizes that some causes of poverty such as lack of material wealth are deep-seated and all emanate from social exclusion (Saith, 2001). In line with this reasoning, Saith (2001) argues that people who are socially excluded cannot participate in decision-making and have no control on their future because of insecurity.

One of the most common causes of poverty is urban bias. Lipton & Ravallion (1997) argue that development in a society tends to centre on urban areas while rural locations are neglected. These authors assert that urban bias is detrimental to growth and poverty reduction. This means that it is crucial to assess the location of poverty in order to determine who is poor. The multidimensionality of poverty explains why there is no one accepted theory of poverty that can establish a hierarchy of all causes. As such, differentiating between a cause and effect becomes a complexity. Furthermore, Killick & White (2001) contend that the slow growth of employment, environmental degradation and economic instability are attributed to the upsurge of poverty in many developing countries. They argue that this often eludes the strategies of policy makers in these countries. The authors explain that the failings of political systems and social forces cause poverty in these countries. For instance, it was mentioned earlier that the unfavourable political climate of September 1998 affected Lesotho's economy negatively. It was stressed that unemployment increased markedly as a result of political instability. Finally, the same authors argue that disability is another cause of poverty that compels households to meet extra needs. For instance, the provision of transport or special

aids to disabled people may be highly expensive to most people. This can adversely affect the economy of particular households. Having addressed the causes of poverty, it is necessary at this stage to view the concept in the context of globalisation. The globalisation-poverty link is discussed in the section below.

2.1.5 Globalisation and Poverty Reduction

In the modern world economy, production relations have become more diversified across countries because of the effect of globalisation. According to Richardson (2000) & Woods (2000), globalisation refers to a set of processes whereby worldwide social relations are intensified making the world one integrated whole. They argue that these processes have a profound and rapid impact on the social, political and economic institutions and lives of people in different countries. This means that there is an integration of economic, political and cultural relations between nation-states. Mittelman (2000) points out that such a syndrome of related processes penetrates across different societies and decentralizes capital movements at both national and international levels. In support to this, O'Rourke & Williamson (1999) state that the political economy of globalisation necessitates co-ordinated policy making above the nation-state.

It is apparent that the analysis of poverty and formulation of pro-poor policies in different countries need to be seen in the light of global processes. One of the discoveries of development studies is that a strong relationship exists between globalisation and poverty (Aisbett, 2003; Mandle, 2003; Round & Whalley, 2002). These authors assert that an understanding of this relationship necessitates consideration of the value chain analysis. On this issue, Kaplinsky & Morris (2000) hold that such an analysis helps to explain how the benefits of economic growth are distributed to those participating in the global economy. They argue that the value chain analysis helps countries to assess the extent to which participation in global markets determines the spread of gains from globalisation. They further point out that this framework is indispensable in understanding the dynamics of income distribution between firms, regions or countries and how they are linked to the global economy. This evidence highlights that the causal links between globalisation and inequality can then be well understood. This explains that the value chain analysis helps countries and firms to explore alternative strategies for poverty reduction and facilitates dialogue and improves on accountability. It is understandable that participation in value chains has the potential to reduce poverty substantially. Aisbett (2003) argues that the ever-growing gap

between the rich and poor has generated intense debate in the current global economy. The paragraphs below explain this link more elaborately.

The proponents of globalisation argue that the numbers of poor people have fallen during the global dispensation (Ravallion, 2003). They point out that the central issue in the globalisation-poverty debate is to consider both the total number of poor people and the incidence of poverty. According to this view, a decrease in the incidence of poverty prevents the total number of poor people from rising. It is deduced from the above claim that many people can be lifted out of poverty as a result of globalisation. The other observation made is that poverty also results from the failure of governments' economic and political systems. This argument is levelled against detractors who assert that poverty has increased during the era of globalisation (Dickson, 1997).

Also, the proponents blame the IMF and World Bank for their lack of transparency and accountability that bring deflationary pressures on poor countries. For instance, it is held that most of the economic problems in Africa are caused by lack of openness, excessive and inappropriate government intervention, leading to deepened social and political instability (South African Institute of Race Relations, 2000). Moreover, the structural reforms under the SAPs and liberalization policies of the IFIs are charged for these maladies in many developing countries. The above source states that reduced social spending by governments in many of these countries is a current burning issue in the globalisation debate. Both Stiglitz (2002) and De Sosa (2003) argue that these policies increased unemployment and led to low economic growth in many developing countries. They also show that they benefited the better-off while the majority faced sheer poverty. These authors explain that trade liberalization took place before safety nets were put into these countries. Thus, they vigorously assert that everyone can benefit from globalisation provided governments follow the right policies. Their main contention is that globalisation offers people, firms and countries ample opportunities for raising growth rates even though they may have to face competition and declining terms of trade for their products. It is understandable that a proper mode of participation in the global economy can provide sustainable growth for poor people in these countries. These countries are therefore encouraged to move from commodity production to manufacturing in order to attain success. The sources cited above agree that some people, countries and firms have benefited from global relations while many others became losers. This means that integration into the global economy does not guarantee gains.

For instance, Levinson (2000) and Kaplinsky (1998) argue that some countries experienced immiserising growth and falling standards of living for their people after globalising.

It is gathered from this body of evidence that the globalisation-poverty link has to be well understood before decisions are reached about poverty and inequality in countries. The World Bank and IMF therefore encourage firms and countries to fully integrate into the global system. It is emphasized that the manner in which integration takes place is given great significance. However, the globalisation-poverty debate just portrayed does not unpack the different aspects of globalisation and how they affect the poor. Besides, the detractors of globalisation do not refer to both the attributes and heterogeneity of the poor. The debate shows that the globalisation-poverty link constitutes a labyrinth of processes that could help to determine the incidence, severity and depth of poverty in different countries.

Poverty reduction in the global economy

From the debate, one can infer that poverty could be reduced if processes that lead to it are well understood. More importantly, the relationships that tie poverty and globalisation together need to be disaggregated for the improvement of people's participation, economic growth and living standards. According to the World Bank (2000), increasing openness to trade may hold good prospects for the creation of jobs and investment opportunities, thus benefiting many people. This source states that this can promote a more efficient use of resources and raise levels of productivity. Another benefit mentioned is that the transfer of skills, managerial expertise and technology would as well be invaluable to poverty reduction. As such, the processes that globalisation entail would also lead to increased access to industrialised countries' markets. However, the same source demonstrates that the competition involved in these processes is most likely to curtail the growth of incomes, investment and job creation, particularly in developing countries. This is why these countries are cautioned to provide safety nets so that they can benefit from global competition.

The source cited above further demonstrates that a massive attack on global poverty could be launched through a broad-based framework of people's participation in essential services such as health, education and infrastructure provision. It is disclosed that these may help to mitigate social and economic inequality, corruption and social strife that impede poverty reduction in developing countries. It is apparent that under such a social and economic milieu, the voices of the poor will better be heard in decision-making, policy or programme design

and evaluation of development projects. In this case, it would be realistic to foster broad-based sustainable economic growth. This means that a sound macro-economic framework with policies that promote low inflation, effective private sector activity and smooth integration into the global economy are indispensable. The theoretical evidence at hand strongly highlights the significance of equitable growth as a crucial ingredient of development in a global dispensation. In other words, it is explained that opportunities should be created for all.

It is perceived from the debate that there is dire need for investment in the human, physical and financial assets of the poor. For instance, the promotion of rural infrastructure, skills development and secured nutrition are essential in combating poverty. The first chapter portrayed that all these factors are in a low state in Lesotho. In addition, the provision of social protection to the poor and weaker people in society is seen as a step further in the reduction of vulnerability and proneness to poverty. Finally, subsidies targeted to the poor, public works, food-for-work programmes are mentioned as some of factors that could help to reduce poverty substantially if they are well planned. In this case, the East Asian experience is employed to show that participation in the global economy promotes economic growth and the living standards of the people. This body of evidence is relevant to poverty dynamics in Lesotho because this country is already part of the global economy. As such, the mechanisms of poverty reduction presented in this section are invaluable for the political economy of this country in the current global era.

The following section dwells on the mainstream theories of poverty as explained by different writers. Amongst them is the participatory theory that this research supports. As indicated in chapter one, this research contends that comprehensive poverty reduction rests on the full and meaningful participation of the poor in development activities.

2.1.6 Theories of poverty

The Neoclassical theory

This theory states that people's living standards could only be improved through the market mechanism (Oyen, Miller & Samad 1996). Its major tenet is that aggregate economic welfare, production and labour productivity ought to be maximized for the improvement of people's standards of living. It is held that these could be attained through the unbridled operation of market forces, improved technologies and efficiency (Desai & Potter, 2002). The assumption

is that all development activities are geared towards poverty reduction and the benefits of growth will trickle down to all people. For instance, these authors contend that the Green Revolution had positive economic and numerous other benefits for the poor in Sri Lanka, India. This example indicates that the rural economy in Sri Lanka was considerably transformed and many of the landless poor received good wages. This means that the achievement of economic growth would make poverty reduction a possibility. Poverty measures as such, are based on income and consumption. In general terms, this theory entirely attributes poverty to lack of physical or material resources. The first chapter has shown that there is a high incidence of poverty in Lesotho. Hence, the government believes that the improvement of economic growth is beneficial to poverty reduction.

A different view is that poverty is not just about income but also entails deprivation of resources, opportunities and choices (Robb, 2002; Cawthra, Helman-Smith & Moloji, 2001). Their main contention is that other dimensions highlighted in Participatory Poverty Assessments (PPAs) are given little emphasis. Thus, Chelliah & Sudarshan (1999) argue that using income as a single criterion for describing poverty can be misleading. Oyen, Miller & Samad (1996) also maintain that market-led policies have had adverse effects on the poor in the past. The Punjab in India is given as an example of a society where the poor benefited little from economic growth. According to this conception, markets on their own may not help to ease the burden of the poor in many countries. As such, regulation or government intervention is recommended as an option in efforts meant to support the poor. Thus, the current study seeks to test the applicability of this theory with regard to the socio-economic impact of poverty reduction in the three villages mentioned in the first chapter. This research proposes that economic growth is essential for poverty reduction. However, from the evidence given above, the researcher argues that the poor in Lesotho can be uplifted from poverty only if the produced wealth becomes available to them. The information regarding the economic boom in this country showed that the growth levels were high but the poor did not have access to the generated wealth.

Political Economy Theory

It is contended that poverty is a function of economic and social processes in society (Alcock, 1997). In particular, the author asserts that there is a conflict for resources between the rich and the poor. As such, divergent interests of various classes in society are attributed to the existence and persistence of poverty. This means that the poor are denied their legitimate

share of benefits that should necessarily accrue to them. The author also highlights that the poor lack the power to exert their influence in this competition for resources with the rich. This incapacity is seen as resulting from powerful forces that deny the poor access to wealth. It is gathered that the concept of class determines access to available resources in society. In this way, the neoclassical theory of poverty is refuted for assuming harmonization of interests between the rich and the poor. Also, poverty is attributed to the failure of the state's anti-poverty policies. In this sense, poverty is seen as a failure of political will to respond to the plight of the weak and marginalized sections of society. In the first chapter, it was pointed out that the GOL is highly committed to poverty reduction but as the theory states this did not correspond with the political will of the government.

This theory also holds that poverty is an outcome of the history of underdevelopment whereby one group or class derives benefits at the expense of the other (Oyen, Miller & Samad, 1996). For instance, one can argue that poverty in rural areas needs to be understood as the absence of resources caused by their centralization in urban areas. This means that the poverty situation in Lesotho may have been caused by the exclusive uplift of the urban areas by the government. So, it is not difficult in such a situation to predict the fate of the poor taking into consideration historical circumstances. The meaning derived in this case is that poverty is created.

However, this theory does not provide many options for the reduction of poverty. Divergent interests of different classes in society may not be solely held responsible for the persistence of poverty. This is because the ruling classes stand a good chance of intervening in the political economy of a nation or society. Such an intervention would greatly be in the interests of weaker classes. The current poverty situation in Lesotho is an indication that development was mostly benefiting a few rich people. This was made clear in chapter One. Also, major stakeholders in government have the capacity to influence the workings of the market in favour of all classes. Another flaw realized in this theory is that governments may be committed to poverty reduction but lack proper and efficient ways of facilitating community participation. Finally, this theory does not seem to incorporate or embrace the multidimensionality of poverty as only a few causes of poverty are mentioned. Nevertheless, the substance of this theory qualifies it for inclusion in the study because it refers to limited

participation of the poor in development processes and urban bias. These are central to this research and have adequately been addressed in the first chapter.

The participatory approach

This theory argues that the poor could be helped out of poverty if they participate in development activities (Oyen, Miller & Samad, 1996). It states that people become poor when they do not have an opportunity to take part in the formulation and implementation of social and economic policy. In this way, they get a limited share of the benefits derived from economic growth. If they become active participants in the generation of growth, their right to resources will be ensured. Furthermore, these authors argue that lack of influence in decision-making leads to poverty. The cardinal point suggested here is that the empowerment of the poor rests on the promotion of growth and equity. As Mammo (1999) rightly argues, interventions in poverty reduction need to entail a balanced mix of bottom-up and top-down approaches for real social change. A pertinent issue is that poor people need to be involved throughout the process of innovation, thus making technologies to address their real needs. In other words, this theory supports the idea that capacity building could be beneficial for the empowerment of the poor. The advantage of this theory is that it opens the scope for dialogue and participation of the intended beneficiaries. Also, it has the potential to elicit people's own analysis of their poverty situation and low well being as well as, deepen their understanding of different dimensions of poverty that affects them (Laderchi, 2001). As indicated earlier on, the researcher strongly believes that the high incidence of poverty in Lesotho could be attributed to low participation of the poor in the economy.

It is further argued that participatory approaches are not adequately applied in development projects and programmes (Marais, 1997; Menter, 2002). These authors assert that as a consequence, enough space is not created for people to share ideas. This means that different institutions and local organizations need to change people's attitudes and opinions through their active involvement. On this issue, Chelliah (1999) adds that the plurality of organizations in communities can facilitate community participation. This theory also holds that most rural areas are isolated because project staff lack time to visit them because of their bad communication infrastructure. The authors indicate that lack of resources often obstructs the proper use of these approaches and this sometimes tempts project agencies to promise beneficiaries unrealistic benefits.

Also, the same sources portray that some staff from government institutions may be resistant to change, thus hampering participatory approaches. It is understandable that this tends to reinforce lack of commitment and passive involvement of communities in projects. It is apparent from the evidence given that real social change can be brought about if societies institutionalize participatory approaches properly (Menter, 2002). This means that people need to witness participatory approaches firsthand for their empowerment. A difficult situation mentioned about these approaches is that they may not be free from cultural biases (Chelliah, 1999). To cite an example, this author argues that wealth ranking is most likely to be problematic as a few individuals may dominate groups. This means that such individuals may then be reluctant to rank themselves, their relatives or influential people in the community. The following section deals with the role of PWPs in poverty reduction. The South African and Indian case studies are used as concrete examples.

2.1.7 Public Works Programmes (PWPs) and Poverty Reduction

There is strong agreement that PWPs play a crucial role in rural development and poverty reduction (Hirway & Terhal, 1994). These authors argue that PWPs provide relief to people in times of disasters such as famines, floods and drought. They maintain that through PWPs, many governments in developing countries create jobs for the poor in order to help them resist shocks and recover their lost sources of livelihood. It is indicated that PWPs are earmarked for economic development and environmental protection. These authors point out that these works are usually organised on short notice and the most vulnerable groups are targeted so that they could be relieved from acute deprivation. Judging from these accounts, it is evident that PWPs will continue to be important in developing countries for a considerable period of time.

It is universally assumed that lack of paid employment is the prime reason for the prevalence of poverty in rural and urban areas (Cassen, 1994). This author argues that PWPs can provide substantial poverty relief if they are more labour-intensive so that they can provide more employment. As indicated in the first chapter, the researcher believes that PWPs can play a significant role in improving the socio-economic status of the rural poor in Lesotho. The GOL clearly states that PWPs have helped to lift a considerable number of Basotho out of severe poverty (MODP, 2001). The researcher intends to find out how PWPs have helped the poor in the three villagers selected for research. The above evidence shows that these programmes could benefit the poor by addressing their basic needs.

From the above paragraphs, one can argue that the sustainability and employment generation of PWPs would depend primarily on how they are planned, targeted and implemented. Also, the mode of participation of rural people in PWPs would certainly depend on how the implementing agency is involved. It is conceivable that PWPs can help to improve investment, income distribution and employment generation in various poor communities. The concrete examples of India and South Africa would provide more evidence.

Public Works Programmes in India

According to Hirway and Terhal (1994), the National Rural Employment Programme (NREP) and the Rural Landless Employment Guarantee Programme (RLEGP) were the first PWPs that covered the whole country from 1980 and 1990. These authors maintain that these programmes were implemented to serve the needs of the rural poor and minimum wages of unskilled agricultural workers were used as the standard for paying the workers. They also demonstrate that these works were fully funded by the central government and voluntary agencies. It is further explained that they included construction of houses for the poor, schoolrooms and tree planting. Another aspect noted is that projects such as rural sanitary latrines, roads and minor irrigation works were also components of PWPs. The section below discusses their impact on beneficiaries.

The authors cited above indicate that both programmes had corruption problems from the beginning. They hold that powerful political leaders twisted the programmes to benefit their own areas and as a result, backward and remote areas were frequently left out, thus reinforcing uneven development. In this way, better-off groups were subsidized at the expense of the poor majority. A major problem mentioned was the poor administration of the works that led to poor performance, particularly in Eastern India. It is further highlighted that the total income and employment impact of these programmes was minimal. For instance, it is disclosed that workers were paid wages much lower than the minimum levels. The information elicited further teaches that there was more corruption in Western India where officials manipulated the records in order to cheat and exploit the workers. Another commonality about these programmes is that the work was so hard that only the poorest or desperate of the workers were prepared to do it.

The authors argue that these works entailed poor maintenance and a great wastage of resources mainly because of poor planning. As a result, the assets that were chosen did not correspond with the needs and priorities of particular regions. The cited authors also state that because the PWPs were biased towards the construction of buildings, they did not generate more employment for the people. Finally, the evidence shows that the assets formed were of low quality due mainly to inadequate supervision by the technical staff.

It is further remarked that women's participation in these programmes was relatively limited even though their number was high. The reason for this was that the work sites were not always suitable for women. It is understandable that the work involved should have been too heavy for women. In particular, long working hours should have prevented women from doing domestic responsibilities in their families. Generally, the above evidence shows that the two programmes failed to improve the people's standard of living and reduce poverty in India. The following section deals with the South African experiences of PWPs.

Public Works Programmes in South Africa

It is argued that PWPs in South Africa were from the beginning targeted to both rural and urban areas (South African Government-White Paper, 1997; Adato & Haddad, 2002). These sources indicate that the central aim of the government was to educate and train people for economic empowerment through these works. In other words, they were designed to instil a spirit of self-reliance in local economic development. The prime motive of the implementing agency was also to reinforce local government institutions in their efforts to foster community development (Hoddinot et al, 2001). Similarly, as in the case of India referred to earlier, PWPs were principally designed to create, rehabilitate and maintain physical assets that meet the needs of the poor. In this regard, the government stressed community participation in infrastructural development. All the cited sources show that these works were invaluable for human resource development, income generation and support for Small, Medium and Micro enterprises (SMMEs). In this case also, they were funded by the national government and their success lay in the co-operation and co-ordination of different NGOs, Community-Based Organizations (CBOs) and government structures. The same sources highlight that PWPs in South Africa were proposed as a component of development strategies by the Research and Development Programme (RDP) and Growth Employment And Redistribution strategy (GEAR). However, it is highlighted that because of poor institutional structures and low funding, these programmes did not bring intended outcomes.

These two sources cited above further demonstrate that poor allocation weakened the effect of the PWPs on the poor. Moreover, the authors state that these works were not well targeted in terms of poverty, unemployment and infrastructure provision. For instance, they hold that some districts with high unemployment had no PWPs. They argue that funds usually went to areas that already had more resources. Also, the White Paper (1997) clearly stipulates that as the works were widely politicised and controversies arose with respect to setting a prescribed wage. Also, it is indicated that there were problems in the allocation of the budget. It is shown that as a result of these impediments, PWPs in South Africa were implemented in an ad hoc manner.

Furthermore, the same sources highlight that even though community members were granted an opportunity to select workers, women were often excluded. It is also noted that the labour-intensity of these PWPs was contradicted by global competitiveness that introduced highly capital-intensive technology, thus limiting participation and employment opportunities for the poor. These problems were attributed to lack of professional expertise, technical design and programme management. As in the case of India referred earlier, their implementation failed to respond to the needs of the poor. The following section discusses the role of community participation in poverty reduction.

2.1.8 Community participation and poverty reduction

2.1.9 Conceptualisation of participation

As note earlier on, many authors agree that the poor are passively involved in the planning and evaluation of development programmes (Mullen, 1999; Francis & James, 2003; Moser (1989) cited in Broltman, 1996). These authors point out that a proper understanding of participation at all levels is essential for community empowerment. It is deduced from the above statement that people should be involved as the cause and consequence of development in their societies. This means that they have to be actively involved as subjects accountable for the evolution of social change in their communities, thus defining their production relations. In such a milieu, they are given control and power to decide their destiny. Therefore, it is understandable that the objectives of community participation have to be known by the beneficiaries. Also, it follows that participation gives beneficiaries control and power over their development. In support to this, Mammo (1999) states that participation

presupposes people's ability to share decision-making and distribution of power. It is apparent that enhancing community participation is most likely to improve democratic decentralization. In line with this reasoning, the World Bank (1999) maintains that this gives the poor voice to influence decisions concerning their well being. It is gathered that participation should go beyond information-sharing and beneficiaries have to be enabled to initiate action and take part in decision-making processes (Mikkelsen, 1995; Abers, 2000).

The notion portrayed according to this framework is that the poor should not be merely regarded as passive receivers of benefits from governments or voluntary agencies. Rather, these agents of change need more input from the poor if the objective is to empower them. The cardinal issue is that the poor should be treated as partners in development. This means that participation entails policy commitment and a sense of ownership in community development. Stiglitz (1999) maintains that participation means reintegrating people who were previously excluded in policy formulation. The above conceptualizations indicate that through active participation, development agents can successfully mobilise and organize the people. This also shows that social transformation, justice and greater equality can be achieved for the beneficiaries.

2.2.0 Participation defined

Community participation is subject to a variety of interpretations by development scholars and analysts (Parfitt, 2004). As such, it is not easy to define it. Some people would even say that it is not possible to define community participation. However, certain authors attempted to define it basing their understanding of development in different contexts. Brozman (1996) refers to community participation as the equitable sharing of the benefits of a project whereby people contribute to decision-making and have control over resources. According to this definition, beneficiaries have an opportunity to influence decisions taken at all levels.

In this sense, one can argue that participation from the grassroots is ideal because it entails voluntary and autonomous public action. A right mix of bottom-up and top-down approaches would be recommended in development since voluntary agencies and governments often have to work together within communities. Decision-making and planning systems need to balance for all major stakeholders. In this situation, most people would advocate co-ordination and a balance of communication so that communities are not forced to act on decisions taken exclusively by outsiders. In other words, genuine participation gives local people democratic

control over project decision-making. Therefore, it is understandable that people's involvement, their ingenuity and skills can facilitate implementation, thus responding to their legitimate needs and priorities. In support to this, Michener (1998) maintains that participation should respond to people's felt needs. This clarifies the fact that the joint or collaborative involvement of the beneficiaries and agents of change is the hallmark of community participation. Finally, community participation as explained in this case entails self-help and self-reliance as strategies that can motivate communities to action. These sources demonstrate that Participatory Rural Appraisal (PRA) is mostly used to enhance community participation. Thus, the role of PRA in poverty research is discussed below.

2.2.1 The role of PRA in poverty research

The researcher contends that community participation in Lesotho could be enhanced if PRA is applied properly. The high incidence of poverty in Lesotho could partly be ascribed to a weak application of participatory techniques in community development. Finally, the field work that will be undertaken by the researcher would most likely be informative and educative about the application of PRA in Lesotho by development agents. In chapter one, it was clearly shown that in the preparation of the Lesotho PRSP, amongst other major stakeholders, NGOs were selected by the TWG because they employ participatory techniques. Also, the application of PRA by these agents will be understood better as the central argument of this dissertation is that community participation has the potential to promote poverty reduction. Hence, the significance of including the role of PRA in this research rests on these premises.

It is generally assumed that through participation, people can share knowledge and use it to direct their development (Turner & Hulme, 1997; World Bank, 1999). These authors point out that PRA enables development workers and project agencies to better access many illiterate and poor rural people through a learning process. It is inferred from this understanding that when applied effectively, PRA can help to bridge communication gaps between all social actors involved.

Moreover, the fact that PRA employs a multi-disciplinary approach, it becomes easier to cover all aspects of poverty (Ferraz & Munslow, 1999; Brock & Mcgee, 2002). It is perceived that beneficiaries would be enabled to systematically analyze, prioritize and solve their problems. As a result, they will be in a better position to draw up programmes of action, using their own resources (Meier & Stiglitz, 2001). These sources underline that PRA relies

mainly on low-cost resources available locally. This implies that local resources such as indigenous knowledge and skills need to be incorporated into rural development and poverty reduction. This would enable the poor to contribute actively in the planning, design and evaluation of development programmes. As Williams (2004) rightly points out, control is handed over to the people, thus making power holders visible to the people and vice versa. These authors assert that in PRA circles, beneficiaries are given a leeway to think critically and reflect on their situation, thus contributing to project performance. However, PRA has also been found to have some limitations. The following paragraphs seek to clarify this point.

A major pitfall mentioned about this method is that its practitioners are not able to redress conflicts and dissolve unequal power relations among communities (Parfitt, 2004; Williams, 2004). It is highlighted that in this way, PRA reinforces unequal development. As such, interventions meant to deal with the poverty situation could easily benefit the powerful and well-off groups. Moreover, since communities are heterogeneous, some individuals could silence or coerce others to adopt particular ideas. For instance, some powerful leaders may use their power wrongly by repressing community members. Thus, the authors assert that PRA exercises ought to challenge undemocratic practices in order to give the poor voice and power.

Another limitation noted about the use of PRA is that project staff may be accountable to their donors and not communities (Nelson, 1997; Blackburn & Holland, 1998). In similar vein, Brett (2003) expresses serious concern that since PRA meetings are usually called by external agencies, the information they elicit may be determined by their objectives. Over and above that, he contends that project decisions usually remain in their hands. This means that this can greatly compromise their accountability to local communities. Besides, shifting control of resources to the people may be a difficult process. Also, it is apparent that such development agents are most likely to have a different agenda from that of the beneficiaries. As a result, donors may get more leverage to determine development in the community contrary to people's needs and priorities. At this juncture, it becomes easier for the government or other development agents to undermine local-level initiative. For instance, grassroots groups may seldom be consulted about their desires by agents of change who could even assume that they know better than local communities. This then, is antithetical to the participatory development paradigm that advocates more involvement of beneficiaries in the affairs that affect them.

It is deduced that there is need for strong accountability so that the poor could be empowered as free subjects in development. It is deduced from the reviewed sources that a strong partnership between external agencies and the beneficiaries is needed. The next section addresses community participation in Lesotho. It builds on what has been alluded to in the previous sections.

2.2.2 Poverty in Lesotho

2.2.3 Community participation in Lesotho

The available evidence shows that some activities are undertaken to enhance community participation in the economy (MODP, 2001). This source reveals that the government involves major stakeholders in the poverty monitoring system through workshops. It is explained that through these gatherings, users are given an opportunity to raise their views on the data collected by the BOS. Also, it is disclosed that the main purpose of this exercise is to ensure that the poverty monitoring system in the country has strong and independent influence on policy and programme design (MODP, 1999). As noted in chapter one, the GOL finances some community projects as a way of decentralizing services to poor communities and creating employment opportunities (IDA & IMF 2001; PANOS, 2002). It is further maintained that the government expanded the TWG membership to 40 since March 2001 to include aid agencies, NGOs and CBOs for enhancing community participation in the evaluation of the PRSP.

Furthermore, it is portrayed that extensive consultations were held by the TWG since 2000 in all electoral constituencies to prepare for the PRSP (Gay & Hall, 2000; MODP, 2003). The authors argue that these processes were backed up by trained staff from government sectors, NGOs and CBOs. It is further held that communication media and national fora were employed to streamline the process by eliciting and disseminating information from the beneficiaries.

However, these authors argue that such workshops have not been seen as user-friendly by some of the stakeholders involved. They demonstrate that users are not yet sufficiently involved in the decision-making functions regarding poverty issues. It is also, highlighted that the ownership of the data is compromised as users have not been afforded an opportunity to discuss their affairs freely. This means that there was no two-way communication process because the users were not involved in decision-making. It is apparent that community

participation has been passive because top-down approaches assumed a dominant character. In such a situation, only information-sharing and consultation could be expected. It appears that there has been no open dialogue and transparency of information (Palast, Oppenheim & MacGregor, 2003). This also means that the users of the data only have to comment on proposed decisions. Besides, it is evident that the rights and interests of the users were not balanced and well represented in the proceedings. It is deduced from the above evidence that community participation is limited even though policy makers involve many stakeholders in the poverty monitoring system. Besides, the ways through which users are involved in the process are not clearly spelt out. Thus, the whole process of participation has tended to be more broad than deep. More importantly, it is not reflected how the poor experience participation as their voices are not clearly represented in the information elicited. Therefore, as Laws, Harper & Marcus (2003) rightly point out, such processes were bound to involve limited or no transformation in power relations.

The researcher concludes that community participation in the anti-poverty project has been limited mainly because the final responsibility for decision-making rested with policy makers and administrators. In the following section, community participation is judged based on the experience and perception of poverty in Lesotho. The general picture of poverty presented covers all ecological zones and major social indicators of development are used as the criterion for assessing the poverty situation.

2.2.4 The Experience and perception of Poverty in Lesotho

The evidence shows that many Basotho experience poverty in terms of low educational standards (BOS, 2002; MODP, 2000). The major problems mentioned include a shortage of educational resources such as teaching materials and qualified teachers. Moreover, the rising costs of education and distance walked to school are regarded as some of the primary reasons for low enrolments. At this juncture, the BOS (2003) reports that low rates of school attendance have been recorded at varying degrees in the 10 districts. For instance, Mofale's Hoek, Mokhotlong and Thaba-Tseka are districts that were found to have the lowest rates of school attendance (BOS, 2000). Their school attendance rates are shown as 55.5%, 52.7% and 49.0%, respectively. Attendance levels are said to be lowest for children from female-headed households, particularly in rural and mountain areas. These sources also illustrate that the dropout syndrome is common in these areas. It is understandable that this

situation adversely affects the quality of education in the country.

It is further reported that regarding the provision of water and sanitary facilities, little has been done in both rural and urban areas. According to the BOS (2002), 40% of the rural areas still lack basic water services and 30% of the rural water systems are not working because of poor maintenance. The evidence shows that public taps and boreholes are the main water sources for households. For instance, it is stressed that 46.4% of rural households still draw water from unprotected sources. These sources demonstrate that Moleleke's Hoek and Quthing were among districts that had the lowest percentage of households that use safe drinking water. As a result, many people do not have access to adequate sanitary facilities. As such, the high incidence of water-borne diseases and intestinal infections that mostly affect about 20% of the children under the age of five is partly attributed to this situation. It is indicated that these infections raise the incidence of infant mortality and morbidity. All the sources cited above note that this situation is more serious in remote rural and mountain areas.

Another serious and widespread problem mentioned is that many people, particularly in rural areas, are far away from hospitals and only a few villages have health clinics. A difficult situation experienced by most rural dwellers is that medical charges are very high and this motivates many rural people to resort to traditional healers. It is also highlighted that most rural households carry a heavier burden of caring for the chronically sick than those in towns. These sources state that female-headed households feel this burden more than their male counterparts. This shows that the situation for health services is deteriorating. For instance, it is clearly indicated that malnutrition and Tuberculosis are increasing (BOS, 2000). Sexually Transmitted Diseases (STDs) are reported to be the most common cause of patient morbidity with HIV/AIDS becoming a major threat, particularly in urban areas. Moreover, it is held that the nutritional status of the people is very low with almost 18% of the children below the age of five reported underweight and 4% regarded as severely so (BOS, 2000). It is further shown that 45% of the children are stunted and 5.4% wasted. Of all ecological zones, the mountains and foothills were found to have a higher proportion of children in these categories. This source also points out that Moleleke's Hoek displays a higher proportion of malnourished children.

The same source demonstrates that many households in Lesotho do not have access to modern sources of energy such as electricity. The BOS (2002) notes that about 58.2% of the

households use paraffin for lighting, 35.5% candles and 4.4% electricity, respectively. For instance, it is shown that in Mohale's Hoek and Quthing, 70% of the households use paraffin for lighting. Also, it is reported that about 69.8% of rural residents as opposed to 2.6% in urban areas use firewood for cooking. It was found from this survey that more people in urban than rural areas use gas. A striking commonality is that most of the rural poor rely heavily on the use of firewood, crop residue and animal waste. This was also found by (May et al 1998) when conducting one poverty study in South Africa.

Also, poor asset ownership was attributed to the persistence and prevalence of poverty in Lesotho. The exception to this is that many people were found to own land but remaining poor. The BOS (2002) states that many rural households do not own assets such as cars, radios and bicycles due to bad terrain, poor communications and high poverty levels. Poor asset ownership is attributed to a high dependency ratio estimated at 80 as shown in chapter one.

2.2.5 Summary

This chapter has shown that most developing countries are characterized by a high incidence of poverty. The globalisation-poverty debate has disclosed that the major causes of poverty have not been well explored generally. However, it has been uncovered that globalisation can benefit countries and poor people provided countries follow the right policies. Amongst all theories reviewed, the participatory approach provides a clearer pathway out of poverty. Furthermore, the case studies on PWP's show that development greatly misses the poor in many societies. This was found to lead to low community participation and unsustainable poverty reduction. The major outcome of this review is that many communities are not fully and meaningfully involved in the design, implementation and evaluation of development programmes. This coincides with the focus of this research. In addition, much evidence shows that poverty in Lesotho is a serious phenomenon that needs urgent attention. All the indicators assessed above portray chronic poverty that affects many households in the country. Previous research exhibits that programmes weakly respond to the needs of the poor. Besides, such programmes do not help the poor to recover their lost livelihoods. It is displayed that as a result, the socio-economic status and overall living standards of the poor worsened and poverty deepened. This chapter has highlighted that several poverty reports and policies were developed in Lesotho between 1991 and 1994. However, problems of implementation have been discerned in the literature reviewed. It is evident that the government had strong

commitment for poverty reduction but lacked proper and efficient ways of facilitating community participation. The sequel to this was a slow decentralization process and deepened poverty. Also, it is strongly stated that most of the wealth generated during the 1980s was not used for poverty reduction. It is apparent that it mostly benefited well-off groups. As referred to earlier on, the next chapter deals with the methodology employed in this research.

CHAPTER THREE

3.1.1 Research Design

This is a descriptive and exploratory study. Both qualitative and quantitative approaches were employed to complement each other in the analysis of data. The researcher wanted to enrich the study and provide for comparability, accuracy and reliability of the data collected (Glatthorn, 1998; Byrne, 2002). The qualitative approach helped the researcher to be acquainted with how people in the three villages experience and perceive poverty. The quantitative approach was also instrumental in testing the data for obtaining the results that helped the researcher to explain the phenomenon of poverty more comprehensively. The prime aim of the researcher was to maximize the validity of data collected. These two approaches therefore required the researcher to use interviews and questionnaires as primary instruments of data collection. Since the study assumed the nature of a survey, a case study was adopted as a general research approach. The case study was used to obtain complete responses using different categories of the selected sample. Also, the survey enabled the researcher to study closely the association between chosen variables more conveniently. Moreover, during the research process, the survey helped to offer more accountability and transparency in the methods and procedures used. In addition, the results were obtained at greater depth and tended to respond to earlier research results. Finally, the boundaries between poverty as a phenomenon and the specific context of the research were made clear. This was because multiple sources of evidence were used to explore, describe and explain the real focus of the study.

3.1.2 Context of the study

The research was conducted at Liphiring, Majapereng and Qhalasi. These villages fall under the Taung ward in the Mohale's Hoek district. They are located in the dry South Western lowlands of the country, immediately below Qhalasi and Qhalasana mountains. The area chief is found at Liphiring which is about 30 minutes drive from town. Due to poor economic conditions and nearness to the South African border, many people from this village have been migrating to the South African mines and farms. Some of the people from this village are now permanent citizens of South Africa. Qhalasi is found on the right-hand side of Qhalasana mountain about five kilometres from the Mafeteng-Mohale's Hoek road. The principal chief of Taung resides in this village. Majapereng is situated on the Southern side of Qhalasana mountain and close to Makhalleng River in the east. These villages are characterized by deteriorated pasturelands, deep dongas (see photograph 2 in Appendix D), and low rainfall as

well as, frequent droughts. All these factors seem to have posed a threat to the sustainability of livelihoods. Furthermore, from close observation, the researcher found that each of these villages has more than 200 households with a few people having better houses. Finally, amongst all the three villages, Liphiring is more endowed with the social infrastructure. For instance, it has a clinic, police station and two schools.

3.1.3 Population

The research used non-probability sampling methods because it was not easy or even feasible to determine the likelihood of including all the representative elements of the population into the sample (Babbie, 1999). In other words, a complete list of the whole population was not available for drawing a representative sample. It was not easy to figure out or know how many poor people were in each village. Snowball and purposive sampling techniques were combined to reach the targeted sample quickly and obtain better results. This consorts well with Babbie & Mouton (2001) where they indicate that the proportionality of the sample is not a primary concern in purposive sampling. Both techniques worked well together. This particular section of the report describes the methodology used in estimating the total population for the study. A few villagers who later became part of the sample helped the researcher to identify poor people in each village. This was not a difficult process because the chiefs also lent their hands by encouraging their subjects to co-operate with the researcher.

Data collection was carried out from the 8th to 25th November 2003. However, five interviews could not be conducted because some of the respondents turned down their promises to be interviewed. As a result, the researcher decided to look for others who would provide information related to the research. At last, these interviews were conducted on 18th January 2004 and lasted for five days. The following section provides issues that relate to the sample selected for this research. Consequently, a rough estimate of the population of poor people was reached in each of the three villages.

3.1.4 Sample

The use of sampling techniques mentioned above revealed that 75 people were regarded very poor at Qhalasi, 61 at Liphiring and 50 at Majapereng. The main characteristics observed were education, income and unemployment. This was to be typical of the population under investigation. Then, the researcher drew a total of 20 subjects from each village to fill in the questionnaire. The total number of subjects who filled in the questionnaire was 60. Also, 27

more subjects were drawn from the total population from each village to be part of the focus groups, totalling 81 subjects. Three chiefs, three teachers and three nurses were added to make the discussions more organized. The total number of respondents who participated in the focus group discussions was 90. Moreover, eight interviewees from the government and private organizations were added to the sample. The grand total for the sample was 158 subjects. Table 3.00 below shows the different categories of the selected sample, methods and places where data were collected.

Table 3.00

Respondent	Sample Size	Research Method	Place of data collection
Poor Households	60	Questionnaires	Qhalasi, Majapereng
	90	Focus groups	Liphiring
CARE	1	Interviews	Mohale's Hoek
World Vision Field Coordinator	1	Interviews	Mohale's Hoek
WFP Field Monitor	1	Interviews	Mohale's Hoek
DMA	1	Interviews	Mohale's Hoek
Senior Crops Officer	1	Interviews	Mohale's Hoek
Road worker	1	Interviews	Liphiring
Road Supervisor	1	Interviews	Liphiring
Principal-Taung Skills centre	1	Interviews	Liphiring

N= 158

Though everything appeared to be in order, the research process brought about significant changes to the target population. Problems of non-participation by most respondents from the government and prolonged absence of others made it impossible for the researcher to stick to proportions developed earlier in the study. All the data were collected using different methods from the sample mentioned above.

It is noteworthy to state that the study was not so much based on large numbers of participants but the robustness of the information obtained from the interviews. The idea was to develop a deeper understanding of the experience and perception of poverty in the three villages as well as, the effects of measures undertaken to reduce it. The study relied mostly on the use of semi-structured interviews and a structured questionnaire to capture validity, accuracy and comparability of responses. The researcher chose to enlarge the focus groups in order to obtain a wider picture of the nature of poverty in the three villages. More importantly, such a sizeable sample would be pertinent for interpreting and summarizing the data with the use of descriptive statistics. Also, the information from the focus groups was intended to give more vigour to the rest of the data collected.

3.1.5 Questionnaires

Prior to data collection, questionnaires and the interview schedule were pre-tested for validity and reliability (Howard et al, 2002). The researcher asked some students from the University of Kwazulu-Natal to give their comments on both instruments. In order to ensure the reliability of data, each type of instrument was administered several times to different people in order to prove its consistency. This process helped the researcher to identify problems and any benefits the instruments would have in the study. The researcher's aim was to understand the frame of reference of these instruments and how they were supposed to be worded. All this was done to improve the design, measurement and administration of the instruments. For instance, the researcher wanted the instruments to successfully represent the phenomenon under study. The researcher also sought to draw conclusions on the relationship between the variables employed. Finally, the main aim of the researcher was to make the selected sample as representative as possible of the population from which it was drawn (Babbie, 1999).

In each village, the researcher distributed 20 questionnaires to be filled in by the respondents. However, the respondents quickly informed the researcher that they could not understand English very well. Others just bluntly indicated that they are not educated at all. This was a clear indication that most rural people are illiterate. So, the researcher got into the task of posing questions to each respondent and noting down the responses on the questionnaire. This task was laborious and very time-consuming. As the work became less manageable, the researcher asked teachers, priests and nurses for help in the filling of the questionnaire. This strategy worked successfully because a few villagers were given enough training by the researcher. The same procedure was followed in the other two villages. However, the

researcher waited for all the questionnaires to be filled in and returned for fear that some villagers might not be co-operative in his absence. The researcher realized that questionnaires were more reliable in data collection as opposed to semi-structured interviews and focus group discussions. All the questionnaires were answered and collected on the same day in each village.

3.1.6 Interviews

A total of two interviews were tape-recorded so that they would be transcribed later. However, six other interviews could not be tape-recorded because the respondents were against it. The researcher depended mostly on field notes only for these particular interviews. All the interviews except those held for road workers at Liphiring were held inside offices and each lasted for thirty minutes. It was more convenient to interview these respondents because of quietness that enabled recording. However, some members of their staff interrupted the interviews from time to time. This distracted both the researcher and interviewees. On the contrary, it was very difficult to interview rural road workers because of the noise made by construction machines and vehicles (see photographs 1, 4 and 5 in Appendix D). It was therefore impossible to record them on tape.

Focus group discussions were arranged with the respondents in the three villages. Their structure resembled that of the administered questionnaire. These discussions were held at the chiefs' premises except in one village where the chief was absent. The chiefs in the two other villages assisted the researcher to hold meetings for all villagers. Their main contention was that villagers usually attend such meetings only when they are approved and convened by chiefs. So, the researcher acted according to the advice given to him. The researcher was encouraged by attendance levels at Liphiring and Majapareng. Nonetheless, all the focus group discussions were successful.

The researcher started by explaining the content and purpose of the focus group discussions. Then, respondents were asked to elect two secretaries and a chairperson to lead the discussions. This procedure worked well except at Qhalasi where the researcher had to exercise more control as the people were unruly. The villagers seemed to enjoy and participate actively in the discussions when they were allowed to voice their concerns and opinions. According to the researcher, this mode of organization seemed to make the discussions more rigorous.

The researcher led the discussions by posing questions to the focus groups. First, the questions focused on PWPs and how they are used to provide poverty relief. Second, agriculture and food security featured prominently in the questions as rural people largely depend on them for their livelihoods. Third, the groups were asked to state how they perceive and experience poverty. More focus was on socio-economic characteristics. Fourth, the researcher inquired about the kinds of assistance given to the villages by the government and private voluntary agencies. Income-generating activities and village assets were included in this set of questions. Fifth and final, the researcher focused on the major problems that each of the villages is facing as well as, their possible solutions.

3.1.7 Biases in the data

During the data collection process, it was impossible for the researcher to avoid bias. First, most of the in-depth interviews were supposed to be held with key informants in government. However, problems of non-participation by these targeted informants forced the researcher to find anyone who was willing to be interviewed. This means that the study failed to interview government officials directly involved in poverty reduction. Second, the researcher could not avoid gender bias in focus group discussions. This was because most female respondents were particularly passive. As a result, most of the data collected were from males even though females outnumbered them. Also, professionals such as teachers and nurses seemed to dominate the discussions whereas most of the data were to be collected from poor households. Third, time constraints caused by late coming for discussions by some of the poor, compelled the researcher to spend less time on certain questions. Fourth and final, the researcher found out later that some of the questions posed on the questionnaire were leading. This piece of evidence therefore accounts for possible biases in the data when the researcher was undertaking field work.

3.1.8 Data analysis

As indicated earlier on, qualitative and quantitative methods were used in the analysis of data. Descriptive statistics were employed for interpreting and summarizing the data from the questionnaire as encouraged by Bryman (2001). Much of the analyzed data were presented in percentage and frequency distributions. Tables were used to present data from the selected sample of 60 respondents in figures and percentage form.

The data units collected from focus group discussions and semi-structured interviews were analyzed qualitatively with the use of the Constant Comparative method as informed by (Maykut & Morehouse, 1994). First, data pages were coded to their sources and smaller units of meaning were identified in the data. This helped the researcher to define larger categories of meaning in the data. Second, units of meaning were separated from others so that comparisons could be made. The 'grounded theory' approach as informed by Glaser and Strauss was used to devise categories and see if they fitted together (Blaxter, Hughes & Tight, 2001). The researcher grouped like properties to establish and identify uniformities from the categories. This also helped the researcher to note dissimilarities in the data. Common themes and key concepts were fundamental elements in the whole process. This enabled the researcher to formulate theoretical concepts by inductive reasoning. This task was easy because interview scripts were analyzed question by question and all records followed an orderly pattern.

The interpretation of data and subsequent discussions are based on the total sample actually used in the study. The findings presented in chapter four are generalized and summarized in chapter five. Then, conclusions were drawn in relation to the research problem. All the responses from the sample relate to the research questions and the body of the literature reviewed in chapter two.

CHAPTER 4: RESULTS OF THE STUDY

4.1.1 Introduction

This chapter presents data on the socio-economic impact of poverty reduction in the three villages selected for this research. As a way of providing answers to the research questions posed, the questionnaire, interviews and focus group discussions were divided into sections to explore poverty issues more broadly. In this chapter, the poverty characteristics of the respondents are explored. In chapter five, these issues are summarised and discussed in relation to the research questions posed.

As shown in chapter three, a total of 158 respondents participated in this study. Different research instruments were employed to elicit information from the respondents as shown above. For the whole study, three focus group discussions were held with a total of 90 participants. The questionnaire was administered to 60 respondents and the response rate was high because the questionnaire was filled in the researcher's presence. All questionnaires were returned.

The raw data from two interviews were transcribed and categorized according to different aspects of poverty being investigated and the research questions asked. As shown in the previous chapter, the researcher depended more on the use of field notes to record focus group discussions and interviews as further tape-recording could not be done. Similarly, data from the questionnaire were put into different categories of the poverty profile and rural livelihoods. They were then recorded and analyzed with the use of the SPSS programme already alluded to in the previous chapter.

Most of the tables in this chapter present data from the questionnaire. As the data from the questionnaire were put into different categories, it was easier to group similar responses and give them a code. All the questions in this instrument were close-ended and a four-point scale was used. Similarly, the data from the interviews and focus group discussions were coded before analysis.

4.1.2 The profile of the poor households

Educational Background

The levels of education differed greatly among the respondents. Many of them were found to be below the Standard Seven grade and the two other categories represented respondents who

had attained secondary education, as well as, the uneducated. These were found to be the lowest categories. Numerically, this is explained as 90% of the respondents below Standard Seven, 8.3% with secondary education and 1.7% who were uneducated. The data from the questionnaire and focus group discussions showed this trend. The educational levels of the respondents are illustrated in table 4.10 below. Similarly, while assessing poverty in the nine South African provinces, May (2000) found that rural areas are characterized by very low educational standards.

Table 4.10 Educational Background

Educational Level	Frequency	Percent
Below Std 7	54	90
Secondary level	5	8.3
Not educated	1	1.7
Total	60	100.0

N=60

Occupational Status

Different instruments of data collection explained that most of the respondents were unemployed. It was found from the questionnaire that 93% of the respondents had reported that they were unemployed. Only 7% of the respondents indicated that they were employed. The first category comprised retrenched mine workers and those who have never worked before. In the second category, there were firm workers, housemaids and herdboys. The focus group discussions and the questionnaire confirmed that most of the rural residents are unemployed. Thus, the proposition from previous research that unemployment is the major cause of poverty in Lesotho was confirmed (MODP, 2000).

Age

The age composition of the poor households exhibited that many of them were between the ages of 41-50 and 51-70. This is represented as 31.7% and 48.3%, respectively. The smallest number of respondents fell under the category 21-30. Table 4.11 below shows the respondents' age ranges. All the studied villages showed this trend. The findings indicate that the poverty incidence rises with increase in age. This was found by May et al (2002) when conducting poverty studies in South Africa.

Table 4.11 The age of respondents

Responses	Frequency	Percent
21-30	2	3.3
31-40	10	16.7
41-50	19	31.7
51-70	29	48.3
Total	60	100.0

N = 60

Gender

The questionnaire was administered to 40 female and 20 male respondents. It was found from the questionnaire that 67% of the respondents were female while 33% constituted the male population. Moreover, three females and five males were interviewed as key informants. It is crucial to state that the difficulty of finding interviewees before data collection forced the researcher to accept anyone who was willing. This limitation was alluded to in the previous chapter. As such, it was difficult for the researcher to avoid gender bias. Based on all instruments, 86 respondents were females while 72 constituted male subjects. Hence, 54% of the respondents were females while only 46% constituted males. It was observed that there were more females than males in poverty. The data collected using different instruments therefore confirmed research studies conducted in India that that there are more women than men in poverty (Hirway & Terhal, 1994).

Table 4.12 Marital Status

Responses	Frequency	Percent
Married	51	85
Not Married	9	15
Total	60	100

N = 60

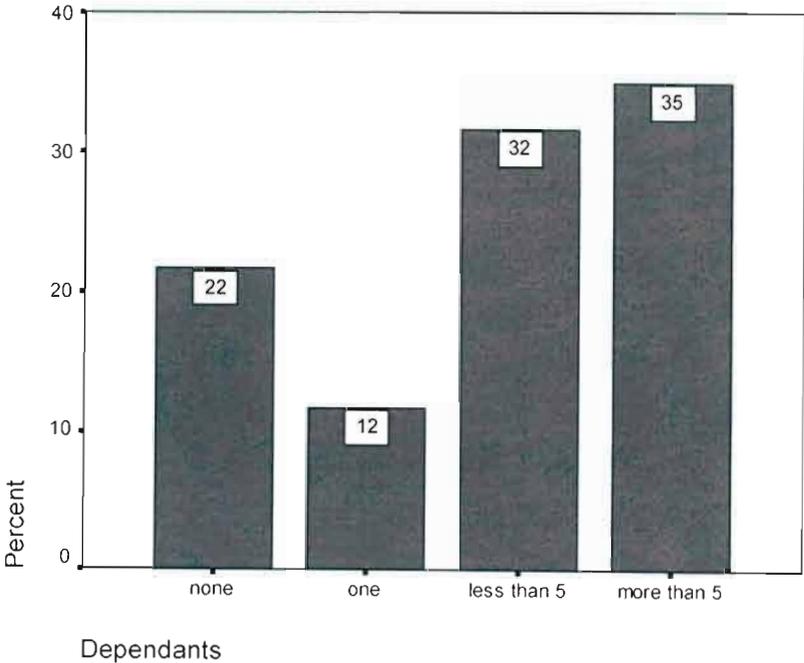
The above table presents data on the marital status of the respondents. Both the questionnaire and focus group discussions showed that most of the respondents were married. The data on the questionnaire alone indicates that 85% of the respondents were married as opposed to

15% who were not married. During the course of the discussions, the researcher became aware that the majority of the respondents entered marriage when still young. This shows that most of the poor are married and they predominate in rural areas where cultural practices are stronger. It was also deduced that marriage is universal in these communities (BOS, 2003).

Dependants in the households

Using the questionnaire and focus group discussions, it was established that most of the respondents had more than five dependants. The data from the questionnaire showed that 35.0% had more than five dependants and 31.7% had less than five. Respondents who had one or no dependants were the least as the abovementioned instruments have shown. The results revealed that the dependency ratio is high in rural areas. This is confirmed by the literature wherein it is stated that the dependency ratio in Lesotho is high for household members below working ages, meaning those under 15 years or 65 and over (BOS, 2000; 2003).The figure below illustrates this information clearly.

Figure 4.1.1 Dependants in households



4.1.3 The experience and perception of poverty in the three villages

When asked how they perceive poverty, respondents in focus groups mentioned several factors. They pointed out that the scarcity of water stands out as a serious cause of poverty in their communities. Their central argument was that efforts made through PWP and the

districts Village Water Supply Project have not been successful. The data from the questionnaire showed that 85% of the respondents indicated that many poor households draw water very away from the villages in unprotected wells. 15% of the respondents also pointed out that the water sources are far away. So, all respondents agreed on this issue. This information was supported by data obtained from the focus group discussions. More than half of the respondents further reported that most people often experience acute water shortages, particularly when there is prolonged drought.

Sanitary facilities

The data from the questionnaire demonstrated that 100% of the respondents strongly ascribed the prevalence of water-borne diseases in their villages to bad sanitation. Generally, this shows that sanitary conditions in these rural communities are extremely unsatisfactory and detrimental to human existence. The researcher established that many of the villagers use nearby dongas to excrete because they cannot afford to build toilets. The respondents further indicated that some of the households have to buy water from boreholes owned by other members of the community and this is expensive for them.

Table 4.13 Children’s attendance at school

Responses	Frequency	Percent
High	2	3.3
Low	55	91.7
Poor	3	5.0
Total	60	100.0

N = 60

With the help of focus group discussions and the questionnaire, respondents were requested to define the status of educational standards in the villages by addressing school attendance. The findings showed that many people have limited educational opportunities. All respondents explained that many children are not able to finish primary and secondary education. Again, it was indicated that the rising costs of education and long distances walked by children to school are some of reasons that lead many to drop out. The respondents strongly held that this situation eventually leads many people into chronic poverty. They were of one mind that high poverty levels in their communities could be reduced by improved educational services (MODP, 2000). Table 4.13 above illustrates that 92% of the respondents reported low

educational attendance. It was therefore concluded that educational attendance in these villages is low.

Health services

The data from all instruments gave a picture of poor health services in these villages. In focus groups, respondents reported that many villages do not have clinics and even where they exist, equipment is limited. The respondents revealed that most of the villagers walk long distances to health clinics because they reside far away from these centres. Reading from the questionnaire, it was uncovered that 99% of the respondents had emphasized long distances walked by most villagers to health clinics. Moreover, the data from the focus groups disclosed that it is inconvenient for many villagers to transport sick people to health centres. Poor transport facilities and high taxi fares were given as some of the reasons for this state of affairs. They further indicated that this is compounded by soaring medical charges, particularly in hospitals (BOS, 2002).

The data from the focus group discussions showed that the proportion of sick people is high in each of the three villages. More than half of the respondents in focus groups indicated this. This is understandable given the reasons just referred to above. They indicated that this results in very high morbidity and mortality rates. The questionnaire revealed that 98.4% of the respondents stated that sickness is the major cause of death in these communities.

Cow dung and firewood as fuel

The respondents were asked to state whether the villagers use cow dung and firewood for cooking. Both the questionnaire and focus group discussions were used to elicit responses. Similar responses were recorded using these two instruments. It was uncovered from the questionnaire that 98.4% of the respondents indicated more use of cow dung and firewood as fuel. Therefore, it was concluded that many people in these villages highly depend on these energy sources. BOS (2002) argues that this is one of the indicators of poverty.

People living in poor housing conditions

With the help of the questionnaire, respondents were asked whether there are people who live in poor housing conditions. 75% of the respondents said that a considerable number of villagers live in poor housing conditions while the remaining 25% indicated this to a higher degree. These findings are confirmed by (BOS, 2001).

How households spend their money each month

A question was posed requiring the respondents to state households' priorities when spending money each month. The data from the questionnaire signifies that 98% of the respondents mentioned food while only 2% said their households spend more on transport. This was backed up by information obtained from focus group discussions.

Monthly household income

With the use of the questionnaire and focus group discussions, respondents were asked to mention how much their households earn per month. Table 4.14 below developed from the questionnaire, shows that 76.7% of the respondents were of one mind that their households receive less than R 500 per month. Only a few households were reported to be receiving more than this amount. The findings uncovered that many households in these villages receive very low incomes each month. Most of the respondents in focus groups stated that they get money from their sons, daughters or spouses working either in Lesotho or South Africa. It was not surprising to learn from the female respondents that their husbands do not work in the mines as this was noted in the sources cited in chapter one.

Table 4.14 Respondents' monthly income

Responses	Frequency	Percent
Less than R 300	7	11.7
Less than R 500	46	76.7
More than R 500	7	11.7
Total	60	100.0

N = 60

The study has clearly shown that the major reason for low income levels among the poor households is poor educational standards. In focus group discussions, many respondents indicated that the improvement of educational standards would help to increase their incomes.

Households' dependence on transfers

A question was posed to the respondents inquiring on the dependence of the poor households on transfers from the government. The data from the questionnaire showed that 100% of the respondents greatly depend on transfers. The findings correlated with what was elicited from both the interviews and focus group discussions. So, it was gathered that many households

depend on transfers because of poverty (Gay & hall, 2000). For instance, income transfers for the war veterans are a great blessing in poor households. Also, quite a number of poor people depend more on free food that is given by the government every month.

4.1.4 Agricultural production and food security

The respondents were asked about the number of people who own fields in each village. It was discovered from the questionnaire and focus group discussions that many of them have family gardens and fields. Moreover, focus group discussions revealed that most of the pieces of land have not been used for a very long time. Most of the respondents indicated that they usually practise gardening for food production but drought is their serious threat. The data from the questionnaire displayed that 92% of the respondents agreed that many people in the villages have fields. It was concluded that most of the village households own fields. An associated question concerned the contribution of PWPs during periods of drought and hunger. Many similar responses were recorded. Table 4.15 below shows that the majority of the respondents agree that most PWPs are not helpful during periods of hunger and drought.

Table 4.15 drought and hunger

Responses	Frequency	Percent
Helpful	6	10.0
Not Helpful	53	88.3
Not Sure	1	1.7
Total	60	100.0

N= 60

Income generated from village woodlots

An inquiry was made with regard to the amount of money generated from woodlots in each village. According to the data from the questionnaire, 65% of the respondents were of one mind that woodlots generate a considerable amount of money. In focus group discussions, respondents highlighted that funds raised from wood sales are seldom disclosed at village meetings. In one of the villages, respondents shared common ground that such funds are misappropriated by their chief. Some of the respondents, who looked aggrieved, claimed that serious drastic steps need to be taken to rectify the situation. They believed that these funds would contribute substantially to the welfare of their community.

income from the nearby woodlot

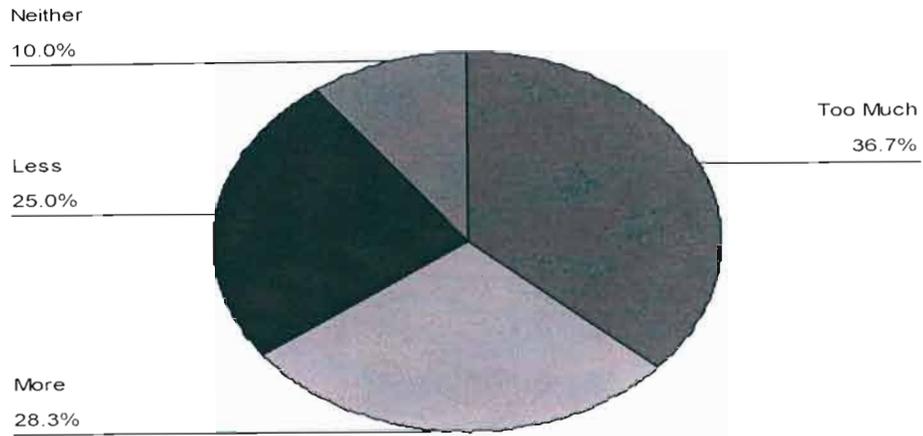


Figure 4.1.2 above illustrates responses regarding the income generated from woodlots in each of the three villages.

Communal Gardens

In each village, the respondents were asked to state whether there was currently an operating communal garden. According to the data from the questionnaire, 88% of the respondents indicated that there were no communal gardens in their villages. The data from the focus groups showed that communal gardens used to exist during the late 1970s and 1980s but have ceased to function.

Households' ownership of assets

With the use of the questionnaire and focus group discussions, the researcher inquired on the ownership of livestock in the three villages. The data from the questionnaire showed that 98% of the respondents indicated low ownership of livestock among the poor households. Also, it is demonstrated that 92% of the respondents reported ownership of fields in these villages. This shows that many households own land as opposed to livestock. The literature illustrates that many of the households are not able to produce their food requirements albeit more land that they hold (MODP, 2001; Mohasi & Turner, 1999; BOS, 2002).

The information elicited from focus groups portrayed that this has reduced substantially the number of fields ploughed every year. It was stressed that this situation leads to low yields

every year. The focus groups further pointed out that this state of affairs leads to food insecurity, malnutrition and poverty. They also explained that this ultimately makes them to depend heavily on the government and private voluntary agencies for food aid, grain seed and fertilizer for farming.

Key informants from NGOs and Ministry of Agriculture asserted that the availability of agricultural extension services and credit facilities would help to better the situation of the assetless households. They held that this situation became worse during the mid 1990s and has intensified up to the present time. Most of them argued that because of these factors, it is currently difficult to make agricultural production sustainable in these communities.

4.1.5 Non-farm production Activities

With the use of focus group discussions and the questionnaire, a question was posed regarding the availability of non-farm production activities. It was established from the questionnaire that there are limited non-farm production activities in all the villages. This is represented by 77% of the respondents who agreed while 23% answered in the negative. For instance, respondents were asked to estimate the number of households that own sewing machines in each village. The data from the questionnaire showed that 78% of the poor households do not own sewing machines. This indicates that a small number of households own sewing machines.

4.1.6 Public works programmes

In focus group discussions, the respondents were asked about the nature of PWPs in their communities. In all cases, they stated that these programmes entail the construction of roads and planting of trees to prevent soil erosion. The respondents from Qhalasi and Liphiring mentioned that sometimes the government employs several villagers to install pipes through water supply projects. They however pointed out that the state of PWPs in their village is very low. These respondents unanimously agreed that workers are often exploited by corrupt officials. For instance, they stated that people work longer hours for less pay. This is denoted by 91.7% of the respondents. These findings are confirmed in the literature (Hirway & Terhal, 1994). Table 4.16 below illustrates this information clearly.

Table 4.16 Respondents' wages in PWPs

Responses	Frequency	Percent
Low	55	91.7
High	4	6.7
Not Sure	1	1.7
Total	60	100.0

N = 60

The data from the questionnaire showed that work in road projects is very strenuous (see photograph 3 in Appendix D). This was represented by 77% of the respondents. Also, the data from focus group discussions confirmed this. Respondents explained that most of the poor get engaged in these projects because they are desperate.

In focus groups, respondents were asked about the contribution of PWPs to poverty relief. The consensus reached was that most government-funded PWPs provide limited poverty relief. According to the respondents, this is because these programmes are implemented poorly. This is represented by 85% of the respondents according to the data from the questionnaire. They expressed dissatisfaction with the implementation of PWPs and suggested that they need to be restructured so as to benefit the poor better.

The key informants were asked to state how PWPs relate to the activities in organizations that they represent. Three of them were of one mind that their activities are not related to those in PWPs. However, three others stated that their services slightly resemble and complement those in PWPs. The last two informants said that they are wholly involved in PWPs as road workers. It was found that most PWPs do not relate to already existing programmes.

4.1.7 Income-generating activities

The respondents were asked to state how they generate income for their households and the community at large. From the focus group discussions, it was apparent that they have been depending largely on burial societies as one way of generating income. However, many of them acknowledged that their effectiveness is currently deteriorating. They were seriously concerned that the smooth operation of these activities is thwarted by weak leadership and a high incidence of crime. For instance, theft was reported to be a serious threat to income-generation.

Nevertheless, it was interesting to find some impressive developments at Mabalane. Here, some people formed a club and started to make bricks for sale in 2002. The respondents stated that a few children water the bricks on weekends and each is given R 3.00. Later, the same club started a bakery which they called Kopano-Ke-Matla, meaning unity is strength. A few respondents who are members in the club remarked that they obtained financial assistance and equipment from the Irish Consulate of Lesotho. They further highlighted that a few members of the club take responsibility for running all the projects. It was encouraging to find that there is a local market for all products sold by the club. They mentioned that a tuck shop was later started to support the other two projects. Some club members boldly stated that their principle is to sell products at affordable prices so that the poor can also benefit.

4.1.8 Community Participation

Involvement in planning

The respondents who participated in the focus groups were asked about the involvement of the villagers in the design, implementation and evaluation of development programmes. They agreed that the situation is not satisfactory. Their main concern was that for a long time the involvement of the villagers in this regard has been minimal. Table 4.17 below clearly presents this information.

Table 4.17 Respondents' involvement in the planning and evaluation of development programmes

Responses	Frequency	Percent
Strongly Agree	2	3.3
Agree	5	8.3
Disagree	50	83.3
Strongly Disagree	3	5.0
Total	60	100.0

N = 60

The above piece of data drawn from the questionnaire symbolizes that 91% of the respondents strongly reported low involvement of the respondents in the different phases of development programmes. This shows that the highest number of poor people was discontented with their

involvement in development programmes. Their contention was that villagers usually get involved in projects only at the implementation stage as workers. They argued that their views are usually not taken into account by project staff. The respondents held the same view that in their communities people are just informed about proposed projects. Nevertheless, they unanimously agreed that CARE and Taung ADP try to involve them more closely than all other organizations.

Contribution of Village Councils (VCs) in development programmes

The respondents were asked to state how VCs co-ordinate and liaise with the people when projects are proposed by various development agents. Members of the focus groups remarked that project agencies inform village chiefs about proposed projects. They held that chiefs then deliberate with the VCs before the rest of the villagers are informed at meetings. According to the respondents, the main function of the VCs is to facilitate in the recruitment of workers.

The nature and power of committees in the villages

In focus groups discussions, the respondents were asked to state the power of committees in their respective villages. They all agreed that most village committees do not function well. According to the data from the questionnaire, 86.7% of the respondents reported that these committees are highly ineffective and less organized. Weak responses were neglected. In focus group discussions, committees were charged of not reporting back to the villagers after decisions had been reached. In this way, they were blamed for lack of accountability and transparency to community members. They further remarked that these structures are less viable because of weak leadership and lack of training. This is illustrated in Table 4.18 below.

Table 4.18 Work and power of committees in the villages

Responses	Frequency	Percent
Highly effective	2	3.3
Effective	1	1.7
Not effective	52	86.7
Highly effective	5	8.3
Total	60	100.0

N = 60

Needs Assessment

A question was posed on how needs assessment is conducted in the three villages. Most of the key informants stated that various project agencies first hold meetings in the villages to know people's needs and priorities. This was referred to as wealth-ranking. They pointed out that this enables project officials to assess the assets, liabilities and livelihood portfolios of the people. They further held that they rely mainly on the use of PRA to know the needs of the people and enhance their participation. They stated that this method helps them to understand the problems of communities better and offer informed strategies for resolving them. The same respondents agreed that village committees are trained on techniques of assessing the needs of community members. In addition, key informants from NGOs stressed that committees are trained to use action plans in assessing community needs. This was validated by information elicited from the focus group discussions. It was generally agreed that among all agents of change, Taung ADP is best at helping them to assess their needs.

Are programmes in tandem with local needs?

Members of the focus groups were asked whether programmes are implemented in accordance with people's needs. In all the villages, respondents stated that programmes rarely tally with people's needs. According to the data from the questionnaire, 92% of the respondents articulated that programmes respond weakly to the needs of their communities. This portrays a very weak response of programmes to the needs of community members. As noted before, many respondents commended CARE and Taung ADP for their positive contribution. They stressed that these NGOs implement activities that often closely relate to their needs. However, they contended that even these organizations need to improve in this regard. The respondents were of one mind that government programmes often fail to address their needs. Most of them stated that public officials often claim that capacities are limited and the government works on a tight budget. They said that these officials always encourage them to engage in communal projects and strive for self-reliance. Table 4.19 below illustrates this information clearly.

Table 4.19 Programmes' response to community needs

Responses	Frequency	Percent
Strongly	5	8.3
Not Strongly	24	40.0
Weakly	31	51.0
Total	60	100.0

N = 60

4.1.9 Other forms of assistance from the outside

In focus group discussions, the respondents were asked to explain broadly how the government and other agents assist them apart from PWPs. The respondents in all the villages stated that they get more assistance from Taung ADP. They said that this organization pays half of the fees for some destitute children in primary and secondary schools. The same organization was noted for assisting the poor by caring for some of their sick and burying them when death strikes. Another form of assistance cited by the respondents was that the same NGO sells them fertilizer at reduced prices as a way of helping farmers to increase crop yields. In addition, they divulged that Taung ADP, WFP and DMA provide them with free food on a regular basis. The respondents acknowledged that sometimes the government ploughs and plants their fields in share-cropping schemes. They pointed out that they are not charged for these services and yields are shared equally when harvests come out well. A good point reported by the respondents was that if the yields are low, the government does not take its share of the harvest. Their major concern was that this seldom happens. Notwithstanding this, they expressed dissatisfaction at the government's low levels of service delivery in their villages. They stressed that most government's programmes benefit them minimally because of their short-term character.

4.2.0 Problems encountered by villagers

The respondents were asked to state major problems that they experience in their communities. In focus groups, respondents mentioned that the rate of unemployment is high because many people do not have job skills. These findings confirm previous research findings regarding high unemployment in the Mohale's Hoek district (BOS (2002). Respondents at Liphiring explained that this results in crime and chronic poverty. For instance, it was said that some of the people in this village are notorious for stealing livestock from the neighbouring South African farms. These findings confirm previous research

findings wherein it is shown that unemployment is the major cause of poverty in Lesotho (MODP, 2001).

They also mentioned bad road conditions as one of the most serious problems in their communities. The data from the questionnaire illustrate that the majority of the respondents noted a bad state of road conditions in their villages. They pointed out that this exacerbates the transport system and is unfavourable to the provision of social and economic infrastructure. Table 4.20 below gives a better picture of the situation. The respondents stated that it usually takes the government many years to attend to this problem.

Table 4.20 Road conditions

Responses	Frequency	Percent
Very Bad	46	76.7
Bad	13	21.7
Not Bad	1	1.7
Total	60	100.0

N = 60

4.2.1 Problems encountered by development professionals in the villages

The key informants were asked to state problems that they encounter in these rural communities. Most of them asserted that many of the meetings they hold for villagers often become unsuccessful because of low attendance levels. They assumed that the villagers lack interest in such meetings. As such, they declared that this tends to retard progress in the villages. In addition, they demonstrated that the high dependence of rural people on aid poses problems for their operation. For instance, they argued that many people in these villages are not willing to do things for themselves if they are not remunerated by someone else. They agreed that this problem makes it difficult for project agencies to institutionalize bottom-up participation. Finally, they remarked that political issues in these villages tend to bring much confusion and lasting conflicts among the people. They strongly held that this situation incapacitates them from instilling a spirit of co-operation among the villagers.

4.2.2 Successes attained

The key informants were asked to evaluate the impact of their anti-poverty interventions in these communities. Three of them replied that they have succeeded to provide much free food

to the sick and poor children in the villages. They showed that this has alleviated the problem of hunger and raised the standard of nutrition. In addition, they reported that through their assistance, the villagers have reaped good crop harvests from small irrigation projects and water conservation schemes. They contended that their intervention motivated many rural people to start their own projects for self-employment. For instance, they disclosed that some rural residents are now running poultry projects to generate income for their households. However, half of the interviewees argued that very little has been achieved in poverty reduction by the institutions they represent.

4.2.3 Challenges faced by development professionals

The key informants were further asked to state the challenges that they face in rural development and poverty reduction. Most of them mentioned that lack of funding greatly impedes their progress. They held that as a result, they fail to purchase needed resources such as machines or vehicles to speed up their work. Also, they stated that this lowers their performance rates as it becomes difficult for them to reach most of the rural poor. They also argued that it is very difficult for them to instil a spirit of self-reliance because most of the poor households are highly dependent on aid.

4.2.4 Contribution of various programmes to sustainable poverty reduction

When asked whether different programmes contribute to sustainable poverty reduction, most of the key informants answered in the negative. They argued that it is not easy to achieve this goal because most of the village households highly depend on aid and this jeopardizes local initiative. Besides, they said that this contradicts self-reliance that can see the villagers out of poverty. They also levelled an attack on most private voluntary agencies and the government for their indiscriminate use of aid in these villages. They held that aid should be given only to the weak, disabled and very poor people. Moreover, they expressed that other households ought to be given aid only during disasters. Poor targeting by government departments was said to be one of the factors contributing to poverty in these villages. Furthermore, they noted that it is currently difficult to reach sustainable levels of poverty reduction in these villages because of the current low state of agriculture. They said that the Ministry of Agriculture and Food Security contributes little towards helping the villagers to recover their lost livelihoods. Therefore, their central argument was that subsistence agriculture needs to be improved because many villagers still largely depend on it albeit low benefits derived.

As such, the respondents asserted that the achievement of sustainable poverty reduction requires all agents of change to relate their programmes to the real needs of the poor rural households. In addition, they emphasized that the views and opinions of the villagers as a whole have to be incorporated into vital development decisions. They also stressed that rural people know their problems better than anyone else. As such, they affirmed that unless this is done, sustainable poverty reduction will remain just an ideal for a long time to come. In the next chapter, these findings are discussed and summarized.

CHAPTER 5: SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION

5.1.1 Introduction

This study explored the socio-economic impact of poverty reduction in Lesotho. The major concern of the researcher was to establish the effect of community participation in the socio-economic development of the rural poor. The effects of government and other agencies' programmes on the socio-economic development of the poor in the focus area form the substance of the previous chapter. In the major sections of this chapter, the results are summarized and combined to form conclusive evidence. Also, the implications emanating from these results are discussed and recommendations follow. These steps were taken to create coherence between the research questions posed in chapter one and the literature reviewed in chapter two. This was done to show how the findings revealed by the study resemble or differ from previous research. The findings are discussed with reference to the research questions below. The five research questions in chapter one have been reduced in number to four for convenience.

- ✓ How do the people perceive and experience poverty in Lesotho?
- ✓ What effects has poverty reduction had on the socio-economic development of the rural poor?
- ✓ How do the government, civil society and villagers co-ordinate and collaborate in the anti-poverty project?
- ✓ To what extent have poverty reduction in Lesotho been participatory?

5.1.2 Summary and discussion of the findings

1. How do the people perceive and experience poverty in the three villages?

The results of the study show that the poor households experience and perceive poverty in almost the same way. Low levels of socio-economic development are underlined by the findings. For instance, it is unveiled that acute water shortages and substandard health services make the lives of most rural residents unbearable. It is apparent that the intervention of the government through PWPs has not ameliorated the situation. As such, the villagers are in dire need for services. The findings portray that the highest numbers of people who are unemployed in the three villages symbolize chronic poverty. It is further established from the findings that poor transport facilities frustrate efforts to improve the overall unfavourable condition of the poor households. For instance, table 4.20 illustrates the bad state of road conditions in these villages. The findings further show that the difficulties of life force many

poor people to depend directly on the environment. For instance, the use of animal waste and firewood by many rural households denotes chronic poverty.

It is apparent from the findings that many households live in appalling housing conditions. This is understandable given that many of the people in these villages do not work. It is clearly shown that poor housing conditions are most likely to reinforce bad child training and later criminal behaviour. This is because parents are most likely to stay separate from the children because the dwellings are small. It is presumed that the high incidence of crime in these villages emanates from this situation.

The findings indicate that most poor households spend more money on food. This means that subsistence agriculture provides limited opportunities for self-sufficiency in food production. Thus, food has become a significant commodity for many households in these villages. It is deduced from the findings that the failure of agriculture to supplement other sources of income renders many households vulnerable to hunger and chronic poverty. The message conveyed by the findings is that the improvement of agriculture in these areas would lower expenditure on food in favour of capital goods needed for production. It is vigorously shown that most people in these villages neither have farm implements nor use fertilizer in their fields. This explains why production levels are low.

Also, the findings reveal that most of the households earn little money either from their spouses or children. The R 500 per month earned by only a few of the households is very low given the current high inflation rate in Lesotho (Gay & Hall, 2000). Table 4.14 explains this point clearly. The findings demonstrate that most of the money received by these households is not raised from subsistence agriculture. This means that most of the households have limited opportunities of earning adequate income either from agriculture or non-farm production. This is because of their limited sources of capital as against the rich households.

2. What effects have poverty reduction had on the socio-economic development of the rural poor?

Public works programmes

The findings explain that most of the respondents are highly dissatisfied with the implementation of PWP's. Their major criticism is that these works concentrate on a narrow spectrum of activities. They stress that PWP's need to entail more than tree planting and road

construction. This means that their scope needs to be expanded in order to meet other aspects of the villagers' development and benefit the poor better. It is indicated that this has been the trend for a very long time. The general feeling among the respondents is that through road construction projects, workers are subjected to intense exploitation by corrupt officials from construction firms. For instance, low wages and strenuous work provide sufficient proof. The consensus reached by the poor households is that government-funded PWPs provide limited poverty relief and therefore have to be restructured for the benefit of the poor. This means that the villagers need programmes that build up on their existing livelihoods. The findings further display that the role of most PWPs needs to be seen in the light of the state of food production and agriculture in general. Also, the fact that most PWPs do not relate to and build on existing programmes signifies that they are poorly planned.

Furthermore, the findings describe that most of the unemployed rural poor expect more from PWPs because subsistence-based modes of production have declined. They do not regard these works as a supplementary mechanism for poverty relief. It is implied that most of them expect the government to implement PWPs throughout the year. The findings have revealed that PWPs have contributed very little to the economic and social uplift of the poor households. They have neither bridged socio-economic differences between the people nor contributed to sustainable poverty reduction.

Agriculture and food security

All the instruments used teach that most of the people in these villages own more land but it is largely underutilized because of shortage of implements and draught animals. Also, the non-existence of communal gardens is indicative of low levels of food production. It is reflected that agricultural production in these areas has been deteriorating for more than a decade. It is understandable that agriculture in these areas can no longer provide a substantial and reliable source of income for the poor. It is apparent that these villages urgently need rehabilitation in agriculture so as to increase productivity. It follows from the findings that low-cost irrigation schemes or the construction of dams would respond to the problem of drought that persists in these areas.

Also, the findings evince that a considerable amount of money is generated from woodlots but it does not benefit poor households. Acts of corruption by some chiefs, improper record-keeping and absence of financial reports provide sufficient proof. In a nutshell, this means

that in most of these villages, households have lost much income that was supposed to have been used for their welfare.

Non-farm production activities

The focus groups inform that non-farm production is unable to compensate for declining agricultural yields in these villages. As a result, poor households greatly depend on failing subsistence agriculture. Also, an evident deficiency of vocational skills gathered from these particular respondents makes the situation worse for many poor households. It is understandable that lack of incentives, credit and access to training opportunities greatly jeopardizes the growth of non-farm production in these communities.

Income-generating activities

It is apparent from the focus groups that burial societies are the most common means by which some villagers generate income. Their major contention is that weak leadership and crime tend to adversely affect the development of income-generating activities. Nonetheless, it is shown that some people at Mabalane have already taken initiative to diversify their income-generating activities.

3. What major problems, successes and challenges do development professionals and the rural poor experience in poverty reduction?

The findings indicate that the villagers are poorly organized. This is confirmed by low levels of attendance at meetings convened by development professionals. Also, there is a strong feeling among development professionals that a high dependence on aid jeopardizes the ability of poor households' to take initiative in their development. They unilaterally agree that such dependence is detrimental to self-reliance and the institutionalization of bottom-up participation. In addition, it is noticeable that party political differences seem to be riddling these communities apart. The findings explain that this behaviour is easily recognized in aid disbursements across these communities. Development professionals see eye-to-eye that this situation brings confusion and lasting conflicts among the rural poor. Besides, they think that such situations impede their progress. Finally, the bad state of rural roads appears to be at the peak of serious concerns in the three villages. The poor households generally feel that this worsens their transport system as well as, the social and economic infrastructure.

It is clearly shown that even though development professionals and the poor households are encountering problems, several successes have been attained. First, the disbursement of more free food to poor and sick people as well as, share-cropping between the government and villagers seem to have satisfied development professionals. Second, it is reflected in the findings that the efforts of these key informants have enabled several households to start their own small projects for income-generation. However, they underline the fact that in general terms, very little has been done to rehabilitate these communities. This proves right the assertion of the villagers for supposing that they have been neglected and isolated by both government and other organizations. This is one of the arguments raised by the focus groups. Third, all the key informants argue that lack of funding tends to lower the performance rates of project officials. Fourth and final, these development professionals feel that aid needs to be given to the sick, weak and very poor people only. They assert that the current use of food aid in these communities is detrimental to self-reliance. More especially, they are critical of poor targeting of aid resources. They therefore advocate the formulation of a policy to govern the allocation of aid resources in the three villages.

4. How do the villagers, NGOs and government co-ordinate in the anti-poverty project?

The findings reveal poor co-ordination and weak collaboration between the government and NGOs. The evidence shows that these organizations do not work together or share ideas in programme planning, implementation and evaluation. Therefore, it is apparent that they fail to fit projects together as each party follows its own different path. This was not supposed to be the case because these development agents serve the same rural communities. It is further portrayed that only a few pro-poor organizations offer services in these communities. This is most likely to obstruct efforts meant to strengthen accountability and development management. Nonetheless, it is derived from the findings that support for NGOs emanates from their meaningful application of participatory approaches.

Most of the households show much discontent at the government's poor service delivery in their communities. This is why they feel neglected by the government. For instance, they hold that government officials rarely visit them and it takes a long time for their concerns to be known and responded to.

5. To what extent have poverty reduction in Lesotho been participatory?

All instruments used teach that in all the three villages, people are not actively involved in the planning, design and evaluation of development programmes. This is illustrated in Table 4.17. Generally, the findings reflect poor community participation in development activities. This confirms the literature reviewed about community participation in Lesotho. It is evident that the villagers are only informed when projects are to be undertaken. Their views and concerns are not taken into account by many project agencies. As a result, they do not have the capacity to initiate action on decisions taken about their development. For instance, the focus groups argue that the villagers are involved in projects only at the implementation stage as workers. It is therefore evident that they are not fully involved in most projects. As such, efforts directed at poverty reduction are most likely to be thwarted because the poor have not been given a say regarding their development. Many respondents from the focus group discussions commend CARE and Taung ADP because of the way they involve them in development activities.

The focus groups strongly highlight that VCs act as middlemen between project agencies and the villagers. It is clearly given that one of their principal tasks is to recruit workers for new projects either introduced by government or private agencies. In this way, they are able to decide how the people have to be involved. It is exposed that VCs communicate and deliberate with chiefs as heads of villages. These bodies thus operate as another government in the communities. However, the findings indicate that their main task is to facilitate but final decisions are made by project agencies. This is contrary to the participatory development paradigm that supports active involvement of the people in decisions-making processes for real social change.

There is a general agreement among members of the focus groups that most village committees are ineffective and not well organized. The data from the questionnaire support this claim. Moreover, most of these committees are charged for lack of accountability and transparency. Respondents in focus groups attribute this to lack of training and weak leadership. Clearly, this is one of the obstacles to progress in the three villages.

The evidence from the focus group discussions signifies that meetings serve as crucial needs assessment instruments in these villages. The previous paragraphs have exposed that NGOs are best at involving the villagers in needs assessment than the government. The fact that they

dwelling more on the livelihood portfolios of the poor wins them much support. This symbolizes that NGOs can often reach local and target groups more effectively. However, it is evident that the poor households are discontented about meetings held for them by most project officials. Their major concern is that most of these gatherings bear no fruit because convenors often disappear forever afterwards. It is deduced that the nature and content of such meetings are not embraced and endorsed by the poor households because their outcomes do not benefit them. This means that such meetings minimally involve the poor. Moreover, there appears to be no balance of power between decisions exercised by development professionals as opposed to the villagers. The poor households are disgruntled because programmes weakly respond to their needs and priorities. This point is explained more concretely in table 4.19. Furthermore, it is established that government officials encourage the villagers to strive for self-reliance by engaging in co-operative ventures. However, the villagers are not provided with a clear pathway towards self-reliance. Also, being self-reliant requires the availability of resources most of which the poor households do not possess. Thus, it is presumed that such low levels of participation cannot lead to sustainable poverty reduction in these villages. The majority of the poor households unanimously agree on this issue.

The understanding derived from the findings is that very little was done to improve rural livelihoods and develop the agricultural sector in these communities. It is explained that as a result, the incomes of the rural poor did not improve for a long time. Thus, CARE calls for the revitalization of agriculture through livelihoods recovery programmes (Mohasi & Turner, 1999).

In the previous paragraphs, it is revealed that these development goals could only be achieved if programmes address closely the real needs of the villagers. The data from the questionnaire and focus group discussions have underscored that this has rarely been the case. By so doing, both government institutions and most private agencies have not involved the poor rural households actively in development activities. The findings also show that generally, the poor have done little to organize themselves for their own empowerment. Their total dependence on project agencies and government aid tends to be counter-productive for their development. This led to the evolution of development that was not based on their real needs. As a result, achieving sustainable poverty reduction is far-fetched for these communities, as long as they remain passive participants in their development. A significant message disseminated by the

findings is that development is not an exogenous process but evolves from within communities.

5.1.3 Conclusions

A case has been made that people in the three villages experience poverty mainly because of very low levels of social development. Acute water shortages, poor educational and health services are mentioned as some of the major problems facing the poor households. Also, many responses indicate that a very poor system of communications infrastructure has exacerbated these appalling conditions. Again, the study revealed that non-farm production has failed to offset declining agricultural yields. Agriculture appears to have failed to improve food security and this has led to more unemployment and crime in these villages. Moreover, a greater dependence of the poor households on aid tends to militate against efforts to attain self-reliance. Most development professionals are concerned that the dependency syndrome leads to political conflicts and retards progress in these villages. A major discovery exhibited by the findings is that skills training programmes can substantially raise the incomes of the rural poor and lower the high unemployment rate.

It has further been highlighted that various programmes have generally failed to actively involve the majority of the poor in development activities. This is the major argument raised in the participatory theory of poverty discussed earlier. The findings have shown very low levels of community participation in the three villages. Moreover, policy weaknesses are manifested by a poor response of programmes to the real needs of the rural poor. This is exemplified by the role of PWPs in poverty reduction. The study has exposed that corruption by project officials has made these programmes a burden to many poor households. The data from the questionnaire and focus group discussions demonstrate that PWPs have contributed little towards the improvement and recovery of livelihoods in the three villages. This is why the poor households call for their restructuring. It is clearly shown that agricultural improvement has the potential to lift the poor in these villages out of poverty. Development professionals strongly believe that the availability of incentives, credit facilities and training opportunities would contribute substantially towards the rehabilitation of these villages.

On the whole, the study has demonstrated that very little has been done to reduce poverty in the three villages. It is apparent that lack of funding is one of the major problems facing organizations engaged in the anti-poverty project. Moreover, lack of co-ordination and collaboration between the government and NGOs tends to impede progress. Nevertheless, it is

noted that some NGOs have outpaced the government in the rehabilitation of these areas. Furthermore, the villagers call upon the government to reassert its commitment to the plight of the poor. In chapter one, it was noted that the GOL received more aid and the economy improved from the late 1980s to mid 1990s but little was allocated to poverty reduction. It is underlined that if substantial amounts of money or other resources were used for poverty reduction, many of the poor could have been lifted out of poverty. Thus, the neoclassical theory has been proved right that economic growth is beneficial to poverty reduction. The message picked up from the findings is that problems of implementation and lack of proper and efficient ways of facilitating community participation led to a slower decentralization process. It is indicated that these factors largely contributed to the prevalence and persistence of poverty in these villages. Much evidence has shown that these villages have been isolated for a long time. A poor lack of essential services in these villages provides sufficient proof. This proves right the political economy theory that underlines urban bias and underdevelopment. As a result, most development programmes minimally benefited the poor rural households in the three villages socially and economically. However, this still confirms the first hypothesis in this study. Equally, the second hypothesis that community participation can enhance the socio-economic condition of the poor rural households has also been tested and confirmed by the arguments put forward by the key informants. All the hypotheses have been supported by the theories reviewed in the study. Also, the tested variables indicate the existence of chronic poverty in the three villages. The research was successful in achieving its aim. It is therefore argued that all the findings of this study have been confirmed by the literature reviewed in chapter two.

Finally, as indicated in chapter one, the findings of this research could be a valuable product for social science research in Lesotho. If a wider area and greater population were used, the results would yield more. There is a high possibility that the three villages have similar characteristics with many others in the country. The researcher believes that only narrow differences would be found between these villages through empirical evidence. Therefore, it is contended that these findings can be generalised.

5.1.4 Recommendations

The Ministry of Agriculture and Food Security would do well to continue engaging in share-cropping schemes with the poor households as a way of helping them to recover their lost livelihoods. This would make up for the poor households' lack of farm implements, inputs

and draught animals. Such services need to be well administered and monitored by the poor households and district agricultural officers together on agreed time frames. Also, the rehabilitation of roads in these villages needs urgent attention for the improvement of agriculture, non-farm production and other essential services. This would greatly help to raise levels of growth and reduce poverty. Furthermore, it is imperative that the government and NGOs invest substantially in agricultural education as a crucial step towards accessing farmers to new technologies. All these can work well if the government provides credit facilities, training and extension services to poor rural farmers. A strong partnership between all these organizations would bring better prospects for many of the rural poor. The findings prove that this is lacking in these villages. Such interventions have the potential to substantially lower the current high dependence of the poor households on government aid.

Both the government and private agencies need to ensure that needs-based research is undertaken in these areas before projects are implemented. It is imperative that most poor rural households take a greater part in the design, implementation and evaluation of all projects. Such projects need to serve the needs and priorities of the villagers. The success of projects ought not to be the prime objective of the government or private agencies. Rather, the overriding objective of such initiatives needs to be based on the needs of the villagers. Besides, more emphasis would ideally be placed on the implementation of policies designed to enhance people's participation. In this way, the engine of decentralization will have been set in motion.

Also, the Ministry of Public Works would do well to improve the administration of PWPs. This would help to deal with cases of corruption disseminated by the findings. Most of these initiatives need to back up subsistence agriculture which is the life-blood of many poor households. The profit motive and achievement of efficiency by project agencies and construction companies need not supersede efforts to reduce poverty in rural areas. Besides, it is crucial that PWPs be used to provide poverty relief and not supplant Local Government services in the villages. A great lack of essential services in these communities is clearly manifested in the findings. In addition, village leaderships are encouraged to pay special attention when committees recruit workers for projects. This would help to prevent committee members from engaging in acts of discrimination and corruption. The discrimination of women, who constitute a majority in the three villages, ought to be done away with.

In addition, the poor in these villages need to organize themselves through the use of trained committees for enhancing participation and effectiveness. The poor have to form alliances with organizations that support their course. This would enhance their competitiveness, self-development and efficiency which are key ingredients in development. The people at Mabalane have demonstrated that the formation of clubs and projects can help the rural poor to generate income for their families. More importantly, proper record-keeping and adoption of modern accounting procedures are recommended. This would help to eliminate financial mismanagement and corruption by committee members.

Furthermore, close collaboration between Local Government institutions and NGOs is needed to inculcate values of co-operation and political tolerance in the villages. Existing political conflicts in these areas ought to be dealt with directly by trained personnel. It would not help these bodies to avoid mediation in such conflicts because they trouble mostly poor households and impede their progress. The Local Government office in particular, ought to inculcate proper styles of administration and leadership through training programmes. Training workshops in the villages would ideally serve this purpose if they are held at least quarterly every year. These workshops need to be funded by the government in collaboration with the private sector. Such workshops would help to respond to the existing leadership problems and challenge the presently fragile nature of democracy in these villages. The poor households need to be engaged in dialogue and democratic decision-making processes so that repressive power structures can be challenged for the sake of their freedom. This was found to be one of the serious concerns of the poor households. It is vital that many organizations intervene in these processes so that the scope of poverty reduction and community participation could be widened. Also, this would be one efficient way of decentralizing development.

Finally, the use of aid needs to be treated with great care for best results. It is imperative that aid resources be used for small lower-level initiatives identified by the villagers. This would help to lower the high scale of unemployment. Also, donor agencies and village committees need to ensure better targeting and proper management of aid resources so that the poor can benefit. More importantly, it is essential that the use of aid does not frustrate efforts to promote self-reliance.

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APPENDIX A

I am conducting a short survey as part of an exercise for research. The research focuses on the socio-economic impact of poverty reduction in Lesotho. Would you be willing to participate in the study? Your answers will of course be treated confidentially and anonymously. The crucial issue is that there is an urgent need for communities and governments to implement programmes that will reduce poverty. This interview will not take much of your time. Read each item and write an appropriate number in the separate box provided.

QUESTIONNAIRE FOR THE POOR HOUSEHOLDS (60 RESPONDENTS)

DEMOGRAPHICS

Educational background

Below Std 7	1	Secondary Level	2	Tertiary Level	3	Not educated	4		
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Occupational Status

Currently employed	1	Unemployed	2	Job-seeker	3	Other	4		
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Age

21-30	1	31-40	2	41-50	3	51 and above	4		
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Gender

Male	1	Female	2				
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Marital Status

Married	1	Not Married	2	Divorced	3	Separated	4		
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Dependants

None	1	One	2	Less than 5	3	More than 5	4		
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QUESTIONS

Please answer the following questions by inserting the appropriate number in the open boxes opposite.

A. EDUCATION

1. Public works programmes have greatly improved transport and educational facilities in your village.

Strongly agree = 1 Agree = 2 Disagree = 3 Strongly disagree = 4

2. How is children's attendance at school in your village?

Very high = 1 High = 2 Low = 3 Poor = 4

B. HEALTH

3. Many people in your village are:

Very sick = 1 Sick = 2 Less sick = 3 In good health = 4

4. Most villagers walk long distances to health clinics.

Strongly agree = 1 Agree = 2 Disagree = 3 Strongly disagree = 4

5. Most villages do not have health clinics.

Strongly agree = 1 Agree = 2 Disagree = 3 Strongly disagree = 4

6. It is difficult for many villagers to afford paying medical fees at the clinic?

Strongly agree = 1 Agree = 2 Disagree = 3 Neither = 4

7. Many people in the village because they are sick.

Very true = 1 True = 2 Not quite = 3 Not true = 4

8. During emergencies, it is convenient to rush sick people to the local clinic or hospital in town?

Highly convenient = 1 Convenient = 2 Not convenient = 3
 Highly inconvenient = 4

C. EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITIES

9. The working day in rural road projects is more than 9 hours.

- Strongly agree =1 Agree =2 Disagree =3 Strongly disagree = 4

10. Work is very strenuous in most public works projects.

- Very strenuous =1 Strenuous = 2 Not strenuous =3
 Manageable = 4

11. Many people who work in public works programmes travel long distances to and from the workplace.

- Strongly agree =1 Agree =2 Disagree =3
 Strongly disagree = 4

12. Workers get very low wages in public works.

- Not very Low = 1 Low = 2 Neither = 3 Not Sure = 4

D. COMMUNITY PARTICIPATION

13. The villagers are involved in the design and evaluation of government and other programmes.

- Strongly agree =1 Agree =2 Disagree =3
 Strongly disagree = 4

14. You are satisfied with the way public works operate in your village

- Highly satisfied =1 Satisfied =2 Dissatisfied =3
 Highly dissatisfied = 4

15. Committees are effective and more organized in your village.

- Highly effective =1 Effective =2 Not effective =3
 Highly ineffective = 4

16. Government and voluntary agencies' programmes strongly respond to the needs of the community?

Very strongly =1 Strongly =2 Not strongly = 3

Weakly = 4

[]

E. AGRICULTURE AND RURAL PRODUCTION

17. Public works schemes help you a lot during periods of drought and hunger.

Very helpful =1 Helpful = 2 Not helpful = 3

Not sure = 4

[]

18. In your village, most of the people have fields.

Strongly agree =1 Agree =2 Disagree = 3

Strongly disagree = 4

[]

19. Many people in your village own livestock.

Too many =1 Many =2 A few =3

None = 4

[]

20. Road conditions in this village are generally bad.

Very bad =1 Bad =2 Not Bad =3 Good = 4

[]

21. Your village derives much income from a nearby woodlot?

A considerable amount =1 More =2 Less =3 None = 4

[]

22. There is currently an operating communal garden in the village.

Strongly agree =1 Agree =2 Disagree

Strongly disagree

[]

23. There are limited opportunities for off-farm production activities in the village.

Strongly agree =1 Agree = 2 Disagree = 3

Strongly disagree = 4

[]

24. A small number of households in the village have sewing machines.

- Very small =1 Small =2 Large = 3 Very large = 4

F. WATER AND SANITATION

25. Many people in the village do not have pit latrines and other sanitary facilities.

- Strongly agree =1 Agree = 2 Disagree = 3
 Strongly disagree

26. Many people get water from wells far away from the village.

- Very far =1 Far =2 Not far =3 Near = 4

27. Most of the people in the village experience acute water shortages.

- Very acute =1 Acute =2 Not acute =3 Plenty = 4

G. THE EXPERIENCE AND PERCEPTION OF POVERTY

28. There are many poor people in your village.

- Very true =1 True =2 Not true =3
 Highly untrue = 4

29. Many people in the village do not work.

- Very correct =1 Correct = 2 Incorrect =3 Very incorrect = 4

30. Women-headed households work in public works and other programmes.

- Strongly agree =1 Agree =2 Disagree =3
 Strongly disagree = 4

31. Many villagers use cow dung and firewood as fuel for cooking.

- Strongly agree =1 Agree =2 Disagree =3
 strongly disagree = 4

32. The majority of people in the village depend on government transfers.

- Highly dependent =1 Dependent =2 Less dependent =3
 Not dependent = 4

33. Most of the people here live in poor housing conditions.

- Very poor =1 Poor =2 Neither =3 Good = 4

34. Your household spends more money on:

- Food =1 Clothes =2 Transport =3 Drinking = 4

35. The average monthly income expenditure in your home is:

- Less than R 300 =1 Less than R 500 =2 More than R 500 = 3
 R 1000 and above = 4

APPENDIX B

INTERVIEW SCHEDULE

INTERVIEW 1: TAUNG SKILLS CENTRE

1. When did the centre start to operate?
2. (a) What role does the centre play in the development of this community?
(b) So, What special skills do you impart to members of the community?
3. (i) Is the centre engaged in poverty reduction? Give a brief explanation.
(ii) What kind of projects or schemes have you started for the benefit of the Liphiring community?
(iii) Are the schemes producing the intended outcomes? Explain briefly.
4. (a) In your view, have public programmes really catered to the needs of the villagers?
Give reasons for your answers.
(b) How do your activities relate to public works programmes (Fato Fato)?
(c) Do you think public works programmes should continue operating in your community? Give a reason for your answer.
5. (a) What should be done to improve the lives of poor people in the village?
(b) What has the centre done so far to work towards achieving this goal?
6. So far what are the challenges facing the centre?

INTERVIEW 2 and 3: WORLD VISION and CARE

1. When did your organization start offering services in the Mohale's Hoek district?
2. What kind of services does your offer to different communities in this district?
3. Does the organization offer services in rural areas? Explain briefly.
4. (i) Which villages have you been serving in the Taung ward?
(ii) Are you content with their involvement in your day-to-day operations? Comment briefly.
5. Are your development activities coordinated with those public works programmes.
Explain briefly.
6. As a service provider, what problems have you encountered in various communities in this district.
7. What successes and challenges would you cite about the operation of your organization in this district?

8. Are your programmes carried out on a continuous basis? Elaborate on your answer.
9. How does your organization involve communities in different projects?

INTERVIEW 4: MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE OFFICIAL

1. What services does the Ministry of Agriculture provide in the Mohale's Hoek district?
2. Does your organization provide services in rural areas?
3. Which communities do you deal with in the Mohale's Hoek district?
Give a brief explanation.
4. Are your development activities coordinated with those of public works programmes?
Elaborate on your answer.
5. Land reclamation is very crucial in the rural areas. What has your department done so far with respect to environmental degradation in the Taung Ward?
6. How does agriculture contribute to the rural economy in this district?
7. (i) As a service provider, what problems are you encountering in this district?
(ii) What has your department achieved so far in the rural areas?
8. (i) Do you think agriculture in the villages contributes to sustainable poverty reduction?
(ii) What should be done to achieve sustainable poverty reduction in rural area?

INTERVIEW 6: RURAL ROAD SUPERVISOR

1. Who is responsible for the funding, implementation and evaluation of rural road projects?
2. Are these projects undertaken on a long or short-term basis?
3. How are these projects targeted?
4. How rural communities and the government involved in these projects?
5. What problems do you encounter in your work?
6. When do the workers start and finish work each day?
7. Do you think these projects help to fight poverty in rural areas?
8. (i) On what basis are the workers paid?
(b) Do you think that money can meet their every needs? Explain briefly.
9. Do you keep any time-books for each work day?
10. In your view, what improvements need to be made in your work?
11. Who will maintain this road after you have completed your work?

INTERVIEW 6: WORLD FOOD PROGRAMME (WFP)

1. When did WFP start operating in the Mohale's Hoek district?
2. (a) Does WFP provide services in rural or urban areas? Give an explanation.
(b) Does WFP provide the same kind of services in these areas?
3. (a) How does WFP involve communities in its various activities?
(b) Explain briefly how WFP assesses the needs of its intended beneficiaries.
4. Are the services of this organization provided throughout the year? Explain briefly.
5. Which communities have you helped so far?
6. (a) As a service provider, what problems do you face in your work?
(b) What have you done so far to address these problems?
7. What are the successes and challenges of WFP in the Mohale's Hoek district?
8. (a) Do you think the services of WFP contribute to sustainable poverty reduction.
Elaborate on your answer.
(b) How can this objective be achieved?

INTERVIEW 7: DISASTER MANAGEMENT AUTHORITY (DMA)

1. When did DMA start to operate in the Mohale'Hoek district?
2. (a) Does this organization offer services in rural or urban areas? Explain briefly.
(b) Does DMA provide the same kind of services in communities that it serves?
3. How does DMA involve communities in its various operations?
4. What successes and challenges can you cite about this organization in the Mohale's Hoek district?
5. (a) Do you think DMA's activities contribute to sustainable poverty reduction?
(b) How can sustainable poverty reduction be achieved?

INTERVIEW 8: LIPHIRING ROAD PROJECT WORKER

1. How were employed in this road project?
2. When do workers start and finish work each day?
3. What does work entail?
4. (a) On what basis are you paid?
(b) How much are you paid?
5. How does this money help you to meet your household needs? Explain briefly.
6. What major problems do you encounter in your work?
7. In your view, what needs to be done to improve the work environment in this project?

FOCUS GROUP DISCUSSION

Majapereng, Liphiring and Qhalasi

1. What do public works in your village entail?
2. What does it mean to be poor in this community?
3. What income-generating activities do have in your village?
4. Generally, how do committees work in your village?
5. What forms of assistance do you get from the government and other organizations?
6. What major problems tend to hold down development in your village?
7. How are the villagers involved in the planning, design and evaluation of development programmes?
8. What is the role of Village Councils (VCs) in the co-ordination and development programmes?
9. How is needs assessment done before programmes are introduced in your village?
10. Are programmes in your village implemented in line with the needs of community members? Give a brief explanation.

APPENDIX C

Name of Respondent	Sex	Age	Dependants	Marital Status	Education	Employment Status
No.						
1						
2						
3						
4						
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APPENDIX D

PHOTO 1



PHOTO 2

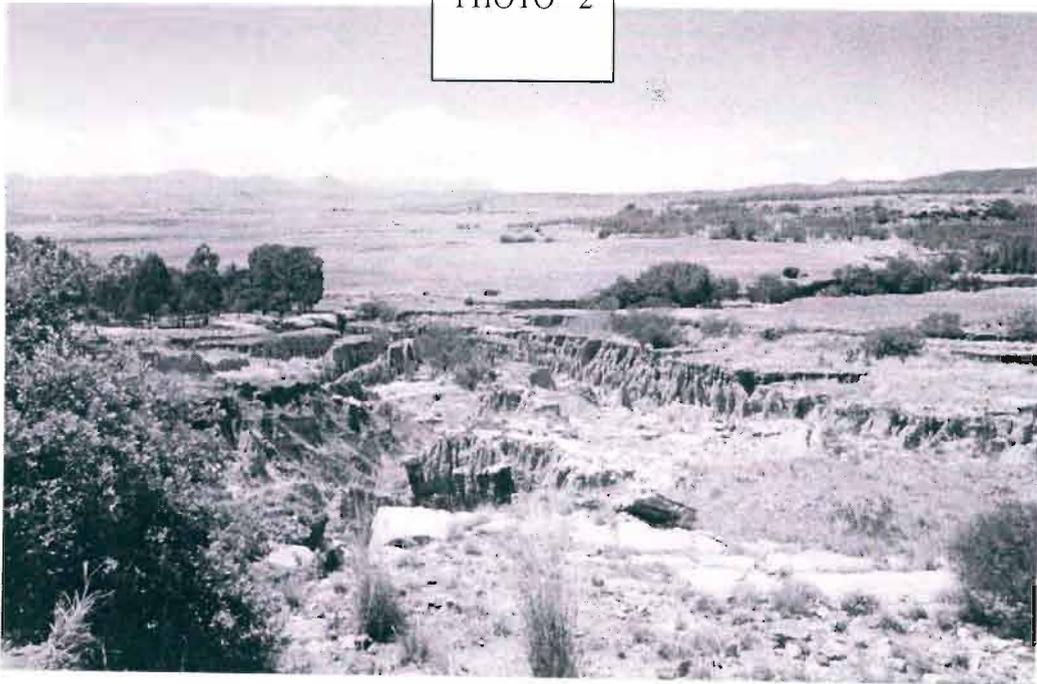


PHOTO 3

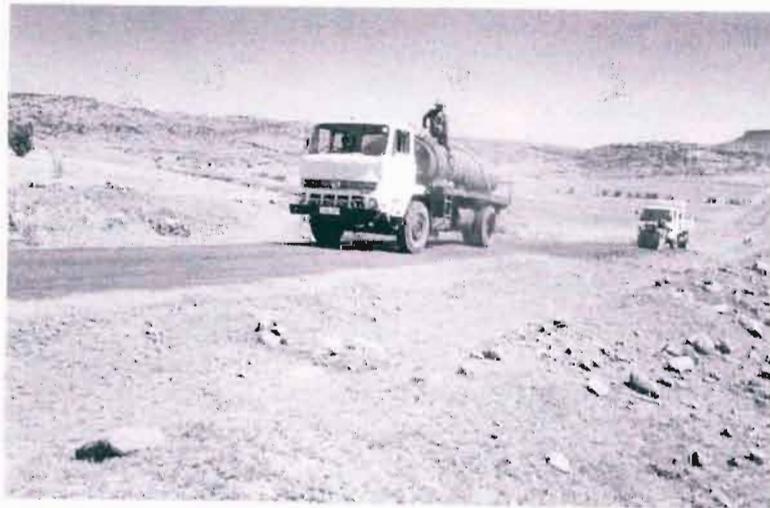


PHOTO 4

PHOTO 5

