

SELF-HELP EFFORTS AND RURAL DEVELOPMENT IN CAMEROON

THE CASE OF THE AWING COMMUNITY
IN THE NORTH-WEST PROVINCE(1986 - 1996)

BY

MBAFOR, NCHOTU CHRISTOPHER.

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MBAFOR, NCHOTU CHRISTOPHER.

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DEPARTMENT OF LOCAL GOVERNMENT STUDIES,
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ZARIA, NIGERIA.

DECLARATION

I hereby declare that this thesis has been prepared by me and that it is a record of my own Research work. It has not been presented in any previous publication for a higher degree.

All quotations are indicated and all sources of information are specially acknowledged by means of references.




MBAFOR CHRISTOPHER NGHOTU

JUNE 1998

CERTIFICATION

This thesis entitled, "SELF-HELP EFFORT AND RURAL DEVELOPMENT IN CAMEROON: A case study of Awing Community in the North-West province" (1986-1996) by MBAFOR NCHOTU CHRISTOPHER, meets the regulations governing the degree of MASTER OF PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION M.P.A. (L.G.) Of Ahmadu Bello University, Zaria, Nigeria, and is approved for its contributions to knowledge and literary presentation.



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TABLE OF CONTENTS

TITLE PAGE.....	I
DECLARATION.....	II
CERTIFICATION.....	III
DEDICATION.....	IV
ACKNOWLEDGMENT.....	V
TABLE OF CONTENTS.....	VI
ABSTRACT.....	XI

CHAPTER ONE

1. INTRODUCTION	
1.1 BACKGROUND TO THE STUDY.....	1
1.2 STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM.....	6
1.3 OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY.....	8
1.4 SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY.....	9
1.5 HYPOTHESIS.....	10
1.6 OPERATIONAL DEFINITION OF CONCEPTS.....	11
1. SELF-HELP.....	11
2. FELT-NEEDS.....	11
3. DEVELOPMENT.....	12
4. COMMUNITY.....	13
5. RURAL DEVELOPMENT.....	14
6. RURAL AREA.....	15
7. PROJECT.....	15
1.7 RESEARCH METHODOLOGY.....	16
1.7.1 METHODS OF DATA COLLECTION.....	16

A.	PRIMARY DATA.....	16
i.	THE INTERVIEW.....	16
ii.	THE QUESTIONNAIRE.....	16
iii.	OBSERVATION.....	17
B.	SECONDARY DATA.....	17
1.7.2	SAMPLING TECHNIQUE AND SIZE.....	18
1.7.3	DATA ANALYSIS.....	20
1.8	SCOPE OF THE STUDY.....	21
1.9	OUTLINE OF SUBSEQUENT CHAPTERS.....	22
1.10	FOOTNOTES AND REFERENCE.....	23

CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW AND THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK:

2.1	INTRODUCTION.....	26
2.2	THE CONCEPTS OF DEVELOPMENT AND UN-DEVELOPMENT.....	27
2.3	THE NATURE OF RURAL DEVELOPMENT.....	29
2.4	THE CONCEPT OF SELF-HELP DEVELOPMENT.....	37
2.5	MAIN CHARACTERISTICS OF SELF-HELP.....	40
1.	BENEFITS TO BE SHARED BY ALL PEOPLE CONCERNED.....	40
2.	NO IMPOSITION FROM OUTSIDE.....	41
3.	LOCAL EFFORTS BASED ON FELT NEEDS.....	41
4.	ASSISTANCE FROM OUTSIDE.....	41
5.	AN ASPECT OF ADMINISTRATION.....	42
2.6	SELF-HELP AS A PARTNERSHIP OF GOVERNMENT PRIVATE DEVELOPMENT AGENCIES AND THE PEOPLE.....	43

2.7	APPROACHES TO SELF-RELIANT DEVELOPMENT.....	45
2.7.1	THE DIRECTIVE APPROACH.....	46
2.7.2	THE NON-DIRECTIVE APPROACH.....	46
2.7.3	WHAT INFLUENCES THE CHOICE OF EITHER APPROACH.....	47
2.8	THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK:.....	50
2.8.1	MODERNIZATION AND THE PROCESS OF STRUCTURAL DIFFERENTIATION.....	51
2.9	FOOTNOTES AND REFERENCES.....	57

CHAPTER THREE:

HISTORICAL AND SOCIO-ECONOMIC PROFILE OF AWING IN THE NORTH-WEST PROVINCE OF CAMEROON.

3.1	INTRODUCTION.....	61
3.2	GEOGRAPHICAL HISTORY OF THE AWING COMMUNITY.....	63
3.3	PRESENT GEOGRAPHICAL LOCATION.....	65
3.4	NEIGHBOURS.....	66
3.5	TOPOGRAPHY.....	66
1.	RELIEF.....	66
2.	TYPES OF SOILS.....	66
3.	FERTILITY OF SOIL.....	67
4.	EROSION.....	67
5.	FAUNA AND FLORA.....	68
3.6	THE HUMAN ENVIRONMENT.....	68
1.	SIZE OF POPULATION	68
2.	MIGRATION.....	69

3.	POPULATION DENSITY.....	69
3.7	POLITICAL INSTITUTIONS.....	70
3.8	ECONOMIC INSTITUTIONS.....	71
3.9	SOURCES OF REVENUE.....	73
3.10	TOURIST POTENTIALS.....	73
3.11	THE SELF-HELP MOVEMENT IN HISTORICAL PERSPECTIVE.....	74
3.12	FOOTNOTES AND REFERENCES.....	76

CHAPTER FOUR

DATA PRESENTATION AND ANALYSIS

4.1	INTRODUCTION.....	77
4.2	TESTING OF HYPOTHESES.....	78
4.2.1	PRIMARY HEALTH CARE.....	82
4.2.2	RURAL INFRASTRUCTURE.....	87
4.2.3	PIPE BORNE WATER SUPPLY.....	91
4.3.4	EDUCATION.....	94
4.2.5	SOCIAL MOBILISATION.....	96
4.2.6	DEVELOPMENT OF THE COOPERATIVE MOVEMENT.....	98
4.2.7	AGRICULTURAL DEVELOPMENT.....	101
4.2.8	FIELD OBSERVATION ON GOVERNMENT PROJECTS.....	109
4.2.9	ASSESSMENT OF GOVERNMENT'S CAPABILITY TO CARRY OUT DEVELOPMENT.....	112
4.3	CONSTRAINTS TO SELF-HELP EFFORTS IN THE AWING COMMUNITY.....	118
4.4	FOOTNOTES AND REFERENCES.....	123

CHAPTER FIVE

CONCLUSION, SUMMARY RESEARCH FINDINGS RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 SUMMARY.....124

5.2 RESEARCH FINDINGS.....126

5.3 RECOMMENDATIONS.....129

5.4 FOOTNOTES AND REFERENCES.....131

BIBLIOGRAPHY.....132

JOURNALS.....134

APPENDIX A.....135

APPENDIX B.....140

INTERVIEW SCHEDULE.....144

ABSTRACT

In Cameroon like in many developing countries, most government programmes for rural development failed or faced some difficulties in realising their objectives due to several reasons. Among them are: lack of sufficient funds, and material resources, misappropriation and embezzlement of resources, poor implementation due to inadequate motivation of civil servants and the fact that most of these programmes do not address the felt-needs of the rural dwellers.

Against this background, several rural communities have resorted to self-help initiative as a means of uplifting their standard of living.

This study is concerned with questions such as why rural dwellers usually feel reluctant to actively participate in the execution of government initiated projects and why on the other hand, locally initiated projects are better implemented, utilised, and better maintained?

In this study the writer set out to critically compare the top-down and bottom-up approaches to rural development in Awing community thereby identifying their merits and demerits with a view to recommending one for adoption. Some theories which place great emphasis on external support as a big push for self-help were re-examined. The study also looked at ways of sensitizing and mobilizing rural communities for continuous efforts to develop themselves through either of the two approaches.

The research is mainly exploratory. It therefore relies mostly on primary data, using conventional survey techniques (the interview, questionnaire and observation) on a cross section of community dwellers and community development staff. From a population of 38000 inhabitants, a sample of 400 persons was chosen from four community based

associations (CBAs) which are made up of all occupational groups. All the 104 community development staff were given questionnaires for data generation.

In a review of related literature on development, authors like Micheal Todaro, Dudley Seers, Akin Mabogunje, see the concept ;is multidimensional and can be situated within a socio -cultural and spatial context. Most theorists encourage rural development on a self-sustaining basis while others like Uma Lele encourage external support from private agencies, but cautiously.

Rural development should, not be taken as a speedy, dramatic transformation but as a gradual piecemeal process of social change involving beneficiaries from planning to implementation stages.

The modernization theory is used as a theoretical framework to guide the study and test the two hypotheses.

The study validated both hypotheses revealing that the development of the community was a function of the sell-help efforts of the people and that comparing government efforts with those of rural dwellers, government efforts had been less effective and less successful. Government's extractive, regulative, distributive, symbolic and responsive capabilities were grossly inadequate to initiate and sustain rural development in the area.

This study recommends the bottom-up approach to rural development and calls on government to re-orientate it's rural development policy especially in the English speaking region of Cameroon. It also recommends the granting of more autonomy to local communities especially in matters of determining their own priorities, project planning financial management and management of other local resources.

CHAPTER ONE:

INTRODUCTION:

1.1. BACKGROUND TO THE STUDY:

In many less developed countries, Rural Development has often relied on change initiated by external bodies; (government and non-governmental organisations). Rural development has usually been a sort of social action in response to some form of initiative by outsiders. Some communities have lived in their apathy waiting for deliverance to come from somewhere. There is very little effort on their part to think and initiate positive change on their standard of living.

(1)

The tendency has been that government or Non-Governmental organisations identify a problem within a community, initiate some projects to satisfy the needs and the local populace is merely invited or forced to contribute in the realisation of projects in the form of unskilled labour, finances or material. If such initiative does not come from above, then little or no development ever occurs in such localities.

However, by the end of the two world wars, and with the advent of the great economic depression, several governments were faced with a multiplicity of obligations both internally and internationally such that less efforts in terms of

funds

and skilled manpower were left to satisfy local demands for national development.

Governments readily welcomed the ideas of involving local people in the development process and got relieved of some responsibilities that were now overburdening them. People's direct participation in development was preached and encouraged especially among the British colonial territories through the system of indirect rule. A premium was even put in the form of more financial allocations for the more dynamic territories.

On their part, the new nations of the less developed world had by that period produced some educated elites who having gained some experience from the developed world, where they studied, sensitized their communities on the essence of self-reliance as a strategy for rural development. The rural populace could therefore be mobilized to understand that government could no more provide all their needs.

The new emerging methodology of self- help thus supports the conviction that socio-economic improvement is hardly realized until the people concerned believe that such improvement is possible, that they really need it and are directly involved in the process.

The concerned people must be sufficiently convinced that they do need such a change and must be equally moved to take the initiative themselves² The

phenomenon of self-help development under scrutiny here lies in the consideration of human beings in a process of self-chosen change for better living standards.

Self-help would thus tend to mean, popular participation in the decision-making process by the majority of people if they are well mobilized for that purpose. It demands independence in almost all aspects of life; the right to set ones own objectives and achieving them through personal means available with minimum reliance on any outside aid. Successes and failures are thus looked upon as experiences which will shape a better course for future enterprises of that nature³.

Modern self- Help development has its origins in Europe and America which however stems from the natural heritage of most of the third world especially Africa which had earlier seen this spirit suppressed by colonialism with its selfish objectives of exploitation and servitude.

The inheritance of this modern phenomenon in many new nations of the third world, began when the British began to lay emphasis on community development projects as a means of rapidly reaching local communities and voluntarily involving people in their own development with the aim of giving them that experience in the use of democratic processes for their self-governance after independence⁴. In 1953, they established an advisory committee on social development in the colonies. In 1954, a conference at Ashridge college,

Hertfordshire examined development in the local communities.⁵

The idea of self-help development in Cameroon is a chequered one which warrants a critical analysis of its evolution. from pre-independence period. This phenomenon has been influenced by the political, territorial and administrative changes the country was subjected to during the 19th and 20th centuries.

German colonial rule established in 1884 by the Berlin Conference was characterised by heavy industrial investments with the local communities having nothing to do with development strategies. The Germans with their policy of establishing colonies purely for the extraction of raw materials for the home industry, were out strictly to exploit the unskilled labour of the local people to pursue this economic policy.⁶ Most often, such exploitation was enlisted through the use of force.

By the end of the first world war, and the defeat of Germany, Cameroon was assigned to the British and the french as a mandated territory under the supervision of the league of Nations, Subsequently it became a full colony to both. The French governed the territorially vast eastern part of the country while the British administered the relatively smaller but richer southern region which they incorporated as part of Southern Nigeria.

The French practiced a policy of assimilation of the local people to the French culture leaving little or no room for local initiative which was regarded as a

challenge to the french hegemony.⁷

On the other hand, the British governed by the system of indirect rule which was more open and gave room for grassroots democracy thereby encouraging local initiative in the development process. It is under this background that the concept of self-Help evolved in the southern region of the country faster than in other regions.

By 1961 community development activities operated only in the English-speaking provinces of cameroon (North-West and South- West provinces). It was only in 1976 that the concept of Self-Help was officially acknowledged and initiated in the French speaking part of Cameroon and formally integrated as a National development policy.⁸

After the peaceful political revolution (a constitutional coup d'etat) and the re-unification of the east and west cameroons on 20th May 1972, the activities of self-help development in the English speaking part of the country were assessed and recommendations made to the government.

By a presidential decree No 76/256 of July 1st 1976 the self-help practice was recommended to the former east Cameroon.⁹

The Francophone dominated federal government between 1961 and 1972 paid little attention to the relevance of local initiative and participation in rural development and nothing substantial was done to encourage it. However, since

the 1976 decree, more interest developed for the self-help approach to rural development.

The unitary government of 1972 recognised the giant steps so far taken by the Anglophones to cater for their basic needs like water, roads infrastructure, elementary education, and primary health care. The government even pledged to assist such initiative by granting subsidies Community development personnel and financial aid from non-governmental organisations, was attracted by the more dynamic communities.

However, government's assistance to encourage self-help, has been grossly insufficient. The reasons are obvious:

There is a general economic depression that became very acute in the 1980s. There is a world economic recession where national economies especially of third world countries grounded to a slow movement such that basic social services to the rural populace can no more be provided.

Government spent the scarce financial and material resources at its disposal on projects that benefited urban dwellers, to the detriment of rural dwellers.

1.2. STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

In Cameroon, most Government plans for the development of rural areas either failed or faced enormous difficulties in realising their objectives and targets.

Among several factors responsible for the situation are as follows.

- i. Most of the planned projects do not address the real problems or felt-needs of the rural dwellers. Such projects are usually imported models from outside which are imposed on the people.
- ii. The masses are therefore either not interested to work for their success or could even sabotage the implementation of the projects. Government fails to realise the fact that development programmes which come from people's initiative could be better implemented, than those imposed on them.
- iii. Another factor is the poor conditions of service of civil servants who are not motivated enough to take projects implementation seriously.
- iv. The most serious problem responsible for failure in implementing government initiated projects is the lack of sufficient funds at all levels. Such funds are not only grossly insufficient, but a good proportion is embezzled by officials in charge.
- v. Faced with such frustrations, the more dynamic rural communities have resorted to self-help initiative to fill the gap created by failed government projects. It is against this background that self-help efforts have gained ground in the northwest province. With a spirit of hardwork the people of Awing Community have taken some steps in self-help development over the years which has greatly uplifted their standard of living.

The study is an attempt to compare government-initiated Community development programmes with those initiated by the people themselves with a view to finding out factors responsible for the difference in their level of success at implementation, utilisation and maintenance stages. Thus, the research questions are:

- i. Why do people in rural communities always feel reluctant to participate actively in implementing programmes initiated by government, even when such programmes are meant to uplift their standard of living?
- ii. Why do programmes initiated by rural dwellers seem to be more successfully implemented, utilised and maintained than those initiated by government?

Awing Community in the North-West region of Cameroon is chosen to find answers to these and other related questions.

1.4 OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

This study is a comparative assessment of government's efforts with those of rural dwellers to uplift their standard of living. It is an assessment of the Top-down and Bottom-up approaches to rural development in Cameroun. The specific objectives are:

- a. to critically examine the two approaches and identify their merits and

demerits with a view to recommending one for adoption in Cameroon or at least in the English-speaking region where community development has become a way of life.

- b. to re-examine some theories of development that place great emphasis on external support as a big push to rural dwellers for self-help.
- c. to recommend ways of sensitizing and mobilising rural communities for more efforts to develop themselves whether the approach adopted by government is top-down or bottom-up.

1.5. SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY

National development could better be achieved by improving on the living standards and productivity of rural dwellers who constitute about seventy percent (70%) of the total population of Cameroon. In effect rural development through self-help efforts today stands as a more effective means of improving socio-economic welfare which is enough justification for the attention being given to it through this study.

On the other hand, the degree of government involvement in the socio-economic development of the Awing community considering its status in the geopolitics of the country has been grossly inadequate. There is therefore need for emphasis to be placed on the encouragement of self-help initiative at the local

level which serves as a primary source for raw materials, manpower and other resources for global national development in the long run.

The significance of such an academic work lies in the extent to which it can serve as a working asset for policy-makers, researchers, scholars and students of development administration who undertake studies aimed at evolving effective rural development strategies. This study is therefore prompted by the desire to contribute to the already existing literature in the field of rural development.

1.6. HYPOTHESES

Based on the statement of the problem of the research, the following hypotheses are tested:

- i. That the more efforts people make to provide socio-economic and infrastructural facilities for themselves, the higher their level of income, health, educational and social well-being. In other words, the level of socio-economic development of the Awing community, is a function of the self-help effort of the people.
- ii. That government efforts at raising the living standard of rural communities are less successful and less effective than the self-help efforts of the people themselves, especially in the areas of income generation, health and educational facilities.

1.7. OPERATIONAL DEFINITION OF CONCEPTS

1. SELF-HELP

Ikoku defines self-help as follows:

"Self-reliance in its general sense means the right and ability to set ones own goals and then realising them as much as possible through one's own efforts and using one's own factors"¹².

In this case, self-reliance has a direct affinity to self-sustenance. A situation whereby personal efforts could be used to achieve set goals using one's environment and one's faculty. Self-help could further be described as a process of conscious organised efforts through which individuals or groups acquire attitudes, skills and concepts necessary for their democratic participation in solving their problems in an order of priority and according to their own pace and style.¹³

The essence of self-help lies on the principle that initiative and action which comes from the people themselves without external influences and pressures will be more genuine in the sense that the people will value it more than whatever is imposed on or offered to them from outside; self-help is a group method of expediting personality growth through group responsibility for local common good.¹⁴

context of a growing economy. 15.

Dudley Seers puts it more succinctly in the following words:

"The questions to ask about a country's development are three: what has been happening to poverty? What has been happening to unemployment? What has been happening to inequality? If all three of these have declined from high levels, then beyond doubt, this has been a period of development for the country concerned" 16.

Though many have regarded development as Westernization, or modernization, others argue that the concept should be pinned down to specific spheres of life for example economic, social, political, or technological development.

Development in its essence, must represent the whole gamut of change by which an entire social system or community tuned to the diverse basic needs and desires, of individuals and social groups, within that system moves away from a condition of life widely perceived as unsatisfactory towards a condition of life regarded as materially and emotionally better.

These conditions would include life sustenance (the ability to provide basic needs), self-esteem (preserving the human dignity), and freedom from servitude (to be able to make one's choice on things and issues) 17. For the purpose of this study, we will use the term development

to mean:

"a continuous process of positive change in the quality and span of life of a person or community"¹⁸

4. COMMUNITY

A human community usually refers to a group sharing a physical space (for example Kongo Campus A.B.U.) and common traits (for example lesbians). A community is bound together by a shared social identity and common culture and is typified by a high degree of social cohesion.

For the purpose of this study, a community must have that feeling of oneness and sense of belonging which warrants them to pursue common goals of development. The group must be able to survive and remain indivisible.

5. RURAL DEVELOPMENT

Rural development in general implies a quantitative concept that might be understood as economic growth. It also implies a qualitative aspect which has much to do with the idea of social well-being encompassing such factors as the level of satisfaction of the felt-needs of a population in terms of food and nutrition, housing, health, education, recreation, security and spiritual satisfaction.¹⁹

There is a general consensus that rural development is a multi dimensional phenomenon. To Mbithi, rural development is:

"A spatial as well as a technical or economic process. It is constrained by the consideration for human welfare in areas such as

nutrition, public health, the family setting and community involvement as well as by technical considerations like rural access to roads, credit, tractors, ploughs etc.²⁰

This study would adopt the following definition by Williams who sees rural development as:

"A set of economic and social development activities peculiar to the process of transforming the traditional sector as a whole"²¹.

6. RURAL AREA

Various characteristics of rural areas are usually identified to differentiate them from urban areas. Such characteristics include the size and density of the population, the dominant occupation and its contribution to the national economy.

For the purpose of this study, a rural area is taken to be a locality which would exhibit some or all of the following traits:

- A relatively small population with a low population density spread over a relatively large geographical area.
- The main occupation of more than 70% of the population is farming and mainly at subsistence level
- The non-availability of modern infrastructure like electricity, pipe borne water, adequate educational and public health institutions.
- A low level of per capita income.²²

distant from large urban centres.

7. PROJECT

The term "project" refers to an activity or sets of activities which are related, planned and executed as an identifiable and inseparable whole. It usually has a specific geographical location and often has a clearly defined life span.

The boundaries or specifications of projects are usually clearly defined but could nevertheless be carried out in isolation irrespective of any other form of planning activity; for example, the construction of a dam, a hospital or a bridge in a particular locality.

1.8 RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

1.8.1 METHODS OF DATA COLLECTION

a. PRIMARY DATA

The research is mainly exploratory and therefore relies heavily on primary data. In this wise, the use of conventional survey techniques is employed.

i. THE INTERVIEW

This technique was used to generate information from:

- a. subsistence farmers and the low income group of the area;
- b. the elites of Awing Community and rural development assistants within the

locality who would furnish details and personal views that cannot be obtained through the questionnaires.

ii. THE QUESTIONNAIRE

Questionnaires were served to rural development assistants, literate community elites notably the executive officers of the development unions and other age group associations. These questionnaires seek to obtain data of self-help projects carried out in the area.

iii. OBSERVATION

This technique will examine the following issues:

- Inspection of project sites to assess progress in relation to set targets.
- How the inhabitants participate in the execution of projects, their behaviour and attitude to work.
- The level of social mobilization of the masses, the level of interaction of people in various groups as they deliberate, plan and decide on issues affecting their felt-needs. This exercise would better validate data collected from the two previous sources.

b. SECONDARY DATA

Secondary data would be sought to compliment primary sources.

Government departments and Non Governmental organisation will be contacted to obtain any relevant data on the evolution of the development process in the area.

Equally the cooperative societies were contacted for any relevant data on agricultural performance(production quantity and quality), the Credit Union League would be consulted for information on the incomes level of the people and their savings capacity.

Library books, journals and magazines would also be consulted for relevant literature and data.

1.8.2 SAMPLING TECHNIQUE AND SIZE.

Two sets of questionnaires were designed and administered directly to two categories of respondents (Appendix A and B). The first set is for community members while the other set is meant for community development personnel working in the Awing community. Apart from the questionnaire for community members, a checklist of issues was prepared for discussion with community members. (Appendix c).

From a population of 38.000 inhabitants, a sample was chosen which tried to ensure some representativeness. To get such a sample, we relied strongly on Community Based Associations (CBAs) which have been existing for long. These associations, we judged genuinely represent the views and opinions of the masses.

This is because they are democratically constituted with elected executives who direct the affairs of the association on behalf of the entire community. Decisions are arrived at through deliberations and consensus.

The following table shows the sample of respondents with whom we held discussions and administered questionnaires to:

1. The Ndong Awing Cultural and Development Association - (NACDA).
2. MENDZONG
3. Awing Agricultural and Cooperative Society - (AGRICOS)
4. Awing Cooperatives Credit Union - (ACCU)

Table 1.1

Distribution of questionnaires to respondents of C.B.As

Total population	Sample size		
	Association	Sample Size	Percentage of total sample
38.000	- NACDA	183	45.75
	-	120	30
	MENDZONG	39	9.75
	- AGRICOS	58	14.5
	- ACCU		
Total		400	100

Source: Field Work research

The table shows that four Community Based Associations fairly representing all categories of persons in the community were sampled which gave a total of 400 respondents out of a total population of 38,000 inhabitants. All occupational groups are represented within these four associations.

The forum for questionnaire administration and discussions with respondents was on separate meeting days in different wards and then appointments made on meeting days of each group. Once the motive of the exercise was explained to the members, their minds were prepared for the exercise. Each group was visited at least two times.

Discussions were sometimes at individual level while at other times it was done collectively between three to five members at a time.

A cordial atmosphere prevailed during the exercise due to the fact that the researcher spent some reasonable time with the people in their daily activities and sufficiently interacted with all occupational groups.

The population of community development staff stands at 104. The second set of questionnaires were administered to all thereby involving all the strata of personnel (senior, intermediate and junior staff).

The distribution of questionnaires was as follows:

Table 1.2

Distribution of questionnaires to rural development staff

Total population	Sample for each level	Number of Questionnaires	Percentage of total population
104	1. Junior staff	65	62.5
	2. Intermediate staff	21	20.58
	3. Senior staff	18	17.30
Total		104	100

Source: Field work research

8.3 DATA ANALYSIS

Based on the nature of data obtained we adopted a statistical and content analysis approach for testing the hypotheses. This included calculating the frequencies and percentages and presenting them in tabular forms.

1.9 SCOPE OF THE STUDY

Our area of study is the Awing community in the North west province of Cameroon. This area falls within the English speaking region of the country where the self-help phenomenon is almost part of the people's way of life from pre-colonial and colonial time to date.

The Awing community covers a land area of about 918km² with a population of about 38,000 inhabitants²³. About 550km² is a residential area while about 368km² is farm land giving a population density of 41 persons per km².

The study covers a period of ten years: 1986-1996. Though this period appears very long, it must be understood that most of the self-help projects were conceived and initiated years in advance but had to take long delays due to several constraints especially insufficient funding. To better assess the impact of self-help therefore, it is worthwhile considering a ten year period.

The aspects of development that we look at in this study include; the agricultural sector, the educational sector, primary health care, rural infrastructure and social mobilization. The limitation of the study to the Awing community alone allows for an indept analysis of issues and problems related to its development.

1.10 OUTLINE OF SUBSEQUENT CHAPTERS:

The study comprises five chapters, each of which is sub-divided into headings and sub-headings for clarification purposes.

Chapter one deals with a general introduction to the work wherein we examine the statement of the research problem, the objectives of the study, the scope and the limitations as well as techniques to be used in data collection and analysis. Some key concepts used are also defined for the purpose of the study.

Chapter two deals with literature review. This is to put the research into perspective (to portray the state of the art) by looking at theoretical developments over the years which have influenced the practice of self-help.

Chapter three looks at the history of the place of study. This shows the

peculiarities of the area and its pattern of development which inspires the study.

Chapter four is concerned with a detailed presentation and analysis of the relevant data collected; to validate or invalidate the hypotheses.

Finally chapter five presents a summary of the findings of the research, observations and recommendations that are relevant to the practice of self-help in Cameroon.

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CHAPTER TWO
LITERATURE REVIEW AND
THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

2.1. INTRODUCTION:

Social problems could be resolved more effectively through planned and concerted action by individuals, groups and organizations if they rely on already existing knowledge and attempted solutions.

There has been an ever increasing demand for evaluative research with the tightening of budgetary releases from both government, NGOs and private agencies concerned with the development process. In this light we are going to focus on the conceptualization of self-help in relation to Rural Development, its main characteristics and the various approaches through which it is studied, studies already carried out by scholars in this field about the practice of this form of development in other places, the results and problems encountered and how relevant the outcomes of such experiences could be of inspiration to our area of study.

One of the principal reasons for the failure in the struggle for rural development could be traced from the misconception of the notion of development globally taken and what rural development should specifically entail. It would thus be of great interest for us to identify the real concept of development and the nature of rural development in particular.

2.2. THE CONCEPTS OF DEVELOPMENT AND UNDERDEVELOPMENT

To Todaro, Development is not purely or cannot purely be an economic phenomenon. It encompasses more than the material and financial side of people's lives. Development should be perceived as a multidimensional process involving the reorganization and reorientation of the entire economic and social order.

Economic development could thus be redefined in terms of the reduction or elimination of poverty, inequality and unemployment within the context of a growing economy, redistribution rather than economic growth becomes the new order.¹

Seers puts it more succinctly in the following words:

"The questions to ask about a country's development are three: What has been happening to poverty? what has been happening to unemployment? what has been happening to inequality? If all three of these have declined from high levels then beyond doubt this has been a period of development for the country concerned."²

Development in its essence, must represent the whole gamut of change by which an entire social system or a community tuned to the diverse basic needs and desires of individuals and social groups within that system, moves away from a condition of life widely perceived as unsatisfactory and toward a situation or condition of life regarded as materially and emotionally better.

These conditions would include amongst others life sustenance, (the ability to provide one's basic needs), self-esteem (preserving the human dignity), and freedom from servitude (to be able to make one's choice on things and issues)³. In this light therefore

Mabogunje looks at development not only as economic growth but equally as a process of modernization, a process of distributive justice and social transformation.⁴

The view of development by these authors, represents a broad and appropriate framework for studying development as it looks at all the ramifications of change within which a community should be studied to be able to assess any positive change it is going through by self-help means for the improvement of their living standards.

The concept of underdevelopment on its part is very relative or relational in nature. It could be seen as a state of societal well-being which in relation to conditions elsewhere, is far from satisfactory. This state reflects certain absolute conditions notable amongst which is the lack of self reliance and the inability to be master of one's own fortunes.

The lack of self-reliance to Mabogunje could be as a result of the undermining of their traditional socio-economic values by the international capitalist world⁵.

This more practical and realistic approach by the author goes a long way to actualize our view of development. It recommends a new orientation to our view of rural development and enlightens communities to look at their rural development initiatives or strategies within their socio-cultural and economic context.

Therefore our view of development should be oriented more towards what could be done to rescue the state of affairs rather than realizing the consistency of several intellectual constructs from the western capitalist world that have been evolving over the decades⁶

Discussions on rural development problems throughout the developing world usually sound so familiar and repetitive. Rural structures vary considerably within and between less developed countries but the similarity in the processes are glaring viz: colonial exploitation, rapid population growth and their responses to outside interventions.

Mabongunje again looks at rural development as concerned with the improvement of the living conditions of the low income populations living in rural areas on a self-sustaining basis through the transformation of their socio - spatial structures in productive activities.⁷ This improvement goes beyond agricultural development which is just an aspect of their rural productive life.

In essence, rural development implies a broad-based reorganization and mobilization of the rural masses to enhance their capacity to cope effectively with the daily tasks of their lives and reliance on this for positive change. The contention of Akin M. in his study of rural development is that comprehensive reorganization is essential to the attainment of the objectives of rural development and that in the past most of the failure in rural development had been due to a relatively scanty attention paid to the spatial dimension of rural development planning. To him this form of development stands out as the most effective means of improving the well-being of the vast majority of a country's rural population⁸.

A rational policy solution to raise living standards within the rural poor, with the aim of increasing agricultural productivity must necessarily be accompanied by some sort of land reform or redistribution to allow small farm holdings rather than a few landlords oppressing the masses.

Digressing from the advocates of centralized economic growth and social planning, who rely on large scale concentrated production patterns (essentially a top-down model)⁹, populists and others have argued for development based on small scale individual enterprises in agriculture, significant improvements in elementary education and health care based principally on local initiative and local resources. Proponents of this thought are led by Lipton,¹⁰ who has recommended a diversion from large scale industrial investment to small farmers productivity, reduction of taxation in rural areas, with greater attention to welfare services and the training of rural extension workers.

The positive attribute of the Lipton school of thought notwithstanding, one cannot refrain from criticizing or discouraging small scale individual agricultural enterprise which would tend to encourage and promote subsistent agriculture since these small farm holdings will barely produce for home consumption. Rather we should encourage amalgamation or the cooperative use of arable land with the introduction of mechanization to improve yields and better commercialization of produce.

Such a model of land tenure does not necessarily give room for feudal-like landlords who can monopolize land and oppress the masses. Cooperative land tenure could be of great encouragement to our study area which has an extensive communal farm land which is redistributed from time to time exclusively for farming purposes.

According to Gabriel T. due partly to the failure of social benefits such as health and education to 'trickle-down' to those less well-off of the rural areas, and partly due to the realization that better education and health in addition to land, machinery and capital create real increase in economic and social improvements, more emphases have to be placed on the provision of these basic needs rather than on increase in Gross National Product (GNP). Health and education have been proven to make better improvement to labour productivity than do most industrial investments.

Certain categories of conditions for rural development are analyzed by Todaro M.¹¹ as being:

- Land Reform: whereby farm structures and land tenure patterns need to be adapted to the dual objectives of increasing food production and promoting a wider distribution of the benefits of agrarian progress. Redistribution from large landowners to individual cultivators to allow equitable exploitation of rural wealth.
- Supportive policies from government and non-governmental organizations to boost rural agricultural production in the form of fertilizers small farmer credits, improved seeds and pesticides.
- Integrated rural development objectives; apart from small farmer agricultural progress, should be included, the provision of social and welfare services, health, education and a lessening of rural-urban inequalities and the capacity of the rural sector to sustain and accelerate the pace of these improvements over time.

Gabriel T. again refers to Rural Development as a process of change in rural societies arising from planned interventions either by the state or NGOs or the

people themselves. This may involve an analysis of the processes which make rural societies and economies what they are and substantially determine the changes that occur within them. Such a framework is intended to understand the nature of the phenomenon with which rural development practitioners deal and offer the basis for planned intervention by government development agencies.¹²

Lele Uma classified rural Development (R.D) Programs into five categories:

Commodity programs, which are relatively straight forward at increasing export crop production among small holder farmers.

Functional Programs, to satisfy a single aspect considered to be of priority.

Subsectoral Programs, directed at specific subsectors or regions such as live-stock development in Kenya.

Rehabilitated spontaneous Efforts

Principally on squatter settlement for disadvantaged social groups, the unemployed or landless and

Regional Rural Development Programmes

Undertaken mainly by NGOs, planned and administered by expatriates; for example the rural development projects in Kenya and the Ujamaa'a in Tanzania or ZAPI and SDN settlement schemes both in Cameroon,¹³ this five-fold classification covers the types of R.D schemes undertaken in most developing regions of the world.

However, most of the population living in these areas do not participate in the implementation of the project though they do benefit somehow from it. Emphasis have been laid most of the time on agricultural export crops than on food production for the

masses.

The issue at stake is not whether these projects succeeded or failed but how appropriate they were for the particular circumstances under consideration.

In reviewing the success that have attended these various approaches to rural development projects over the years, lele, identified various factors which have made most of them less than fully effective in making the process of development of the low income sector self - sustaining viz:

That R.D. objectives have changed over the years notably from emphasis on agricultural export crops to sufficient food production. That R.D.projects had been based on more limited knowledge than is available now due to more research.

There was poor knowledge of the socio cultural and institutional environment in which they were implemented such that responses from target populations were not anticipated and above all, there was scarcity of trained local manpower to effect the rural projects.

The question then arises whether R.D. can be undertaken on a gradualist, piecemeal, project by project basis or must involve a speedy and dramatic, comprehensive and total transformation of the rural areas of a country accomplished by the people themselves with their own resources and organizational talents and without or a minimum of foreign assistance. This latter view of R.D. prevails. Mere capital investment by outsiders is not enough, but the extent to which the population is involved in this effort matters more.

Lele again argues that if the emphasis in R.D. is to be on mass participation. and on the viability (financial and material) of the process, it would seem necessary that R.D.

programmes be viewed as part of a continuous dynamic process rather than as an extensive versus an intensive or maximum versus minimum effort¹⁵.

Akin M. recounts the progress made by China to transform its rural communities into reasonably advanced development stages. He traces the evolution from the cooperatives or "collective" to the "commune system" which coordinates all types of activities not only agricultural. The western world however fails to adequately assess the Chinese achievement because they apply performance criteria of a capitalist economy to a very different set of societal situations¹⁶.

As Gray put it, rather than emphasize upon investment directly into modern industry, in the hope that the effect would spread downwards, emphasis should be on investment in the improvement of local communities which would feed back into modern industry.¹⁷ The approach is ideal for all peasant countries seeking to modernize, what ever their political system or ideology tolerates.¹⁸

In Tanzania, the policy of Ujamaa or "Ujamaization" that is "co-operative communities" in which People live together or worked together for the good of all" entails the following;

- Voluntary collectivization of the population into nucleated settlements (Ujamaa Villages).
- Formation of Village Government with power to plan and implement Local projects.
- Provision of social services such as schools, dispensaries and water supply. The Tanzanian Government fully grasped the close relationship between spatial form and social progress.

Several programmes aimed at effecting R.D. in different African countries revealed that projects were at least partially directed toward improving living standards of the low-income rural populations especially the subsistence agricultural sector. However, the projects were less than fully effective, in making the process of development self-reliant. The limitations of such programmes are implications for future sectoral policies and for planning and implementation for future R.D. programmes. The target groups should be well focused at with the ultimate aim of ensuring the participation of the lowest income groups.

Planning R.D. requires considerable manpower and effort and given the scarcity of these, it is left for outsiders to plan and implement. One of the following alternatives has to be used:

- The use of existing scarce trained manpower thereby maximizing their effectiveness.
- Adopting the approach of learning by doing; that is through pilot programmes.
- A combination of the first two approaches; planning based on systematic acquisition of local knowledge and feasibility in the course of implementation. This approach places greater emphasis on the environment of the local people's knowledge, in place of the informal data gathering and research.

Lele, recommends an approach whereby programmes should be allowed to evolve in scope through time phasing of activities. Programme evolution should be based on specific facts, constraints identified and indigenous human, institutional and financial capability development during the course of earlier stages of programme implementation.

Chambers R. analysis the existence of rural poverty and bias as being under the influence of two schools of thought: the political economists who see rural poverty as caused by processes which enable the rich to accumulate wealth at the expense of the poor and the physical ecologists who see rural poverty as caused by population growth and pressure on the available resources and the environment. Pluralism is therefore highly solicited if a better understanding of the causes of rural poverty are to be better understood.

Pluralism recognises multiple causation, multiple objectives and multiple interventions. It stands out as a philosophy of reversals; that is reversing the narrowing of professional vision of rural poverty and broadening it by learning to take from those at the peripheries; the top learning from below.²⁰

Since this pluralism embodies the top-down approach to development there is the risk of undermining the bottom-up approach since the culture of pluralism is that of urban based outsiders. To better understand rural poverty and judge better there is need to see things from the other end; that is from the periphery to the village center.²¹

The knowledge of rural people is often superior to that of outsiders especially in issues such as mixed cropping and knowledge about the environment. Rural knowledge and modern scientific knowledge should thus be complementary in their strengths and weaknesses. If combined, they would achieve what neither would alone.

It is better to start with the priorities and strategies of the rural poor themselves and secondly by concentrating on what outsiders and the rural poor agree in saying no to. Rural development can thus be redefined to include enabling poor people to demand and control more of the benefits of development; an unconstrained dialogue with the poor and

an effort to learn from them what their priorities are. Objectives for outsiders can then be expressed as a reversal putting first the wishes of the poor themselves. Even if the initiative should start from outsiders, the aim should be to transfer more power and control to the poor.

2.4. THE CONCEPT OF SELF-HELP DEVELOPMENT:

To Dayal Rajeshwar, there are nearly as many aspects of community development as there are people interested in the various stages of its process.²² Self-help is located to have grown out of the earlier concept of "Mass Education" (as was the case of Ghana),²³ which evolved as an arm of government policy for a grand design of rural development. It is not limited to formal teaching in a classroom but includes mass literacy campaigns especially through the mass media, posters and film shows.

Self-help development can today be recognised as a balanced programme for stimulating the local potential for growth in every direction. It reposes on a reciprocal advance in both wealth and welfare, not on the basis of outside charity but by building on the vitality of the beneficiaries themselves with the minimum of outside aid. A collection of the various definitions emphasizing the following aspects, material progress, a process of communal change and an aspect of administration.

While some authors vaguely approve grassroots participative organisation, Biddle and Biddle,²⁴ specifically endorse self-reliant development as the condition sine-qua-non for social progress. The means of encouraging peoples' initiatives are made more specific by giving both definition and content to the self-help process describing the methods by which great social improvements can be realised by local citizens

The new emerging methodologies of self-help support the conviction that social improvement does not occur until the people involved believe that such improvement is possible. The people themselves must be sufficiently convinced to take the initiative.

Development is always normative, that is taking place in the midst of actions that serve chosen goals. No scientist who takes part in development can be contented with descriptions only. He must approve actions and evaluate results in the light of some scheme of values (standards) towards the attainment of which the development is directed.

The self-help process tends to depend upon the formation of community serving small groups or the utilization of one already existing. (CBAs)

According to Biddle and Biddle self-help development is something further than mere social action in view of some societal change.²⁵

A distinction is made from community service which is usually offered by universities, churches libraries or town councils in the form of public lectures, concerts or advice. The concept of self-help englobes all these and goes beyond. Several authors would however hold the view that it is an activity addressed to or reserved for underdeveloped peoples overseas destined to bring such peoples up to the level of the advanced or modern nations of the west.²⁶

However, Biddle and Biddle refuse to see self-help as only meant for rural areas. This is contrary to the view held by developed countries that self help is reserved for overseas territories struggling to come up to the level of the advanced nations of the west. It is a phenomenon that covers both metropolitan and peripheral areas.²⁷ Any society and its institutions with which residents identify themselves is a conducive community²⁸ for

the self-help process. It involves group decisions, collective action and joint evaluation that leads to continuing action. It could equally involve utilization of all helping profession and agencies that can assist in problem solving.

Biddle and Biddle again attempt to illustrate certain operational assumption viz:

1. That each person is valuable and capable of growth toward greater social sensitivity and responsibility.

- Each person has underdeveloped abilities in initiatives, originality and leadership which can be cultivated and strengthened.
- People's activities tend to grow stronger when they work more together in small groups that serve the common good.
- Although people may express their grievance freely, when they become responsible, they often choose to refrain in order to further the interest of the whole group and the idea of community.
- Groups are capable of growth towards self-direction when members assume responsibility for growth of the group and for inclusive local welfare.

2. Human beings and groups have both good and bad impulses.

- When people are free of coercive pressures and can then examine a wide range of alternatives they tend to choose the better and wiser course of action.
- There is satisfaction in serving the common welfare even as in serving self-interest.

Dayal on his part reiterates the position that community development includes all forms of betterment carried out by the country side people themselves, government or non governmental organisation in the fields of agriculture, cooperative societies, health services, training programmes, housing and social welfare. ²⁹ It should however, be clarified that community development cannot be satisfactorily defined in terms of its contents because it is a question of manner rather than matter. The job is not so important as the way in which the problem is tackled and solved.

Burke, further strengthens the community nature of self-help by making three considerations in community change:

- That it is an approach to the solution of some specific problems which can be resolved through community effort.
- That the means employed are more important than the solution itself.
- That it is often difficult to separate community development from other types of change within the environment.

Three principles thus serve as guidance to this process: self-help efforts, attention to the felt-needs and development of the community as an integrated whole.³⁰

2.5. MAIN CHARACTERISTICS OF SELF- HELP:

In a bid to distinguish self help from other forms of development, Dayal, identifies certain characteristics peculiar to this form of development process viz:

1. Benefits to be shared by all people concerned:

To be considered a programme of self help, it is most essential that its benefits must be shared evenly and equitably over the whole populace so that the economic

disparities existing between the people of different classes are reduced to the minimum, if not removed altogether. If the benefits of the project satisfy only a class within the community, then it cannot be termed a self-help project.

2. **No imposition from outside :**

If there is some imposition from outside, the people feel it is a temporary one and think it is not in their interest. It amounts to serving the present at the detriment of the future.

3. **Local Efforts based on felt Needs**

There should be an urge from the masses for improvement and development in their standard of living. A change however, good it may seem, may not be acceptable to the people concerned. It is essential that the members of the society appreciate the necessity of that change, psychologically adjust themselves to that change and its numerous repercussions in various walks of life and ways of living and work out the change themselves. It is more a problem of voluntary change in the values that affect people most intimately and so must necessarily be gradual and allowed to work at the speed set by the community itself.

4. **Assistance from outside**

While no imposition from outside should be allowed, assistance from outside is always welcome. This assistance must always be to stimulate community self help efforts. Such assistance should be based on kinship and not influenced by the idea of exploitation.

5. An aspect of Administration

Rural Dwellers these days are increasingly called upon to perform various functions with a view to enhance their socio-economic welfare. Based on such a thinking, self help development could be considered an aspect of administration.

In a bid to serve peasant movements and all those interested in self help, Mbithi and Rasmusson present self reliance as an approach to overall national development. Using the code name of 'Harambee'. (A Kenyan word for self-help), self - reliance is characterized by the following aspects:

- a. Self help projects reflect bottom up rather than top down development project initiation.
- b. Self-help projects are heavily biased towards the use of local resources for example human labour, local power (oxen, horses, donkeys), local materials in construction for example wooden structures, earth bricks, grass thatch and the use of donations in kind for example livestock, food and individual material property.
- c. Participation of individuals is guided by the principle of the collective good rather than individual gain.
- d. The choice of project is guided by the principle of satisfying the immediate need of participating members and groups.

A typical self reliant rural development programme is diagnosed to have arisen from two factors.

Firstly: The disenchantment of a strongly traditional periphery or grassroots population with a planning political centre where decisions are taken, and.

Secondly: The disenchantment has led to the emergence of powerful sentiments and the formation of solidarity groups in the periphery which are focused on designing local efforts.

for their own ends and also to attract and or change the development resource allocation strategy of the decision making political centre.

A specific trait of the 'Harambee' style self help process in a less developed country, portrays that a project is basically a common man's movement; that is collective effort born of the frustration of the poor, marginalised non-elite populations and its use of indigenous group forms³³. Participation is somehow compulsory though it may be involuntary or may be due to the fact that one is a leader and is publicly committed to contribute.³⁴ Mobilizing others to participate by ones own example is a prominent element. Besides there is a clear specification of the project goals which motivates the contributors.

2.6. SELF-HELP AS A PARTNERSHIP OF GOVERNMENT, PRIVATE DEVELOPMENT AGENCIES AND THE PEOPLE.

Anxieties and desires for change are usually harnessed if people reach a consensus about their needs and priorities and also if the projects have some support from the government or non - governmental development organisations (NGOs) for maintenance purposes or for the projects not to conflict with other national development plans. Owuamalam ³⁵ views it improper to plan any self help project outside the overall national development plan for various sectors of national life; for example building a hospital without the concurrent approval of the government department responsible for the health

sector or the missionary body which would be required to provide technical assistance and maintenance by way of management personnel or otherwise. Similarly, building a school, the education ministry has no plans to run simply because a neighbouring community has built one.

On the other hand a proper application of the self - Help development concept, sometimes influences governments national development policies; for example a national health service becomes a serious proposition to government when sanitary and preventive health measures are widely undertaken at village level.

The rural development assistant has a prominent role to play as the interpreter of community needs. He is also used in imparting informal education to combat ignorance and superstitious beliefs inherent in the rural areas, which might be adverse to development. Helps to combat poverty, impart more knowledge about health to reduce disease, techniques for social organisation and self-government to combat civil inertia.³⁶

Though self help occurs through the efforts of volunteer local citizens as described by McKee,³⁷ most often, the process seems to require the attention of employed initiators in the form of trained community development personnel or at least encouragement and direction from professionally qualified staff. In such circumstances, therefore, each of these agents fit into a role which is seen both as part of the process that the individual perceives himself as playing and the part others, perceive him as playing.

The community development workers' assignment is to assert sufficiently favourable conditions for a successful group action without in any way infringing into group autonomy either by making decisions for them or by doing for its members anything that they could reasonably be expected to do or learn to do themselves. In this

case, the worker tries to perform the following duties as Batten enumerates.³⁸

1. To strengthen incentives for people to act when these are weak by stimulating them to discuss their needs in the hope that they will come to see them specifically as wants.
2. Help in providing information about how similar groups have successfully organised action.
3. Help people systematically to think through and analyse the nature and causes of any problem they may encounter in the course of their projects and to explore the pros and cons of each and every suggestion for solving it.
4. Help by suggesting sources from which the group may be able to obtain any material help or technical advice in addition to what they can provide for themselves.

2.7. APPROACHES TO SELF - RELIANT RURAL DEVELOPMENT

The development concept generally taken to mean positive change or 'betterment' is sometimes very vague and a general term interpreted variously by different people. Since positive change is always very relative, it is often difficult to ascertain what approach or method is actually good or acceptable by people concerned in this process. What might be regarded as good or for 'betterment' by the local inhabitants, might not be regarded as such by community development workers or agents.

Batten, presents the Directive and the Non - Directive approaches which are either used depending on whether the development agent feels he must be the ultimate judge for what is good for the people, or that he just needs to help the people judge for themselves

what is good for them.³⁹ The lecture method usually attributed to the directive approach while the discussion method goes to the non-directive approach.

The former as a means of persuading people to accept his conclusions as good for them or for stimulating people to think out their conclusions for themselves. Similarly a Rural development worker may value a discussion method for stimulating people to think, express their ideas and make their own decisions.

The Directive Approach to self-Help Development

As its appellation indicates, this form of top-down approach to rural development means that the development agency adopts it itself, decides more or less specifically whatever it thinks people need or ought to value or do for themselves. The government agency or the NGO analysis or decides on what it feels is good for the betterment of the people; that is it identifies their felt-needs and then provide what ever staff, equipment, premises and programmes they think are needed to meet the needs of the people. The agency will then try to influence people in relation to the agencies plans. The essence of this approach is that the agency and its workers than, decide, plan, organise, administer and provide for people. Always the main initiatives and the final say remains with them.

The Non-Directive Approach

The idea of Non-direction is first of all not very appealing to development agencies. The community development (C.D) worker and his agency would not want to

do more than merely "non - direct" a community he is incharge of.

The essence of the non-directive approach is that the community worker doesn't decide for the people what is good for them. He barely tries to get them to reflect and decide for themselves what their felt needs should be, anything they are about to do to meet these needs, and how they can best organise, plan and act to carry their projects through. Thus he aims at stimulating a process of self-determination and self-help and he values it for all the potential learning experience which participation in the process provides. It aims at encouraging people to develop themselves and it is by thinking and acting for themselves that he believes they are most likely to do so. In this case, two kinds of betterment occur: change in the people and change in their physical environment going hand in hand.

What influences the choice of either approach

The directive approach to rural development has been for long the traditional approach used in most developing countries and like all established traditions, it tends to perpetuate itself. This would probably explain why it is more widely used as agency workers find it difficult to perform the non directive role in the whole process. It had therefore been very difficult to switch over to the bottom-up approach.

C.D. agents further feel more comfortable and really in control with the directive approach moreso since most of them are not independent and have to be cautious enough to yield good results to their employers. Choice of either approach will therefore depend on what the agent sees as the people's major needs and what he thinks of the well being of the people having these needs.

Thus if he thinks the people are either so ignorant, inexperienced and unfit to decide for themselves or so apathetic, lazy, irresponsible and over dependent in their attitude or so hostile towards one another that they would refuse to work together, for their own good, then he may well decide to use the directive approach. He will equally be influenced by how he sees himself; if he is capable of diagnosing and meeting peoples needs, and the less he trusts them, the more likely he opts for the directive approach especially in the health and agricultural sectors which necessitate a lot of technicalities and skilled labour.

Once an agency notices differences between itself and the people concerned, there would be the tendency to adopt the non -directive approach and merely encourages them and guides them to make their own decisions. However, either approach could be used based on how acceptable it proves to be to the people concerned but the reverse would apply if the people remain un-dynamic.

Choice of the non directive approach will depend mostly on the reasons that the agency diagnoses that the people have many more needs than they could possibly hope to meet, out of its own independent means or resources. This approach thus has to be used to stimulate them to meet at least some of these needs themselves.⁴⁰

If the agency feels the peoples greatest need is to acquire more confidence and competence in thinking, planning, deciding and implementing their own decisions for themselves; then it will be forced to apply the non directive approach. This approach will be used in areas where the peoples needs for local amenities are often very great: where the people cannot or will not help them selves until some form of outside stimulus is given.

Although the advocates of self help development place more stress upon the process of cooperative self help than on concrete objectives, in the form of projects, it is usually easier to point to tangible successes in the latter. Development projects can be visibly identified everywhere in the form of roads, dams, school, dispensaries and markets while the cooperative phenomenon is not quite noticeable by many, whether processes of self help are really being developed, there are several weaknesses and failures in this process.

An analysis of the successes and failures in Rural Development projects discloses that frequent cause of failure centres around the imposition of the Community development worker of his own desires on the people is an effort to secure quick and tangible results and further there is a failure of coordination amongst government and private agencies cooperating in a programme⁴¹.

The tendency to plan from the top rather than bottom-up is one that seems to appear more often inspite of the efforts employed to appear more often inspite of the efforts employed to reverse this situation. Today however, there is that growing tendency to give preference to a voluntary consensus of villagers than to a totalitarian planning from the top which has been the procedure in many countries.

On the whole, having examined the number of studies that look at the practice of rural development in the less developed countries, the number of loopholes have been exposed, especially such programmes in Africa south of the Sahara, notably in Kenya, Tanzania East Cameroon, and Southern Nigerian states.

Not only there was lack of grass-root participation and initiative in the policy implementation, there was lack of equality in the income distribution and above all,

failure to examine the relationship between the characteristics of target populations and work organizations by outsiders.

In this light, therefore we should try to use these weaknesses as the basis for more comprehensive understanding of the problems of rural development to help us draw out strategies as to the viability of using self-help efforts as an instrument of rural development in a developing country like Cameroon.

2.8 THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

Research findings into the study of rural development especially in third world countries has led to the elaboration of several theories techniques or approaches aimed at analysing and evaluating the development processes that occur in these areas. Of major significance among the approaches are; the transformation approach which relies on the introduction of new programmes to rural areas; the improvement approach which aims at a progressive improvement of agriculture through various forms of agricultural assistance especially from the world bank; the comprehensive approach which involves detailed planning based on a careful definition of the needs and resources of its target population; the mobilization approach which is a process of putting together, harnessing, activating, actualizing and the utilization of potential human and material resources for the purpose of development; the integrated rural development approach which is a multidimensional strategy for improving the quality of life of rural people; the command compliance approach which uses coercive means to compel the people to participate in rural development; the demonstration approach which induces people to acquire new methods

and techniques, and the community development approach.

The search for a macro theoretical framework for the study of economic development and social change has been a major concern for social scientists over many years. The problems of social evolution and developmental processes first raised by writers like Spencer, Taylor, Morgan, Marx and Durkheim have become of greater interest.

The modernization approach is widely used today as social scientists try to examine its analytical utility for understanding the types of socio economic transformation that takes place among rural populations of developing countries⁴².

2.3.1 MODERNIZATION AND THE PROCESS OF STRUCTURAL DIFFERENTIATION

According to Wilbert Moore, the concept of modernization denotes (a total) transformation of a traditional or pre modern society into the types of technology and associated social organisation that characterizes the <advance> economically prosperous and relatively political stable nations of the western world.⁴³

This view is based on the assumption that one can describe the general features of traditional or primitive societies on one hand and modern and prosperous western societies on the other hand and thus treat development as a transformation of the former type of society into the later type.⁴⁴

Based on the above concept of modernization, Neil Smelser formulated the model of structural differentiation for the study of the process of rural development. To him, a developed society is characterized as a highly differentiated structure while an underdeveloped society as one relatively lacking in structural differentiation. Therefore,

change centres around the process of differentiation itself.

By (differentiation) Smelser means the process by which more specialised and more autonomous social units are established especially in the spheres of the economy, the family, the political system and religious institutions⁴⁵.

Smelser's model is not concerned only with isolating economic determinants but rather with describing the social and political transformation that accompanies economic development.

Economic development (growth of output per head of population)⁴⁶ is seen by Lewis as taking place through:

- the modernization of technology (change from simple traditional techniques to the application of scientific knowledge).
- the commercialization of agriculture (from subsistence to commercial farming which involves cash crop production)
- the industrialization process (transition from the use of human and animal power to machine power) and
- urbanization (from farm and village towards the growth of large urban centres).

These processes he suggests sometimes occur simultaneously and at other times at different rates. Nonetheless, these four processes do affect the social structure of traditional societies in similar ways.

First we find that structural differentiation occurs as more specialized and autonomous social units are formed; for example as economic development occurs, several economic activities become separated from family institutions. The nature and the functions of the family change as cash cropping leads to the separation of consumption

modernizes the production system.

Similar changes occur in other institutional contexts for example in the field of social stratification, recruitment to various occupational, political, administrative and religious positions tend to depend more on achievement criteria rather than on ascription, and individual mobility increases.

Secondly, a process of integration takes place whereby these differentiated structures are united on a new basis, for example from (pre-modern) political structures (where political integration is closely bound up with kinship status or tribal membership), to a 'modern' type characterized by the formation of specialised political parties and pressure groups. In the economic sphere, peasants and tribesmen develop new types of social relationships through participation in modern cooperative type enterprises and trade unions, or business ventures nationally and internationally.

To Smelser, accompanying these processes of differentiation and integration is the spasmodic occurrence of social unrest" which normally reflects the uneven rate of change⁴⁷. To him discontinuities frequently occur because integration does not always keep abreast of differentiation and this can lead to the disruption of the social order.

Although Smelser recognizes that differences in pre modern conditions and traditional structures may shape the impact the forces of modernization have on particular social systems, he claims that such a model depicts the general, ideal type features and processes of socio economic development.

Like Smelser, Hoselitz conceptualizes the change from a traditional to a modern society as entailing the eventual modification or elimination of (traditional pattern

variables) modernization involves the structural shift from functionally diffused economic roles to functionally specific roles that operate irrespective of the category of person with whom one interacts. Transformation occurs to them by the differentiation process.

Hoselitz argues that developed countries are characterised by universalism, achievement, orientation and functional specificity while underdeveloped countries are characterised by opposite variables of particularism, ascription and functional diffuseness.⁴⁸ Variations in the development of nations can thus be explained by reference to the presence or absence of these structural elements and indices constructed to measure the degree of modernization attained, (to fulfill the development criteria laid down by the modernization theory).

The impetus of modernization may have come from different groups internal to the society or from the influence of external forces for example colonization in the third world or the spread of technological innovation or cultural movements (like village development unions).

The sequence of development and the problems encountered also depends on the policies and strategies of the more active elites of that society who have major roles to play in the institutionalization of modernization.⁴⁹

Dalton on his part, summarizes or characterizes the process of changing the old as differentiation and instituting the new as integration which both necessitate adaptation.

All modernizing societies are in a process of transition. Such transition is from a condition that is not modern to a condition that though modern is not necessarily industrial like the path followed by western nations. The struggle to modernize is what

has given meaning to our generation. Modernization leading to a state of modernity begins when man tries to solve a problem. It is a non economic process when a culture embodies an attitude of inquiry and questions about how men make choices.⁵⁰ The problem of choice is central to modern man. To be modern therefore means to see life as alternatives, preferences and choices.

Self conscious choice implies rationality. Men will in principle see more than one alternative plausible. Preference will then include the making of priorities and about these, reasonable men may differ. Therefore debate and discussion are characteristics of modernity and these stand out as critical conditions for modernity.

Through the modernization characteristic of choice. People are able to choose a direction and means of change they judge more appropriate depending on their surrounding circumstances. Government stands as a mere mechanism for regulating that choice of the people not to conflict with other national interest.⁵¹

Having thus exploited the principal contents of the modernization theory, it stands out as an appropriate theoretical frame work for the study of self help efforts and rural development in the Awing community since we are involved in assessing a process of transition of a rural area to modernity; that is a process of change engaged by the rural people through their initiative to attain better living standards similar to those of more advanced or <modern> societies.

Development in this area has not been limited to the economic sphere, but to general social transformation. Through the impetus of dynamic elites and sometimes external forces (non governmental organisations) the rural people of this area engaged in a course of self-conscious change which involves choice based on alternatives,

preferences and surrounding circumstances. Debate, discussion, planning and participation at all implementation levels have characterised this process of development. Our theoretical framework for this study will thus be the modernization theory based on Smelser's model of structural differentiation.

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Politics of Modernization.

CHAPTER THREE

HISTORICAL AND SOCIO - ECONOMIC PROFILE OF AWING IN THE NORTH WEST PROVINCE OF CAMEROON.

3.1 INTRODUCTION

Men chose to live in communities in order to do for themselves those things which as individuals or families they could not do.

Thus before the advent of modern statehood and the territorial organization which ensued, communities had existed with well developed socio - cultural, political and economic institutions which governed the peaceful coexistence of all members.

S The geo-political history of Cameroon is a very chequered one that requires critical analysis. The Portuguese first discovered the Atlantic coast of the country in the 15th century which they named " Rio Dos Cameros" meaning shores of crabs, due to the abundance of crabs in the coastal waters and when they saw from afar the volcanic eruptions of the Buca mountain, they called it the " chariot of the gods." ,

In the 19th century, following the Berlin Conference of 1884 and the subsequent partitioning of Africa, the Germans took effective occupation of the territory which they administratively organised to suit their economic activities of extracting raw materials for the home industries.

By 1921, the First World War escalated to the colonies of the Great Powers; the Germans were pushed out of Kamerun and in 1922 the territory was declared a trusteeship territory under the League of Nations and to be administered by France and

Britain. The country was thus partitioned into two: the French taking over the territorially vast eastern region as part of French Equatorial Africa with a strong policy of assimilation while the British governed the relatively smaller but much more resourceful region as part and parcel of Nigeria under a policy of indirect rule.² Both regions got independence in 1959 and 1960 respectively.

In 1961, the southern and eastern regions merged to form the Federal Republic of Cameroon; the south comprising two provinces and the east eight. The malicious French policy of assimilation orchestrated a constitutional coup d'etat in 1972 which saw the Federal Character of the country abolished and the emergence of a unitary state called the United Republic of Cameroon.

Once more in 1984, the unitary aspect of Cameroon was subdued and the country took the appellation of " Republic of Cameroon," thus suppressing the historical fact that there had once been two states with different socio - cultural backgrounds which voluntarily decided to come together. The socio-cultural identity of the former southern Cameroons however, remains intact despite constant attempts by the political authorities to estinguish it. The marginalisation of this minority is today leading to a secessionist tendency if the country does not revert to its Federal status.

It is under this historical perspective that we shall now examine the geographical history and socio-economic profile of the Awing community which is our case study place.

3.2 GEOGRAPHICAL HISTORY OF THE AWING COMMUNITY.

The community referred to today as Awing, has a long history of migration. For centuries they spent their time wandering from place to place due to infertility of land, inter-tribal Wars, epidemics and deaths and cultural and ideological differences with successive neighbours.

From an intensive research carried out on the origins of the Awing community, about 90% of the population traced its origin from an area called widikum (presently found in Momo Division of the North West province of Cameroon). The Awings had migrated alongside other communities like the Bambili, the Bamesing, the Bamali and the Bamunyan.³ Awing was originally called "Bamburuwing". like the "Ba" in all the other groups the Ba means "the people of".

The Awing community is part of the socio-cultural heritage of the Upper Ngemba clan which covers most of the North West province.

"Assengwingmenta" (market place of) ⁴ As these groups moved westwards due to tiredness the Bamali and the Bamesing remained at their present site in present day Ngoketunja Division (Ndop) still in the North west province while the Bambili, Bamunyan and Bamburuning continued to messanga where tribal war forced them to seek refuge in widikum.

While in widekum, insecurity and constants, threats from their immediate hosts to seize their symbol of power (the Kwifor) coupled with the search for better farm land forced them to leave. Their first stop was at Tardkon in Batibo sub-division, then they moved further Westwards to Babaju in the western province.

Still not comfortable with their hosts, they proceeded to Mankon which they named Ntarinkon after the Tardkon they had left behind in Batibo. The environment here again was uncondusive so they shifted to Baba I in Ndop sub-division and then to Bambili which they called "Ngub."⁵

Meeting oncemore the Bamunyan people both groups decided to descend the hills of Banja (Aka). As the Awing decided to settle in Alameti, the Bamunyam proceeded to settle just below them which administratively today falls under Bamboutous division in the west province. Alameti meant "Old Town" as if some people had earlier settled there and left. They however preferred this area for security reasons. Being on this hill top they could watch their potential enemies from all directions.

Here at Alameti the nine family heads led by - Mbahngwashi decided to build a fence (Nemo) wherein all the mine family heads would throw their bangles(symbol of authority) and the person who appeared inside the next day would be declared paramount fon. However on a second thought one of them Mba-Nka refused to surrender his bangle and deserted the group. The following morning, Mbahngwashi's son was found in the fence putting on all the eight bangles. He was crowned fon but one of the family heads again - Ndiemeh saw this as a successful trick by his colleague and refused to recognize the new fon. He rebelled until a settlement was made whereby he would act as the fon's assistant and would not clap hands and bow down to the fon as a sign of respect⁶.

Shortly after their arrival in Alanmeti, a lake was discovered which had peculiar characteristics. Not a single leaf could be found on the water surface despite the

surrounding forest nor any other piece of dirt could float on it. The people agreed to preserve the purity of this lake which they discovered had followed them all along their travels. It was believed to have emitted fog to shield the Awing people from the view of their enemies in times of war. However, after a period of stay the lake disappeared and it was discovered that women had thrown into it menstrual waste and other dirt.

On a hunting trip one morning a family head Mbanka met a group of fierce looking men all smeared with camwood who explained to him that the lake had disappeared in protest of the bad treatment by his people. He was given a bell to ring whenever they wished to see again the lake. When Mbanka returned and narrated his encounter, a group was dispatched in search of the lake and as they rang the bell from time to time they were guided towards the new site of the lake. Henceforth the lake was declared a secret place of worship and sacrifices are today made yearly to appease the gods therein.

3.3 PRESENT GEOGRAPHICAL LOCATION:

The Awing Community is presently settled below the Alameti hill and the lake where they first landed about two centuries ago. This area is located at about 6.5Km North-East of Santa sub-division in the North-West province (see figure)

It is surrounded on all sides (except a portion of the South) by a continuous range of hills and a small mountain which measures up to 2.550m above sea level. The area is virtually a valley village though there are two isolated hills within the plain.

3.4 NEIGHBOURS.

To the North, Awing is bounded by Mendankwe, Bambili and Kedjom, to the South by Baligham, Bamenyam and Bagham, to the West by Akum, Ndzong and to the East by Balikumbat and Bamukumbit.

Administratively it is under Santa sub-division in Mezam Division in the North West Province of Cameroon.

3.5 TOPOGRAPHY :

3.5.1 RELIEF: As earlier mentioned Awing is surrounded to the north west and east by a continuous range of hills and a mountain to the west. As shown on the topographical map, there exists, two isolated hills- Nkong-mo-mbing and Nkonewangne, at the direct interior part of the village. The highest of these highlands is mount Lefor with a height of 2,550m.

The presence of volcanic rocks is significant of the fact that the hills are just the continuation of the volcanic chain of the Bamboutous high lands of the western province.

The presence of salt in Awing could be appreciated because of the usual alluvial deposition along the banks of the two main streams that flank the community. The exploitation of this mineral is highly expected by the inhabitants.

3.5.2 FERTILITY OF SOIL.

The soil of this area is generally fertile. This is attributed to the vegetation cover that provides organic manure through litter fall and the leaching of Animal remains from the high lands. Cow dung especially is leached from the grazing land which enters the two main streams and transported southward. This explains why soils around the banks are fertile as those benefiting from House - Hold - Refuse.

Farmers also maintain the fertility of the soil through the use of fertilizers and fallowing. Fallowing is however on the decline due to population increase. Soil fertility and good climate have greatly enhanced agricultural production of the area.

3.5.3 EROSION:

despite the fertility of the soil, erosion is inevitable just like in any other hilly area. The main eroding agent is Water. Erosion occurs as a result of the high speeds of water from the hills and particularly the increase in the capacity of the two main streams during the rainy season. cases of flood are registered every year and constant destruction of crops along the profile of the streams.

The wind is also another agent that accompanies water in eroding the soils of the area. Precautionary measures taken by the farmers include the construction of channels for rain water flow and farming across the sloping farm lands.

3.5.4 FAUNA AND FLORA:

Animals in this area range from domestic to wild ones. Domestic ones include Pigs, Cows, Goats, Cats, Sheep, Dogs, and Horses. Wild ones include Monkeys, Baboons, Squirrels, Antilopes, Rat Moles, Rock Rabbits, and Grass Cutters which are mostly dangerous to farm cropping.

The presence of destructive Birds like Hawks, Eagles, Owls, Bats, and Kingfishers has a negative impact on agricultural production. The destructive feed-backs of this Fauna however, are abated by certain constructive feedback such as droppings of these animals which serve as Manure. The Animals also provide good sources of proteins.

The flora of Awing is widespread; there are Forest and Savanna plants that serve the people in several aspects. The raffia palm bushes provide a lot of palm wine while the Eucalptus and Iroko, serve as good wood for building. The savanna Pennisetum, Purpureum (Elephant Grass), Sperbolus, Africana for Cattle, Imperata Cyclindrica. A variety of medicinal plants also do well in Awing.

3.6. THE HUMAN ENVIRONMENT.

3.6.1. SIZE OF POPULATION

In 1977, the population of Awing stood at about 22,000 inhabitants.⁷ Today it could be estimated at about 38,000 people as of 1996. The available figures of birth rate

permitted the establishment of this estimate. These figures were obtained from the civil status registrar and the Health centers.

3.6.2. MIGRATION:

Many youth is leave the Awing community to urban centres in search of employment and for further education. The general tendency had been that very few people immigrate to Awing. The emigration rate had this always been Higher than the immigration rate. However, this tendency is likely to be upset with the rapid rate of change in Awing following the creation of post primary educational institutions and the advent of other socio - economic amenities to create employment, attract students and visitors.

3.6.3. POPULATION DENSITY:

The Awing community covers an estimated total land mass of 918km² for a population of 38.000 inhabitants. About 550km² is a residential area while about 368km² is farmland. The population density for the community is therefore:

$$\frac{38.000}{918} = 41 \text{ persons/Km}^2$$

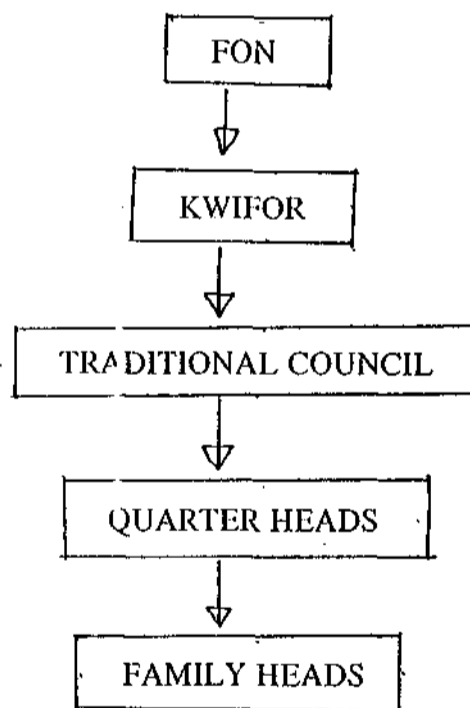
The current population size and density of the community depicts that the human resource level of the community is quite comfortable for meaningful development within the near future. The land area is quite sufficient to contain any significant population increases in the future without fear of congestion.

There is equally ample room for other forms of economic investment given the population and the land mass together with a conducive climate and topography. However the fact that the rate of emigration is by far higher than the immigration rate depicts that if much is not done to balance migration useful manpower might be lost in the near future. Strategies have to be evolved to restrain the youths from massively deserting the community for want of education, employment and other social amenities.

3.7. POLITICAL INSTITUTIONS

A political institution could be seen as a complex set of social norms which serve to maintain social order, ensure existing systems of authority and provides means by which changes could be made in the legal and administrative systems.

The structure of the Awing leadership takes the following organogram:



The fon is the paramount head of all socio-cultural and political organisations. The kwifor (Committee of decision makers and kingmakers) remains the most powerful ruling institution which incorporates legislative, executive and judiciary powers. It judges and sanctions even the fon for cases of high treason. Membership into the kwifor is mostly hereditary and reserved for the elderly and experienced.

The Traditional council is like a lower house of parliament where all quarters of the community are equally represented. The council is divided into four main committees each headed by a chairman and a secretary who are members of the executive committee of the council. The committees are for: Development, land dispute, social affairs and health.

The political enlightenment of the Awing community was tested during the inception of multi-party politics in Cameroon in 1990. The C.P.D.M (Cameroon People's Democratic Movement) which had been the only political party saw its members crossing carpet to the opposition S.D.F (Social Democratic Front) which emerged with a modern and dynamic ideology to liberate the people from the bondage of dictatorship under one party rule. Today 95% of the people, are adherents of the S.D.F. This political awareness has made them more dynamic and self-reliant since government has been a failure.

3.3 ECONOMIC INSTITUTIONS:

The economic environment of Awing is seriously moderated by the presence of several institutions which operate to improve on the farmers' well being.

The backbone of the farmers' economy rests on the coffee co-operative union and the credit union league. The co-operative union is the principal means to market coffee produce and acquiring farm inputs at lower rates. The cooperative buys farmers produce with guaranteed payments even in the long run and further supplies them with coffee paupers, fertilizers and pesticides at subsidized rates. The liberalisation of the coffee market a few years ago provided room for competition between the co-operative and other licenced buyers. From this, prices will be the major factor to determine where farmers would market their produce.

By 1993, a women's co-operative society was introduced with the objective of grouping together women for easy marketing of their food crops such as maize, beans, potatoes, groundnuts and gari amongst others.

The Credit Union is the principal financial institution in the absence of a bank in the modern sense. This Credit Union came to improve on the saving habits of the people through their "Njangi" groups (local financial houses where savings and credits of money takes place). This Credit Union principally banks and lends money to farmers at lower interest rates.

In 1994 an Agricultural and Industrial Co-operative Society -AGRICOS was created with the objectives of helping to market farmers products of livestock, poultry, and fishing. It also intends to help farmers open such farms and notably create fishing ponds at Ghebli (South of the community). Membership is open to all farmers above 15 years of age, each share in the society costs 500 francs CFA and a member is entitled to a minimum of 10 shares and a maximum of 200 shares (5000frs and 100.000frs

respectively) 1000.frs CFA ₦130.00 advent of the Co-operative movement will go a long way to boost the income level of the population.

3.10 SOURCES OF REVENUE:

The Awing Community receives no funding from the central government or the Rural Council unlike the case of other developing countries like Nigeria, where each local government council is entitled to a substantial amount of the Federation Account.

The community generates whatever income it does basically from periodic levies on indigenes for communal projects directly affecting them, and compulsory annual contributions to NACDA. No statutory provisions allow it to raise revenue in any other form since all other taxes like community tax, licences, ground rents fees, and permits are collected by the Santa Rural Council.

These poor sources of revenue generation accounts for the meagre financial resources of the area and invariably retards the smooth execution of development projects within the community.

3.11 TOURIST POTENTIALS:

A major tourist potential in Awing is a lake which attracts visitors from within and out of the country. The lake is under the national tourist reserves of the ministry of tourism. The forest surrounding it presents a good site for picnics and other excursions especially during the dry season. This has been rendered more accessible in recent times by the modernization of the road leading to it.

Apart from the lake, there is also mount Lefo and its surrounding hills which

almost circle the entire community. A view from the top of the mountain enables one to see as far as towns in the Western Province. Salt deposits are speculated at the bottom of the mountain. These tourist potential is likely to expose the community to the outside world generate revenue and even attract investment to the area.

3.12 THE SELF-HELP MOVEMENT IN HISTORICAL PERSPECTIVE:

The history of self-help efforts in the Awing community could be traced from the period the nine family heads (Ncieme, Mbangwashi, Mbache, Mbatia, Tengie Mona, Ba Nkadbi, Ndiendeng, Mbaju, Mbalah) who migrated from Widikum to the present site decided to get one paramount Fon to concretise their unity and strength. From their wanderings, the various families had seen the need to unite and constitute a stronger group that could protect itself against rival groups.

Self-help in the Awing Community first started in the form of "shieh"- a form of community labour whereby individuals converged on a chosen day to go and assist a member either in clearing, hoeing or harvesting in his farm or in any other major project such as building. The host would provide food and drink to entertain his helpers. The same assistance would be rendered to another member in due course. The need for mutual assistance thus developed and grew tremendously with time as it was realised to be facilitating the execution of tasks that a single man and his family could not execute.

By 1967, prominent elites under the initiative of one Mr. P.C Mbako saw the need to form an umbrella organisation which could coordinate all development initiatives back at home. It was within this background that was conceived the Ndong Awing Cultural

and Development Association- NACDA.⁹

From 1967 attempts were made to come out with a marshall plan for the modernization of Awing. However, it was only in 1980 that NACDA actually embarked on development projects. Before any project was conceived and embarked upon, a detailed study was carried out before implementation thought of.

NACDA believes in hardwork and by this period, most communities began to value their own self initiated projects than those imposed on them by the government or non-governmental organizations.

The constitution of NACDA in its preamble stipulates its objectives as follows:

- To unite all Awing elements towards the common goal of development.
- To foster and encourage cultural, socio-economic and educational development.
- To sensitise one another towards self-reliant development.

The successes and constraints of NACDA in coordinating the development initiatives and harnessing the potentials of the community towards self-reliant development rest to be judged from the analysis of data collected on its sphere of operation.

FOOTNOTES AND REFERENCES.

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3. HANDBOOK ON THE A'WING COMMUNITY by J.F. MBAFOR, 1992, p.12.
4. Ibid.
5. Ibid. p.18.
6. Ibid.
7. NATIONAL POPULATION GROWTH. PUBLICATION OF THE MINISTRY OF PLAN AND REGIONAL DEVELOPMENT, 1990, P.42.
8. J.F. Mbafor op cit.
9. Brochure on: "NACDA 1970-1995".

CHAPTER FOUR

4. DATA PRESENTATION AND ANALYSIS.

4.1 INTRODUCTION:

As earlier indicated in chapter One, very little information could be obtained from secondary sources. Thus to prove the hypotheses put forward, in the study, reliance was mainly on primary data principally through the questionnaire technique, interview and participant observation.

The first set of questionnaires was administered to members of community based associations within the community. A total of 400 questionnaires were distributed to this category, which comprised all occupational groups within the community (out of a population of 38,000). Detail discussion were equally carried out with some of the members following a checklist of issues prepared for the purpose.

The second set of questionnaires were designed for rural development staff under whose jurisdiction the study area falls. This category was stratified into senior, intermediate and junior staff as cognisance was taken of the income and literacy levels of the respondents. A total of 104 questionnaires were distributed; 65 for the junior staff 21 for intermediate staff and 18 for senior staff. The research findings was therefore based on the synthesis of data collected from the various sources indicated.

From the 400 questionnaires administered to the communities members, there were 366 returned and out of these returns, it was discovered that about 57 were either not completely filled or were wrongly filled. Consequently, these were discarded. Out of the 309 valid ones, 300 questionnaires were considered to enable convenient analysis.

From the questionnaires to the rural development staff, out of the 104 sent out, 75 were got back and all were considered for analysis.

Table 4.1 Illustrates the distribution of the questionnaires and the percentage of returns for analysis.

Table 4.1: Number of questionnaires administered, number and percentage returned and number and percentage used for analysis.

Category of persons	Population size	Sample size	Number Returned	Percentage Returned	Number Analysed	Percentage Analysed from sample
1. Community members	38,000	400	366	91.5%	300	75
2. Rural Development Staff	104	104	75	72.1%	75	72.1

Source: Field work research data.

4.2 TESTING OF HYPOTHESES.

The first hypothesis of the study states: that the level of socio-economic development of Awing Community is a function of self-help efforts of the people, that is, the more efforts people make to provide socio-economic and infrastructural facilities for themselves, the higher their level of income, health, education and social well-being.

It is the intention of this study to find out to what extent the self help activities of the population led to positive changes or increased the standard of living of the people.

In order to test this hypothesis, certain variables were measured. In this wise, issues such as activities identified to be the efforts of the people were examined.

Table 4.2 below sought to assess the level of awareness of the people. The question was asked: as a resident of this community, are you aware of any self help activities carried out by the people?

Table 4.2 level of awareness of the people about self -help activities in Awing community

Response	Number of	Percentage	Respondents
No	6	2	
Yes	294	98	
Total	300	100	

Source: Field work research.

As indicated in the table, it is clear that a vast majority (98% of (294) of the respondents were fully aware of the self help process while 2% (6) of the respondents were ignorant of the phenomenon. This shows that a majority of the population was conscious of the essence of self help as a means of development.

A similar question was asked to the rural development staff of the area whether the people practiced self help. Table 4.3 illustrates the responses.

Do the inhabitants of this area engage in self help efforts to foster their development?

Table 4.3 level of peoples participation in self-help activities

Response	Number of Respondents	Percentage
No	0	0
Yes	75	100
Total	75	100

Source: Field work research.

The results from the table confirm the existence of self help development in the area

as 75 (100%) of the staff confirmed this.

To further confirm the peoples awareness, they were asked for how long they had been engaged in this process. Table 4.4 illustrates their responses.

The responses fell within the following ranges as shown in the table:

Table 4.4 duration of peoples practices of self-help approach to rural development

Longivity of self help	Number of Respondents	Percentage
5 -10 years	8	2.7
10-15	77	26.2
15-20	143	48.6
20-30	46	15.6
More than 30 years	20	6.8

Totals	294	100
=====		

Source: Field work research.

Of the 294 respondents who were aware of the existence of self help as illustrated in table 2 above, 8 of them (2.7%) were conscious of this 5-10 years ago, 77 (26.2%) knew of this movement 10-15 years ago, 143 (48.65) 15-20 years ago, 46 (15.6%) 20-30 years ago while 20 (6.8%) of the respondents judged that this movement has been going on for more than 30 years now.

It could thus be concluded that majority of the population judged self help development to have begun about 15-20 years ago.

A similar question put to the rural development staff to know for how long the inhabitants of the area had been engaged in self help development revealed that the practice actually evolved about 15-20 years ago.

The study further sought to know whether the people were actively involved in this movement or a spirit of indifference or apathy still prevailed within them; and if they were involved, how they enlisted their participation in the process. These issues were tested in the following analysis. The question was asked; How do you enlist your participation in self-help activities?

Table 4.5 Way of participation in self help activities

Responses	Number of Respondents	Percentages
a. Deliberation in planning meetings	46	16.2
b. Final Decision - making	10	3.5
c. Physical labour	60	21.1
d. Financial contribution	106	37.3
e. All of the above	62	21.8
TOTAL	284	100

Source: Field work research.

The table illustrates that out of the 284 respondents who claim to actively participate in the self-help process, 46 (16.2 %) do so through deliberation in planning meetings, 10 (3.5%) do so by taking part in final decision making, 60 (21.1%) of respondents do so through their physical labour, 106 (37.3 %) do participate by making their financial contributions while 62 (21.8%) claimed participate through all the four above mentioned means (a - d) on the table.

Having thus established that self help development in this area is a self conscious process engaged by the inhabitants to foster their standard of living, the study then sought to know what has actually been realised by the people in terms of development projects. In

this wise the people were asked to identify projects realised through their efforts within the case study period. Several projects were identified by the people as having been realised by their efforts with the help of Non governmental organisations amongst these a pipe borne water supply system, construction of bridges and culverts, the construction of a modern community hall with a library facility, construction renovation and equipment of Health centres, the construction and equipping of schools, the construction and maintenance of roads as well as improvement in the agricultural sector which increased their yields and consequently their income levels.

Having listed these self help achievements, the researcher went ahead to interview a good number of inhabitants on how these projects were initiated and actually executed, and observed the physical existence of these projects. It was after this exercise that the following analysis were made sector by sector.

4.2.1 PRIMARY HEALTH CARE:

The primary health care sector witnessed significant improvements between 1986 and 1996 through the self help initiative and handwork of the people. Within the period of this study five primary health posts were either constructed, renovated or equipped by the efforts of the inhabitants. The health sector over the years had received very little attention from the government and faced with this need for improved health care the people put it as one of their development priorities.

Before 1986, there existed just one primary health care centre for the entire community which was constructed some years before by the people themselves but staffed

and managed by the government. A serious wind disaster in 1985 shattered the roof and ceiling almost entirely.

Faced with the risk of completely losing medical health care facilities the Ndong Awing cultural and Development Association (NACDA) took up the rehabilitation of the building as government had watched the incident for a reasonable period without response.

A fund raising campaign was rapidly carried out and contributions from external elites were quite generous to rehabilitate the building. As the roof was replaced, the women's wing of NACDA took upon itself to supply basic equipment to the centre which affect mostly the plight of pregnant women. The maternity ward was thus provided with beds, beddings and a gas cooker amongst other materials affecting the smooth delivery of women.

The rehabilitation of this health centre at Nelebe did not solve the health problems of the people as many still had to move out to neighbouring towns like Mbouda, Santa and Bamenda for proper health services. There was therefore that need for other health posts to accommodate the increased demand for health care services.

Lack of response from the government to the peoples health demands made them appeal for assistance from non governmental organisations (NGOS) notably the presbyterian mission which first intervened to set up a health post at Mbeme on the basis that the people provided the building and basic furniture. This was rapidly responded to while the mission came in with a management staff initially of three persons. They offer primary health care services like consultation, administration of treatment and sale of drugs at subsidised rates. A visiting specialist doctor comes around monthly for more serious

cases.

Another health post was constructed and furnished at Nepelle and the government invited to run the services in 1991. A major problem here is inadequate staffing. By 1994, German Technical Assistance accepted to help the inhabitants set up another health post at Alamei.

Proximity to these health posts became a serious problem to the inhabitants of Tanjang Quarter. This need was identified by a dynamic retired senior health officer resident in the quarter who through his private investment established a clinic and personally acting as the chief medical officer he solely built and equipped the clinic with adequate staffing.

To help validate the assumption that positive changes have been effected in the health sector by self help initiative, the following questions were posed to the inhabitants.

What improvements have been effected in the health sector through your self help efforts?@

Table 4.6 Improvements in the health sector through self-help

Response	Number of Respondents	Percentage
a. Construction of health posts	37	12.3
b. Renovation and supply of Furniture	38	12.7
c. Subsidizing running cost	45	15
d. All of the above	180	60
TOTAL	300	100

Source: Field work research.

The table reveals that out of 300 respondents, who acknowledged improvements in the health sector, 37 (12.3%) indicated the construction of health posts, 38 (12.7%) identified the renovations and supply of furniture, 45 (15%) the contributions to subsidize the running cost and 180 (60%) identified all of the above changes in a,b, c. These responses were verified by physical inspection on the field.

Inadequate staffing has not been the only problem facing the health services of the area as government is expected to perform subsidiary functions such as the immunization of the population against killer diseases such as Tuberculosis, measles, diarrhoea, tetanus and whooping cough, sensitization campaigns to educate the people on better health care habits, vaccination against seasonal diseases like meningitis and yellow fever.¹

However, most of these responsibilities are not met by government because of financial, material and logistic reasons.

Renovations in the health sector did not only end at providing structures and equipment to the health posts but financial contributions are made by the people which is used for running the institutions and the maintenance of infrastructure and staff.² A levy of 200 frs (about N30) is imposed as consultation fee, 1500frs (about N210) as delivery fees and 500 francs (about N70) as laboratory fee per patient.

30 percent of these charges is retained by the health posts for recurrent expenditure while the rest is channelled to the North west special fund for health (a provincial body which coordinates health services).³

Interviewing the chief of health posts of the community, on the outcome of such funds, he revealed that for over the years the area has received only once the sum of

500.000 francs (about N70.000) for the repair and maintainance of the structures.

The staff power of the Nelebe health centre stands at eleven today comprised of one state nurse, (who is the chief of centre and the other health posts) one assistant laboratory technician, three nursing aid workers, four ward maids and one ward servant. A pro-pharmacy attendant was also engaged for the sale of drugs.

This staff inadequacy has attracted the attention of the inhabitants who resolved to recruit and pay two more staff for a beginning; a microscopist and a night watchman. A health management committee of seventeen persons was set up to oversee the good functioning of the health infrastructure.

In 1991, the NACDA women's wing came up again to initiate the extension of the Nelebe health centre with a construction project to elevate a new block of eleven rooms destined to accommodate admission wards, injection rooms, internal toilet facilities and ample space for future expansion.

This project used the physical labour of the inhabitants who supplied sand and stones along side their financial contributions.

By 1996 this construction project is complete but for the floor, windows and doors. No government assistance has so far been received for this project. The urgent need of this structure has led to its premature usage as patients bring along their mattress and mats to lie on the uncemented floor on admission. Several appeals are being made to NGOs for assistance.

In a bid to assess the impact of improved health services in the area, the questions was asked Awhat factors would you consider as responsible for decrease in mortality rate@

Table 4.7 factors responsible for decrease in mortality rate?

Response	Number of Respondents	Percentage
a. Improved health infrastructure	17	5.7
b. Improved sanitary conditions	15	5.0
c. Improved Nutritional habits	8	2.7
d. All of the above	260	86.7
Total	300	100

=====
Source: Field work research.

From the table, 17 respondents (5.7%) identified improved health infrastructure as a reason for decrease in child mortality, 15 (5%) identified improved sanitary conditions, 8 (2.7%) identified improved nutritional habits, while 260 (86.7%) considered all the first three factors above as having influenced the decrease in death rate.

Rural Infrastructure:

The availability of Rural infrastructure is a major factor for the development of the community. The need for the disenclavement of the Awing community was realised many decades ago as the inhabitants tried to create local paths that could link them to various parts of the province and to major neighbouring towns and villages. Apart from the main highway that came from Bamenda the provincial capital right up to the santa coffee estate, most of the roads remained very unpracticable especially during the rainy season.

Road construction and rehabilitation has been given adequate attention by the people of the area. By 1988, a campaign was stepped up to make every single household accessible by motorable road.

Major self help efforts on road construction were devoted to improvement of roads leading out of the community. In this wise the Awing Nepelle road, the Nepelle-Bamunyam road, the Bamunyam-Mbouda road, the Awing-Baligham road and the Awing-Santa coffee estate roads were seriously retouched by the physical labour and financial contributions of the inhabitants.

The organisation of such work is usually taken care of by the KWIFOR. On the ground the various quarters these roads pass through mobilize themselves, fix a day and come out with tools to effect the job. About 50 kilometers of road were thus modernized through this effort. These communal work go on yearly at the approach of the rainy season. Such work usually consists of digging gutters to control the flow of rain water, digging out stumps and roots of Eucalyptus trees that protrude on the road surface, the throwing stones on areas that can easily develop pot holes, and the building of culverts.

After several years of neglect, the Awing santa coffee estate road was given a face lift when the department of works (PWD) sent caterpillars to help grade the road. This was seen as a campaign strategy by the government since the 1992 elections were at the corner. And again this would help the evacuation of coffee from the area which is the highest coffee producer in the division.

In 1993, an inter tribal war erupted between Awing and the neighbouring Ndzong community which led to the blockade of the Awing-Santa-Mile 12 road by the Ndzong people. Even after the cessation of hostilities and a government order for the reopening of the road, persistent threats came from the Ndzong people to ambush and agrees users of the road from Awing.

Faced with these threats the Awing community resorted to exploit another outlet through the Lake Awing. The road from Achielum to the lake had been hand-dug many years but and only the portion from the lake to mile 8 on the highway to Bamenda was motorable since the lake was a tourist site being exploited by government. A fund raising exercise covered by NACDA met with enthusiastic response from the people out of patriotism together with German technical assistance. Between 1994 and 1995 a distance of about 35 kilometers was made motorable consisting of grading the road, construction of culverts, gutters, small bridges and the throwing of gravel on the surface.⁴

The realisation of this Awing lake road project is thanks to the sacrifices of a son of the soil who executed the work without payment until any latter date when NACDA must have collected the dues from the people.

To ascertain the amount of work done on road network, respondents were asked to state the number of kilometers of road constructed during the period of study. Their responses are illustrated in table 4.8 below.

Table 4.8 Number of kilometers constructed by the people between 1986 - 1996

Kilometers of road	Number of Respondents	Percentage
60 - 100	8	2.7
100 - 140	25	8.3
140 - 180	247	82.3
more than 180 km	20	6.7
Totals	300	100

Source: Field work research.

From the table, the majority of respondents 247 (82.3%) estimated that between 140 - 180 kilometers of road were either constructed or modernized through their personal effort, 20 (6.7%) estimated more than 180 kilometers, 8(2.7%) estimated 60 - 100 kilometers while 25 (8.3%) estimated 100 - 140 kilometers of road.

The road network in the community today is such that all parts at the level of compound to compound are almost motorable. Within the community itself as it was observed, about 80 kilometers of road network has been modernized from what they were seen some seven years back. As most of the external elites mostly businessmen based in the big towns carry out construction of their houses, this is preceded by making the site motorable.

Road construction or modernization did not go on successfully without the construction of bridges and culverts to support it and provide good drainage. In this wise, six bridges were constructed through communal effort between 1988 and 1994 linking various parts of the area. These include the Mbenjom bridge linking Mbenjom quarter to the rest of the community,

The Mepie bridge

The Mbatmete bridge

Nelebe bridge linking Tanjang quarter to the health centre

The Bamunyam bridge linking Awing to the southern most community of Bamunyam

The Aheble bridge which enables vehicles to have access to the hilly region of the community.

It is worth indicating here that the realisation of the Aheble and Bamunyam bridges

were made possible mostly due to the personal efforts and funds of two illustrious sons of the soil in the persons of Mr. Patrick Tembunde and Pa Longmengem who because of insufficient funds to execute the projects, opted to sponsor the venture to be reimbursed whenever NACDA could collect the funds.

The realisation of these roads and bridges has greatly relieved the population from perpetual trekking to vacate their preoccupations especially the farmers from the farms which are quite far from residential areas for sale or storage especially maize and beans. Accessibility to health centres has also been facilitated.

4.2.2. PIPE BORNE WATER SUPPLY:

The Ndong Awing development Association NACDA, had put a joke sometimes in the 1980s when a debate arose over the priority of two development projects. It was asked whether a woman delivering needed good water or a good hospital. Good water supply won the day because the inhabitants considered the fact that women delivered in their homes, some in the farms, and others under exceptional conditions; but in all situations they need good water because contaminated water can kill even in a decent health establishment. Both mother and child are very vulnerable to water borne infections.

It was within this background that a project for pipe borne water supply was initiated by the people in 1984 to be executed in three phases. A first phase launched in 1984 was 70% realised by 1987 when water was first available in a storage tank. By 1988, 12 stand taps and 2 fountains had been built.

MIDENO (Mission De development Du Nord-Quest) North west development Authority which is an integrated rural development agency came in to assist the project with the sum of 15 million francs CFA (about N2,100,000.00). This support came in form of materials: pipes and other fittings. SATA (Swiss Agency for Technical Assistance) supported this initiative with the sum of 4.5 million francs CFA (about N630,000.00).

By June 1989, water was being drunk in some quarters of the community, A catchment and a storage tank was built to supply water to the environs. Eleven stand taps were constructed and the population dug the pipe lines to distribute the water further. At this stage, the Canadian Embassy supported these efforts with a sum of 4.240,000 francs CFA (about N593,000.00). This aid came in the form of materials.

By July 1990, the department of community development of the Santa Rural council endorsed studies and planning on the second phase projecting the cost at about 42 million francs CFA (about N5.830,000.00). This second phase was named the Lonkele water project denoting the catchment area. By 1991 the catchment was completed and masonry work was in steady progress to distribute the water to storage tanks.

In May 1991 HELVETAS (a German NGO) aided the project with the sum of 2,775,000 francs CFA (about N388,500.00) and by mid 1992 the storage tanks were completed with inspection chambers built. In 1993 about 45 stand taps were installed. The completion of this second phase of the water project, has ensured the constant supply of water to about 75% of the community.

The following table would help to assess the contributions of government, NGOs and the inhabitants in the realization of this second phase of the water project.

Table 4.9 Contribution of government, NGOs and inhabitants to the implementation of the water project

Source of finance	Amount	Percentage
Government	168,000	0.49
NGOs and MIDENO	23,275,000	67.90
Population	10,801,129	31.50
Total	3,244.129	100%

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 Source: Ndong Awing Cultural and Development Association (NACDA) Development Committee report (1994).⁵

The table illustrates that a total of 34,244.129 francs CFA was raised from three sources for the financing of the phase II of the water project. Government contribution through the department of community development amounted to 168.000 francs which came in the form of 70 bags of cement and this accounted for just 0.49% of the total amount as opposed to 34.076,129 francs (99.51%) provided by the population with the support of NGOs.

The supply and maintenance of water is ensured by a water management committee. Each quarter has its sub management committee which oversees the smooth functioning of installations and to report any problems to employed technicians incharge of maintenance paid by the inhabitants. From the public stand taps, individuals can then connect water to their houses at their own cost after a payment of 25,000 francs CFA (about N3.500.00) to the water management committee.

Another major project undertaken by NACDA, between 1987 and 1991, was the construction and equipment of a modern community Hall which has a library facility. This

venue now serves to host cultural festivals and NACDA General meetings. It is a project solely borne by the contributions of the inhabitants having a capacity of about 1,500 seats.

4.2.3. EDUCATION:

The educational sector registered important developments in terms of infrastructure, staffing, enrollment and literacy rate due to the intervention of the rural population through self help efforts. For over the years, there was only one government primary school in the area until the presbyterian and Baptist missions came in to establish 4 other primary schools in the community. There existed no post primary institution until 1989.

In 1982, a retired educationist initiated a community primary school at Makemtikong. This site was a former catholic mission primary school which had been abandoned for many years. In the absence of buildings, an abandoned cooperative building was used temporarily. In as much as the community had accepted the creation of the school, the necessary funds did not come forth as anticipated until in 1986 the initiator of this project Pa J. F. Mbafor, decided to invest his personal money to erect 6 classrooms with cement blocks to be eventually reimbursed whenever the community could raise the funds.

Funding for this school is through PTA (parents Teachers Association) levies. Until 1989 when government decided to take over the school under its administration, the equipment in the classrooms (Furniture) stationary, the recruitment and payment of teachers was borne by the community.⁶ Even after the take over of the school by government, the material well being of the school still lies in the hands of the people. Out of a staff force of six, four are employed and payed by the community, In 1990 a seventh classroom was put

up by the community.

What is normally obtained in the schools is that the population provides the basic necessities for daily running of the school. From interviews with some school head masters, the PTA has to ensure good infrastructure and its construction maintenance, renovation of classrooms and staff residential quarters, recruitment and payment of extra staff to supplement what is provided by the government or mission bodies.

Secondary school education saw light in Awing in 1989 when a dynamic elite Mondiemman founded a commercial and Grammar secondary school to satisfy the need of the rural youths. The absence of a post primary institution had been one of the major causes of rural exodus to further their education.

The emergence of Mondiemman national comprehensive college (MNCC) paved the way for three other colleges: AFETA comprehensive college, self reliance Academy and BICOSTEC. These colleges offer grammar, commercial and technical education. Though they are founded by groups of individuals, they rely strongly on community support for structures and other infrastructure either through their physical labour, PTA levies or donations from the population. The school fees are within the reach of parents who are allowed to pay in kind and in small installments. No subsidies have ever been received from government.

In 1992 out of sheer political bribery against up coming elections, government announced the creation of a secondary school for the community. This creation of a government secondary school merely ended on paper as the structures, furniture and running cost were solely borne by the inhabitants. The PTA employs and pays 3 of the 13

staff members.

The respondent were asked to state the contribution they are had made to the establishment and running of secondary schools in Awing community.

Table 4.10 People=s contribution to the establishment and running of community secondary schools.

Responses	Number of Respondents	Percentage
a. Construction of classrooms	37	12.3
b. Provision of furniture	21	7
c. Recruitment and payment of PTA staff.	42	14
d. Maintenance of school infrastructure	7	2.3
e. All of the above	193	64.3
Total	300	100

Source: Field work research.

4.2.4 SOCIAL MOBILISATION:

The socio-economic development of the Awing community could only have been possible through the mobilization and organisation of the population towards the process of self help. Social mobilisation is done under the banner of the cultural and development association NACDA.

Organisation for community effort is usually through groupings on sex or age basis.⁷ Age group meetings at quarter level (Mendzong) ensures active participation of all members without knocking heads with elders who command a lot of respect. These Mendzong groups meet regularly, share ideas and development strategies, do financial contributions and prepare for physical labour in the execution of community projects.

The organisation of women into cooperative groups for their common good is a recent phenomenon of the early 1990s. By 1992, women effectively grouped themselves in a cooperative movement for the better commercialization of their food crops. Two women centres were set up at Achielum and Mætu where women could meet regularly to receive lectures and advice from their more enlightened counterparts based in urban centres.

These two centres were built and furnished by the women's financial contributions and physical labour. The women's wing of NACDA initiated and personally supervised this project and secured financial assistance from the American Embassy to the worth of 3 million francs CFA (about N420.000.00). The Canadian Embassy further donated two grinding mills to the centres in 1995.

Youth clubs have greatly been encouraged for their efforts in the socialization process. The phenomenon of youth social clubs started in the late 1980s by the organisation of youth football tournaments during the summer holidays. By 1989, all the quarters came up with football and other sporting clubs. This spirit of sports competition developed into major socio cultural events which took the forms of clean up campaigns and enlightenment campaigns which all culminate in a cultural week and an annual festival.

Vigilante groups popularly known as Aanti-gang@ have reduced the insecurity and banditry rate, as youths constitute into groups organise daily patrols and with the authorization of the KWIFOR intercept question and arrest any suspected nocturnal pedestrians.

The Development and cultural association NACDA organises and installs branches in every quarter and town all over the national territory, and abroad. These NACDA

branches (about twenty new branches were created between 1989 and 1996) have a minimal annual financial contribution to channel to the central body which is obligatory. By such means, all Awing indigenes are mobilized where ever they are resident to contribute to the development of their community. Non participation or indifference can lead to the individual or his family ostracised or treated as second class indigenes of the area.

4.2.5 DEVELOPMENT OF THE COOPERATIVE MOVEMENT

The cooperative union in Awing since 1986 has undergone several challenges both from its members and the invasion of the coffee market by licensed buyers. Since the liberalization of the coffee market which had hither to been the exclusive domain of the cooperative unions, flashy terms were offered by these licensed buyers such as prompt cash payments even at times better prices. However, with time most farmers retreated and went back to the cooperative union which was a better means of selling their produce.

In the cooperatives, their democratic participation increased as they elect and sanction their members according to laid down rules. The cooperative has the security in storage and sales besides bonuses that accrue from time to time.

1991 saw the emergence of a women's cooperative society to help better market or preserve food crops such as beans, maize, potatoes, yams and coco yams. The idea of a women's cooperative was initiated by the NACDA women's wing which educated the women on the need to come together, organise the storage and sale of their produce in a more competitive manner. By 1993 the women confessed the essence of this spirit of cooperation.

In 1994, another cooperative was organised: The Awing Agricultural and industrial cooperative society (AGRICOS). This cooperative was set up to enhance the marketing of livestock such as goats, pigs and sheep, poultry and fishing produce, it also has as objective to establish fishing ponds at Aheble and Help farmers set up such farms.⁸

Membership into this cooperative, is made open to all above 15 years of age and shares are within the reach of the rural dwellers. A share in the society costs 500 francs CFA (about N70); a member is entitled to a minimum of ten shares and a maximum of two hundred, that is 5000 francs and 100,000 francs respectively.

The study sought to assess the peoples appreciation of the cooperative movement, whether it had made any impact in their income level especially with the advent of two new cooperatives in 1991 and 1994. The question was asked;

Through what means do you prefer to sell your farm produce?

Table 4.11 :preferable Means of selling farm produce.

Means of selling farm produce	Number of Respondents	Percentage
a. Directly in the retail market	21	7
b. Through the farmers cooperative society	268	89.3
c. To other large scale farmers	11	3.7
d. Any other means (specify)	0	0
Total	300	100

Source: Field work research.

The table reflects the preference of farmers of the cooperative means of selling their produce as 268 (89.3%) expressed this while 21 (7%) preferred going directly to the retail market, 11(3.7%) sold to other farmers who buy to increase their quota at the union thus attracting more bonus from the co-operative. In a follow-up respondents were asked whether

their income had increased through co-operative sales.

TABLE 4.12: Increase In Level of Income due to Co-operative Sale of produce.

Responses	Number of Respondents	Percentage
Yes	268	100
No	0	0
Total	268	100

Source: Field Work Research.

Of the 268 farmers who sold exclusively through the cooperative union, all of them 268 (100%) acknowledge the fact that their incomes had improved.

Another economic institution which the people have developed is the credit union. The Awing credit union which is a member of the Cameroon credit union league (CAMCUL)experienced growth between 1990 and 1995 through the patronage given it by the inhabitants.

Over the years, the farmers relied strongly on their local 'Njangi' houses for their monetary transactions (credit and loans).

However, as the economy deteriorated, transactions in these 'Njangis' became very complicated as people could no more honour their pledges. Besides no banking facility exists around the community unless at the provincial capital Bamenda.

A spirit of awareness got into the people who realised they could better save their income and obtain loans at very reduced interest rates. The credit union movement thus developed rapidly. Every farmer is registered here and those who operated bank accounts

retreated home to patronize the credit union which they see as their bank. The union officials are elected democratically and sanctioned according to laid down rules and regulations. The structure and furniture of this credit union is the people's property.

The study asked the question: Awhich means of savings and loans facilities do you prefer between banks, 'Njangi' houses and the credit union@. Between commercial banks, the farmers credit union and local 'Njangi' houses which ones do you prefer for your savings and credit facilities?

Table 4.13: Means of banking preferred by community dwellers.

Responses	Number of Respondent	Percentage
a. Commercial banks	20	6.7
b. Credit union	264	88
c. Njangi houses	16	5.3
Totals	300	100

Source: Field work research.

The table clearly illustrates that a majority of the farmers 264 (88%) preferred the credit union to 20 (6.7%) who still preferred commercial banks in town and 16 (5.3%) who again still relied on their local 'Njangi' house for their savings and loans.

4.2.6 AGRICULTURAL DEVELOPMENT:

The agricultural habits of the Awing people has experienced serious improvements within the past eight years as a result of the commitment of the people who have resolved

that agricultural development is their best means of economic survival. Certain factors motivated the people to resort to agricultural modernization.

Firstly the depression that hit the country economy in 1988 pushed many unemployed youths in the towns to return to the rural areas to engage in agriculture. Again before the devaluation of the CFA franc, there had been two salary cut in the public service which slashed salaries by about 70%. Many more people resorted to agriculture not only to supplement their household consumption, but equally as a commercial activity.

Secondly, in 1991 there was an increase in the price of coffee. This attracted many of the farmers who had deserted farming and resorted to other businesses. Farmers saw the need to improve on production to better their incomes.

The traditional functions of government to encourage agricultural production notably the supply of agriculture inputs like pesticides and fertilizers, modern farming tools, improved seedlings suitable for the terrain, provision of credit facilities for farmers and the education and sensitization of farmers on new farming techniques have been taken over by the people since government has remained unconcerned over the years.

The study first sought to establish whether government has been assisting them in their agricultural needs. The questions asked was to know whether government has been adequately assisting them in supplying their basic agricultural needs.

Table 4.14 Assessment of government assistance to agriculture

Responses	Number of Respondents	Percentage
Adequately	0	0
Not adequately	157	52.3
Partially	112	34.3
I don't know	31	10.3
Total	300	100

=====
Source: Field work research.

The table reveals that a majority of 157 (52.3%) respondents claim inadequate government assistance, 31 (10.3%) claim ignorance or indifference while 0 (0%) acknowledge any form of assistance.

Statistics from the local government reveal that the staff strength of the department of agriculture is just 44 which is grossly inadequate to carry out extension services in the localities within the santa rural council.

Poor government assistance pushed the farmers entirely on their own efforts coupled with assistance from NGOS interested in improving agricultural production in the area. Farmers now acquire their fertilizer through middlemen who sell at a higher price than what is supposed to be obtained through government. Others who cannot afford for this fertilizer have resorted to various sources of manure such as cow dung from the grazing hills, domestic litter and droppings for those who have poultry and other livestock at home.

Several farmers have invested in the acquisition of modern farming tools such as improved forms of hoes, or ploughs and the use of tractor on more smooth terrain all these through the help of NGOS. The farmers' awareness has led them to welcome the use of

improved crop seedlings sold by agro allied agencies.

Farmers equally frequently request the consultancy services of NGOs to organise workshops to sensitize them on new modern farming techniques to improve output. The cooperative movement has been resorted to as the best means to sell produce as it guarantees the consistency of agreed upon prices set by the farmers. The study then asked to know what significant improvements they had made in agriculture through their self reliance.

Table 4.15 Innovations in agricultural sector through self-help

Responses	Number of Respondent	Percentage
a. Purchase of pesticides fertilizers and seedlings	51	17
b. Adoption of modern farming techniques	26	8.7
c. Cooperative marketing of produce	85	28.3
d. All of the above	138	6
Total	300	100

Source: Field work research

The table illustrates the various strategies the farmers are implementing to improve their agricultural output. 51 (17%) talked of the purchase of pesticides, fertilizers and seedlings, 26 (8.7%) mentioned the adoption of modern farming techniques, 85 (28.3%) mentioned the cooperative marketing of their produce while 138 (46%) mentioned all the above strategies.

(a - c)

Having thus examined the various sectors wherein the people have effected

development within the past ten years, the study sought to know about the current state of these self help projects. The question ask was; AWhat is the current state of self help projects?@

Table 4.16 Current state of self-help projects

Responses	Number of Respondents	Percentages
a. Functioning well	204	68
b. Lack Maintenance	75	25
c. Just surviving	21	7
d. Any other (specify)	0	0
Totals	300	100

Source: Field work research.

The table indicates that a majority of 204 (68%) of the respondents judge that the self help projects are functioning well while 96 (32%) feel such projects either lack maintenance or are just surviving.

This reaction goes a long way to strengthen the point that assets acquired by people through their personal efforts are better taken care of and maintained than those that are provided by government or other gifts from non-governmental organisations. It also indicates that self help projects are more curable since adequate attention is given to their execution. The study further asked the assessment of the people of the rate of development based on their self help efforts.

Table 4.17 Rate of development by self-help means

Rate of development	Respondents	Percentage
a. Slow	21	7
b. Average	74	24.7
c. Fast	205	68.3
Total	300	100

=====
Source: Field work research

The table reveals that a majority of 205 (68.3%) respondents judge the rate of development as encouraging 74 (24.7%) judged it to be average while 21 (7%) saw it as slow.

However, the research observations proved that comparing the state of development in the Awing community to that of other neighbours it was quite encouraging, and commendable.

Having identified and analysed the various self help activities of the people and their perceptions, views and judgements of the development of the area, the research came to the conclusion that these activities have directly improved upon the standard of living of the inhabitants. In other words, the socio-economic level of this area some ten years ago has drastically changed for the better despite governments neglect of the area which to many is seen as political marginalisation.

To corroborate the people's responses on the state of self help projects the researcher personally went to the field to inspect the various projects notably the water installations, the functioning of stand taps, the health posts, the various school premises and some farms. Interviews were conducted with the heads of schools, health posts and the various quarter

heads.

The various heads of establishments acknowledged the fact that the survival of these institutions was almost solely dependent on the efforts of the population. It was equally observed that the various self help projects were in good order notably the water installations. The structures put up in the various schools and health centres are jealously maintained as repairs are constantly carried out.

The case of the government secondary school created in 1992 was very illustrative: the people had erected seven classroom buildings and three offices. The government within the period of 1992 to 1996 could realise just one classroom and a second one which was started and abandoned half way by the contractor. Also in the government primary school Makentikong, the people constructed eight classrooms meanwhile since its take over in 1989, it was only in 1996 that government approved or allocated the construction of two new classrooms for the school which up till date have not been completed.

These observations, lead us to our second hypothesis which states: that government efforts at raising the living standard of rural communities are less successful and less effective than the self-help efforts of the people themselves; especially in the areas of income generation, health, education and rural infrastructure.

To test this hypothesis, the study sought to identify and assess government development efforts in this area over the same period and compare them with the self help projects. In doing this, we adopted the capabilities approach to social research developed by Gabriel T Almond and Birmingham G. Powell.⁸ According to this approach, the extractive, regulative distributive symbolic and responsive capabilities of government need to be

assessed to judge its success or failure in a political system.

In their view, the effectiveness of any political institution in these five areas, is a measure of its overall capability to justify its existence and role in development.

A political institution (in this case the government) that is able to extract resources from its citizens, regulate or influence their behaviours and activities, distribute resources equitably to them, display and receive societal affection from its people and respond adequately to external demands and pressures, is considered capable and effective, in the context of the capabilities approach.

The capabilities approach could be used here to assess the role of government in rural development. To some extent government could be judged effective and efficient depending on answers to issues such as, how successfully has it been able to perform its role in development.

To assess governments role in the development of the Awing community, the research relied much on personal observation of development projects by the government to corroborate information gathered from both government staff at the local government head quarters and interviews with prominent elites of the community as well as the masses of the inhabitants.

Before going to the field the researcher first of all sought to know from the inhabitants whether they could identify any government projects in the area over the past ten years. The question asked was; @Has government carried out any development projects over the past ten years?@

Table 4.18 Level of government=s involvement in the development process in Awing community

Responses	Respondent	Percentages
Yes	57	19%
No	243	81%
Total	300	100

Source: Field work research.

The table reveals that a majority of 243 (81%) of respondents failed to recognise any government development in the area while a meagre 57 (19%) respondents acknowledged government development over the past ten years.

Further asked to identify some of these government projects, the respondents identified some projects which could be summarized as educational, health, and rural infrastructure, (ie assisting to maintain a few kilometers, of road, assisting the functioning of the health centres and government schools.

4.2.7 FIELD OBSERVATIONS ON GOVERNMENT PROJECTS

In the health sector, it was observed that there were five health posts in the community. One government health centre at Nelebe and another post at Nepele. The presbyterian mission was operating a health post at Mbeme, Mr Mba Frederick was operating a clinic (Meforlack) at Tanjang while the health post at Alameti was yet to be completed. The structures of the so called government health centres were put up solely by the people who supplied the furniture and basic equipment.

Government merely sent a few staff and some equipment notably one refrigerator,

elementary instruments and a few beds. A pro-pharmacy was latter set up to sell elementary drugs to patients supposedly at subsidized rates.

Public health activities such as the immunization of people against killer diseases like Tuberculosis Measles, Polio, diarrhoea, whooping cough and Tetanus, sensitization campaigns against seasonal diseases like meningitis, are far below average. Health staff interviewed confessed the gross inadequacy of their services to satisfy the health needs of the population.

In the area of rural infrastructure, government could not boast of any road construction within the past ten years. Prior to this period of study, a few kilometers of road had been constructed linking the Santa coffee Estate with a bridge at Makemtikong. At the time even, this road was being financed by the Germans who were the ones setting up the coffee factory just before the outbreak of the second world war.

Government through the department of community development is supposed to grade and laterite local roads yearly during the dry season against the rains. However, within the past ten years, this exercise was done just twice on the Awing - Santa road and this at the verge of political elections notably in 1992. In this exercise, a distance of about 35 kilometers was modernized with the construction of some indispensable culverts.

Of the seven major bridges within the area, just one was actually masterminded by government; the one at Makemtikong.

In the pipe borne water project, of a total cost of 34,244.129 francs CFA raised for the second phase of the project, government's contribution through the department of community development amounted to 70 bags of cement (168.000 francs CFA). This

contribution formed 0.49% of the funds while the people with the aid of NGOs provided 99.51% of the cost.

Governments role in the educational sector could be summarized in the creation of one primary school and one secondary school without the infrastructural capability to manage them. There are in all seventeen schools in the area: 12 primary and 5 secondary schools out of the 12 primary, schools, 3 are government while 9 are either community schools or run by the missionary bodies (presbyterian, baptist and Catholic) of the 5 secondary schools just one is a government school.

Government school in this context means that the creation of such a school is merely done by announcement. The site for the establishment is then provided by the people, the structures are set up by them, furniture and basic stationary are provided while the government barely sends a few staff. The running of the school will then be through fund raising by the levying of PTA fees, development fees and other charges on the parents. Supplementary staff will have to be employed and paid by the community to solve the problem of staff inadequacy.

In the case of government secondary school Mewungne, with an enrollment of 521 students, since its creation in 1992, the government has succeeded in erecting just one classroom and a second one abandoned half way by the contractor. The existing 7 classrooms and 3 offices were put up by the population. In government primary school Makentikong too government has not constructed any classroom since its creation until in 1996 when it announced the allocation of a new block to the school. The present seven classes and office were constructed by the people. Equally out of the 6 staff of the school just 3 are government staff while the rest are PTA recruits.

The level of social mobilization by the government has been very low as was observed. In several interviews with local residents, (mostly illiterate farmers) many still remained apathetic and ignorant of issues affecting their well being and the essence of government in their life. Government sensitization only comes during political campaigns in a bid to solicit the votes of the people to retain them in power.

4.2.8 ASSESSMENT OF GOVERNMENT'S CAPABILITY TO CARRY OUT

DEVELOPMENT:

Governments extractive capability was unsuccessful as revenue collection yielded below average. The population has become recalcitrant and deliberately evade taxes as a form of political rebellion: (government has done nothing for their well-being thus they see no need to pay taxes). On the other hand, the government tax collection mechanism is ineffective and inefficient full of corrupt officials or sympathizers of the people.

The regulative capabilities of the government in this area has failed; the population has become very politically aware such that the people consider the present government as an illegitimate one after the 1992 elections and it has got to the point that the population is prepared to resist by force any coercive means the authorities might resort to.

Government's distributive capacity is seriously handicapped by lack of political will to effect any meaningful development. Besides the infrastructure is not there to effectively execute programmes.

The symbolic capabilities of government usually doesn't generate any favourable response since the people have adopted an attitude of indifference and resort to violence if

provoked. Their allegiance is paid to the opposition.

Governments responses to demands and needs of the people has been very poor and even calls from NGOs and foreign governments have not been headed to. This has led to the withdrawal of cooperation ties from several foreign development bodies.

After the field observation and interviews, a series of questions were asked to test the hypothesis that self help efforts has been faster and more effective in developing the area than reliance on government. The question was asked:

AJudging from the facts on the ground, would this area have been developed to this extent by the government?@

Table 4.19
Rate of change in Awing community by reliance on government

Responses	Respondent	Percentages
a. Yes	21	7
b. No	276	92
c. May be	3	1
Total	300	100

Source: Field work research.

From the table a majority of 92% (276) are of the opinion that the current level of development would not have been possible with the government 7% (21) shared a contrary view while 3 (1%) were indifferent over the issue.

In comparing the roles of government and that of the people in the development of the area, the study sought the opinion of the people. Respondents were therefore asked:

AIn your opinion, between government and the people who has been more performant in the development of this area?@

Table 4.20

Level of performance between government and self-help initiative

Responses	Respondent	Percentages
Government	0	0
Self help	300	100
Total	300	100

Source: Field work research

The table indicates that 100% (300) of the respondents were of the view that community efforts had proven a better means of development than reliance on government.

In the same line, rural development staff were asked to assess governments efforts in the development of the area: The were asked; AIn your opinion, how would you assess governments role in the development of the area?@

Table 4.21

Assessment government=s role in the development of Awing community

Responses	Respondent	Percentages
a. Satisfactory	0	0
b. Poor	13	17.3
c. Fair	7	9.3
d. Below expectation	41	54.7
e. Much is still desired	14	18.7
Total	75	100

Source: Field work research.

The table illustrates that none of the government staff were themselves satisfied with the role of government in the area 13 (17.3%) described governments role as poor, 7 (9.3%) described it as fair, 41 (54.7%) saw it as below expectation, while 14 (18.7%) opined that much was still desired.

The opinions of the government staff as to who had been more performant over the past ten years again revealed that the efforts of the people are more effective. This opinion was reflected in majority of 58 (77.3%) of the respondents as against 17 (22.7%) out of a total of 75 respondents. This is illustrated in the table below.

Table 4.22 Assessment of level of performance between government and self-help

Performance between Govt. & Self help	Respondents	Percentages
Government	17	22.7
Self help	58	77.3
Total	75	100

Source: Field work research.

The capabilities of the government over its citizens once more was put to test whether government was performing its expected regulative, symbolic and responsive functions. In this wise, the rural development staff were asked to know whether they could determine the types of projects to be undertaken by the people.

Table 4.23 Level of determination of types of projects for Awing community dwellers by rural development staff

Responses	Respondent	Percentages
Yes	0	0
No	75	100
Total	75	100

Source: Field work research.

The table illustrates that all the staff acknowledge that they could not determine projects in any way as all 75 (100%) expressed this.

On the other hand 21 (28%) expressed the view that their department could influence such projects either by assisting with logistic and technical know how while 54 (72%) still expressed the fact that they could hardly influence the development course of the people unless this diametrically goes against government national policy.

However, when the study sought to know whether they participated in the execution of such projects, the responses were mostly affirmative as expressed in the table. They were asked: ADoes your staff participate in the execution of self help projects?@

Table 4.24 Level of participation in self-help project by rural development staff

Responses	Respondents	Percentages
Yes	63	84
No	12	16
Total	75	100

Source: Field work research.

The study then sought to know how they participated in the execution of such projects:

Table 4.25 Ways of participating in self-help projects by rural development staff

Means of government participation in self help projects	Respondents	Percentages
a. Technical assistance	0	0
b. Supervision of planning.	0	0
c. Inspection of project sites	0	0
d. All of the above	63	100
Total	63	100

Source: Field work research.

All 63 (100%) respondents who acknowledge government participation in self help efforts, indicated by means of the three proposed ways in a - c above.

From the foregoing analysis, comparing government development with the self help efforts of the local people, it could clearly be seen that government has been lacking very far behind in its capabilities. When one compares the realisations of both parties, our second hypothesis will be validated that self help efforts has developed the area faster and more effectively than the government

When the study sought the opinion of the rural development staff on their assessment of the rate of self help development in the area, their responses were positive as expressed in the table below.

Table 4.26 Assessment by rural development staff of the rate of self-help development in Awing community

Responses	Respondents	Percentages
a. Average	47	62.7
b. very positive	28	37.3
c. Ineffective	0	0
Total	75	100

Source: Field work research.

4.2.8 CONSTRAINTS TO SELF-HELP EFFORTS IN THE AWING COMMUNITY.

One of the major obstacles to rural development in Cameroon is the lack of proper integration of development initiatives between government and local communities. A great deal of development initiative or activities take place at the local level sometimes unnoticed by the government which matter much in the overall development of an area. Even when such activities are known, the government fails to give the necessary support and encouragement that is needed to help these people forge ahead or maintain what they have acquired.

The issue of rural development is one that requires the complementary efforts of the local government and that of the local communities to jointly exploit initiatives.⁹ One of the challenges facing government today is therefore the inability to harness local resources through the encouragement of people involved in self help activities.

Looking at government capability to complement the efforts of its citizens, the study sought to assess governments level of involvement in the self help process. To assess this role the study tried to identify the resources at their disposal for this purpose.

Governments role in the rural development process is supposed to be backed by enough financial, human and material resources.

The manpower strength of the santa rural council (local government) numbered 104 persons distributed under the following departments:

Table 4.27 Staff strength of Santa Rural Council

Public Health	-	19
Education	-	10
Public works	-	11
Agriculture	-	44
Social welfare	-	12
Personnel	-	4
Finance	-	4

Source: Personnel office Santa Rural Council

Both the quantitative and qualitative aspects of human resources are vital for any efficient function. The educational qualifications of these staff revealed the following. ¹⁰

Table 4.28 Educational level of rural development staff

Educational level	No of staff	Percentages
a. Illiterates	30	28.8
b. Primary school certificate	35	33.7
c. Secondary school certificate	21	20.2
d. professional Diploma.	12	11.5
e. Any other Superior qualification	6	5.8
Total	104	100

Source: Personal office Santa Rural Council

The table indicates that 30 (21.8%) of the staff are illiterates, 35 (33.7%) are primary school certificate holders, 21 (20.2%) are secondary school certificate holders, 12 (11.5%) are holders of professional diplomas while 6 (5.8%) hold qualifications above diplomas.

Having identified the quantity and quality of staff, the study sought to know their conditions of service. They were asked: AHow would you describe your conditions of service?@

Table 4.29 Assessment of conditions of service of rural development staff

Responses	Respondent	Percentages
a. Satisfactory	0	0
b. Fair	9	12
c. Poor	60	80
d. V. poor	6	8
Total	75	100

Source: Field work research.

The table illustrate that none (0%) of the respondents were satisfied with their conditions of service (financially and materially) 9(12%) simply describe it as very poor.

From the above analysis, the study logically concluded that both the staff quality and number were below the expected human resource level required to efficiently perform the traditional functions of government in rural development. The conditions of services of these staff is unsatisfactory and consequently there is no real motivation to effectively carry

out projects.

Financial inability had most often been a serious handicap to rural development programmes particularly to self-help activities in developing countries. Government is expected to adequately subsidize and encourage local efforts.

Our assumptions in this study is that inadequate financial assistance from government has been a major constraint to self-help development. To test this assumption the people's opinion was sought to judge the level of government assistance to their efforts as illustrated in the table below. The question asked was: How would you assess the level of your assistance to self-help projects?

The government staff were then asked what in their opinion accounts for the inadequacy of government assistance to local development initiatives by the people:

Table 4.30 Reasons for inadequate government assistance to self-help initiative

Responses	No. of Respondents	Percentages
a. Financial constraints	10	13.3
b. Infrastructure inadequacies	18	24
c. Insufficient staff	3	4
d. Poor motivation of staff	4	5.3
e. Lack of political will	2	2.7
f. All of the above	38	50.7
TOTAL	75	100

Source: Field work research.

From the table, the majority of respondents identified the reasons listed in a-f as being reasons for the inadequate government assistance to self-help development.

Interviewing the elites on this same issue most of them identified these same reason but emphasising on the lack of political will by the government to develop the area.

Amongst the local inhabitants themselves, the study diagnosed that there was a spirit of disolidarity among the inhabitants themselves which accounted for the sometimes slow execution of projects, An example of this was seen in the execution of the water project that went on in phases. It was easily discernable that the population did not take their participation in these various stages as a joint venture. Many quarters enthusiastically took part in the physical labour only when the pipe line had to pass through their region.

This self-help attitude has its roots in the spirit of jealousy and envy vis-a-vis certain quarters like Mbeme and Mbenten: The former for their intellectual supremacy as they have produced most of the educated elites and thus usually take initiative faster than the rest, the later Mbenten for their commercial or financial domination as they have produced the business class.

The human, financial and material participation to projects has usually been determined by proximity of the people to the projects site and how directly beneficial it would be to them.

This segregative attitude notwithstanding the general financial contributions of the population has been inadequate due principally to the economic crises that has drastically affected peoples financial viability especially for the rural dwellers and junior civil servants

who underwent two salary cuts (about 70%) in 1993 and a currency devaluation in 1994.

The identification of all these handicaps to the smooth execution of self-help projects goes to substantiate the fact that several constraints handicapped the self-help process which if overcome would yield better results in the development of Awing Community.

FOOTNOTES AND REFERENCES

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CHAPTER FIVE

CONCLUSION:

SUMMARY, RESEARCH FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 SUMMARY:

The study attempted to examine the activities of self-help as a means to rural development and its bearing on the socio-economic improvement of the Awing community between 1986 - 1996.

The research was motivated by the assumption that self-help efforts could be a more viable strategy for rural development and could be used to bring about genuine development to an area if well practiced. Equally it was assumed that the self-help practice if well assimilated by the people could bring about improved standards of living faster and more effectively than reliance on government and other external sources.

The motivation of the research stemmed from the problem that the government of Cameroon had failed woefully in its basic responsibilities to care for the well-being of the rural populace thereby making the inhabitants of the area to take up the challenge to improve their standard of living.

The genesis of the problem just covered stems more from the socio-political circumstances under which the country Cameroon was born. The pre-colonial and colonial past portray the manner in which the indigenous people had been moulded to serve as human tools merely to be used by outsiders when needed. This was exemplified during the period of German colonial rule between 1884 and 1922.¹

This culture of laxity and direction from above was further promoted by the French policy of assimilation from 1922 to 1960 and which still continues today in the French speaking provinces of the country (former East Cameroon). It is the period of global economic recession that forced people to become alert and conscious of the role they can play in their own development.²

In the first chapter of this work, we tried to portray the general background to the study taking into consideration the problem at stake. The chapter outlined the objectives of the study in trying to assess the activities of self-help in terms of its process and end results (inputs and output). Two hypotheses were framed as a guide to the study which had to be refuted or validated at the end of the study. The methodology for the study was presented which comprised the use of traditional research instruments such as the Questionnaire, Interview and Observation as well as secondary sources to compliment the primary sources. Certain concepts were also given operational definitions within the context of the study.

In chapter two we explored the plethora of existing literature on the characteristics and evolution of Rural development and self-help more especially within developing countries. The various approaches and theories related to rural development led us to adopt the modernization theory by Neil Smellser as a theoretical framework for the study.

In our chapter three, we presented an overview of the historical and socio-economic profile of our study area the Awing community, its population, geographical location and physical features which accounts for the development pattern it undergoes.

In chapter four the data collected from the field work was presented and in analysing them percentages were used to illustrate the comparison intended to be shown. From these analysis, logical conclusions were arrived at relative, to the hypothesis tested.

Our chapter five summarised the findings of the research.

5.2 RESEARCH FINDINGS:

Our research findings emanating from the analysis of the data collected revealed glaringly that significant changes occurred during the study period (1986-1996) within the Awing community due to the self-help efforts of the inhabitants of this area thereby validating our first hypothesis which stipulates that there is a direct link between self-help efforts and the socio-economic development of the Awing community.

This hypothesis tested through the collection of data from questionnaire served to the inhabitants, rural development staff and interviews with the various categories of persons and field observation revealed that the various sectors of development had witnessed significant improvements.

In the health sector for example several primary health care centers had been built or renovated hospital equipment had been supplied and recurrent maintenance had been assured by the relentless efforts of the people. This dynamism had attracted substantial aid from NGOS especially the missionary bodies. Life expectancy has therefore improved.

The education sector has equally seen significant improvements as a result of construction, equipment and maintenance of classroom equipment and payment of teachers.

Elementary rural infrastructure was provided through communal efforts in the creation and maintenance of rural roads, a pipe borne water system which modernized the peoples way of life, a community hall which stands as a symbol of unity amongst the people and a recreational facility for the socio-cultural well-being of the people.

Another significant revelation of the study is the level of social mobilization attained and the level of people's participation in the self-help development process. The society has been organised into groupings, (Community Based Associations) with various roles to play in self-help activities. These include the age grade groups (Mendzong), women's groups and several youth clubs and the various quarter committees, and NACDA wards. The arrangement of the community into such groupings is an indispensable step in the implementation of communal projects.³

The agricultural sector improved through the introduction of modern farming techniques and crop protection mechanisms in the face of government failure to supply farm implements fertilizer and pesticides. These developments were spurred by the creation of cooperatives with savings and loans facilities which could not be enjoyed in commercial or government agricultural banks.

The study revealed that these self-help projects were realised with very insignificant assistance from government as illustrated in table 4.9 wherein in the pipe borne water project only 0.49% of funds came from government. Government only came in to render certain essential services like in the health sector. These self-help infrastructure were observed to be in good condition since the inhabitants jealously guarded the fruits of their sweat.

The capability of the government in performing its traditional role of providing basic service to the rural populace was judged to be grossly inadequate. Government's extractive, regulative, distributive, symbolic and responsive capabilities were not sufficient to enable it play its development role effectively.

The study revealed that lack of funds, lack of human resources and infrastructure on the part of government stemmed from its inability to harness the required resources for its functions. The government tax collection machinery is not only deficient due to corrupt officials who sometimes sympathize with the people but the people deliberately evade or avoid tax payment as a form of political rebellion to starve government and frustrate its policies.

The government equally lacks the political will to attend to the needs of this area which is a staunch opposition stronghold.⁴

The second hypothesis of the research was validated after these lapses of the government were diagnosed. From the statistics of development projects shown, it was clearly seen that self-help efforts had been faster and more effective in improving the living standards of the habitants of this area. It was evident at the level of cooperation between the local population and the government staff that a cordial atmosphere did not exist between them always for the fact that the staff always refuse to accept and incorporate local initiative and cultural values in their approach to issues. The staff preferred the directive approach to their assignment.

5.3 RECOMMENDATIONS

As Adewumi rightly puts it, government policies on rural development have been no more than rhetorics and platitudes over the years. ⁶ Not only unrealistic policies are taken but the implementation leaves much to be desired. Despite the efforts made by rural inhabitants

to engage in meaningful development projects, government has not shown sufficient proof of encouragement to these efforts rather huge funds have been channelled to government agencies and such funds have never reached the rural populace.

This study will therefore recommend that government policy on rural development which has always taken the directive approach should be reoriented to let prevail the people's initiative which will allow local realities and cultural peculiarities to have their place in whatever strategy is envisaged, especially at implementation stages .

Funds meant for government agencies should be channeled directly to the people who have proven more responsible in handling communal funds. The management of funds at the communal level has been more efficient because leaders cannot take the risk to embezzle such monies and face the sanctions which can range from imprisonment to being ostracized from the community.

Inadequate funds and poor human resource level has equally been a major handicap for government to assist self-help development as they claim . Though the study went ahead to discover that even when such funds could have been adequate, government did not have the will to spend it or such funds were misappropriated by officials. It is however recommended that the revenue generating capacity of the government be

improved to yield more funds. Equally the staff strength of the rural councils should be increased to provide for more field workers in the various sectors of development.

However some statutory provisions should be made to enable local communities to generate some minimal financial resources. We therefore suggest that some of the revenue sources reserved for the rural council should be left for the local communities.

One of the short comings of planning for self-help projects in the Awing community was diagnosed to be the super imposition of ideas from indigenes resident in urban centers. The fact that these external elites contribute and provide more than 50% of the funds for projects they usually impose their will in the selection of priority projects which at times does not reflect the real or most crucial need of the rural community.

It is therefore recommended here that selection of projects should be left in the hands of those actually resident permanently within the community for they are better placed to know what they need most.

The role of the paramount ruler of Awing and the traditional council has not been encouraging so far. Being the custodians of the culture and power of the land they are expected to play a leading role in the implementation of development projects. This council has remained largely ineffective because of its nature and its mode of composition which is undemocratic and unrepresentative. It is recommended here that the composition of this council which wields a lot of power be democratized and revitalised to enable it to be more operational in the implementation and maintenance of self-help projects.

Migration of indigenes of this community to urban centres has drained potential skilled labour from the area principally due to inadequate education, health and employment facilities. While unskilled labour is ever present, lack of skilled labour affects the quality and rate of planning and execution of self-help projects which leads to the expensive hiring of skilled labour from outside. In this light we recommend that government should think of locating firms or small industries within this area to attract and retain some of the skilled labour that is highly needed for self-help development.

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APPENDIX A

QUESTIONNAIRE FOR MEMBERS OF COMMUNITY BASED ASSOCIATIONS

TITLE: SELF HELP EFFORTS AND RURAL DEVELOPMENT

Dear Respondent,

This questionnaire is designed to generate data for a Master Degree Thesis, in partial fulfilment of requirements for the award of MPA (L.G) of the Ahmadu Bello University, Zaria Nigeria. I shall be pleased if you would kindly provide answers to the questions and feel free to make your comments where necessary to the best of your knowledge and ability.

Your name is not required. You can therefore be rest assured that all information collected from you is for academic purpose only and shall be treated as confidential.

Thanks for your cooperation.

Signature.

Name.

Mark an (X) against the appropriate answers:

1. Age group:
 - a. 20 - 30
 - b. 31 - 40
 - c. 41 - 50
 - d. 51 - 60
 - e. above 60

2. Sex: a. Male b. Female

3. Occupation: a. Farmer (b) Civil servant (c) Business man (d) Retired civil servant

4. Marital Status: a. Single
b. Married

5. Marital Status: a. Monogamy
b. Polygamy

6. As a resident of this community, are you ware of any self help activities going on.
a. Yes b. No

7. If yes for how long has this phenomenon been going on?
a. 5 to 10 years b. 11 to 15 years c. 16 to 20 years d. 21 to 30 years
e. More than 30 years ago.

8. Do you actively participate in the self help process
a. Yes b. No

9. How do you enlist your participation?
 - a. In deliberations of meetings
 - b. In final decision making
 - c. Physical labour
 - d. Financial contributions
 - e. All of the above

10. What improvement have been effected in the health sector through your self efforts?
 - a. Construction of health posts
 - b. Renovation and supply of furniture
 - c. Subsidizing the running cost
 - d. All of the above

11. Has child mortality decreased over the past ten years?
 - a. Yes
 - b. No

12. If yes what accounts for this decreased?
 - a. Improved health infrasturcture
 - b. Improved sanitary conditions
 - c. Improved nutritional habits
 - d. All of the above

13. Approximately how many kilometers of road has been constructed or modernized by the people through their own means?
 - a. About 60 to 100 kilometers
 - b. About 100 to 140 kilor meter
 - c. About 140 to 180 kilor meters
 - d. More than 190 kilometers

14. What improvements have been effected in the educational sector over the past ten years through your efforts?
 - a. Construction of classroom
 - b. Provision of furniture
 - c. Recruitment and payment of PTA staff
 - d. Maintenance of schoo infrastructure
 - e. All of the above

15. Has the literacy level increased as a result of these changes?
 - a. Yes
 - b. No

16. Through what means do you prefer to sell your farm product?
 - a. Directly in the retail market
 - b. Through the farmers cooperative society
 - c. To other large scale farmers
 - d. Any other means (specify)

17. Has your income level improved through cooperative sales?
 a. Yes b. No
18. Between commercial banks, the farmers credit Union, and local 'Njangi' houses, which do you prefer for your savings and credit facilities?
 a. Commercial banks
 b. Credit Union
 c. Njangi house
19. Has government been adequately assisting you in supplying your basic agricultural needs?
 a. Yes b. No c. Partially d. I don't know.
20. What significant innovations have you effected in the agricultural sector through your own efforts?
 a. Purchase of pesticides and fertilizers
 b. Adoption of modern farming techniques
 c. Cooperative marketing of farm produce
 d. All of the above
21. What is the current state of self help projects?
 a. Functioning well
 b. Lack maintenance
 c. Just surviving
 d. Any other (specify).....
22. What is your assessment of the rate of development as a result of self help efforts?
 a. Slow b. Average c. Encouraging d. Very slow.
23. Has government realised any development projects over the past ten years?
 a. Yes b. No
24. Judging from the facts on the ground, would this area have been developed to this extent by the government?
 a. Yes b. No c. May be

25. In your opinion, between government and the people, who has been more performant in the development of this area?
a. Government b. Self help efforts
26. How would you assess government assistance to your self help effort?
a. Satisfactory b. Grossly inadequate c. average
27. How would you describe your relationship with government officials (Rural development staff)
a. Cordial b. Conflictual c. Indifference d. Tolerable
28. What is your approximate annual income as a farmer?
a. 200,000 to 400,000 b. 400,000 to 600,000 c. 600,000 to 800,000
d. above 800,000
France CFA = 1000 = N140.00
29. Withing the past ten years has it increased or decreased?
a. Increased b. Decreased

APPENDIX B

QUESTIONNAIRE FOR RURAL DEVELOPMENT STAFF
TITLE: SELF HELP EFFORTS AND RURAL DEVELOPMENT

Dear Respondent,

This questionnaire is designed to generate data for a Master Degree Thesis, in partial fulfilment of requirements for the award of MPA (L.G) of the Ahmadu Bello University, Zaria Nigeria. I shall be pleased if you would kindly provide answers to the questions and feel free to make your comments where necessary to the best of your knowledge and ability.

Your name is not required. You can therefore be rest assured that all information collected from you is for academic purpose only and shall be treaded as confidential.

Thanks for your cooperation.

Signature.

Name.

Mark an (X) against the appropriate answers:

1. Age group:
 - a. 20 - 30
 - b. 30 - 40
 - c. 40 - 50
 - d. 50 - 60
 - e. above 60

2. Sex: a. Male b. Female

3. Academic qualification:
 - a. Illiterate
 - b. Primary school certificate
 - c. Secondary school certificate
 - d. Professional diploma
 - e. Any other (indicate)

4. Field of specialization:
 - a. Health
 - b. Education
 - c. Agriculture
 - d. Public works
 - e. Social welfare
 - f. Any other (specify)

5. For how many years have you been in this service?
 - a. 5 to 10
 - b. 11 to 15
 - c. 16 to 20
 - d. 21 to 25
 - e. Above 25

6. Do the inhabitants of this area engage in self help efforts to foster their development?
 - a. Yes b. No

7. If yes for how long has this been going on?
 - a. 5 to 10 years
 - b. 10 to 15 years
 - c. 15 to 20 "
 - d. 20 to 30 "
 - e. Mores that 30

8. In your opinion, how would you assess the impact of self help efforts ons the development of the area?
 - a. Average b. Very positive c. Ineffective

9. In what sectors have you noticed any significant improvements due to self help efforts
 - a.
 - b.
 - c.
 - d.
 - e.

10. In your opinion how would you assess government role in the development of this area?
 - a. Satisfactory b. Poor c. Fair d. Below expectation
 - e. Much is still desired

11. How would you describe you conditions of service?
 - a. Satisfactory b. Fair c. Mediocre d. Unbearable

12. Does your service determine the types of development projects to be carried out by the people?
 - a. Yes b. No

13. Can your service influence the type of projects the people intend to undertake?
 - a. Yes b. No

14. If yes, how do you effect this?
 - a.
 - b.

- c.
d.
15. Does your department participate in the execution of self help projects?
a. Yes b. No
16. If yes, how?
a.
b.
c.
d.
17. How would you assess the rate of self help development of this area?
a. Average b. Very positive c. Ineffective
18. Does the government regularly subsidize self help projects
a. Yes b. No
19. What specific development projects has government successfully carried out which have significantly improved the conditions of the people?
a.
b.
c.
d.
20. How would you described the relationship between your department and the inhabitants of this area?
a. Cordial b. Conflictual c. Just tolerable
d. An atmosphere of indifference
21. In your opinion, how would you assess government's role in the development of area?
a. Satisfactory b. Poor c. Fair d. Below expectation
e. Much is still desired
22. In your opinion between government and the inhabitants who has contributed more in rural development?
a. Government b. The people

23. In your opinion what do you think accounts for the inadequacy of government assistance to the self help development process of the area?
- a. Financial insufficiency
 - b. Infrastructural inadequacies
 - c. Staff insufficiency
 - d. Lack of staff motivation
 - e. Lack of political will by the government
 - f. All of the above

APPENDIX C

CHECK LIST OF ISSUES DISCUSSED WITH MEMBER OF COMMUNITY BASED ASSOCIATIONS (CBAs)

1. Type of farming practiced.
2. Where are farm produce usually sold
3. Which community based association do you belong to ?
4. How has membership in any group improved on your welfare?
5. Level of awareness of the self-help process.
6. Level of participation in self-help activities.
7. How have self-help activities improved on living standards?
8. Specific areas where significant improvement have been made.
9. Assessment of government attitude to the development of the community
10. Compare government activities with those of self-help
11. Assessment of state or projects carried out by the community members.
12. Specific problems encountered in the self-help process.
13. What measures are being taken to counter such constraints?
14. What accounts for such problems?
15. What are prospects for the development of the community in the near future ?