

THEATRE FOR DEVELOPMENT AND FOOD SECURITY IN TANZANIA: THE CASE OF INTEGRATED FOOD SECURITY IN RUKWA

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Abstract

In Tanzania, NGOs have commissioned and sponsored most of the theatre-for-development (TFD) initiatives to date. However, as Penina Mlama (1993) observed, theatre for development practitioners were called into the communities after some problems had occurred. At the end of the process, the facilitators went away leaving the people without concrete implementation strategies, or left the community members to seek help from the same structures, which were against their development initiatives. The development agencies, on the other hand, could not implement the solution reached during the theatre-for-development process as many of them had lost hope. Their duration of the project expired and hence they could no longer have the financial capability of carrying out another project in the same village, or had changed their priorities and strategies.

The Integrated Food Security Programme (IFSP) in Rukwa region - a programme that was initiated and funded by the Deutsche Gesellschaft für Technische Zusammenarbeit (GTZ) - introduced an alternative approach. IFSP commissioned theatre-for-development facilitators to carry out workshops during the planning stage of the implementation of its programmes in Rukwa region in 1993.

This article, using IFSP-Rukwa as a case study, examines how the theatre for development programme was utilised as a forum for planning, and whether the solutions and recommendations given during the process were heeded by the IFSP during the implementation stage.

Introduction

Theatre-for-development (TFD), sometimes known as Popular Theatre, Theatre for Social Development, Theatre for Integrated Development, Community Theatre or Community Theatre for Integrated Rural Development, is 'used to describe a great variety of theatre based forms including mime, folk forms, puppet theatre and political protest theatre, all of which are specifically employed to advance and validate a people-based counter culture'(Thomas, 1988). The 'multiplicity of nomenclature' (Abah, 1995) suggests similarity to the approaches in theatre-for-development. However, the reality shows that there are many different approaches that have been moulded according to the requirements of particular communities or particular projects, and sometimes these approaches have led to different interpretations and perceptions of what constitutes

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theatre-for-development. The more the variety, the more difficult it becomes to find a definition that can be agreed upon by all theoreticians and practitioners in theatre-for-development.

As a concept, theatre-for-development implies a process of researching, analysing, and communicating a community's development issues through theatre. It is a method of continuous participatory research involving the people of the area being studied as researchers, who should take part in the investigations and not as passive objects in the study. This method of investigation, which involves criticism of the study by the people, is at the same time a learning process. Through this process, the level of critical thinking is raised among all those involved (Freire, 1972).

Theatre-for-development in Tanzania is carried out through two main approaches, namely, the performance approach and the workshop approach. The performance approach involves devising specific performances for particular target communities with the aim of establishing a dialogue between performers and the audience, in order to discuss community problems (Bakari, 1997). In the performance approach, artists create performances based on specific problems and take them on tour to different villages. The performances are created in a way that they provoke the audience to discuss the issues raised. This can be done either at the end of the performance, or during the performance, where the performance may be stopped for inputs from the audience, which may involve the audience taking some roles in the performance.

The workshop approach involves facilitation of the process by animateurs who normally come from outside the community but live or stay in the community during the entire period of the workshop (which is normally two to three weeks). As success of the whole process lies upon them, the people who take this task on should be experts in both theatre and social mobilisation. However, these animateurs do not bring a ready-made play into the community but help the community to create one for themselves (Hoeane, 1995).

The theatre-for-development workshop involves seven stages that include familiarisation, research, data analysis, theatre creation, performance and post-performance discussion.

Familiarisation is the stage when animateurs familiarise themselves with the people, geography, history, and customs of the targeted group. It involves pre-workshop visits to the area and contacts with the people and their leaders as well as higher government structures at the district and regional levels. Effort is made to give all the concerned parties sufficient information about the objectives of the workshop and what is going to happen. As most of the animateurs come from outside the area, the familiarisation stage is also used to create a rapport with the community members. There are many ways of creating the rapport between the animateurs and the people. These ways vary according to the context, place and period. The animateurs are supposed to be flexible enough to

adapt to different conditions. Animateurs in Tanzania have, on many occasions, created rapport through employing means such as simple dressing, good manners, participation and observance of the people's culture, simple gestures of care like attending a burial ceremony, and helping people in their daily economic activities.

Information gathering is the stage that follows familiarisation. Here both the animateurs and community members are involved in gathering as much information as possible, about problems and other issues related to the specific objective of the workshop. Methods of research are kept very simple in order for the community members to understand and follow. Information gathering may take the form of interviews, group discussion, a simple chat with some people or an artistic format whereby, for example, songs and folk-tales are used as information sources.

When sufficient data has been collected, analysis follows. The animateurs together with villagers examine and discuss the gathered information and seek a deeper understanding of the problems raised. Sometimes data analysis may also take an artistic format where, through songs and poetry or dramatic skits, problems are posed and solutions searched for. Then the problems are arranged in order of priority, and issues which have the most dramatic force are sought.

Theatre creation begins after the data analysis. Theatre creation involves translating data analysed into a theatrical language that can involve drama, dance, song, music, story-telling and poetry. As there are many theatre forms, the people are left to choose the forms which they think can best suit them. Theatre creation often involves rehearsals which are also used for further research and analysis. These rehearsals normally take place in areas accessible to all the members of the community whose ideas and opinions are constantly solicited. The significance of this stage is that it deepens the understanding of the problems as new meanings are added or removed from a theatrical piece.

Theatre creation leads into performance, which is used as a platform for communicating the issues analysed to other members of the community who could not attend the earlier stages of the workshop. Immediately after the performance, the entire community is invited to discuss the issues raised during the performance and plan strategies for dealing with the problems identified. This discussion is aimed at identifying the priorities of the community and the possibilities for a practical follow-up. During the discussion, committees are also formed to preside over the implementation of the proposed resolutions.

Theatre for development, as a movement where theatre artists and intellectuals framed it within a particular methodology (as described above), started in Tanzania in the 1980s. Since then, projects have been carried out in the Coast, Morogoro, Mwanza, Mtwara, Tanga, Arusha, Singida, Mara, Dodoma, Iringa, Rukwa, Kigoma, Mbeya, Mtwara, Dar es Salaam, Ruvuma, Shinyanga and Lindi regions. So far, theatre-for-

development in Tanzania has tackled issues that include education on AIDS prevention, stigmatisation, civic education, female genital mutilation, enhancement of sanitation and nutrition standards, family planning, eradication of illiteracy and poverty, corruption, leadership irresponsibility, conflict resolution, as well as information communication on many other development issues.

However, in most of the mentioned theatre-for-development projects, the animateurs/facilitators were called into the communities to carry out theatre-for-development after some problems had occurred. Development agencies, which sponsored most of these workshops, wanted to know the causes of the people's apathy to development initiatives and why their projects have failed. The animateurs used theatre-for-development process as a research method to find out the root causes of the problems. However, at the end of the process, the facilitators went away leaving the people without concrete implementation strategies, or left them to seek help from the same structures which were against their development initiatives. The development agencies, on their part, could not implement the solution suggested during the theatre-for-development process as many of them had lost hope, the duration of their project had expired and hence could no longer have the financial capability to carry out another project in the same village, or had changed their priorities and strategies.¹

Criticism that was leveled against this approach to theatre-for-development led both scholars and development agencies to search for an alternative approach which aimed at carrying out theatre-for-development workshops at the planning stage of the development project, and use the solutions suggested during the theatre-for-development process in the planning and implementation of the project². This new approach was first adopted by the Integrated Food Security Programme (IFSP) in Rukwa region - a programme that was initiated and funded by the Duetsche Gesellschaft fur Technische Zusammenarbeit (GTZ). It was first experimented in eight villages in Rukwa region in July and August 1993 and was co-ordinated by the author (Nyoni: 1993).

As far as the practice of theatre-for-development in Tanzania is concerned, IFSP has been among the development agencies that pioneered to employ theatre-for-development to involve the grassroots communities in planning and implementation of a development project³.

Although it is common practice for the facilitators of a theatre-for-development workshop to 'walk away' at the end of a workshop and never return to the community, with the IFSP case it was necessary and important to make a follow up. The 1993 workshops were carried out on experimental basis and were meant to initiate a process that would last for the entire duration of the project, and hence, a follow up to determine the effectiveness of the approach was a must. But, the IFSP project was closed in 1998 - about five years since the Theatre-for-development workshops were carried out in Rukwa, and no follow-up has been done on the approach.

The lack of a follow up on the 1993 workshops in Rukwa created a gap of knowledge in Theatre-for-development scholarship and practice. A gap, which made a follow-up research, which culminated into this study a necessity.

2.0 IFSP - "Rescuing People From a Wrecked Ship..."

2.1 *The Birth of the Project*

IFSP was a project initiated by the governments of the United Republic of Tanzania and the Federal Republic of Germany to address the issue of food security in Rukwa region. It was found out that, although Rukwa region is a surplus producing area with regard to maize production and considered as one of the four regions in Tanzania with a generally high potential for agricultural production (the big four), the nutritional status of many households was highly endangered and far from satisfactory. Wolfgang Kunze noted:

An estimated one-third of the total population faces, at least seasonally, food shortages and is exposed to an unbalanced diet. Most endangered are children below the age of 5 years; approximately 5 percent are severely and 45 percent are moderately malnourished. The infant mortality rate is estimated at 17%, the highest in Tanzania... and the mortality rate of mothers during pregnancies/deliveries has been increasing over the last years... (Wolfgang, 1993, p.2)

IFSP was a second project funded by GTZ to tackle the problem of food security in Rukwa region. The first project, which covered the period between 1983 and December 1991, started with the construction of a few fairly large godowns in co-operation with the defunct National Milling Corporation (NMC). Later the project concentrated more on the construction and rehabilitation of godowns for primary societies at village level. During its last phase, the food security project had a clear bias towards the support of the Rukwa Region Co-operative Union (RURECU) and the primary societies, concentrating mainly on the fields of marketing of what is produced and related areas.

The notion of building godowns as a means of enhancing food security hit a snag, as most of the godowns could not be used for storing crops as they had been intended. Instead, the godowns were used as recreation halls, meeting places, and places for religious worship. Local people continued to store their food in the traditional storage facilities. They could not store their crops in the godowns because of the long distances from their homes to the godowns (a godown was usually constructed in the middle of the village) as it created the problem of transportation. Storing crops at home was economically viable since most people farmed around their houses and they did not have to incur transport costs to take their crops to the godowns. However, the most important reason was that it is "a Wafipa tradition that the family's crops are stored at home and very close to where one sleeps. That is why most of the food stores are built inside the houses".

IFSP addressed the problem of food security at household level so as to ensure that each member within a household has access at all times to food in sufficient quantity and quality for an active and healthy life. The initial studies by the IFSP led to the following suggested solutions:

- To encourage crop diversification including fruit tree planting and vegetable production
- To introduce and produce fuel-saving stoves
- To improve storage structures
- To promote aforestation and woodlot management
- To introduce labour saving technologies for women
- To introduce public works projects, for example, road building and maintenance, construction of the nutrition centres and building of shallow-wells for safe and clean water
- To provide basic health services (Wolfgang, 1993).

The project area consisted of Sumbawanga rural, urban and Nkansi districts. Mpanda district was excluded due to difficult logistics and fund limitations. The project focused on the rural areas of these districts and covered 19 villages. These villages were; Mkima, Mkowe, Mikonko, Mtuntumbe, Katazi, Itela, Tentula, Kasanga, Zimba and Mtowisa in Sumbawanga Rural district; and Isale, Masolo and Kabwe in Nkasi district. Others are Isesa, Senga, Chipu, Mawenzusi and Chelenganya in Sumbawanga Urban District.

2.2 The Project Duration and Activities

The IFSP in Rukwa lasted for about six years and had two main phases. The first phase started in 1992 and ended in 1994; and the Second phase started in September 1994 and ended in August 1998.

2.2.1 Phase One (1992 - 94)

Phase one had a number of activities. These are detailed below.

2.2.1.1 Feeding posts

Feeding posts were initiated in Rukwa Region on a pilot basis in July 1992 in the villages of Chipu, Mkima, Senga and Isale. The implementation was taken as an immediate measure to reduce the malnutrition of pre-school children in these villages. But beyond that its main purpose was to collect information on operational problems, and even more important, on the perception of the villagers of such measures and their willingness to participate their implementation.

Each feeding post catered for about 40 to 60 children and had two attendants who cooked porridge for them. The porridge, which was mixed with nutritious ingredients, was offered to all children who came to the feeding post.

2.2.1.2 1992 ZOPP Seminar

The seminar, which was held in Sumbawanga from 25th - 29th January 1993, brought together participants from the regional and district levels of the Planning office and various representatives from the departments of the Ministry of Agriculture and the Ministry of Health. The objective of the seminar was to plan the implementation phase of three and a half years of the IFSP from July 1993 onwards. The workshop followed the Objectives Oriented Project Planning method (ZOPP), which is the standard planning procedure for all German aided projects.

The seminar finally agreed the project to have the two main components outlined below.

1. The establishment of nutrition centres which would be organised, run and maintained by parent groups among villagers, and which will offer a variety of services.
 - Child feeding and child care (thus functioning as kindergarten or nursery schools).
 - Support in de-worming campaigns for children and adults.
 - Dissemination of knowledge on food processing and preparation, sanitation, health as well as on new production techniques, for example, in the field of horticulture.
 - Demonstration example for the use of adequate storage and processing techniques as well as the use of fuel saving stoves.
 - Demonstration of the cultivation of some new vegetables, oil seeds or fruit trees in a garden belonging to the centre including the respective processing techniques (sunflower oil extraction).
 - Distribution place for some inputs (especially vegetable seeds and seedlings).

These centres would need a house with sanitation facilities and permanent staff or two attendants to cover the child feeding and child care functions. Other services would have to be offered in co-operation with various departments of the Ministry of Agriculture (nutrition, horticulture, etc.) and the Ministry of Health. The cultivation of new crops and/ or improved production techniques on areas close to the centres would take place under the supervision of the village extension worker.

2. The planning and implementation of the public work programmes in close collaboration with the villages and the ministries concerned. These public work programmes had three main functions.

- To provide income in cash or kind (food and / or farm inputs - depending on particular needs and the availability of these items on local markets) thus reducing the danger of overselling after harvests.
- To enable poor parents to contribute to the centres (food provided for the children and or salary of attendants).
- To create benefits for the village.

Potential areas suggested for public work programmes include: road rehabilitation and maintenance, bridges, construction of nutrition centres, improvement of schools and dispensaries, maize mills, water supply, sanitation, forestry, erosion prevention and fish ponds.

2.2.1.3 1993 Theatre-for-development Workshops

Informed by experiences of similar GTZ-funded projects elsewhere, IFSP decided to employ Theatre-for-development as a method for involving the villagers in the planning stage of the project. IFSP wanted to seek opinions and ideas of the villagers and then make a compromise or change its implementation strategies to fit specific demands and needs of the people. The 1993 theatre-for-development workshops, christened as 'Participatory Village Planning and Art Performance Campaigns' were a result of such considerations. The facilitating team included project officers who were supposed to take over the process at the end of the workshops.

During these workshops the villagers participated effectively in the process of research, analysis and finding solutions to their problems on malnutrition and food security. Some of their solutions concurred with those of the IFSP (as outlined during the ZOPP seminar) but some were not. However, IFSP - whose officials fully participated in every stage of the workshop process - promised to implement those solutions that each village had come up with during the theatre-for-development workshops.

During the workshops, which was facilitated by 6 resource persons from the University of Dar es Salaam, about 60 local facilitators at the district and village levels were trained. It was hoped that these facilitators would carry on with the theatre-for-development process after the resource persons had left.

The Workshop Process

The workshops in Rukwa took six weeks from July 14th to August 30th, and covered the villages of Chipu and Senga in the Sumbawanga Town Council, Mkowe, Mkima and Mtowisa in Sumbawanga rural district, and Isale, Masolo and Mkinga villages in

Nkansi district. These workshops were co-ordinated by the researcher who was also among the team of six resource persons from the University of Dar es Salaam. As the workshops were carried out in two villages concurrently, the resource team split into two groups of three, and each worked in one village assisted by three local facilitators who were recruited from health, nutrition, community development and district planning departments. The aims of recruiting these local facilitators was to enable them undergo on-the-spot training in theatre-for-development methodology so that they could continue with the process after the resource team members had left.

The village workshops followed the same process of familiarisation, data collection, data analysis, performance creation, performance, post-performance discussion and follow-up meetings. The workshops were honoured with the presence of top officials from IFSP at the beginning and during the performance, post-performance discussion and follow-up meetings.

After the workshops, a two-day seminar was held in Sumbawanga town. The seminar brought together two representatives from each of the villages covered, the facilitators, resource team, IFSP officials and the then co-ordinator, Mr Muller. The general aim of the seminar was to get the preliminary report on the theatre-for-development workshops and allow the IFSP officials to respond to it. The specific aim of the seminar was to evaluate the effectiveness of the theatre-for-development approach in village participatory planning and communication for development. This seminar was very crucial to the whole process of theatre-for-development as IFSP stated clearly in the presence of the village representatives which of the decisions it would take on and implement.

Implementation of Phase one Activities

During this phase, IFSP decided to concentrate the project efforts on two fields of intervention, which are nutrition centres and public works. The following activities were thus implemented between 1993 and September 1994 in the following sample villages visited by the author in 1999.

Masolo Village

- The bridge across river Lwamfi was constructed,
- Two shallow-pump wells were constructed,
- A nutrition centre was constructed,
- A first aid kit was provided to the village,

Senga Village

- Construction of a bridge and partial rehabilitation of the road from the village to Sumbawanga town,
- A nutrition centre was constructed.

Mkowe Village

- A building for use as a dispensary had been constructed but it was not yet operating when the author visited the village in August 1999.
- A nutritional centre was constructed.

Mkima Village

- A dispensary building was constructed but it was not yet operational when the author visited the village in September 1999.
- A nutritional centre was constructed

Chipu Village

- A nutritional centre was constructed.

2.2.2 Phase Two (1994 - 1997)

During this phase, the IFSP dropped the building of nutrition centres and public works as its project activities and concentrated more on the target group project's approach, whereas some individuals identified as the most affected as far as malnutrition was concerned, were provided with assistance to improve their nutritional standards. To meet the new objective, the IFSP carried out the following activities.

2.2.2.1 Nutrition and Health

This involved carrying out educational programmes to create awareness in community members to assess and analyse nutritional problems and take action for the improvement of the nutritional status of their community through participatory approach. This was realised by initiating village health days, which were used as information forums for results on the nutritional status of the under-five children.

2.2.2.2 Horticulture

This component comprised the establishment of village nurseries and improvement of district nurseries. At the end of the programme, village nurseries had already been started in 19 villages and each was supplied with the necessary equipment. Nursery operators were selected from among the villagers and they ran the nurseries as their personal income generation ventures under the supervision of the IFSP officials. Other villagers paid a little sum to the operator to purchase the seedlings. In these nurseries, fruit trees such as avocado, oranges, pineapples, pawpaws, guavas, peaches, and passion were raised.

Apart from fruit tree nurseries, common vegetable seeds such as tomato, onion, spinach and carrot were given to the target group farmers. These farmers were encouraged to establish gardens and grow those vegetables.

Sunflower seeds were also distributed to all the 19 villages in the programme. The IFSP realised that sunflower is suitable to the ecological conditions of the Ufipa plateau, and it has a highly nutritious value. It can be used for home consumption to improve the diet or sold as a good source of income. To enable the local people process the oil locally, 15 oil-pressing machines were distributed to eight villages for a selected target-group farmers. These machines were given on credit. They were under the ownership of the individual farmers, who each had to pay a subsidised amount of 9,000/= over a period of three years. Payment for these machine was supposed to start in November 1996.

2.2.2.3 Household Energy

Women's workload was identified as the main constraint facing them in caring for their children. Activities such as firewood collection and walking long distances to fetch water were seen as having direct influence on the nutrition status of the family. Under the household component, the IFSP planned and implemented some activities which it believed reduced women's workload. Such activities included the introduction of fuel saving stoves, the promotion of tree planting, the treatment of drinking water and the improvement of traditional storage structures.

Under the same component of household energy, the IFSP introduced the keeping of pigs and goats as income generation activities for women. By the end of the programme in 1998, the IFSP had supported 358 households in 12 villages. These pigs and goats were given to identified target group members from the poorest families, on a credit basis. That is a she-goat was given to a member who was supposed to take care of it, and when it gave birth for the first time, the kid would be given to someone else.

2.2.2.4 Building Pit-latrines

It was found that some villagers did not have pit-latrines and used to relieve themselves in the bushes. During the rainy season the dirt is washed away into the rivers and wells where, when the water is fetched and brought home, it causes health hazards evidenced by the widespread and frequent outburst of diseases such as diarrhoea, dysentery and typhoid. The IFSP launched the campaign to mobilise villagers to construct pit-latrines and provided assistance to build latrines for some of the poorest households. At the end of May 1997, 52 latrines were completed in 13 villages under the programme.

3.0 Integrated Food Security Programme and Theatre-For-Development:

A Paradox?

The project 'pretended' to let people make decisions and own the project, but the truth was that decisions were made by the project and the project was the owner, not the people. (Hosea Nazareth Mwaisaka⁶)

3.1 Analysis of the Implementation of IFSP Activities

1. The IFSP constructed nutritional centres in all the five villages involved in this study. The study revealed that all the five villages had requested the construction of the nutrition centres during the Theatre-for-development workshops. However, it should be noted here that the construction of the nutritional centres did not arise from the people's needs but was an idea that was planted by the IFSP during the pilot phase of the project, which started a year before the theatre-for-development workshops (Mwang'onda et al, 1997). It was already known to the villagers that the project would help in building nutritional centres. During the theatre-for-development workshops, for example, it was found that some villages had already begun making bricks for the nutrition centres. Again, although all the villages suggested the construction of nutrition centres, these were not a top priority in their ranking of solutions to their food security problems (Nyoni, 1993). However, the IFSP made the construction of nutrition centres the top priority in all the villages.

In other words, the construction of the "nutrition centres" was not a result of the intervention of the theatre-for-development, rather it was IFSP's implementation of its objectives laid down during the ZOPP seminar. The same argument can be applied to road and bridge construction. According to the evaluation report of July 1997, the decision:

Reflects a blatant misconception of the needs and means of the target group, thus resulting in a considerable waste of time and resources, and in spite of the results of the many studies financed by the project during the orientation phase. (Waengaertner et al, 1997, p.2)

2. The IFSP implemented only those projects which fitted its own objectives, but not necessarily what the people wanted or needed. For example, consider the following.
 - (i) According to the findings of the 1993 theatre-for-development workshop, the main problem which contributed to the high rate of malnutrition and, hence poor and insufficient food intake in Mkima village, was the lack of unsafe and clean water. The villagers suggested the construction of three water-pump wells in the village. However, only one water pump-well was constructed by the IFSP in Mkima. Again, the well has been located at a place that most villagers consider to be far from their households. Furthermore, the site was not suggested by the villagers, but by one influential village leader who wanted the service to be closer to his household. As a result, the majority of the villagers continued to use and drink unsafe and unclean water.
 - (ii) During the theatre-for-development workshop, Mkowe village had put as its priority, the solutions to problems facing the Ilimba hamlet. However, the

Ilimba hamlet was left out during the implementation of IFSP activities in Mkowe village. During the researcher's visit to the hamlet in August 1999, it was found that no project official had ever visited the area since the 1993 workshop. It was also found out that the malnutrition situation had worsened. Most of the people who were there in 1993 had already died. The symptoms of severe malnutrition were evident in almost every child. People continued to draw water from the Ilimba river whose level was reduced and looked dirtier than it was in 1993.

(iii) The case of Mkinga village is worth mentioning as it illustrates further what Mwaisaka has pointed out in the quotation at the beginning of this chapter (although it was not one of the villages under the research, but it was covered in the 1993 TFD workshops). During the research visit to Rukwa, the researcher discovered that Mkinga village had been removed from the project since 1994, as the villagers had stolen all the equipment that had been sent to the village for the construction of the nutrition centre. However, the researcher found that Mkinga village had organised the theft as an act of rebelling against the IFSP for not heeding what the village had suggested as its priority needs. During the 1993 theatre-for-development workshop, Mkinga villagers ranked as priority number one in the construction of the road to Kirando - that would by-pass Kipili, a village hostile to them. Despite the fact that the road via Kipili would have been shorter, the people of Mkinga resolved to construct the longer road insisting that the only difference in so doing was the additional use of human labour, which they were ready to contribute. The IFSP went ahead and constructed the road via Kipili. However, the road was only used by the project officials when visiting the village. So when construction material and equipment for building the nutrition centre were brought to the village, the villagers stole it. The solidarity shown between the people and their leaders in Mkinga made it impossible for the IFSP to track down the culprits and, as a result, the IFSP moved out of the village.

3. Some of the projects were not completed by the IFSP. The following are some examples.

(i) In Chipu village, the IFSP managed only to complete the nutrition centre building. Other projects such as shallow-wells, the dispensary building, road maintenance and construction of pit-latrines were started but could not be completed by the time the project ended. During the researcher's visit to Chipu village, the village chairperson (Mr. Desderit Masanja) showed the researcher some shallow-well hand pump fittings that were being stored in his house waiting for the IFSP to come back and finish the construction of the started shallow wells.

- (ii) Distribution of goats to targeted people in Mkowe village was not completed by the time the project ended.
- (iii) The completed nutrition centres in all the villages were not furnished or equipped.
- (v) During the researcher's visits to Mkima and Masolo villages, he was shown pits that were dug for latrine construction but no latrines were built. People were still waiting for IFSP officials to come and complete the project.

4. Some projects were not properly implemented. For example, a water pumpwell in Masolo village was constructed at a place where the water was unfit for human consumption (it contained mud and could not be used for domestic purposes). As a result, the well was abandoned.

5. Misconception between what the people needed and what the IFSP provided. The IFSP lacked perception of the people's needs and initiated programmes which pleased them but which did not cater for the needs of the people. For example, the IFSP embarked on providing, on credit, oil-pressing machines to some of the villagers. However, during the field visit for this study (a year after the project had ended) not a single farmer had paid a single cent for the machine. To most of them, the machines were a burden and a loss-making venture. The income of most villagers was too low for most of them to afford the luxury of using pressed oil, and continued to use the traditional method of pounding the sunflower in a mortar. So either the machine owners pressed others' sunflower oil free or used the machine for their own families' consumption. The question is, "did the villagers ask for the machines in the first place?" Medad Kasensemo, the member of the Village Executive Council in Chipu village, had the following to say:

"IFSP people came and asked us to find the poorest people in the village. We found them. Then IFSP said that they will assist them with income generating projects and they were asked to select what they preferred between goats, pigs, or oil-pressing machines. If we had been left on our own, we would not have selected the oil-pressing machines as we did not know them."

With regard to pigs and goats which were given to the villagers in the same spirit as the oil-pressing machines, the following scenario was observed.

- Some households continued to keep and care for these goats or pigs.
- Some households lost their animals through death, some were stolen, and some families slaughtered them for meat or sold them.

- Some village leaders confiscated the animals from their owners and slaughtered them.
- Some families had kids or pigs that had not been distributed to other families as they should. It was found that village leaders were waiting for IFSP officials to come and supervise the distribution. The author's observation that the project had ended and was now the responsibility of the village leaders to continue the practice, was responded to as follows.

“This project belongs to the IFSP, not to us. It is their responsibility to come and distribute these animals. You know these people ran away, they did not bid us farewell and we do not know what to do with not only goats and pigs but also with the oil-pressing machines, gardening tools and nutrition centres.”

It can, therefore, be concluded that ZOPP seminar set up objectives and, as such, terms of reference for the implementation of IFSP activities in Rukwa region, which were fully abided by during the first phase of the project. During the second phase of its implementation, the IFSP changed the approach but went on to implement the decisions of the ZOPP seminar, with the exception of the public works and building of the nutrition centres. That is to say it was almost impossible for the IFSP to change its plans after the ZOPP seminar. The theatre-for-development workshops of 1993 were meant to involve the villagers in participatory planning. Adhering to the process would have meant re-planning what was suggested during the ZOPP seminar as some elements which the villagers saw as their priorities were not IFSP priorities.

4.0 Conclusion and Recommendations

Development is not something which can be done for the people. It cannot be done to them either. Only the people can develop themselves through their involvement in the search for solutions to their own life problems, relying on their own resources and taking their destiny into their own hands (Hoeane, 1995, p. 42).

4.1 Conclusion

This article concludes that the theatre-for-development method is a very effective tool for involving the grassroots communities in participatory planning and communication for development. As for the IFSP, theatre-for-development enabled the villagers to participate in researching, analysing and finding solutions to their malnutrition problems, and communicate these to other villagers, the IFSP and other stakeholders. It further enabled the most disadvantaged, particularly women and children to be heard, and created the potential for the project activities to be sustained beyond the duration of the project.

However, the theatre-for-development method, enthusiastically taken up by the IFSP and tried in eight villages in Rukwa region in 1993, was only used to persuade the community members to accept the project and hence implement whatever was planned by the IFSP, rather than acting as an avenue for development dialogue, whereas the community members are left to discuss, decide and plan their own implementation strategies.

One of the conclusions which this article makes is therefore, that the IFSP planned and implemented its own activities. Employing theatre-for-development as a participatory planning process was just a means to justify their presence rather than a process of democratisation of thought (Abah, 1995) that aims at empowering the rural masses, giving them the tools of analysis with which they analyse their problems and take initial steps to overcome them. The process that could dislodge the mentality of the grassroots people that development comes from outside, from the government or donor agencies.

Furthermore, the IFSP in Rukwa region indicated a desire to involve the community members in planning, implementation and monitoring of its project activities. But it never actually fulfilled that intention. We have seen how it first started by employing the theatre-for-development method but could not implement some of the decisions that were suggested. Later on, and particularly after the criticism levelled against the IFSP for not heeding the people's voice when implementing its project activities, the IFSP adopted a new working concept based on participatory approaches. Within the new concept, the theatre-for-development was 'modified' into Participatory Rural Appraisal and Participatory Rural Planning. But the analysis of the activities implemented as a result of the new concept show that planning was done by the project officials elsewhere and the villagers were only involved in identifying the target groups, and in selecting - among the already planned projects - the ones that suit a particular situation. For example, the people were asked to decide whether they wanted goats or pigs, to select target households that can be assisted in toilet or mud-stove building, and who can be given seeds or put in-charge of village seedling nurseries.

Such imposition of projects on the people has always had the effect of the project not being sustained after its duration has ended. When the author visited the villages a year after the IFSP project had ended, he found that most of the project activities had not been sustained. The scenarios of the project in the villages can be compared to an abandoned construction site where tools and equipment idly lay everywhere. There were unused or misused nutrition centres, unfinished dispensary buildings, unused shallow-well pumps, pits for the construction of pit latrines, unused oil pressing machines, and neglected fruit gardens and tree nurseries. Even malnutrition was back in full-swing. The comment by most villagers that 'we are waiting for the IFSP to come and continue with the projects' clearly indicates that the project did not belong to the people. It was yet another demonstration of a 'development-from-above' initiative that used local community participatory approaches to make them accept the project that was planned elsewhere.

4.2 Recommendations

1. Village participatory planning within the theatre-for-development concept refers to a process whereby villagers are involved in researching, analysing and finding solutions to their development problems. However, the planning does not end with finding solutions, but with strategizing the follow-up and implementation of the solutions suggested. The method empowers the villagers to decide on what to do and how, in order to overcome their development problems. It makes them captains of their own fate. In other words, theatre-for-development as a planning method cannot be complete if villagers are only involved in deciding what to do without being involved in deciding on how to do it and vice versa.

Where a development organisation or agency carries out a theatre-for-development intervention in a community, an understanding needs to be established that it plays the part a facilitator, its job being to assist the villagers in finding solutions to their problems and plan how to implement them.

2. The IFSP experience has proven that the theatre-for-development method can be effectively used for planning any development programme but needs to be followed by concrete implementation of strategies and the provision of resources. A development agency that is committed to the use of theatre-for-development has to understand that it is very important these resources, whether in the terms of technical advice or finance, are provided to the community.
3. The development agency's limitations - in terms of provision of resources - needs to be communicated to the people during the theatre-for-development process where planning is carried out so that people plan only for those activities which can be assisted.
4. Theatre-for-development is not just about singing, dancing and making plays about AIDS, sanitation, malnutrition or any other developmental issues. It is about giving a voice to the people, listening and heeding their voices. Moreover, if one wants to use the method, he/she has to go all the way and not halfway. Just as there are no shortcuts to development, there are no shortcuts in using theatre-for-development for planning and communication for development.

Endnotes

- 1 Interview Extracts with Penina Mlama in Dar es Salaam, June 1996.
- 2 Interview Extracts with Penina Mlama in Dar es Salaam, June 1996.
- 3 Recommendations to carry out TFD at the planning stage of a project was made in September 1992 by a joint seminar of TFD practitioners in Tanzania, representatives from the NGOs, development agencies, and government institutions and ministries responsible for development issues. The seminar aimed at receiving and discussing Penina Mlama's report on a TFD project on "Women Participation in Communication for Development". GTZ was represented at the meeting, and were the first to contact the department of Theatre Arts to facilitate TFD at the beginning of the project.
- 4 Interview with Leonard Mtama, the Rukwa Regional Agricultural and Livestock Officer and former IFSP co-ordinator, August 1999.
- 5 A Report on the 'ZOPP Workshop for the Integrated Food Security Programme Rukwa Region (Sumbawanga, (January 25-29.1993), p. 1
- 6 The former IFSP field official and one of the local facilitators of the 1993 theatre-for-development workshops in the Sumbawanga urban district.
- 7 Extracts of interview with Simon Mwangóna and Leonard Mtama - former coordinators of IFSP-Rukwa, August 1999.
- 8 Extracts of interview with Medard Kasensemo, a member of the Village Executive Council in Chipu Village.
- 9 An extract of interview with Mzee Pesambili, the Senga village chairman, August 1999.

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