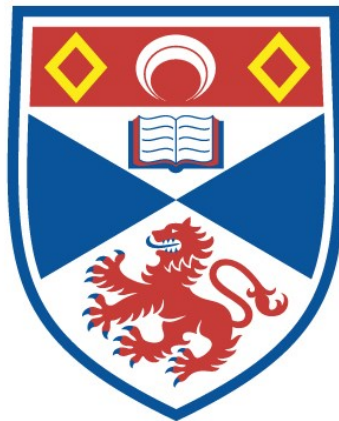


DEVELOPMENT AGENCIES AND THEIR CLIENTS :
THE CASE OF THE EN NAHUD SMALLHOLDER
AGRICULTURAL PROJECT (ENSAP), SUDAN

Abdel Raouf Mohamed Adam

A Thesis Submitted for the Degree of PhD
at the
University of St Andrews



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Map No. 1

KORDOFAN

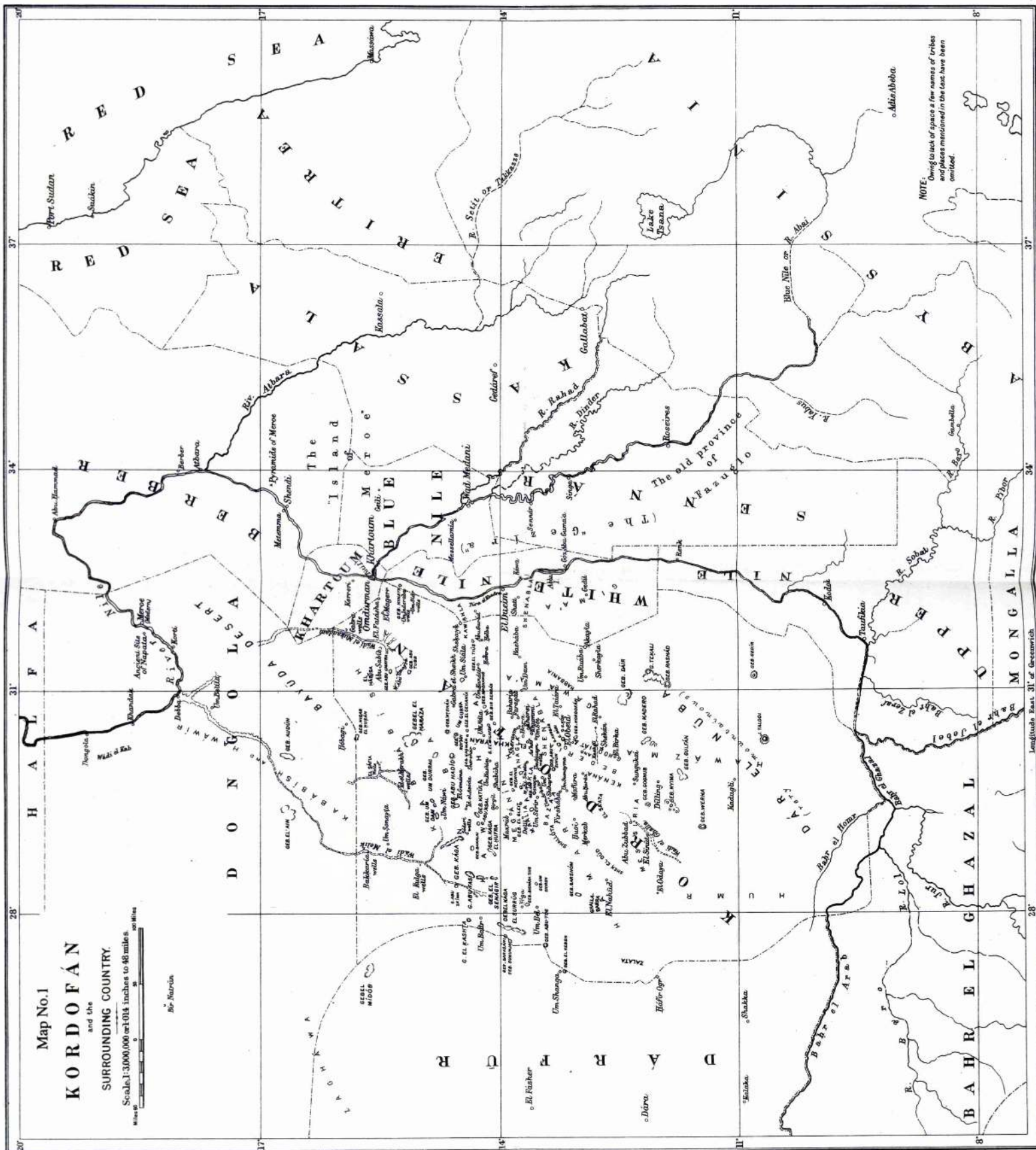
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By Naivara



NOTE: Owing to lack of space a few names of tribes and places mentioned in the text have been omitted.

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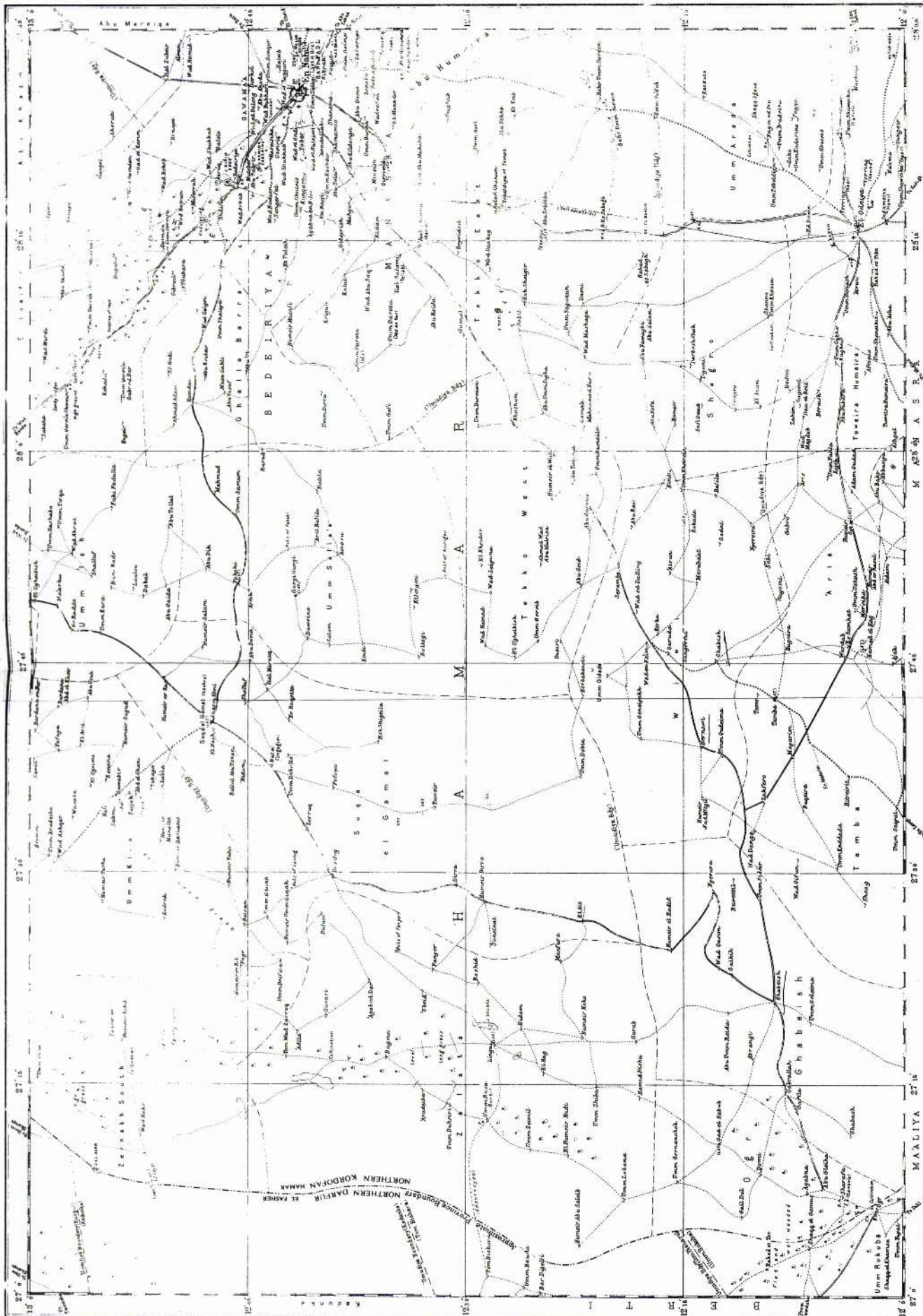
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REFERENCE

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INDEX

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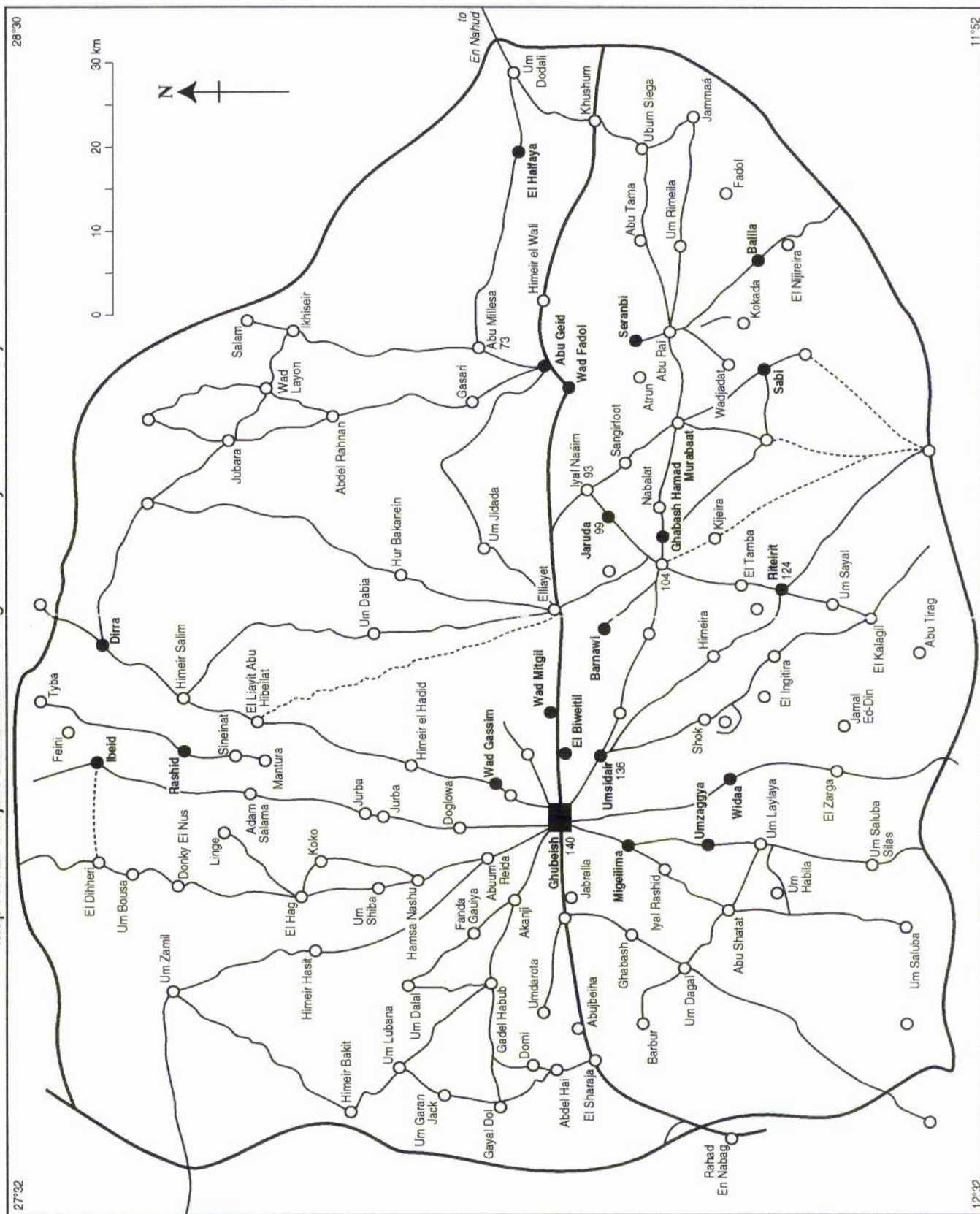
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INDEX

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Map No. 2: Project Site Location. Villages affected by the ENSAP Project



**DEVELOPMENT AGENCIES AND THEIR CLIENTS: THE CASE OF
THE EN NAHUD SMALLHOLDER AGRICULURAL PROJECT
(ENSAP), SUDAN**

BY

Abdel Raouf Mohamed Adam

Thesis Submitted for the degree of

Ph.D

to the University of St. Andrews

May 1993



TH. B406

DEDICATION

To my mother, to whom I am beholden for this success,
and to my town En Nahud

Declaration

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Signature of Supervisor:

Acknowledgement

This thesis is the result of field work carried out by the author from the end of December 1989 to January 1991 and a subsequent return to the field in June 1991 for a three weeks' stay in the project site. I am very grateful to the university of Gezira, Sudan for the funding of a scholarship. In addition I would like to express my gratitude for the generous financial award contributed by the Arab-British Chamber Charitable Organization which assisted with the cost of my fieldwork in Sudan. Thanks are also due to Africa Educational Trust for its generous financial award. Thanks are due to my supervisor, Dr. David Riches, for his persistent support, insight, inspiration and constructive criticism which claimed a good part of his limited time.

Special thanks are due to ENSAP's project staff for their timely assistance with the presentation of their views of the project as well as their allowing me access to the project documents and reports. The staff are also thanked for allowing me a space in the transport to the various project villages, which assisted in solving my logistical problems in the harsh environment. Special thanks are due to Mike De Vries, Ibrahim Omer, Bashir, Abdalla Humeidan, Giseima, Fatima and to the Agricultural Field Extensionists represented by the then Mohamed El Nil, El Dow, Abu Asha and Mohamed El Amin. The latter are especially thanked for conducting the questionnaire with the project farmers. I would also like to thank Jordan Holtam, who replaced Mike, for his generous support and patience in responding to occasional informal interrogation.

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extended to the secretary of the St Andrews Department of Social Anthropology, Mrs Pam Lee for her kind assistance during my stay at Edinburgh and after finally moving to St Andrews.

Abstract

This thesis is concerned with rural development in Ghubeish village communities in En Nahud district, Northern Kordofan, Sudan. The area currently experiences an intervention in its traditional rain-fed agriculture by an NGO and is supposedly an area where rural development is underway. The thesis has to make use of an 'eclectic approach' which, in my view, is theoretically grounded to provide a holistic account of the development process. The 'eclectic approach' is an amalgam of the micro- and macro-approaches to development. Traditional anthropological approaches to development are mostly predicated on the too narrow premises of micro-models (e.g. transactional, actor-oriented etc.), and this renders them ill-equipped to take any account of the macro-level processes (such as local government, agencies etc.), which come directly to bear on the local scene. This, plainly, does not fully grasp the totality of the development enterprise (micro and macro). Despite being viewed as polar opposites, both the micro- and macro-approaches are necessary for the study of rural development at the local level. Rather than detracting from theoretical strength, combining such models in an overall 'eclectic approach' adds to the vigour of the theoretical analysis.

Ten villages were selected for the present study, with between 274 and 1957 inhabitants. The population is from the Hamar tribe, which has historically witnessed a long process of transformation from semi-pastoralism to sedentary agriculture, combining subsistence and cash crop production. The basis of agriculture is predominantly traditional, using simple implements in a savannah environment. The majority of the inhabitants are smallholder farmers cultivating less than thirty makhamas (1 makhamas = 1.79 acres), though a significant proportion are large landowners. In addition to household labour hired labour and sharaka (share-cropping) contribute to the overall structure of the farming system. Despite the fact that land remains plentiful, expansion of the area under cultivation was restricted by capital shortage (which gave rise to informal and exploitative credit systems), and the simplicity of the agricultural technique.

The intention this thesis is to bring to the foreground the views and perceptions of the people in these villages who are affected by the development project and to compare them with those held by the agency itself. It is shown that some of the respective views square and others diverge, whilst closer communication works to bridge the misunderstanding and misplaced stereotyping held by both sides. The study also shows that the government authority tends to ignore the villagers in their remoteness despite its plans for community development.

Evaluation of the project shows that over the limited period of three years (mid-term) of project implementation the agency has partly succeeded in its experiment with institutionalising a low-cost and sustainable credit/extension system appropriate to the needs of smallholder farmers. But, on balance, it had had a limited impact towards reaching its goal of raising, significantly, smallholders' income.

CONTENTS

Page No.

PART ONE:

Introduction	1
Chapter One:	
Oral Tradition, The Hamar And Major Trends In The Establishment Of Dar Hamar..	26
Chapter Two : Social Organization	58
Chapter Three : Agricultural And Economic Patterns	87

PART TWO:

Chapter Four: The Project	147
Chapter Five : Agency Versus Clients: Views, Conceptions And Goals	195
Chapter Six :The Project Impact	254

PART THREE:

Chapter Seven : Rituals, Religious Beliefs And Development	289
Chapter Eight: Local Government	342
Conclusion	365
Appendix	375
Bibliography	377

List of Tables and Maps

	Page No.
Table (1) Major forms of the domestic group in selected project villages..	60
Table (2) <u>Jamaa</u> recruitment	82
Table (3) Field crop and <u>jubraka</u> Mix	92
Table (4) Highest and lowest areas and yields for groundnuts, millet, sesame, and sorghum relating to 1983 season	95
Table (5) Percentage of seed purchased (1988/89 season)	101
Table (6) Average seed dressing used per <u>makhamas</u> and per farmer (1988/89 season)	103
Table (7) Farming tool kit	104
Table (8) Labour inputs for millet and millet/watermelon	108
Table (9) Labour inputs for groundnuts and groundnuts/watermelon.....	109
Table (10) Labour inputs for millet, groundnuts, watermelon by type of planting	109
Table (11) Labour inputs for minor crops, <u>jubraka</u> and gum arabic	111
Table (12) Labour inputs for sesame and sorghum	112
Table (13) Number of <u>sharaka</u> cases and the variation between the selected project villages (among the PFs).....	131
Table (14) Average household incomes by source in the project villages (1990)	139
Table (15) Populations of the rural councils of En Nahud district (1983-1988 censuses)	149
Table (16) Distribution of associations and cooperatives among the PVs	161
Table (17) Participating and control villages for 1988/89, 1989/90 and 1990/91	194

Table (18) Planned and actual targets	257
Table (19) Average yield in PVs and CVs for 1988/89, 1989/90 and 1990/91 seasons	260
Table (20) Average areas cultivated, 1988/89, 1989/90 and 1990/91	261
Table (21) Average area cultivated of the two main crops (1990/91) for each village ..	262
Table (22) Change in the food and cash crop prices, 1988, 1989 and 1990 (LS)	264
Table (23) Percentage of farmers purchasing food for the 1988, 1989 and 1990 seasons	264
Table (24) Average yields for women <u>jubra</u> crops for 1988, 1989 and 1990	267
Table (25) Repayment profile for ENSAP PFs for 1988/89, '89/90 and '90/91	268
Table (26) Cause of default in loan repayment among ENSAP PFs.....	268
Table (27) Project impact on <u>sheil</u> system (percentage of farmers with <u>sheil</u>) for 1990/91	270
Table (28) Seasonal labour in ENSAP project villages	279
Table (29) Number of <u>jubra</u> women receiving in-kind loans	281
Table (30) The numerical values of the Arabic letters	317
Table (31) The significance of some of the Arabic letters	318
Table (32) Comparison of the social services in the seven councils of En Nahud district	347
Table (33) Estimates of the <u>zaka</u> t over the past four years	349
Table (34) Amount of the groundnuts crop supplied at En Nahud market and the sales prices for the period 1981-1990	351
Table (35) The amount of gum arabic supplied at En Nahud market and the sales prices over the period 1985-1990	352
Table (36) Number of animals supplied at En Nahud livestock market ...	355

List of Maps (End Pocket)

Map No. 1 Kordofan and the surrounding country

Map No. 2 Project site location (villages affected by ENSAP project)

Map No. 3 En Nahud (special reference to Dar Hamar)

PART ONE

Introduction;

Oral Tradition, The Hamar And Major Trends
In The Establishment Of Dar Hamar;

Social Organisation;

Agricultural And Economic Patterns

Introduction

Recent development thinking had seen a dramatic shift from advocating macro-level models to the formulation of micro-level planning. The traditional models of development draw their tenets from modernization theory which conceives of the development of the present-day underdeveloped societies in terms of a need for the diffusion of modern technology from the advanced nations. Conceived of in this manner, less developed societies are labelled as passive recipients of planned change which is unproblematically fitted into indigenous social, institutional, cultural and political arrangements and settings (see, e.g. Moore, 1963; Smelser, 1967).

This sort of thinking has been recently condemned by both policy-makers, international organizations, not to mention social scientists, particularly anthropologists, as having accentuated the very problems which it purports to solve: it inflicted more poverty on the poor of the developing world. For example, deeper investigation into the conditions under which the poor lived had resulted in empirical findings which showed that the values embodied in the diffused techniques do not square with indigenous local values. Thus, the newly emergent thinking calls for reversing traditional wisdom with a closer focus on the social context at stake (see, Adam, 1989; Bastide, 1973; Dalton, 1987; Johnston, 1979; Long, 1977; Schumacher, 1973 ; Weintraub and Margulies, 1986).

One alternative to the imposed models of planned change was the actor-oriented approach which is another version of the transactional model (see, Long, 1977; Riches, 1979; Holy and Stuchlik, 1983). Favoured by many anthropologists, the actor-oriented model is predominantly a decision-making construct for dealing with individuals and groups in "problematic situations" such as allocational choices. Thus Long argues that when documenting the ways in which groups or individuals

utilize resources in novel situations the premise is to analyze "why is it that certain individuals or social categories pursue particular courses of action; and to assess the economic, organizational, and other outcomes (intended and unintended) of such decisions" (1977:135). By so doing the model claims to make provision for explaining why actors behave, or more specifically, respond as they do when confronted with economic opportunities (e.g. development projects). The model had been touted for its capacity to explain both the reasons behind the actor's positive as well as negative responses to planned interventions.

However, in its attempt at resolving the pitfalls of the imposed macro-models of planned social change, the actor-oriented model has gone to the extreme of being an over-stressed micro-level formulation of reality. The relevance of such a formulation is much stronger in conditions of indigenous development and evolution that are predominantly internal to the community. More specifically, it is largely relevant for analyzing self-help or community development projects planned and executed by the local people. However, rural development projects usually involve government and international agencies in the planning and the implementation processes, and it would be theoretically inadequate not to take account of the macro-level processes inhering with and adding shape to the micro-level context.

A model of planned social change should therefore be theoretically grounded to account for local processes (with the deployment of the actor-oriented model) and at the same time deal with macro-level processes which come to bear in local situations. This call has also been made by Dalton in a recent study of planned change interventions. He suggests that analysis of planned change interventions should put into consideration "policies of central government which directly impinge on [the level of the] local group..[which] traditionally has been the focus of anthropologists" (1987:373). In another context I have argued that in studying

development "we should define our concepts in such a way as to fit what developers purport to do with the goals and ends which local groups have in respect of development " (Adam, 1989:6).

I.1 Theory Versus Development Practice:

A very recent approach to the practice of rural development implicates these theoretical discussions. This has been the assignment to anthropologists the task of conducting participant-observer's evaluation of development projects. The World Bank which upholds this approach, contends that development includes dimensions which are not discernible to the outsider and should therefore be treated from within. It further argues that traditional project-impact evaluations "consisted of before-and-after measurements of such project effects as changes in income or health" (Salmen, 1987:5) which are of an insignificant magnitude and difficult to explain solely in relation to the intervention. The World Bank's concern is the closer understanding of local people through improved communication between the interfering agency and its clientele on behalf of adjustments while the project is being implemented. Problems which arise in respect of project implementation are considered as most serious since they occur even in a context in which the clientele and their agencies initially agree on the overall premises of planning (see e.g. Wenger, 1982). Thus the World Bank stresses that "traditional evaluations fail to address issues that arise during the course of project implementation, such as the degree of communication between beneficiaries and management, they do not shed light on community power relations that might determine who has access to the benefits of the project, and they do not reveal the values and behavior of beneficiaries" (Salmen, 1987:5). In contrast, having a participant observer on the scene throughout the implementation stage means that these issues can be addressed.

I would note that this participant-observer method is by and large subsumed within the basic interactional, actor-oriented theoretical model, as it has as its essential premise

the processes of communication (i.e interaction) between the development agencies and their clients. As such it provides no alternative to the pre-existing anthropological approaches to the study of planned change situations. This is clearly discernible from the Bank's statement that "participant-observer evaluation may also be used to monitor the interaction between the project and its beneficiaries so that project management can take on-going self-corrective action" (Ibid.:6). The importance of the participant-observer's approach to the study of development projects fundamentally lies in its contribution to the evaluation of project sustainability which forms one of the basic goals of the interfering agents. "After a project is completed the [participant observation] techniques may be used to assess whether the benefits have been sustained and what indirect effects the project may have produced over time" (Ibid.:7). This is consistent with the normal way by which anthropologists study local level development.

What is evident from the World Bank's approach, then, is that the development plans themselves are treated as givens: the focus of attention is on whether or not they square with the culture of the recipients. This means that what led to the formulation of the plans is left in the background. In other words, the approach does not grasp the overall situation since it ignores the perspective of the agencies themselves. In a study which includes the agencies, the interest is in the reasoning on the part of the developers that led to the plan being constructed and presented in the way it was. Indeed, how the plan was then objectively received by the natives can be secondary. But as this would also be theoretically inadequate at the other extreme, it is ideal that a study should have it both ways, focusing on the aims, understanding and knowledge about the development situation of both sides, and examining how discrepant they are.

It is therefore my contention that a holistic approach which makes use of the interactional, actor-oriented, participant-observer's evaluation but which also

incorporates the macro-level (e.g. external factors such political constraints on the agencies) setting is absolutely important for the study of rural development projects.

I.2 The Need For An 'Eclectic Approach':

The fundamental problem is that the study of rural development has commanded the attention of both economic anthropologists and economists. Whilst anthropologists are mainly concerned with micro-level issues such as interpersonal relationships, the lineage system and village institutions (e.g. traditional authority), economist are concerned with macro-level phenomena, such as rural-urban migration, the effects of government policy on local producers and local government's contribution to community development. I have indicated that preoccupation with one perspective to the neglect of the other has led to inadequate examination of the phenomena under investigation. What underlies this either/or situation? The main reason is that by focussing on the 'deciding actor' (into whose cultural predicament development inputs are introduced) the anthropologist strikes up a subjectivist position, and so finds it too difficult to integrate the macro-level (or objectivist) standpoints. This refers to the limitedness of the 'systematic' or 'unidisciplinary' approach.

Such difficulty is particularly damaging to applied anthropology since this seeks implications of its findings and analyses beyond anthropology. Applied anthropologists select data for analysis on the basis of their relevance to current issues rather than ancient precept (Eddy and Partridge, 1987: 6). For that matter they try to learn the processes by which cultures change when acted upon (e.g. by development agencies), and for the purpose of the agency or project planners who are interested to know more about the success and failure of their innovations they find it imperative to compile cases so as to draw comparative conclusions from them. But in their endeavour to deal with these issues applied anthropologists are restricted by micro-models which say little about the exogenous factors (such as government intervention) which come directly to bear in the local situation. As Long says (1977:

1), rural phenomena cannot be understood without taking into account the wider socio-economic structure. "A second related question is whether one can identify particular local institutions or [else] macro-level factors which might be said to inhibit the process of socio-economic development. And the obverse of this is identification of facilitating factors...or the so-called socio-cultural prerequisites" (Ibid.: 5). Note here that even the most radical critics from the developing world agree that "pure" and "applied" anthropologists must free themselves from the colonial modes of thought; must discard the prevalent traditional/modern dichotomy; and must in the Third World, be oriented to practical problems of social development (see e.g. Ahmed, 1977; Long, 1977). Yet the present position applied anthropologists hold is two-fold: at one extreme there are those who set themselves the task of "defending the clients/actors" against the overwhelming intrusions of development planners, on the grounds that such interventions serve the interests of a "powerful class". At the other extreme are those anthropologists who side with social planners and seek to change the people concerned in accordance with the aims of these planners. Critics from the first group consider the failure of outsiders' plans to be the result of "inappropriateness"; or that planners fail to "listen to the local people" (Salmen, 1987). The second group, on the other hand, direct accusations which tend to "blame the victim"; in such terms as "actors' conservatism" and "irrationality". It is the shortcomings of both camps which lead me to an analysis that combines the micro-level and macro-level models of social change. As a new model of applied anthropology (cf. Eddy and Partridge, 1987: 6) it derives significance from its contemporary implications for the solution of social problems, where the anthropologist has to "cross disciplinary boundaries, investigate problems which are novel to anthropological traditions, and select data for analysis on the basis of their relevance for current issues" (1987: 6).

Merging the micro- and macro-models in the analysis of rural phenomena gives rise to what I call an 'eclectic approach'. Eclecticism results from shifts in the level of

analysis as necessitated by the phenomena under investigation: at one level the researcher may, indeed, need to gain insight from the history and the oral tradition which enables him to make important suggestions for applied research. In this instance the researcher looks for "past experiences" which contemporary people, too often, invoke as shaping their present-day actions or strategies (see Adam, 1989). This calls for development of abstract anthropological perspective. Note that the data compiled from the oral history may or may not tell us of how people today form groups, accomplish tasks or solve problems (Eddy and Partridge, 1987). At another level reference need be made to the living actors, their social arrangements, ecological patterns and ideology (included here are local people's values, plans and goals). Pertinent to this level of analysis is the actor-centred or actor-oriented model, and the interactional approach (see Long, 1977; Stuchlik, 1976). At this juncture, and for the purpose of compiling material which has practical implications, specific features arising from the deployment of the actor-centred model could be identified as "socio-cultural prerequisites", or, for that matter, "community vitality features" (see Bowles, 1979:67).

At yet another level the researcher is bound even to touch on crucial macro- issues inhering in the local community . This points to the role which local government agents (and, indeed, project agents themselves as planners) play on behalf of planning, or lack of planning, for the local people. The fact that local people develop their own perceptions and ideologies (such as self-help movements) in reaction to government policies necessitates such analysis. A micro-level analysis which restricted itself to examining such ideologies, goals and plans would certainly lead to oversimplification of the facts, let alone be theoretically inadequate. Herein lies the strength of the 'eclectic approach' : it deals with local level processes, but also maps out the macro level factors which come to bear in the local situation.

Some further clarification of 'macro-processes' and 'eclecticism' is in order. As

deployed here 'macro-processes' should not be taken to refer to 'analytical models of development', e.g. centre-periphery, Marxist underdevelopment models etc. Rather, 'macro-processes' in this context precisely refer to (i) empirical events in the nation-state at large that have bearing on what will prevail in the local community (even if members of the local community do not subjectively appreciate them), or to (ii) perceptions of the agents who come into local communities in the context of development, or (iii) some combination of the above.

As will be shown (iii) deals mainly with the subjectivities of the development agents, and that these subjectivities arise directly from (ii).

'Eclecticism' may refer to (a) a mixture of analytical perspectives on the same field of investigation (e.g. groups interacting), looked at from different angles. This will be elaborated on when we refer to the notion of hermeneutics (below). Or (b) discussion in which there is continuing shift from one subjectivity to another (i.e. subjectivity of the agents to subjectivity of clients): detailing the different experiences which underpin these respective subjectivities; showing the way that the different subjectivities constrain misunderstandings of the 'other side'; and also at the same time detailing the efforts, by each party, to bridge such misunderstandings through attempts to "understand" and "communicate". In sum, it is this latter concept (of understanding and communicating) that describes 'eclecticism' as used in the thesis (note that this bears on our understanding of yet another concept, "holism").

Overall the thesis makes the point that it is desirable to include in discussion a comprehensive account of the processes and subjectivities bearing on all actors involved in the development, yet this can only be done at the cost of 'eclecticism', i.e. by freely admitting that the subjectivities of the different key actors (agents and clients) are theoretically unbridgeable since their respective 'realities' are quite different. All, therefore, the analyst can do is shift perspective from one side to the

other, highlighting the communicative successes and failures between the two as the development project unfolds. It should be finally added that being myself a citizen from Dar Hamar (the area of the research) is itself an advantage, presuming that idiosyncrasism and ethnocentrism can be guarded against (a danger which unavoidably confronts anthropologists dealing with the subjectivities of their own tribes).

Hermeneutic theory (e.g. Bleicher, 1982) elucidates the crucial interpretive process implied here. The essence of hermeneutics may be grasped in terms of a contrast with structuralism and ethnoscience. Salmond has illustrated the intrinsic differences between these anthropological approaches in the following way: structuralists view the societies they are studying as if from a height, which gives them full control over the objects under investigation. Ethnoscience, on the other hand, elect to take the actor's point of view, and this enables them to escape being accused of ethnocentrism and value judgement. Meanwhile, in hermeneutics, the anthropologist tries to narrow the gap between himself and the other and concentrates on where the two viewpoints converge. This Salmond refers to as the "merging of horizons" (Salmond, 1982,74). Upholding hermeneutics, Bleicher (1982) points to the vigour of such an approach in that it exposes the anthropological principle that intrinsic to the research the anthropologist is going to have to deploy prior knowledge of 'other' who is under study. He argues that "it is only on the basis of some pre-understanding that the study of social phenomena is possible" (Ibid, 2). Transferred to the scenario of this study the hermeneutic approach attends to the anthropologist's capacity to grasp and explain ideas and knowledge pertaining respectively to the agents and clients, and to tap data which lends itself to contributing to improvement in the targeted community. This perspective, by which the hermeneutic approach may be characterised as practice-oriented (Ibid.: 27) since it is concerned "not with a theory of the language of science, but with a theory of inquiry" (Ibid.: 27), draws attention to the anthropologist's background circumstances. In my case I am, as I have mentioned, a

citizen from Dar Hamar (the area of the research), and this itself is an advantage because the communicative gap is likely to be small and ethnocentrism is guarded against (a danger which unavoidably confronts anthropologists dealing with other cultures).

If we are to appreciate Salmond's illuminating argument that hermeneutically oriented disciplines are concerned with "instances of human creation" (ibid.: 69) such as words and actions which bear witness to the intentions, hopes and fears of suffering among individuals, then hermeneutics is also theoretically grounded to enable us to appreciate the communicative relationship between development agents and their clients. This is mainly because the encounter between developers and the people at the grass-roots always entails goals and purposeful actions which give rise to hopes and fears : hopes for attaining a better form of life (on behalf of more income, etc., from development) and fears of loss as a result of failure. It goes without saying, however, that the agents need to gain a pre-understanding of the local society on which to base their implementation activities. This undertaking involves learning the social structure of the people (e.g their leadership), the social network system (e.g. reciprocity or cooperation) and the people's ideas and responses to new opportunities. It is this pre-understanding and knowledge gained by the agents that lies at the heart of their intervention programmes (i.e. on the basis of which they come to act). Yet it is too often neglected in social research. Whether the agents' and clients' views, perceptions and goals converge or diverge, meet the planned target or run afoul of one another is partly attributable to such pre-understanding, which we refer to as 'the hermeneutics of the developers'.

I.3 Theoretical Ideas And Empirical Material From Ghubeish Villages, Northern Kordofan, Sudan:

In this sub-section we turn to demonstrate how our theoretical ideas apply to the

concrete project context. The communities we are dealing with are the Hamar of the Northern Kordofan region, Sudan. The Hamar are Muslim communities and their social life is mainly influenced by Islamic beliefs and concepts. Like the other tribes in Northern Kordofan, the Hamar practise rain-fed agricultural cultivation in a savannah environment. Being remote from the central government, the majority of these communities are left out of the development process. As a consequence, development at the grass-roots level is mostly the concern of the local community, though local government might often be involved in planning for the local people. The ENSAP (i.e. En Nahud Smallholder Agricultural Project) project was launched in 1988 by CARE (Cooperative for American Relief Everywhere: an NGO) with the aim of improving the well-being of the Hamar farmers through the provision of cash credit and extension education. Therefore, our theoretical discussion will directly reflect local people's views relating to the improvement of their own well-being, notions about local government and the NGO, and Islamic beliefs. It will also contrast local people's views and perceptions about development with those held by the ENSAP agency and by the local government.

When it comes to the analysis of the empirical material, the eclecticism in the theoretical framework can be observed throughout the basic concern of the thesis. In the first instance, since the research proposes to tackle issues such as the aims and goals of both the agency and clients, the focus of the coverage shows a predilection for the transactional model of social change. The model holds that actors behave purposively and according to the actor's knowledge. This behavior is explained in terms of the goals, realised or intended to be realised, by the actors (see e.g. Riches, 1979). Following from this understanding, the theoretical framework focuses on (a) the concepts indigenous people have as actors and (b) the concepts the agents hold as actors. Secondly, since goals are associated with certain situations (e.g. constraints and incentives), which may be referred to as problematic situations, (since they elicit the actor's response) it is ideal that these situations confronting the

actor be examined in order to come to grips with the actor's response (this is particularly the premise of chapter 5).

The above theoretical analysis helps us deal with :

a) change in the local people's human activity (i.e traditional farming) during the project implementation process, which is facilitated by the availability of the new economic opportunities (project loans and services) designed to respond to their situation;

b) change in people's ideals (new outlook towards the notion of interest from an Islamic context) due to the newly developed social relationships between the farmer and the agents;

c) the study of external factors (as far as the agency itself is extraneous to the local community); needless to say agencies have their aims and goals as well; and

d) the effect c) has on a) and b) and on the various social relationships and institutions in the project area-- specifically the institutional arrangements and social organization at large. Germane to this last matter, Marvin Harris points out that:

while every social species has ecological patterns and social structures, only human groups have ideologies. Ideology includes explicit and implicit knowledge, opinions, values, plans, and goals that people have about their ecological circumstances; their understanding of nature, technology, production and reproduction, their reasons for living, working and reproducing (1971:146).

The sad fact of the project situation is that the local people's knowledge is grossly neglected by the agency. This is further compounded by the stereotypes both the agency and the clients have of one another (incorporated in their respective ideologies) which cause divergence of understanding and frustration. These are the conflictual situations of development interventions which the anthropologist must

be able to observe and explain.

The eclectic approach invites a second aspect of concern in this study. Here we turn away from individuals and agents (agencies), and their goals and perceptions and ideologies. It is argued that social anthropology is the study of the systems of cooperation (Mair, 1961) based on the general recognition of the rights and obligations and the role that each individual is expected to play in the various situations likely to confront him, by which people succeed in living together in some sort of harmony. I am thus required to investigate local people's cooperative efforts both among themselves and with the agency to strike that harmony. This point made by Mair is essential for examining the crucial matter of local people's recruitment into economic and social situations. It finds theoretical support from Stuchlik (1976).

Drawing inspiration from Mair and Stuchlik, the theoretical framework thus shifts to adopt both a group-centred and a norm-focused approach (see e.g. Boissevain, 1968). As such the analysis will seek to explain patterns of actual situations in relation to local group membership (ethnic group, domestic group etc.). The study does not purport to find out the forms of activities implicated by membership in a given group in the society since it is argued that "it is almost impossible to find any system of activities which would be repeatedly and normatively performed by individuals as members of corporate groups" (Stuchlik, 1976:8). The study, though, is able to observe and explain the mechanisms of recruitment of village members in the context of interactional situations (chapter 2); in other words, pertinent groups will be seen as the outcome of patterns of activity.

In line with Stuchlik, recruitment is referred to here as:

a process through which an individual, on the basis of his knowledge of socio-cultural alternatives and of his evaluation of relevant factors, come to the decision as to whether he will participate in a given situation and what

position he will occupy in it.. It denotes the process through which an individual comes to the decision about inviting other specific individuals as partners in the situation (1976:8-9).

However a key point in this regard is that as they thus engage with one another individuals are liable to societal norms. A few illustrative examples will suffice from the following situations of group mobilization for cooperation and assistance among the project villagers of Ghubeish communities.

The first case is that of aljuhda sha'abi (public effort or self-help). When community members express a felt need of, say, constructing a local water yard (i.e. a system of tanks and machinery for supplying water to a community) for village welfare, they have the alternatives of approaching local government officials to do it for them, or otherwise mobilizing human and material resources within the community on a voluntary basis. Should the first alternative fail, as it too often does, then particular groups will voluntarily assume the role of arranging group meetings, electing a water yard committee and the recruitment of particular village members for contributing material and labour resources for that specific target. Members selected abide by the normative system which stipulates the value of helping out for the community's interests (and also supported by a goom na'ayeenak [lit. "should you help yourself, I will help you"] ideology). Usually the selected members are known from previous experience of cooperation. The same public norm of helping out on behalf of the community's interest holds when the villagers decide on arranging a karama (lit. sacrifice) ritual to induce plenty of rainfall or to ward off bad omens.

Another example is the nafir (communal work groups) system in the sphere of agriculture. Almost the whole life of the village farmers in the project area revolves around nafir. The nafir is a choice made by a farmer to have his farm weeded by particular villagers of acquaintance as an alternative to the hired labour system, sharaka (share-cropping) , or the exclusive use of household labour. When decided on nafir

recruitment the individual farmer should make accurate calculations of those who should participate, depending on his previous participation in others' nafirs as well as his present social relationships (e.g. neighbourhood, kinship, ethnic etc.).

Yet a third example draws from the villagers' experience with the project itself. Before being deemed eligible for project loans, the participating farmers of the project were required to form Jamaa (lit. groups). Each group is to be headed by a damin (lit. guarantor). Every farmer should have a guarantor if he is to be entitled to the project loans. Thus recruitment into a Jamaa is determined by who guarantees whom, depending on the pre-existing relationships between the damin and the other farmers subject to be guaranteed. A farmer himself makes such calculations concerning who should guarantee him when determined to participate in the project, given "the cultural alternatives", to borrow Stuchlik's (1976:9) phrase, that guide the acceptance or refusal of his demand.

Equally pertinent to our analysis is Stuchlik's distinction between relational factors and situational factors of recruitment and future action. Relational factors refer to various rights and obligations incumbent in an individual's on-going relationships with others and which in turn determine the intensity of the relationship between the organizer of and the participant (e.g. kinship relationship, neighbourhood or acquaintance). The situational factors are those which are not included in the 'relational' but which occur as a result of mere ability to be present or to perform the activity which is the object of recruitment (1976:9). A nafir recruitment is a good example of future activity determined by relational factors, while recruitment into the sharaka system is totally guided by situational factors (such as a meeting by chance in the town market between a land owner and the sharaka labourers). However, the distinction between relational and situational factors becomes difficult to strike in relatively small villages such as El Halfaya, or indeed even in large villages (e.g. Murabaat) in which village members see themselves as all ahal (lit. all relatives,

or kinsmen). In such cases the intensity of the interpersonal relationships are shared by almost all members in the relevant social context (e.g. rain-making rituals , or funeral rituals).

The third point in the eclectic theoretical framework is the social soundness analysis model.

This relates to the practical benefits the present study may deliver. The social soundness analysis in social theory is deployed to assess the alternative ways of implementing projects and the likely consequences and effects such interventions would have in specific communities, or a specific group within a community (cf. Bowles,1979 ; Norman and Kenneth, 1985 ; Derman and Scott,1985 ; Carbett, 1985). Bowles sees social impact assessment as concerned with the impact of planned change on a group's quality of life, in terms of its traditions, social relationships and institutions. Generally, impacts which development interventions are expected to have on particular aspects of a community are grasped in terms of the concept of "community cohesion". Thus "although a project may be designed, for example, to increase farm productivity or facilitate access to markets, the primary aim of SIA [social impact assessment] is the positive adaptation of .. the community to the external intervention" (Norman and Kenneth,1985:78).

We are concerned with community because it is only in relation to the whole community that we can come to grips with such concepts as 'target groups' or 'participants', and the nature of interactions these target groups have in respect of one another. The major roles groups play can not be taken in isolation from the community from which they draw. Such concepts as "organisation", neighbourhood, households and jamaa should accordingly be construed with reference to the notion of a whole community since these are only component parts of it. Thus Norman and Kenneth define community cohesion as "the activities within the unit that tie people

together in positive ways and enhance personal identification with the group.. it is advanced by high prestige, attractive activities , cooperative and voluntary relationships and abundant provision for individual's needs" (1985:79 ; see also Finsterbusch, 1980 :77-78). As such this emphasis is a necessary adjunct to Mair's stress on the concept of harmony in social living (see above).

A most important aspect of the social soundness analysis which finds reflection in this study is Bowles' characterization of 'community vitality' features judged conducive to project success. Community vitality features need to be identified before project implementation proceeds so that the project may make use of the pre-existing features of community vitality and also so that the effects the project had on them may be subsequently assessed. As a prelude to the entrance into the body of the study we need to shed light on the vitality features pertaining to the communities covered in the fieldwork. In the following list I compare features of project villages in relation to the characteristics of 'community vitality' described by Bowles (1979:67-68):

Characteristics of 'community vitality'

- a) many collective events.
- b) high degree of member participation.
- c) the events are internally organized and controlled.
- d) routine services.
- e) life crisis support provided for by internal networks.
- f) few people are socio-metric isolates.

Manifest in (for our village communities)

- (i) aljuhda sha'abi, nafirs, rain-making, karama.
- (ii) recruitment into (i) above.
- (iii) existence of 'organizers' of collective activities who influence participants by the goom na'ayeenak ideology.
- (iv) reciprocity and repetitive mobilization.
- (v) domestic and egocentric groups mobilized in drought periods (karama, rain-making).
- (vi) broadness of the individual's sphere of social relations.

- | | |
|--|--|
| g) stable structures of internal governance. | (vii) inheritable offices of village <u>sheikhs</u> . |
| h) community responds collectively to intrusions. | (viii) traditional counter raids against the Kababeesh tribal raids. |
| i) people gauge h) in collective as well as in personal terms. | (ix) reference to <u>ahal</u> in conditions of mobilization. |

With very many aspects of local village life satisfying the desired characteristics of community vitality we turn, in the body of the thesis, to see how such fitness features were made use of by the project agency, as well as the effect the project had on the pre-existing vitality features. A socially vital community is viewed by impact assessors (i.e. social scientists) as one that is well fit to utilize, cope with and control the impact of a project through the mobilization of its local resources (Norman and Kenneth, 1985:80). Our analysis of the project communities in terms of the mechanisms of recruitment into socio-economic situations has proved potent in elucidating, identifying and explaining these features of community vitality (see chapter 2).

I.4 The Focus of the Study:

A few words about the ENSAP (En Nahud Smallholder Agricultural Project.) which is the substantive focus of this study. The project is a joint-venture by CARE organization (a non-governmental development agency) and the Government of Sudan (represented by the Ministry of Agriculture and the Agricultural Bank of Sudan). It is located in En Nahud district of Northern Kordofan, Sudan, and is targeted to benefit smallholder farmers through the provision of credit/extension services. Ghubeish rural council (which is but one of the several rural councils comprising En Nahud district) is selected for the innovation; its population is mainly from the Hamar tribe (see e.g. MacMichael, 1912; 1922). The ENSAP project was

implemented in 1988 and now involves seventeen villages in a major development enterprise, particularly involving the the creation of a viable credit institution for the provision of loans and extension services to smallholder farmers who are required to maximize returns from agricultural production (mainly groundnuts and millet crops).

I.5 Research Methodology:

The research methodology of the fieldwork was also largely eclectic (for the above mentioned reasons). It ranged from active participation in the project site to occasional interaction with the project agency based at En Nahud town. While spending time with the project management access was secured to the available project documents and interaction was initiated with the project staff. The aim was to gain closer understanding of the agency's interest and of the reasoning on the part of these developers which led to the formulation and presentation of their plans. This also involved participant observation of the work relations between the national staff and international experts. Stay in the district town, En Nahud, also entailed a review of the present and past attempts by the local government at community development. This also allowed the observation of the involvement of project farmers (or peasants) with the town market. Finally, it permitted the reading of the relevant literature on the area and its people (specially the Hamar who are the principal beneficiaries of the project).

Another part of the research entailed accompanying the project consultants, recruited by the project management, who are charged with the evaluation of a specific aspect of the project. This helped draw inferences on the way foreign and national experts approach local people providing them with blueprints for project development. It should be noted that the ENSAP agency was able to compile a lot of data on various aspects of the project (e.g. village population composition and size, household membership composition, migration patterns, cooperation and the leadership system, the pre-existing agricultural patterns, etc.). The material was

collected by trained enumerators, the project staff themselves and, occasionally by outside experts who were invited to evaluate a particular aspect of the project (either the credit or the extension component). It should therefore be pointed out here that ENSAP provides a lot of my data, particularly when I come to deal with agricultural and economic patterns (chapter 3) and also the subsequent chapter which covers the project proper.

Incorporated into participant observation in the project sites, a further part of the research consisted of unstructured interviews with important people such as government officials, village leaders, teachers and the project beneficiaries. Due to time constraints brought about by logistical difficulties and the formidable task of covering a relatively large number of project villages, questionnaire research was also conducted with project farmers for qualitative information. But since such a technique requires some rapport to have been established with the interviewees for the provision of accurate and reliable information, the task of supervising the questionnaires was assigned to the project AFEs (Agricultural Field Extensionists who are village based). The assumption was that since the project agency had placed the AFEs in core villages to establish intimate social relations and trust with village farmers, then these AFEs were the most appropriate for the task. This helped resolve the inherent danger that "the questionnaires are often intimidating to poor people confronted by an unknown interrogator" (Salmen, 1987:4). The research was conducted in such a manner that it touched on issues relating both to pre-project as well as post-project implementation.

The organization of the different parts of the thesis shows my predilection for the holistic approach which incorporates the micro-level processes and the the macro-level setting. In the first part I deal with the social context of the project. Thus chapter 1 deals with the project communities, adopting an historical approach. This enables us to show the major trends in the social and the structural transformations

that had occurred over the generations on the Hamar tribes, the major beneficiaries of the project. Particular emphasis is put on the tribe's migration into the area, the development of their leadership authorities and the internal changes due to tribal sub-divisions as well as those caused by contacts with people who were formerly indigenous to the area.

Chapter 2 deals with pre-project local social organization. An analytical model of recruitment into social and economic situations is adopted in this part. The major concern is with the internal social relationships that bring individuals and groups together, and with the individual's membership in specific social groups, as well as their relations between neighbouring villages. The object is to locate the actor vis-à-vis the other members of the community as well as his place within the whole society. The chapter provides an overall picture of the ways an actor or actors in the society manipulate the various relationships for the realization of specific goals.

Chapter 3 delineates the existing farming system in the project area. It provides a descriptive analysis of the basic features, and agricultural and economic patterns, of the traditional system, referring to Makings' (1967) model of agricultural transition. It is shown that the traditional system is constrained from expanding production for the market by both capital shortage and simplicity of techniques, as well as by environmental hazards. In addition a pattern of low agricultural yields is revealed, which leads to low income returns. It is also shown how both household and hired labour are assigned to the various agricultural operations, in addition to the recruitment of communal work groups (nafir) for the weeding operations. Sharaka (share-cropping) is also demonstrated to occupy a modest place in the traditional farming system. It is shown that the sharaka is an inefficient form of partnership as it works to subsidize the labourer at the expense of the land owner. The share of the land owner is shown to be less than one third of the

total revenue rather than being one half . It is suggested that an alternative system of hired labour is most conducive to ENSAP project smallholders if the project is to achieve its target of "significantly increasing the levels of income for the participating farmers".

Part two covers issues related to project implementation, agency's versus clients' views, goals and conceptions on development, and the project impact. Chapter 4 deals with the project proper. Despite the fact that the project is in its infancy and is still experimenting with adaptive techniques and innovative practices, it succeeded in initiating a credit and extension institution that could be safely adopted by the government of Sudan upon the end of the project life cycle in 1993. In this chapter, loan policies as well as the extension methodology of the project are particularly emphasized. It is shown that new local organizational forms (e.g. 'associations', cooperatives and jamaas) are institutionalized and assigned administrative and executive roles which ultimately lead to sound coordination and communication between the project agents and their clients. In addition this is shown to contribute to the agency's goal of 'sustainability' and grass-roots involvement for project viability and continuity.

Chapter 5 deals with the agency versus its clients in terms of the similarities and differences in views, conceptions and goals. Here we incorporate both the viewpoints of the project clientele and of the agency. The interpretation of both perspectives allows us to come to grips with the often divergent aims and goals held by both the agency and its clients.

It is shown that while both parties agree that development is desirable some divergent views and conceptions about development occur. This relates to the fact that basic values guiding the views of the clients are predominantly micro-level derived and grass-roots oriented, while those of the development agency are

often macro-level derived. This is mainly because the NGO is influenced by the experiences of other international development organizations with projects of similar concern, and which it desires to 'replicate' in the project context. However, the agency's intervention through local leadership and its reliance on clients' evaluation of the major aspects of the project (and acting upon feedback from smallholder farmers) worked to narrow that divergence. It is also shown that communication between project agents and their clients helped resolve mutual misunderstandings and stereotypes of one another. The analysis puts special emphasis on the institutionalization of innovation (so much as the project itself implies the deployment of new resources and ideas for agricultural expansion).

Chapter 6 evaluates the project performance and shows that the project had achieved a limited success towards the goal of increasing, 'significantly', the incomes of smallholder producers. The productivity of the farms is adversely affected by low rainfall and crop failure. However, the project evaluation reports made by the agents reported some significant increases in yields of groundnuts and millet crops relative to those of farmers outside the project. In addition some significant increases in area devoted to the cultivation of the major crops were also observed. This did not conflict with local environmental factors such as encroaching on grazing land and desertification since the agency makes provision for environmental control (in its policy of financing only a limited number of acres). It is also shown that the cultivation of cash crops in the 1989 and 1990 seasons started to be less remunerative in comparison with the rising prices of the millet crop (the food crop). The argument points to grievances felt by smallholder farmers who allocate the bulk of their farm land to producing groundnuts for cash and yet fail to provide for their subsistence due to the persistent rises in the price of millet . This prompted farmers to increase the area devoted to the cultivation of the food crops relative to that of the cash crops, in a purposeful attempt to provide for subsistence.

The chapter also reveals that the most salient impacts the project had on local communities were the abandonment of the traditional sheil (money lending) system, the reduction of out-migration by the able-bodied villagers and the increased ability of the households to retain their animal herds rather than selling them to finance the farming enterprise. An indifference factor, however, was also present: when interviewed, some people (though not a significant proportion) were reluctant to acknowledge any significant positive impact being made by the project agency. Equally important is the project's impact on non-participants who enjoyed the benefits of gainful employment as hired labourers with the project. It is also shown that the project had succeeded in assisting women producers build a preliminary resource management capability which will help village women augment their potential for coping with the cash lending programme yet to be implemented by the agency.

Part three consists of the ritual practices and religious beliefs bearing on the project, and local government's efforts at local community development. Thus in chapter seven full coverage is given of the rituals, religious beliefs and practices and their effect on, or their being affected by, development. It is shown that these practices existed prior to the implementation of the project but also seem to be perpetuated by the project. Their effects on the project varied according to the practice concerned. The beliefs about rainfall signals (a'ina) had little reflection on the project as these were held mainly by the older generation. Religious rituals of rain-making and amulets for the various purposes connected with agriculture were both elaborate and well practised throughout the project villages. The project makes no intervention in respect of the rain-making rituals, while it lacked cognizance of the amulet ritual practices.

Chapter 8 provides information on local government. It is shown that local government draws a significant part of its revenue from taxing local producers while on its part it makes little contribution towards community development. It is shown

how this led to the development of a negative attitude by local people towards the government. Paradoxically the government's negligence of local people had resulted in greater self-reliance on the part of local communities which enabled them to mobilize local labour and material resources for the betterment of their communities. This ideology provided a favourable base for the agency on which to launch its interventions into the rural communities.

Chapter 1

Oral Tradition, The Hamar And Major Trends In The Establishment of Dar Hamar

It has been recently argued that for a development project to be successful it must be implemented at the right time in the right place and for the right people targeted by it. Failure to account for the historical and social context into which the project is introduced can result in considerable difficulties being faced by project planners (Salmen, 1987: 72). In this chapter we cover the oral tradition of the Hamar people, the principal beneficiaries of the project, and the major trends in the establishment of Dar Hamar (lit. the home land of Hamar) in an attempt to show one aspect of the social context germane to the project.

1.1 Oral History:

The presently available literature on the Hamar, currently settled in Northern Kordofan province (see maps No.1 and No.3, end pocket), presents divergent views about their genealogy. MacMichael has presented a detailed account of Hamar genealogy. In some accounts he classifies the Hamar with the Baggara Arabs. In other places he considers them a mixture of Beni Ommaya, Beni Abbas, Anag, Ashraf and Fur. And in yet another account he traces their ancestry to the Guhayna ethnic group (see MacMichael, 1912). MacMichael offers a short historical review of the Hamar tribe during the nineteenth century and into the early 1900's. But he is unable to trace the Hamar genealogy to the common parent, El Ahmar, from whom they claimed (in his period) to descend. Hereunder we will be dealing with major events in the history of the Hamar which have had profound influence on present-day social life: their migration into the area, the development of their leadership authorities, and the establishment of Dar Hamar. Internal changes in the Hamar tribe due to tribal sub-divisions as well as those caused by contacts with locals are also explained.

The history of the Hamar as a tribe in present-day Dar Hamar (see map No. 3, end pocket) dates back to some two centuries ago with the rise of the founder of Dar Hamar El Hag

Munaym. Unlike MacMichael, my research shows that the Hamar can claim direct decent from one common ancestor, Mohamed El Ahmar, who is genealogically linked to the prophet Mohamed's family through the latter's uncle's son, Ali Ibn Abi Talib. Hence, their name, the Hamar, derives from this 'great grand parent' El Ahmar. Thus the tribe is not aboriginal to its contemporary location: it migrated from the Gezira Arabia (El Yemen) during the rule of Hajaj Ibn Yusuf (in the second half of the seventeenth century) and entered the Sudan through the western route to Dar Fur and settled in Kabkabia. Then the tribe gradually moved eastwards in search of grazing land and water sources. The migrant tribe was divided into two groups, the Dagageem section of the tribe headed by Abu Tabir, and the A'asakir section, headed by Sheikh Salim Tarishu. A large proportion of the migrants from the former group perished in their endeavor to reach the Nile borders in the eastern part of Sudan.

The A'asakir migrants, however, settled in Abu Zabad town where Salim left his son, Elhag Munaym, after which he left for another area in northern Kordofan region. Elhag Munaym was later elected by the tribe as a chief, and left for Dar Fur where he met with the Sultan of Dar Fur, from whom he purchased the area now called Dar Hamar for 1,000 camels and 1,000 slaves. The whole area was 51,634 square kilometres.

Unlike MacMichael's argumentation (1912:156), that the Hamar vaguely claim decent from the Arab ancestry of Abdalla el Guhani and Mohamed El Ahmar, my finding has documented the Hamar's claim quite explicitly. My interview, in 1990, with an extremely knowledgeable secondary school teacher, Mustamhil Makin, a Hamar from the Gharaysia section, provides a series of (ascending) genealogical links to Mohamed El Ahmar, Abdalla el Guhani, and further to Ali Ibn Abi Talib. Thus Mustamhil (65 years old) traces his genealogy in ascending order as follows: "Mustamhil, Makin, Mufarrih, Hammad, Na'eem, Sallam, Abdel Salam, Manal, Abu Tanu, Abu Zeid, Gibreil, Raddad, Hasaballa, EL Riheima, Own, Salama, Abu Goam, Mohamed EL Ahmar, Sayid Dardig, Sayid Mohamed el Hassan, Sayid el Ma'arif, Sayid Ahmed, Sayid Rafi', Sayid A'amir, Sayid Mohamed, Sayid el Hussein, Sayid Ismail, Sayid Abdalla EL Guhani, Sayid Ibrahim el Imam, Sayid Musa, Sayid

el Karim, Sayid Ga'afar Sayid el Sadig, Sayid Mohamed el Baghir, Sayid Ali Zein el A'abideen, Sayid el Hussein, Sayid el Imam Ali Ibn Abi Talib".

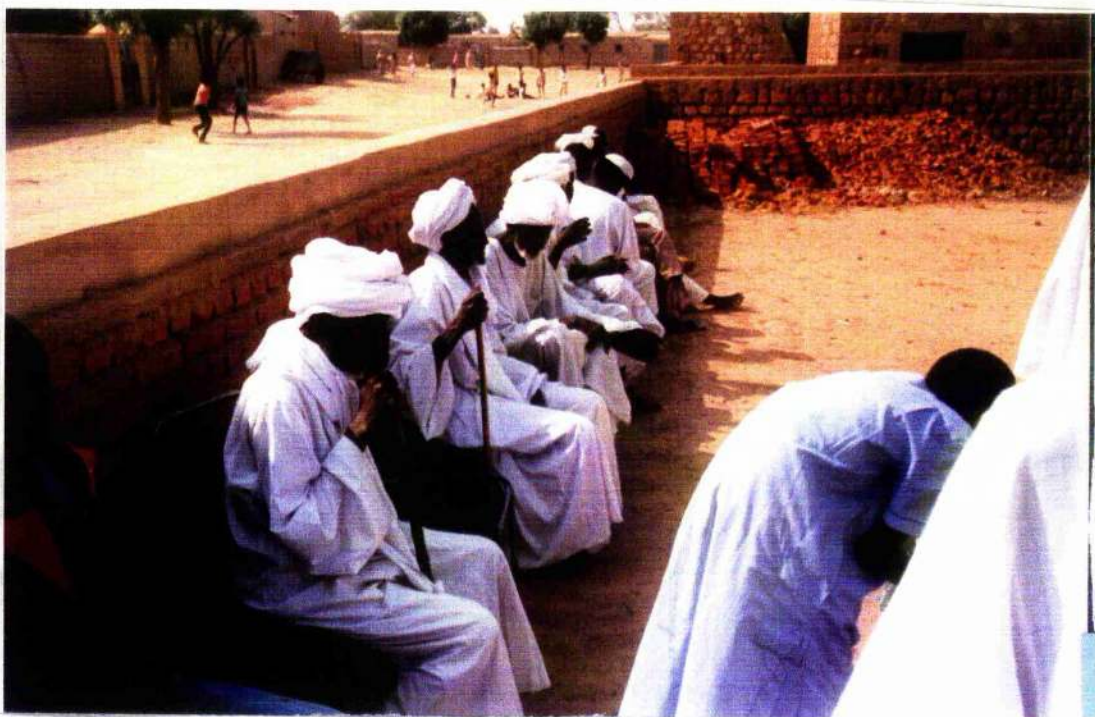
The Hamar tribe is today divided into three main sections; the A'asakir, the Dagageem (from whom Mustamhil is a member) and the Gharaysia (who separated from the Dagageem and are still referred to as Dagageem in origin). According to Mustamhil, the basic tribal divisions and sub-divisions stem from the following common ancestry:

- a) Bani Badr and Ghishimat who formed the A'asakir section.
- b) Awlad Salaama who formed the Dagageem section; and
- c) Awlad Abdel Salam who formed the Gharaysia section.

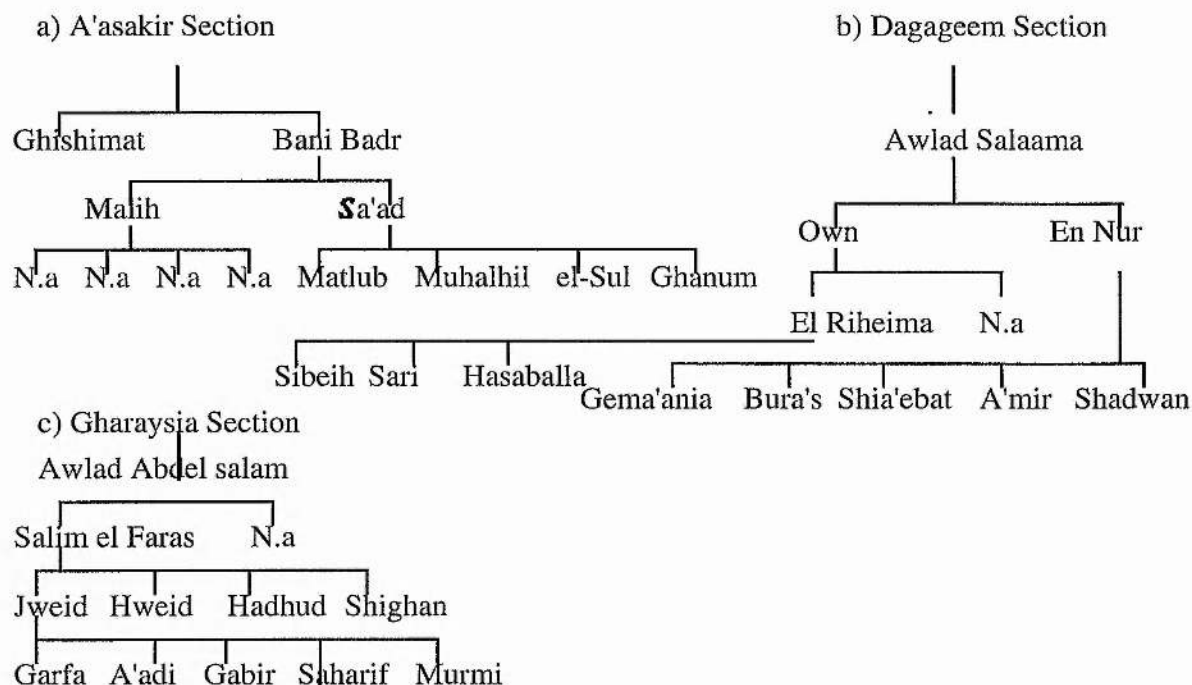
The Hamar use the term awlad to refer to lineage. Thus the lineage named Awlad Abdel Salam is the one descended from Abdel Salam.

From these major sections of the Hamar tribe other sub-divisions arose, as members of certain clans invoked their 'grandparents' as founders of subsections. The main reason why a clan may invoke its own grandparent as a founder of a subsection is that such a clan desires to reaffirm its identity vis-a-vis the other contemporary subsections. To illustrate this we may consider the following example: Malih and Sa'ad both belong to the Bani Badr subsection (as A'sakir). When the lineages of Malih and Sa'ad (see the table below) are formed they were assumed to identify with Bani Badr. But in fact the descendants from Malih elected to identify with Malih as a founder, and are therefore referred to by other subsections as Milalha (See the full complement of sub-divisions listed below). The same applied to the descendants from Sa'ad who, in turn are referred to as Sa'adat.

The three sections of the Hamar tribe include the following lineages:



Two important Hamar teachers participating
in a feast in En Nahud (No. 2 and No. 3 from left):
No. 3 from left is Mustamhil Makin.



The full complement of sub-divisions of each of the three main sections is listed, by founder, in MacMichael (1912). In the following list we use the letters (capital) to denote a highest level in the hierarchy. The numbers 1, 2, 3, 4etc. denote a higher level, and a,b,c ...etc., a high level.

It should be noted, however, that McMichael's list is somewhat confusing. For example, when he dealt with B) in the Dagageem section he placed Awlad Sibeih in a level (i.e., b) lower than that of Nas Sari (i.e., 1). But in reality Sibeih and Sari come from the same lineage (in other words, the same hierarchy, see above). McMichael also makes yet another mistake when he locates a latecomer sub-section in a level as high as that of its predecessors (e.g. he places Wallia on a level higher [i.e. A.] than that of Awlad Abdel Salam [i.e., 2]). We have seen above that Awlad Abdel Salam (who later formed the Ghraysia section) is the first lineage among the Gharaysia section, which implies that Wallia is a latecomer. The same mistake is also repeated when McMichael assigns Mahilhil a level [i.e. b)] (see the A'sakir section below) equal to that of Malih who obviously occupies a higher level (see above).

The Dagageem Section

A. WAILIA

1. Nas Hasil
2. El Hurr
- 3 Abu Hamaydan
4. Hamir
5. Harush
6. Raha
7. Abu A'win
8. Abu Gemanin

B. NAS ABU ZAYD

1. Nas Sari
- a) Nas Gabir
- b) Awlad SIBEIH
2. Nas Abdel Salam
3. Faragulla
4. Abu Tenu

C. El SHIA'EBAT

D. AWLAD SHADWAN

E A'MIR

F. BURA'S

G SIHAIA

1. Nas El Sod
2. Feraywa
3. Ribbayh
4. Abu Na'amir
5. Musellam
6. Khala

The A'sakir Section

A.EL GHISHIMAT

1. Awlad Gami'a
- a) Awlad Ma'ayz
- Shena'bir
- c) Ghara'ra
- d) Merazik
2. Sidayrat
3. Awlad Ma'ali
4. Awlad Gasi
5. Awlad A'li

B. BANI BADR

1. Meramra
- a) Milalha (from Malih)
2. Sa'adat (from Sa'ad)
- a) Awlad Ghannum
- b) Mahahil
- c) Nas Zayd
- d) Nas El Sul
- e) Matlub

C. El KHAMASAT

1. Mayamin
- a) Awlad Subuh
- b) Budrania
2. Menadir
3. Gikhaysat
- a) Um Haysin
- b) Awlad Dhiab

H. El Gema'ania

I. El Gharaga

c) Abu Dan

d) Merahil

e) Nas Mua'mar

4. Menana'

5. Khayrasat

D. El TARADAT

1. Da'mai

a) Subayhat

1. Nas Sodari

b) Gelada

c) Tayaisa

1. Awlad Ali

2. Gawabra

3. Nawara

4. 'Abasia

d) Fawadil

e) Ghanaymia

1. Nas Abu Gebel

2. Nas 'Ali

3. Nas Bilal

4. Nas Gamu'a

f) Noagat

g) Awlad Khadra

h) 'Abadia

1. Nas Abu Guma'a

El GHARAYSIA SECTION:

A. El HADAHDA (from Hadhud, see above)

1. Awlad Hammad

2. Awlad Um Butnayn

3. Dububa

4. Awlad Sherif

5. Awlad Nimr

6. Bera'im

B. AWLAD SHIGHAN

1. Nas Isma'il

2. Um Kisayba

3. Nas Nusr

4. Nas Abu Merakih

5. Nas Mohamed

6. El Homran

C. AWLAD JWEID

1. Nas abu Higaywa

2. Nas Turfa

3. Awlad 'Adi

4. El Hababish

5. Nas Murmi

6. El Sa'adia

7. Awlad Gabir

8. Nas Saharif

D. EL SUBAHA

From all these various sections and sub- divisions there lived in the project location only the following sub-divisions from the two main sections, the Dagageem (merged with Gharaysia) and the A'sakir. But as will be noted other new sub-division (such as Jalada and Jawamees among the A'sakir, and Awlad Garfa among the Dagageem Section) also appear in the list. Here the sub-divisions which occupy the same level of the hierarchy are assigned similar notation, e.g. all sub-divisions assigned A/1 or B/1 occupy the highest level, those assigned A/2 or B/2 occupy a higher level, and A/3 or B/3 a high level.:

A.The Dagageem Section

(A/1= highest level;

A/2 and A/3 higher and high)

A/1 Gharaysia

A/1 Abu Zayd

A/2.Awlad Sari

A/1.Sha'ibat

A/1.Awlad Bur'as

A/1.Awlad 'Amir

A/1 Wailia

A/2 Awlad Garfa

A/1 Awlad Shadwan

A/1 Awlad Sihaia

A/1 Gema'ania

B.The A'sakir Section

(B/1=highest level ;

B/2 and B/3 higher and high)

B/1 Bani Badr

B/1 Taradat

B/1 Ghishimat

B/2 Mayamin

B/2 Mena'a

B/2 Gikhaysat

B/3 Ghanaymia

B/2 Manadir

B/3 Noaygat

B/3 Tayaisa

B/3 Sabha

B/3 Ma'arka

B/3 Khawazma

B/3 Jawamees

B/3 Jalada

B/3 El Merazig

B/3 Awlad Khadra

B/3 Subayhat

B/3 Shama'in

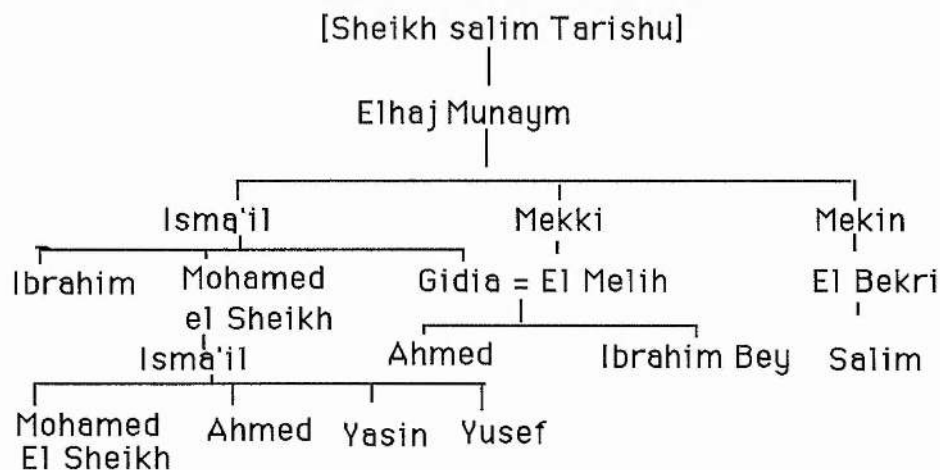
B/2 Khayraysat

As I have mentioned , the present-day Hamar tribes in the project area trace their early settlement in Dar Hamar to their 'grand parent' Elhag Munaym. Immediately after their

settlement in the area The Hamar followed a semi-nomadic way of life raising sheep and camels.

The sheep which the Hamar raised was internationally known as the Hamari sheep (i.e after the Hamar) due to the animals' special characteristic of being highly resistant to diseases, ability to travel for long distance, and the good quality of the meat. The nomadic tribesmen moved during the annual cycle from El Odaya and Foga in the southern part of Kordofan, to UM Sumeima and Um Badir in the northern part, and further eastwards to Abu Haraz, Um Shidera and Gebel Abu Sinun (see map No.1, end pocket, and MacMichael, 1912:156).

These movements brought the Hamar into perpetual conflict over grazing land in the northern part of Kordofan province with the Kababeesh, the pastoral people who have long been indigenous to this area. Unlike the other nomadic tribes in Kordofan, the Hamar "multiplied prolifically in Kordofan and not only did their herds of camels in the Turkia exceed those of most other nomadic tribes on the west of the river, .. their villages occupied extensive tracts between En Nahud and Gebel Abu Sinun"(1912:157). This growth both in number and in wealth of the Hamar was attributed to the enterprise of the descendants of Elhag Munaym. The lineages of this family later provided the principal leadership of the tribe which in turn was inherited by the succeeding generations. The lineages derived from the family of Elhag Munaym were presented by MacMichael(1912: 157) as follows:



Elhag Munaym's 'grand sons' thus succeeded him in tribal leadership as nazirs (lit. boss of the tribe) and sheikhs (see chapter 8).

Pallme (1844:114) had described the Hamar as "one of the most amiable class of people in this province.. I never heard of their having ill-treated or robbed any stranger, much less of their having committed murder". Later in 1876 Ensor described them, contrary to Pallme, "the most war-like and thievish of all the tribes in Dar Fur [referring to those of Hamar groups left behind in the journey to their present abode, Dar Hamar]... and an ill bred and surly lot of fellows" (Ensor,1881:86).

Upon the breakdown of the Mahdist rule (1880's), feuds and raids by the Kababeesh resulted in a considerable reduction in the number of camels owned by the Hamar and so the tribe turned in part to agriculture and became primarily a sedentary population. "They have large areas of cultivation and areas of gum forests round Rihaywa.. but most of them are further west round [En] Nahud rural council and Foga (MacMichael,1912:159). In turn the Hamar made counter-raids against the Kababeesh around 1880's and took over their nahas (lit. war and chiefly drums) from them. Nahas is a prerogative of chiefs (i.e. sheikhs and nazirs), and entitles its holders leadership over non-owners. Up to the present-day it is repeatedly heard in En Nahud rural council that the Dagageem had thus secured their leadership over Dar Hamar by force. However, the Hamar also preserve their own traditional nahas, said to be handed down from their earliest ancestor, thus giving the Hamar a more ancient legitimation of chiefly control of the whole area. Thus, Mustamhil Makin argued that the Awlad Jweid and Awlad Abu Zayd (see above) owned nahas, known also as dimli. The preservation of the nahas was until recently accompanied by elaborate ritual ceremonies and practices. In the past the nahas announced the nomadic movements of the tribesmen from one grazing ground to another. As the tribe later sedentarized, the practice became confined to religious festivals and national ceremonies. The nahas is also beaten to announce the death of a sheikh or an important member of his family as well as for particular social events such as the nafir. Today the nahas

is beaten to summon the farmers who participated in ENSAP for meetings, nafirs and self-help tasks.

A process of disintegration and reintegration has occurred in the Hamar tribe during the past few decades through inter-marriage with the non-Hamar tribes of the area who were also immigrants into Dar Hamar. These tribes included the Tunjur, the Mimi, the Gura'an, Manadeer, Ma'alia and the Berti, to name but the more well-known. These tribes are often referred to as westerners (from western Sudan) to distinguish them from the pure Hamar. Both the westerners and the Hamar tribe came to the area at different times and both claim the right to land ownership, based on these respective occasions. However, the Hamar seem to have more of a legal claim by virtue of the fact, as they believed, that their ancestor Elhag Munaym purchased the land from the Sultan of Dar Fur (see chapter 8). Be it mentioned, here, however, that these western Sudan tribes never came into open conflict over land with the Hamar since land is plentiful and their respective populations were intermingled within the administrative villages (i.e the officially recognized villages) and clusters of surrounding settlements (which include officially unrecognized villages) locally known as areet (see chapter 2).

The villages are separated by vast field spaces, and they are linked by a web of tracks and foot paths and occasionally by roads. The surrounding settlements are evident in groups of thatched houses each with a jubraka (kitchen garden). Most central villages are headed by a local sheikh, well recognized on the part of the rural district council based at En Nahud, the district town (the functions of the sheikhs are elaborated in the chapter on local government). One may mention here that the sheikhs are the lowest level chiefs in the native administration system, and are assigned the function of tax collection, maintenance of order, and the distribution of, and settlement of disputes over, land at the village level.

Despite the multiplicity of ethnic groups, the daily social organisation is made unproblematic by the amiable social relations that have developed between the Hamar and their co-residents. Never have the non-Hamar groups come into conflict over village leadership or authority.

Throughout the project area the majority of the village sheikhs come from the Hamar ethnic group.

Out of the fifteen villages participating in the ENSAP project in 1990, I observed only two villages headed by a non-Hamar sheikh. These villages were Ibeid whose sheikh is a Berti and Seranbi whose sheikh is a Gura'an.

In the past, migrant non-Hamar groups in Dar Hamar were allowed to settle within Hamar villages in order that the villages would be large enough to qualify for the social services rendered by the governmental authority. Growth in the total number of village residents meant a larger tax payable to the government, hence the worthwhileness of the village for social services. It was in the village sheikh's interests to allow non-kin to settle in his village particularly for exacting these taxes. Thus immigrants were allowed access to cultivable land associated with a village: they contributed taxes to the village sheikhs who allocate the available agricultural land. Villages in Ghubeish with this experience included Dirra, Rasheed and Um Dubeiba.

This process of gradual fusion with the other tribal groups (with the local loss of tribal identities; see also MacMichael, 1912), which was also partly affected by inter-marriage and immigration, comes under the heading of what I call the disintegration and reintegration in Hamar historical experience. The ongoing tribal sub-divisions among the Hamar (see above) exemplify the process of disintegration (as the Hamar themselves consider the continuous tribal division and sub-divisions as leading to disunity), whilst social cohesion with the other tribal groups, as well as a general growth in population and power (relative to the other tribal groups), have contributed to tribal reintegration.

As the present nazir of Dar Hamar puts it, "it is largely because we [the Hamar] succeeded in assimilating the other tribal groups and in amalgamating with them that we enjoy our present leadership and power" (Abdel Gadir Munaym, personal interview, 1990, En Nahud). This

trend among the Hamar seems to have been initiated long ago in their early settlement and became fully developed few decades ago. Thus, it has been argued that "large tribes such as the Hamar.. only formed themselves, in the eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries when they were joined by other mixed groups" (Trimingham, 1949:81). This process of disintegration and reintegration was also accompanied by a concomitant rise and fall in the tribal ownership of wealth. This could be established from the following anthropological observation:

The power of the Hamar had increased so rapidly that by 1876. Ensor considered them the richest of nomadic portion of the Kababeesh, and almost equally[equalling !] the whole of that tribe including the settlers on the bank of the Nile. They lost nearly all their wealth in the dervish days, and at the reoccupation the Kababeesh looted from them much of what was left. They are now almost entirely sedentary, but fairly rich in camels and sheep (MacMichael, 1922:321).

Thus the main reason, among others, for the gradual change from pastoral nomadism to sedentary agriculture is this sizeable reduction in the animal population. In 1983, the 79,649 people in Ghubeish were organized into one hundred and forty villages mainly situated in the plains alongside fields and roads. Villages which have their own sheikhs, are considered as modern administrative centres, but note that there are a number of administrative villages which had more than one distinct settlement (pertaining to different seasons). Moreover, when an administrative village, as is the case with Abu Geid, encompasses different sub-divisions of the Hamar tribe, the respective lineages are residentially separate, each one occupying a particular section (area) of the village.

For example, in Abu Geid we have three households belonging to the Manan'a, next to them there are eight households belonging to Bani Badr, next there are ten households of Awlad Shadwan, next to them are the five households of Kharaysat, next the seven households of Abu Zayd, and the rest from the Bani 'Amir sub-division. This implies that despite the

intermingling of the various tribal sections and sub-divisions with one another, as well as with the other non-Hamar tribal groups, there is still an evident predilection for groups originating from the same subgroup to come together vis-a-vis non-members.

It is clear from the above discussion that contrary to what had been reported by anthropologists for African tribal systems and their relationship with land tenure, villages in Ghubeish rural council have not developed any sort of conflict over land tenure as a result of the interlacing of ethnic groups, or of sub-divisions within the dominant Hamar population. It is usually assumed that in Africa in general, kinship explains the complexities of land tenure systems (Radcliffe-Brown, 1950). In Ghubeish, as we have seen, men get access to land in return for their ability to pay taxes to the village sheikhs and this allows the village to further attract services provided by the government. Any potential conflict over land tenure is obviated by the fact that in addition to land being plentiful, the residential groups put into cultivation only a small proportion of land and land appropriation is not considered of primary importance.

The local philosophy for help and community development is implied in the expression "goom na'yeenak ma targud naheenak" (lit. "I will help you should you be active, failing this I would rather humiliate you"). Literally this means self-help with the objective of self-reliance. The result of putting this ideology into practice is outstanding: a large number of villages have established their own schools, water-yards (a system of tanks and machinery for supplying water), cooperative mills and health units through aljuhda sha'abi which is the direct practice of the goom na'yeenak ideology. For the ENSAP agency this philosophy provided a suitable basis to launch its implementation activities. The villagers are constrained by their own traditional ideology to support the project: failure to support the project would lead project agents to accuse them of negating their own ideology.

1.2 Major Features of Hamar Communities:

Below coverage is given of some significant features and points of interest in some selected villages. Time and methodological considerations of course render comprehensive coverage of each village impossible. This is to give the reader a feel for the overall social environment of the study area and to expose issues which will be dealt with more systematically in subsequent chapters (sources of the data include ENSAP and my fieldwork). The location of these villages is given in map No.2 (end pocket).

1.2.1 Seranbi:

Seranbi is a small village composed of thirty households quite isolated from one another by jubraka (kitchen garden) and field plots. The village has a small population of approximately 347 who are predominantly agriculturalists.

The village is composed of three distinct tribes: the Gura'an who make up the majority of the village population, the Wailia Hamar and the miamin. The sheikh is a Gura'an whose inheritance of the office may be traced back through six generations.

Local people reckon the establishment of the village to date back to the period preceeding the Mahdist rule (approximately 1850s) but the village has a very low population growth relative to neighbouring villages. The village is very poor in terms of infrastructure and most of the land owners, who (with their families) comprise nearly half of the village population, settle during several months in the year (the post-harvesting period) over neighbouring villages such as Abu Rai. The main reason for this is the lack of water, health unit, grain mill and schools. The villagers are currently planning to construct a water-yard (i.e. a system of machinery and tanks for supplying water to a community) through aljuhda sha'abi (lit. self-help) as this will motivate its population to stay in the village.

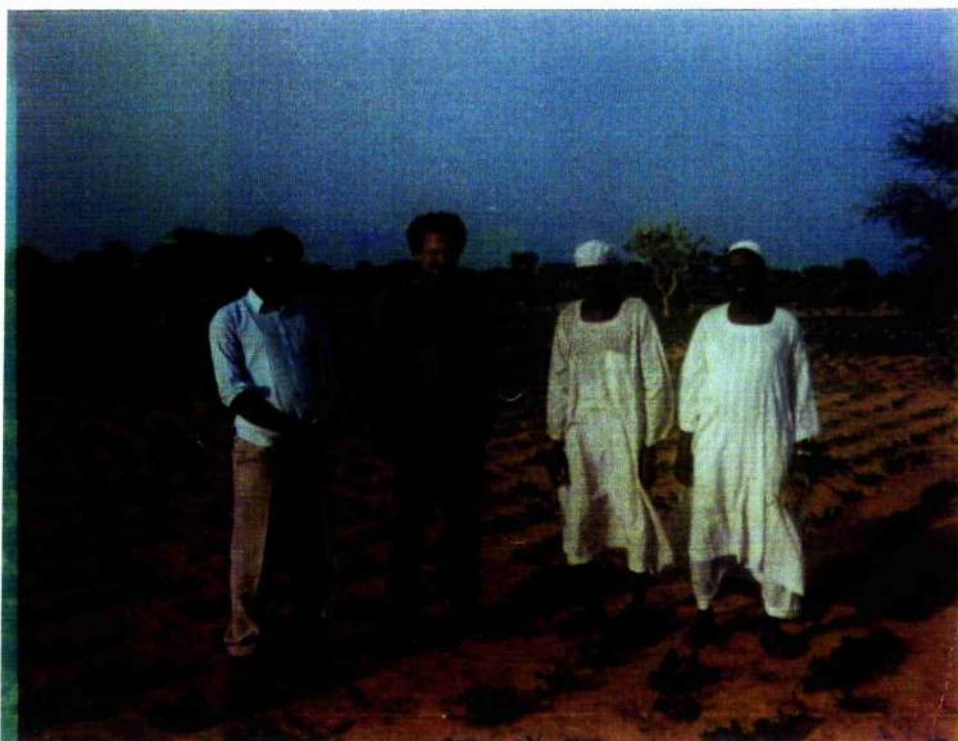
The village, then, experiences a process of desertion and rehabilitation during the off-farm season and the rainy season. A good proportion of the villagers move to the neighbouring

villages after harvesting, but eventually reassemble when the rainy season restarts. Thus the village experiences full habitation while the farmers are engaged in the planting, weeding and harvesting operations. Then nafirs are summoned almost every day on a reciprocal basis. Nearly every member of the village knows one another, thanks to the smallness of its size.

Social events such as marriage, funerals and rain-making rituals are fully attended during the rainy season, when all the population is present. This is unlike villages where the population is relatively stable throughout the year, where ritual practices are arranged to take place in the off-farm season to allow farmers to fully utilize their working time for agricultural operations.

Seranbi had participated in the ENSAP project since the second operating season of the project, 1989. Twenty farmers had received project loans and extension services, including the sheikh who, however, dropped out from participation in the following season, 1990, for religious reasons connected with repayment of loans. The sheikh believed that "there are forty sins in dealing with [economic] interest the least of which is as if one had committed promiscuity with his mother".

However, Seranbi farmers see that despite being important, such services can not be sufficient as to allow sustainable improvement in the village since the lack of water has prompted the villagers to invest their financial resources in surrounding villages touted for providing a better life and economic opportunities. Thus, Abu Rai village, which draws the majority of Seranbi farmers, has a big market which allows growth in trade and brings in a large number of consumers and middlemen thereby opening broader avenues for marketing and income generation. Without equally attacking the problem of lack of water, the village farmers argue, real indigenous improvement will not be easy to attain.



From right to left: sheikh of Seranbi, a participant farmer,
ENSAP Credit Officer and Agricultural Coordinator. Seranbi, 1990.

1.2.2 Dirra:

Dirra is a large village with a population of some 1957 persons. The village is inhabited by two Hamar ethnic groups and three non-Hamar tribal groups. The Hamar are the majority population and from them the village draws its leadership which is inheritable. The two Hamar divisions are the Tradat (the majority, from whom is drawn the sheikh) and Awlad Khadra. The other tribal groups include the Tunjur, Mimi and the Berti.

The sheikh himself is a very powerful and active person who has played a significant role in village development. Through aljuhda sha'abi, which the sheikh was able to mobilize, the villagers were able to build a primary school for both boys and girls. The school admits children from Dirra, its areet (satellite villages which extend from the mother village) and neighbouring villages, such as Rasheed. The village also has a small market of some twenty shops selling consumer items such as tea, sugar, coffee, oil, soap, matches, rice, cloth etc. The water-yard which was constructed by the government has a local committee responsible for its maintenance through fund raising from the villagers. The sheikh has also established a local market committee which was made responsible for the supervision of the market against the malpractices of 'black market' merchants.

Under the auspices of the new Salvation Government of 1989, the sheikh has now been elected as the head of the Agricultural Committee for The Popular Salvation Committee of Dirra. The committee consists of nine members who are local farmers and it was assigned the function of assisting local farmers to solve farm-related problems such as the lack of implements, seeds and pest control. Local farmers view the committee as the basis for future expansion in agriculture and look to it with great hope. The committee has provided a favorable base for the ENSAP project which looks forward to the mutual coordination of activities.

The village committee is well organized and influential in mobilizing local villagers for communal tasks. In 1988 the committee was able to organize self-help groups for the establishment of a local cooperative grain mill, the total cost of which was covered through

fund raising. The cooperative mill is the only mill currently efficiently functioning in the area. Prior to the establishment of the cooperative mill, the villagers had to spend considerable time travelling to the neighbouring villages to do their milling, a situation which had adversely diminished the time spent in farming. In Dirra, hired labour is in short supply relative to neighbouring villages and the bulk of the agricultural operations have to be done by household labour. For this reason the hired labour wage rate for weeding in Dirra is relatively higher than that in the neighbouring villages. Thus, while the ruling wage rate in Dirra was LS 60 (LS= Sudanese pound) and LS 250 for the agricultural seasons 1989 and 1990, respectively, it was LS 50 and LS 230, respectively, in the surrounding villages. Due to the shortage of hired labour, some farmers, including the sheikh, arrange sharaka (sharecropping) with Dinka immigrants from the southern part of the Sudan.

The farmers of Dirra village, unlike the farmers of the other villages currently participating with ENSAP, tend to think of farmers' problems and disagreements relating to agriculture as similar to everyday problems and disagreements affecting household members and that, therefore, they should be democratically resolved by the villagers (no different from a joudia, which is a traditional session for dispute resolution away from the court). Thus, the village committee was observed to hold occasional meetings during the agricultural phases of land preparation, rameil (lit. seeding shortly before the full start of the rains), and weeding to democratically discuss relevant matters. All the farmers attended such a meeting, including ENSAP's participating farmers, to state their problems, which were then put before the committee for resolution. Those farmers who were lagging behind in the weeding of their farms due to the lack of hired labour would be quickly assisted through nafirs being mobilized by the committee. For greater democracy to be secured on behalf of the ENSAP project, which is enthusiastically welcomed by the villagers, the traditional village committee was incorporated in the project and was assigned the functions of:

- a) coordinating local farmers with ENSAP;
- b) following-up and monitoring the destination of spending ENSAP loans so as to
- c) select those farmers who are eligible for the loans and those who should be dropped out;

- d) supporting farmers participating with ENSAP through the provision of farm implements;
- e) supporting the elderly in terms of organizing nafirs.

A related factor concerning the ENSAP project is that, in Dirra, local farmers were developing an attitude of self-reliance for ENSAP will eventually get 'phased out' by 1993. Thus for a sustained source of credit to be available, Dirra farmers have planned to initiate a local fund from member donations contributed by those farmers participating in ENSAP. Farmers have argued that they are now accustomed to receiving loans and that their dumman (lit. guarantors; these are the farmers who should publicly undertake to bring a defaulted farmer for prosecution) have gained experience and trust which enables sound management and supervision of the forthcoming local fund.

1.2.3 Barnawi:

Barnawi is an average village of a population of 1165 persons who are primarily agriculturalists. It was established in the last century (around 1900) and has experienced rapid population growth. The sub-groups in the village include Bani Badr who are the majority of the population, Ghishimat, Tayaisa and Berti. With the exception of the Berti, all the other groups are sub-divisions from the Hamar tribe. The village sheikh is a Bani Badr. The village itself is often named after the Bani Badr for it was people from this sub-division who first settled in the area.

The village sheikh, Murkab, has inherited the office through his grandfather who established the village. The four sub-groups relate with one another through marital ties and have thus established a form of village cohesion that has resulted in consensus over community affairs and leadership. This social cohesion is also expressed in villagers' repeated statements that "we are all one ahal [all relatives], the same and have one say" which implies the absence of conflict and social friction. When later on asked to state their relatedness through ahal it became clear that in fact there existed no kinship relationship as such between the sub-groups in spite of the fact that this term may connote (see introduction and, also, Stuchlik, 1976).

Village unity also finds expression through the community mobilization efforts for the improvement of certain aspects of the village. Alhuhdal sha'abi was fully organized in the last decade for the construction of the local water-yard, and still its maintenance lies with the village people themselves. A committee was formed which was assigned the responsibility of managing the water-yard. Procurement of spare parts, fuel and clerks lies with the committee members who raise money from the small contributions of the village members. The committee was also touted by the local villagers for its success in getting a local grain mill constructed by the government authorities in 1990. The village, however, lacks basic social services such as a health unit, a market and schools.

The village people are in contact with the neighbouring villages of Wad Mitgil (itself participating in ENSAP), Um Dibeiba and El Tayib Wad Um Jineih in the weekly market days as well as for participation in social events. Donkeys are the main means of transportation here. Nafirs were actively summoned throughout the weeding period in August 1990; they are also summoned for the construction of houses and mosques.

Barnawi has participated in ENSAP since 1989, initially with 52 farmers of whom only 35 were receiving project loans in 1990. The reason for this reduction in the number of beneficiaries was that some of the jamaa (lit. traditional 'group' organized by the project) members were dropped as the result of default on the part of their dumman (guarantors).

1.2.4 Ibeid:

Ibeid (or U'beid) is a relatively large village with a population of 1460 persons the majority of whom are small farmers producing partly for subsistence and partly for the market. It lies at approximately 108 kilometers distance from Ghubeish town. The village has more females in its population than men. These are 810 and 650 respectively. The village is headed by a sheikh who is responsible for a multi-ethnic population. The respective tribal groups include the Berti who are the majority and from whom the sheikh draws, the Kenana, Zaghawa, Masalit

and a few Hamar groups who follow a pastoral nomadic way of life. Ibeid was established in 1881, almost a century ago. The Berti were the first group to settle in the area and were able to wield authority by appropriating the right to village leadership. Literacy is provided through an elementary school which enrolls both sexes. In addition there are two khalwas (lit. traditional quranic school run by local faki (i.e religious man)) in which children are taught Islamic religion, mainly the Quran, which the children are required to commit to memory.

Local villagers were for decades concerned about village development. Their incessant demands for village improvement were doomed to fail as the government authorities had shown little interest in fulfilling those demands. The government was able to supply only teachers for the elementary school which was constructed through aljuhda sha'abi. Consequently the villagers repeatedly voice their criticism toward governmental authority. They accuse the government of neglecting to supply health facilities for the local health unit which the villagers had also established through aljuhda sha'abi. As a result the local dispensary is currently not functioning and the people have to seek medication in the neighbouring villages and the town of Ghubeish.

Previous experiences with non-governmental organizations aimed at village improvement had resulted in positive attitudes on the part of the village toward external interventions. In the 1980's the aftermath of the drought had brought the intervention in the village of UNICEF for the provision of vaccination services, which were enthusiastically welcomed. The villagers posited that this experience had demonstrated to them the genuine interests of NGO'S in village improvement, contrary to their own government. Later on when the RFPP (Regional Finance and Planning Project) run by CARE organization approached the village in 1989 to rehabilitate the village water-yard, the village exhibited a high interest. As the result a water-yard committee, a VDC (Village Development Committee) and an administrative committee were added to the pre-existing traditional mosque and education committees.

Ibeid has participated in ENSAP since 1989 with a maximum of 75 farmers receiving project loans. Local teachers were described by the village people as "key persons" here. It is they who actively encourage local farmers involved with the RFPP and ENSAP project to attend the meetings arranged on the part of ENSAP and the RFPP extensionists. These teachers, in turn, appreciate being commended and respected by the community members.

Most of the village population tends to stay inside the village throughout the whole year, with negligible seasonal outmigration. Trading is carried out by local business men in the dead season from January to April.

In Ibeid women are quite involved in community affairs. One of their activities in the past decade was the establishment of a women training centre to cater for women's problems. However, due to financial bottlenecks the centre came to a halt four years later. Other women's activities included the formation of a savings box, na'firs and helping out men in the farms. Women are also included in the RFPP project which trains two female "encouragers" meant to help fellow village women in local development issues. The two "encouragers" were trained in handicraft and extension and their functions were to disseminate knowledge and render services to village women. The VDC arranges meetings which are presided over by these female "encouragers" as the main channel for communication with community members. The community members were developing a positive attitude towards community development and the existence of the RFPP and ENSAP projects had aroused their concern for development. However, as a result of the farmers default on ENSAP loans for the 1989 season Ibeid was dropped from participation in the project in 1990.

1.2.5 Wad Fadol:

Wad Fadol is a small village with a population of 308 persons. The main groups are the Abu Zayd and Awlad 'Amir, both of which are Hamar sub-divisions. The sheikh is from the first group which provides the majority of the population. The village is entirely devoid of basic services and depends on the neighbouring villages of Abu Geid and 'Iyal Na'im (see maps end

pocket) for water, marketing and health services. The village has five areet around it, associating with it for collective self-help projects and participation in wedding, circumcision, funerals, nafirs and rain-making rituals. Wad Fadol inhabitants pursue agricultural production as the main occupation. Due to the dearth of water and basic services the village had lost about forty households during the 1980's as a result of migration outside the village. The local village estimated the number of the migrants to be around 450 persons. The problem of lack of water during the summer as well as shortly prior to the start of the early agricultural operations results in considerable time being spent by the active adults in search of water in the neighbouring villages. A number of attempts by the local villagers to get the government to construct a reliable water system in the village were refused by the government. Despite the village's positive response to ENSAP agricultural service the villagers' overriding concern was to get a viable source of water to stabilize the local population and make them more committed to agriculture. Due to this primacy being given to water as opposed to agricultural credit the farmers who participated with ENSAP project in 1988/89 season recorded a poor repayment performance with the project. As a result the whole village was dropped from participation in the project in the subsequent season.

1.2.6 Um Sidair:

Um Sidair, a village of approximately 8 km square in size, was in 1990 inhabited by a population of 1780 distributed over some 194 households. The village is notable in that the size of its families is relatively large, averaging nine members per household. The level of illiteracy is very high among the ageing population. 90 percent of the villagers over thirty years of age are illiterate but most of those under thirty had at least primary school education. The village is inhabited by two main Hamar sub-divisions, the Shi'aebat and the Sabaha who were recently joined by a small number of people from different Berti groups.

The village skeikh, Ahmed Jadalla, is a Shi'aebat Hamar who is touted by his ethnic group as having made strenuous efforts towards community improvement, mainly through the mobilization of aljuhdal sha'abi. Among the most prominent village institutions which have

been established through local self-help is the construction of a water-yard through the mobilization of local labour and financial resources. The village is relatively the most self-sufficient in terms of water supply. Another contribution is the primary school for both sexes, which still receives maintenance through the village school committee which raises the money from the village members. Part of the income generated from the sale of water from the village water-yard is devoted to finance local community development projects. The local health unit which was built through aljuhda sha'abi lacks basic health facilities and the villagers have to seek health assistance from En Nahud and Ghubeish towns.

The villagers being predominantly smallholder producers have enthusiastically responded to ENSAP innovations which they posited squared with their goals of agricultural improvement. The introduction of the ENSAP project in the village incidentally meant a strong blow to the sheil (lit. the traditional credit system) system which traditionally provided the only source of credit to the smallholder producers. This system is now rapidly falling apart.

Um Sidair farmers keep camels, sheep, goats and donkeys as the main form of store of wealth. Prior to the introduction of the project some farmers with a surplus income would invest that surplus by purchasing a camel at a price of LS 2,000. The camel might be used as a means of transport and, later, should financial deficit occur, it could be resold at a lucrative price of LS 4,000.

Despite the villagers' enthusiasm towards ENSAP, however, religious ideas came slightly to bear on the farmers' response to project loans. Islamic fundamentalists accuse the agency of involving village farmers in usurious credit, an act which contradicts Islamic ethics. By the second operating season of the project in Um Sidair village at least one farmer participating with the project was not utilizing the loans he received in agriculture. However, the majority of the village farmers have not been strongly influenced by religious opinions as the number of farmers joining the project in the subsequent season 1991 dramatically increased. While in the first implementation season of the project in the village in 1990 there were only 56 farmers

who effectively participated , the number rose dramatically to a maximum of 88 farmers in the following season. Part of the reason adduced by the farmers themselves for this high response to joining the project was that some village farmers came to realize that the project has really resulted in the expansion of farm productivity. "The traditional farm productivity was exactly 40% of the farm productivity under ENSAP" some farmers have remarked.

1.2.7 El Halfaya:

It is a small village inhabited by one group, the Ghishimat Hamar. The total village population, 274 in 1990, who are predominantly smallholder producers. The village households are agnatically related to one another which has resulted in strong social cohesion and cooperation, though the village lacks all sorts of basic services. It depends on En Nahud, Khashum and Kileijow for education, health, marketing and for off-farm employment. As was the case with Wad Fadol village, the problem of water shortage had stimulated a proportion of the village members to seasonally migrate to the neighbouring villages, especially during the summer period when the demand for water reaches its peak. A significant portion of the village members had also been prompted to migrate completely outside Sudan for lucrative employment, the younger generation in particular being stimulated to do so from observing the wealth brought from this source enjoyed by their fellows in neighbouring villages such as Wad Fadol and Rasheed. The bulk of the wealth which these young migrants remitted was invested in the purchase of livestock. The average number of livestock per household is about 10 head but a few farmers own up to some two hundred head of sheep. Donkeys and camels are kept for transportation to the neighbouring villages of Kileijow and Khushum from which water is fetched and with whom trading carried out during the period from January to March. The handful of people associated with the village from the sub-divisions, Bidayria and Gharaysia had been prompted to move out of the village and form two separate areet named after the groups. As a result the village had become homogeneously inhabited by the dominant group, the Ghishimat Hamar.

Nafirs were fully summoned during the weeding season through August 1990 and such participation brought all the village members together, as well as its areet : reciprocity in cooperative practice goes beyond 'ethnic' boundaries.

Farmers, however, depend mostly upon household labour for farming operations due to the chronic shortage of a hired labour supply. A handful of farmers were observed to engage in the sharaka arrangement with Dinka labourers from southern Sudan. The average number of Dinka for each such farmer was four, but one farmer was observed to have arranged a sharaka with a maximum of forty Dinka labourers in the 1990 season.

The ownership of livestock had enabled the El Halfaya farmers participating in ENSAP project to repay their outstanding loans thereby recording the best repayment performance among the villages participating in the scheme during the 1989 agricultural season.

1.2.8 Murabaat:

Murabaat, which is also referred to as Murabaat/Kirja (Kirja being now separated from Murabaat as an independent village), was said to be established by a Mahdist hero, Kirja, shortly before the start of the Mahdist revolution in the second part of the last century. The village is inhabited by a population of 1108 persons distributed over 100 households the majority of whom are the Wailia Hamar. few other tribal groups are also represented, including the Riash, Bidayria and the Berti. Agricultural production is the mainstay of the whole village population. Production is both for household consumption and for the market.

The village people had succeeded considerably in their efforts aimed at community improvement through putting into practice the village philosophy of "abni wa 'ammir" (lit. build and reconstruct) which is another version of aljuhda sha'abi. Thus, in 1969 the mobilization of "abni wa 'ammir" was supported by government assistance to the community in the establishment of a local water-yard. Up to the today the water-yard's management and maintenance has lain with the village community which procured its own local technicians for

running it. Later, in 1975, the "abni wa 'ammir" slogan was again raised whereby a primary school for both sexes was constructed. This success had also stimulated the further mobilization of the village masses for the construction of a local health unit shared by the village and its areet (including Um Jamal, Darig Rasak and Tweifra). The village, however, includes a few rich merchants who traditionally provided sheil credit to small farmers. Relating to the ENSAP project, 1% of farmers currently receiving loans from the project also approach the traditional sheil lenders for credit.

The majority of farmers (approximately 80%) have gum Arabic fields which provide part of the household's cash income. Cultivation of the gum Arabic starts upon the conclusion of agricultural operations in December, and lasts until February. The gum produce is then marketed at Ghubeish and En Nahud towns. Also, nearly 80% of the farmers own goats and 30% own sheep. A handful of farmers own up to 400 to 500 heads of sheep but these people are not currently participating in the ENSAP project. The village instructed some of its elders to keep a special calendar which would enable the farmers to anticipate exactly the onset of rainfall in relation to which their agricultural practices should be put in train (see chapter 7). The village is very active in nafir mobilization which follows the norm of reciprocity. Dozens of nafirs were arranged during the weeding phase in the 1990 season, and one nafir, arranged by the sheikh, called into participation a maximum number of 100 people, some coming from three neighbouring villages (Abu Geid, Wad Fadol and Gassari). Non-turning up to a nafir if having been invited is fully penalized by the community members. A fine of 1 lb of sugar is levied and the person concerned is formally interrogated and asked to provide acceptable reasons for failure to attend the ritual.

When ENSAP was first implemented in Murabaat in the 1989 season the farmers were of two, divergent views. A first group was affected by Murabaat's proximity to, and contact with, Wad Fadol village which participated in the project in the first season, 1988. Some farmers from Wad Fadol were not able repay their loans and the project did not prosecute these defaulters. This information leaked out to the farmers of Murabaat who eventually thought that

the project was distributing 'grants' as opposed to 'repayable loans'. The second group included those who could understand ENSAP's lending policy (and these were the majority of the farmers) and were later able to convince the first group to repay its loans lest the whole village be excluded from participation in the subsequent season.

One of the most prominent effects of the ENSAP project on Murabaat farmers has been that households which traditionally hired out part of the household labour as workers on the farms of rich families, are now able to fully utilize that labour for the cultivation of household farms. Moreover those families which were traditionally producing mainly for household subsistence have become increasingly market oriented through the cultivation of groundnuts. Another effect has been the abandonment by some of the poor of the traditional land lease practice. Traditionally the poor landowners would lease out to relatively rich farmers some part of their land, at LS 50 per makhamas for three consecutive seasons. As a result of ENSAP implementation this practice is now in decline.

1.2.9 Rasheed:

Rasheed is a large village of 1264 persons engaged in agricultural production for household consumption and for the market. It was established around the mid-1800's and is currently inhabited by a Bani Badr subdivision of the Hamar, coexisting with Berti tribal groups. The village skeikh, Adam Salih, is a Bani Badr who inherited the office from his father. The village leadership has lain with the Bani Badr tribe (the majority of the village population) since the early establishment of the village and continues to rest with that group through inheritance. The village sheikh has in the past two decades appointed a local village committee which has been assigned the function of mobilizing and administering the village development tasks.

The village institutions which the local villagers have been able to establish through aljuhda sha'abi are numerous. In 1974 the village members raised some LS 10,000 for the construction of the village water-yard. Up to then the problem of water shortage had adversely affected the overall agricultural productivity of the village since the supply of hired

farm workers depended on an availability of adequate water. Local farmers argued that "lack of water to supply to the hired workers had made our village unattractive to them to the extent that the wages paid to solicit more labourers conflicted with the optimum allocation of labour and even to loss". Up until recently the recurrent breakdown of the water-yard had resulted in farmers assigning a considerable part of their farm income toward maintenance. A number of continuous attempts on the part of the village sheikh at soliciting government assistance for the supply of fuel and spare parts for the rehabilitation of the water-yard were doomed to fail due to the lack of concern on the part of the central government.

Aljuhdal sha'abi had also, later, contributed to the establishment of the village elementary school for both sexes. The villagers contributed local material (stools, desks and thatch) and labour, which later prompted the government to supply the teachers. The school is still maintained by the local village committee of elders which was elected by the community especially to attend to problems arising in respect of the village school. Later, in 1980, the village was able to send one of its volunteers to the district town, to receive training in health provision in order to assist in the community's health unit, also constructed through aljuhdal sha'abi. However, the health unit provides only meagre assistance with first aid to the village members due to the dearth of its facilities.

Rasheed has a small market composed of some 20 shops which supply tea, coffee, salt, sugar, cloths etc. to local customers. Local producers supply the groundnuts and gum Arabic crops which are marketed through village middlemen who transport the crop to the main towns of Ghubeish and En Nahud.

The village farmers lack 'cooperative' consciousness (that is, relating to a formally registered cooperative, rather than cooperation in the broader meaning). A large number of the farmers who participated in the ENSAP project in 1989 showed indifference as to whether it was in their interest to form a cooperative or an 'association' (a formally organized development grouping), for the coordination of the project activities. It seems that while they

voluntarily chose a cooperative rather than an 'association', in reality the choice was not guided by rationality. The decision to opt for the cooperative was a 'negative' choice, arrived at only because the farmers were unfamiliar with the 'association' and with the functions it was likely to play.

Rasheed farmers were observed to arrange karama during the wahid

(February) month of every year. Here, the village members go outside the village, kill a sacrificial animal and conclude the ritual with a dua' (lit. invocation of God). More information about this ritual practice is chapter 7).

Local farmers conventionally allocated part of their agricultural surplus as tribute to be paid to the village sheikh in the form of zakat (Lit. Islamic alms). This was not a specified sum as the amount given fluctuated according to the seasonal agricultural yield. Some farmers, however, pay zakat to poor families in an attempt to redress economic equality and effect income redistribution. This does not imply the absence of a rich class in the village. On the contrary, the migration of some village members to Libya in 1984 (during the drought period) on camels and lorries had resulted in a handful of rich people. The key fact here is that these expatriates were able to remit a large amount of money which was invested on the purchase of livestock which is the main form of store of wealth in the village. The reason for this outmigration of village members was, according to the elders, that "our sons were motivated to 'emulate' their fellow expatriates who owned large livestock heads in the neighbouring villages.. every one of these people goes out and hoards money and we should also follow that example".

The project, however, worked to stabilize the village population who became more committed to agricultural production. few farmers in Rasheed were observed to arrange sharaka with the Dinka labourers. At least two of the farmers participating in the ENSAP project in 1990 engaged in such a sharaka arrangement.

1.2.10 Abu Geid:

Abu Geid village, which was established towards the middle of the past century, is inhabited by a population of over 800 persons distributed over some seventy households. The village derives its current name from its original founder Abu Geid whose lineage still wields the leadership represented by sheikh, Abu Geid Bashir. The village is inhabited by six Hamar subdivisions. These are the following, arranged in a descending order according to population size. Awlad 'Amir, Awlad Shadwan, Bani Badr, Abu Zayd, Khiraysat and Manana'a.

The villagers are predominantly smallholder producers who were traditionally prevented by lack of finance to expand production for the market. As a result the majority of the farmers produced for subsistence with only a minimum allocation for the production of marketable groundnuts crops on behalf of the household's need for cash. The village members, however, occasionally contributed part of their meagre cash income to the maintenance of the village water-yard previously established by the government. The water-yard committee which was elected by the local villagers is actively engaged in fund-raising for the rehabilitation of the water-yard.

'Acts of god' [by which was meant crop failure resulting from the shortage of rainfall and pest attack] too often resulted in a considerable loss of household income. This had prompted the outmigration of a large number of villagers in 1984, who fled to Khartoum in search of employment.

Despite the fact that the village households tend to cluster in compartments according to 'ethnicity' (each 'ethnic' sub-division being located separately), there evidently exists strong social cohesion that binds the whole village community together. Karama, nafirs, aljuhda sha'abi and rain-making bring almost all the different sub-divisions to equally participate in the village rituals. The concept of 'ahal' is strongly adhered to by the village members who use it indiscriminately to refer to their relatedness with one another.

The village consumers and producers depend on the Friday weekly market in the neighbouring village of Abu Rai which supplies the bulk of the community's basic needs, for example for the sale of agricultural crops to merchant buyers. Donkeys and camels provide the principal means of transport to these weekly markets.

When ENSAP agents first approached Abu Geid village to introduce the project the villagers divided into two opposite camps, representing divergent views concerning the major goal for the village. The divergence in views was expressed in a local ijtimaa (lit. meeting) which saw the elders in direct opposition to the younger generation. The first group, represented by the elders, viewed the provision of a sustainable source of water to be the priority goal for the village. This was justified on the grounds that over the past few years many village members migrated outside the village in great numbers, a situation which threatens to drain the village of its able-bodied population and to sabotage community improvement. The establishment of a reliable water-yard, it was thought, would contribute to the stabilization of village membership and to greater commitment to agricultural production.

The second group, led by four unmarried villagers, viewed the overriding goal of the village to be the provision of a sustainable source of credit to the smallholder producers. This was justified on the ground that credit provision would allow the expansion of the area cultivated and provide a lucrative farm income which could in turn be invested in community development. This first group, however, absolutely resisted the youngsters' views and claimed that "in so far as these members are 'unmarried' their word should not be given any weight".

Abu Geid is currently participating in the ENSAP project with a maximum of 48 smallholder farmers receiving the project loans. Despite the fact that ENSAP project has not yet made any observable impact on Abu Geid village due to the adverse effect of crop failure and drought, the project has definitely raised local people's aspirations and expectations of material wealth and farmers' income.

Chapter 2

Social Organization

In this chapter we will be dealing with major issues bearing on the indigenous social organisation of the Hamar communities into which the ENSAP project was introduced. These will include discussion of the specific social groups, as well as of the relations which link communities. Stuchlik's (1976) analysis of recruitment into social situations is deployed in this chapter.

The main object of this chapter is to locate the actor vis-a-vis the other members of the community as well as his place within the whole society. By and large, we are concerned here to provide an overall picture of the ways an actor or actors in the community manipulate the various relationships for the realisation of specific goals.

2.1 Types of Household Residence:

A typical house in the project area is a conical thatched house called guttia (lit.: as a bedroom). Nearby will be one or two rakuba (square-shaped thatched building), one for women (who use it as a kitchen) and the other for men's entertainment and the reception of guests (see photo below: farmers congregating in front of a rakuba; a guttia is in the background). The sociological importance of the house lies in the fact that its members comprise the smallest social unit in the village community. The ideal type of 'household' consists of a single elementary family- which usually obtains- when the newly-married couple lives neolocally. However, throughout the project villages, a significant degree of patrilocality is present, where the newly-married couple is clearly incorporated under one roof, joint/extended household, with the husband's father the head of the resulting single social unit. Such an arrangement is known as hosh (lit. big household). But note that in the case of



A group of farmers in front of a rakuba
(a guttia is in the background)

polygynists there will be a separate household corresponding to each wife- between which the husband will share his time. However, among the Hamar, there are very few cases of polygyny.

Due to the perpetual movement during the seasonal cycle, by members of the household from the main/administrative village to the areet, joint extended families often tend in practice, to appear as a simple elementary family. This is mainly during the farming season when some members of the household need to get closer to their farms which lie far away in the areet of the main village, sited there in order to open up new arable land for cultivation. There are other types of movement with similar patterns of change in the structure of the domestic group. For example there is the motivation to secure social services not available in the village of origin. This is even the case in main/administrative villages such as Seranbi. When the majority of the inhabitants regularly move from Seranbi to Abu Rai and the other neighbouring villages during the post-harvesting period the family members who remain effectively constitute a smaller social unit. Note that, in the case of non-administrative villages, this process is also prevalent. We also note that living in a main/administrative village has the advantage over living in a non-administrative village in providing the security which comes from living in a larger community.

The co-residential household group, which typically ranges between seven and eleven members (in some cases of joint-extended households up to seventeen members can occur) is marked out in a number of ways. First it enjoys commensality, albeit that the genders eat separately. Secondly, mutual nafir recruitment is not all that frequent and intensive among members of the same joint extended family. Finally, in social events (e.g.. wedding, funerals etc.) it is the members of the household group relating to the person of ritual interest who preponderantly perform the various rituals and services from among the large number of participants who attend.

Throughout the project area two types of domestic group are therefore observed to occur, exemplifying both the elementary and the extended family forms (the temporarily split extended households properly count as single extended households). Proportions are given in the following table.

Table (1) Major forms of the domestic group in selected project villages:

Village	Type of domestic group	Total number of households
Abu Geid	33 elementary	80
	47 extended	
Murabaat	80 elementary	110
	30 extended	
Dirra	93 elementary	160
	67 extended	
Barnawi	89 elementary	128
	39 extended	
Ibeid	98 elementary	162
	64 extended	
Rasheed	119 elementary	171
	52 extended	
Seranbi	31 elementary	38
	7 extended	
Sabi	48 elementary	65
	17 extended	
Wad Fadol	23 elementary	30
	7 extended	
El Halfaya	27 elementary	34
	7 extended	

Source: ENSAP plus my fieldwork.

The occurrence of large numbers of domestic groups from the elementary family type reflects the people's normative system which conceives of the elementary form as the ideal type.

A number of factors inform whether or not this ideal is achieved (and these can have a bearing on people's experience with the ENSAP project). For example, due to ecological factors coming differently in securing land suitable for providing extra jubraka fields, a newly-married couple may elect to stay with the husband's parents thus effecting a joint extended family. Mainly the reasons for the occurrence of different types of residence could be traced to the availability (or absence) of plenty of unoccupied land in the village of origin (both near to the parents' residence and/or far away in the village). It also often occurs that the elderly brothers in a large-size household may manipulate the available land within/and closer to the parents' residence to the disadvantage of their younger brothers who instead are forced into finding residence elsewhere.

Where joint extended families occurred ENSAP project staff were in the first season of project operation observed to distribute their loans to only one spousal unit, namely that under the name of the original household head. The other was left without a loan despite its being eligible. When, later on, the base line survey of the project detected that more than one 'family' often occurs under the same roof the project included the other part of the joint extended household as eligible for the loans. Meanwhile, the majority of cases, where the elementary type prevailed, reflects the fact that in a neolocal destination the newly married couple can normally find enough space to establish a jubraka field for the cultivation of consumption crops. Concomitantly, the villages which have closer and more numerous areet in the neighbourhood have more elementary family forms than the joint type, the main reason for this being that a newly married couple can easily move into the areet, especially if the areet is growing in terms of local services such as schools, markets and health units.

The existence of the joint family, however, does not imply a domestically unacceptable form of social grouping. On the contrary, most villagers appreciate having one or two parents

living with them under the same roof. Indeed it is normally observed that a father or mother, divorced sister, or widowed sister could easily come and join the household of married kin (for example a son or a brother). A relatively large size of domestic group can also be pertinent in conditions when hired labour becomes locally in short supply for agricultural activities such as weeding. In such conditions the domestic group represents a pool of labour to be effectively mobilised to increase areas cultivated to secure greater productivity. Women, on their part, produce the jubraka crops and partly supply farm labour, with the fruits of such labour accruing to the whole household. Children over five years of age look after the animals lest they trespass on the farms of other villagers leaving the household head to incur the traditional fine (this fine was estimated at LS 1.50 per destroyed plant in 1990).

The concept of the 'common good' deployed by Stuchlik (1976:79) is also pertinent for our analysis of the economic structure of the domestic group. In the period immediately preceding ENSAP implementation (1988), many villagers seasonally or permanently moved outside the community in search of gainful employment (to destinations both within and outside Sudan). As the domestic group's economic activities are influenced by the principle of co-operation an absent member would leave his wife and children under the guard and responsibility (and thus in the household) of a close kinsman (a father or a brother) until he could remit money at a later date, or until he returned home. In this way, for example, a large number of villagers had migrated from Wad Fadol and El Halfaya villages. These villagers going out of their villages for gainful employment were said to be tempted by the wealth brought into the village by their fellows who had gone abroad before. A returned member of the domestic group is likely to assist the remaining members through prestations and gifts.

'Common good' relating to the domestic unit is also evident in the way the Hamar keep goats, sheep and camels as a store of wealth upon which to rely in conditions of need and when the normal avenues of securing income close down (at present animals can even be sold to repay ENSAP loans). The domestic group considers these animals as belonging collectively to the whole household and each member is therefore keen to look after them. For example, donkeys

which are the main means of transportation are used by almost all household members indiscriminately. In this regard "ownership relations become relevant only when the object is to be sold or temporarily given to a non-member of the domestic group" (Stuchlik,1976:80), such as when a neighbour borrows a donkey for transportaion.

There are instances where prestations occurred between close kin from different households, we note that the notion of 'common good' is intensively expressed in the farmers' verbal statements in the ENSAP context. This is in cases where ENSAP funds are manipulated by recipients. Thus a participant farmer from Um Sidair village (which joined the project in the 1991 season) who received an ENSAP loan remarked that "as I am motivated by religious opinion not to use an ENSAP loan, I shall take it and pass it away to my sister's son who usually tends my animals". The fact is his sister's son (from a different household) was not eligible to receive an ENSAP loan, but the farmer was attaching primacy to the indigenous ideology of 'collective good' over the agency's stipulations relating to loan use.

The household has clear corporate functions. Be it the elementary or the extended family type the head of the household is the one who usually decides on the organisation of the household economic affairs. It is he who decides on the number of makhamsat (1 makhamas=1.79 acres) to be cultivated and the way available resources are to be allocated. While his relations with the unmarried adults and children are largely paternalistic, with married members of the household they are those of co-operation and inter-dependence. The wife on the other hand is treated with respect; she is the 'mother' for all household members, who decides on the household work and jubraka activities carried out by the women in the residence.

Similarly indicative of household corporateness, in cases of nafir recruitment people who join the nafir from another domestic group stand as representatives of their whole household. Such representation is recognised only if the participant is above twelve years of age since this is roughly the age at which a village youth's labour is considered to be equal to that of an adult.

Note that a household head can even decide who should represent the household in other people's nafirs.

In extended family households the importance of male authority in the domestic group becomes evident when conflict arises between a married son and his wife. In such a case the head of the household, i.e. the son's father, often assisted by adult neighbours, could arrange a joudia (lit. traditional session for dispute resolution held by the elders), to be held in the house, in which a solution is sought to restore the conflict. It is very difficult to turn down a decision of the joudia as this is socially unacceptable.

2.2 Village Society At Large:

The inhabitants of a single project village, whether they are from the majority Hamar tribe or not (see e.g.. previous chapter), generally conceive of their society as a single organised system. This is contrary to how things were when their ancestors first arrived in the area. In the past the Hamar alone considered themselves autochthonous inhabitants of the land since the area itself, Dar Hamar, was derived from Dar (i.e. the homeland) and Hamar (collective name of the specific tribe of people). For this reason the early Hamar settlers viewed themselves as the original owners of the land which is presently shared with the non-Hamar tribes. Today, however, that conception has faded and all people living in the area see themselves as one ahal (lit. all relatives, or, kinsmen). The various non-Hamar tribal groups who entered Dar Hamar and lived among the Hamar have established strong social ties of friendship, acquaintance and marriage. In addition co-operation at nafirs, weddings and funerals has brought these people into closer contact with one another.

A related factor is language. The fact that nearly all the various groups use the Arabic language as the main medium of communication has stimulated a feeling of unified identity and of belonging together. This feeling of unified identity is plainly observable in their contact with people from Dar Fur such as the Zaghawa, who are bilingual. Thus the non-Hamar groups, upon meeting Zaghawa, tend to identify themselves with their Hamar co-inhabitants who

speak Arabic, rather than uphold common cause with the Zaghawa (for example by clinging to their non-Arabic dialect). Yet other factors contributing to unity between Hamar and non-Hamar in Dar Hamar are the typical forms of houses, dress, consumption patterns and predilection for sociability which appear to be common among all these people.

A key observation is that all villagers in the area are farmers cultivating the same cash and food crops with the same type of farm implements, labour and even rituals (see chapter 7).

An important feature of social life in the project villages is the marked generosity and hospitality extended to guests and strangers. What has been stated earlier by Ensor (in the previous chapter) of the Hamar that he "never heard of their having ill-treated..any stranger" (in MacMichael, 1912:86), not to mention his description of them as the most amiable class of people of Kordofan province, well describes the inherent hospitality of all tribal groups in this area.

This is overtly expressed in people's local proverbs that "when a passer-by diverts to this area to be referred to the correct destination not only will he be entertained, he also will be personally escorted outside the village until the right way is found". This hospitality is repeatedly expressed by ENSAP visiting teams who came to report in their notes that "a very appreciable social phenomenon in the project area is the clients' arrangement of karama (here refers to a sacrifice) for the project staff visiting the villages". The visiting team will never escape being served a meal upon its arrival in the project villages.

2.3 Recruitment Into Social And Economic Spheres:

Local village people have a set of economic relations which guide recruitment into economic spheres. These include a) the land tenure system, b) the right to use land in another neighbouring village, c) land use through lease, d) engaging in sharaka (sharecropping) with a labourer (see chapter 3), and e) co-operation at social events.

a) The Land Tenure System:

As we have seen in the previous chapter, from their early days of settlement in Dar Hamar up to the present period, the Hamar have experienced almost a radical change from an economy which was largely nomadic to one that is characteristically sedentary agriculture. During the colonial period and even until shortly after national independence (1956/57) land was considered common property among the domestic groups forming the local community. The village skeikhs would allocate the land to individuals by virtue of membership in the community.

i) Village Versus Awarrat:

Village and awarrat refer to different social groups (as mentioned above). The group of people in a village as we have established, draw entitlement to the use of land by their being administratively recognised on the part of the municipal council. Each administratively registered village is assigned a sheikh to officiate on village affairs. An awarrat (satellite hamlets or villages), on the other hand, theoretically has no legal existence as concerns land tenure since the land on which it is established belongs to the main/administrative village. The areet (plural of awarrat) is the collectivity satellite villages (non-administrative) drawing social services from a main/ administrative village. The largest areet in the project area was that for Rasheed village which included seventeen satellite villages; for Dirra it was nine . The smallest was reported for El Halfaya village with three satellite villages. Recently, however, population density had necessitated opening new land in the areet .

Some main/administrative villages derive their names from persons, for example Abu Geid and Kirja. Other main/administrative villages were named after natural features, for example Murabaat (lit. squares), which refer to the four trees at the four corners in which the village is located. On contrast, most of the villages in an areet draw their names from the persons or the tribal sub-division living in it. However, the naming of a village or an awarrat after an early settler (mostly a sheikh) does not imply that ownership of the land all reverts to him. He is only required to allocate and regulate land use to late comers, thanks to his knowledge about land boundaries.

Fathers pass usufruct rights to land by inheritance to the male sons. This entitlement to use the land in the village or its areet does not end if the land owner moves to another village. The same land tenure laws established on behalf of land surrounding the main/administrative villages apply for the areet. However, the final word lies with the sheikh who could eventually deny an individual's right of use to land if such an individual fails to put this land into cultivation for ten consecutive years.

Women, on their part, own jubraka fields on which they grow consumption crops as well as some additional cash crops. Almost every married woman had one or two jubraka gardens. These are obtained upon marriage from the husband who is required to make such a plot of land ready prior to the consummation of marriage as women grow in age they transfer the use of their jubraka to their daughters who continue producing for the good of the whole household. Widows also establish the right of use for this purpose over the inherited land in the deceased husband's farms, especially when her children are still below marriageable age.

But men are observed to make the agricultural decisions not just in the main farm, but for the women in jubraka as well. In Barnawi village male farmers even prohibited their women from receiving ENSAP loans. This led to the sabotage of the jubraka loans which ENSAP delivered in that village.

When a family expands its land holding by moving to the awarrat, then, even young sons can secure rights in the cultivable land provided that the land is cultivated for the common good of the household. Meanwhile the father will supervise the cultivation of the original plot in the main/administrative village. While this pattern of moving a part of the family to work in the areet farms can lead to the expansion in the total area cultivated, it also results in improper allocation of household labour since land fragmentation implies a waste of labour time and resources.

Unlike the main/administrative village the awarrat generally lacks structured-ness in the sense that its houses are sparsely scattered. The exception are those which are fully developed into administrative villages (e.g. Murabaat was an awarrat for Kirja). Thus an awarrat normally lacks basic infra-structure such as schools, health units, markets etc. Nor does its populace form village committees as happens in the main/- administrative villages. If a joudia is called to settle a particular problem relating to two persons from the same awarrat the meeting is usually arranged in the house of one of the disputants since they will consider themselves as ahal. To take the matter outside the confines of the awarrat is to negate this concept of being related and is tantamount to their considering one another as strangers who usually settle their disputes through the court.

Most of the areet covered in my field work were inhabited by homogeneous social groups who are agnatically related and from the same subdivision. Thus, relating to El Halfaya village, the Gharaysia awarrat is Homogeneously inhabited by the Gharaysia Hamar who belong to one kinship group. They live in ten agnatically related but dispersed households. The same is true of the Bideiria awarrat of El Halfaya which encompasses thirteen isolated households.

Due to its tiny size an awarrat's members invariably marry exogamously, usually with a partner from the main/administrative village to which it belongs. The agnatic/patrilocal pattern in areet organisation results. Thus with regard to the main/administrative village of Kirja ninety five percent of the male married household members of its areet claimed that they had secured their wives from the main/administrative village; similarly , with regard to the main village, El Halfaya married males in the Gharaysia awarrat and ninety eight percent of the Bideiria awarrat claimed that their partners were from the main/administrative village. So it was commonly mentioned by people in the areet that marrying wives from the main/administrative village resulted in matrilineal ties with the people of the latter community. This in turn gave rise to mutual co-operation on occasions of recruitment for social and economic help (e.g. wedding, funerals and nafirs).

b) The right to use land in another village:

As we have seen earlier, the right to use land in another village is

enjoyed by villagers who seek adequate fertile land for cultivation while the main family lives in the original village which provides better services and shelter. An example is the villagers of Abu Rai who use Seranbi land mainly for agricultural production and return to their 'home' village during the off-farming season. As one establishes the right to use land in a neighbouring village it eventually passes through inheritance to the male son who becomes directly entitled to its use. From among eighteen Abu Rai farmers participating in the project on Seranbi land eleven had inherited the land use from their fathers whilst the latter were still living in Abu Rai village where social services make life more comfortable to stay. The remaining seven farmers had established the right to the use of land on their own initiative.

c) Land Use Through Lease:

Land lease in the project villages is rare but it can occur between two farmers from neighbouring villages, where one has abundant fertile land and the other has not. An arrangement is made whereby land use is conferred on a person for an agreed period of time for an agreed amount of money. Thus in Murabaat village, prior to the introduction of ENSAP project, this amount of money was specified at LS 50 per makhamas. The arrangement involves the presence of at least two other persons one for each of the two parties to witness the deal.

Moreover, the disposal of land outside the community membership has become a rare phenomenon. In the past land lease was commonly effected with a new entrant into the village community who could use it for a number of successive years. Today this practice is very rare (observed only in Murabaat village). We have seen in the previous chapter that in the past the need by a village sheikh to extract taxes from the residents had played a crucial role in the provision of rights over land use. Thus a new entrant into the community could establish access to the land by merely being linked into community membership by a close neighbour or

a person of acquaintance from the same subdivision already settled in the community, or by directly approaching the sheikh with a demand for a plot of land.

2.4 Cases of Economic Co-operation:

In the previous pages we have provided an analysis of the relation among groups in the community and the bases of recruitment. That analysis, however, provides a normative statement of what occurs (i.e. the conscious model) in a generalised descriptive form. In the following I move to actual situations of economic co-operation as they have taken place in the project communities.

As we have seen the elementary or the joint extended family domestic group organises agricultural activities aimed at the sustenance of the household and to cover cash needs. In actuality these economic activities often call for the co-operation of people from beyond the unit of the domestic group. Such co-operation involves people from the same subdivision or even individuals from the society at large who are familiar with the organisers of the co-operative work. In our analysis below we deal with three main types of formalised economic co-operation in the project villages. These include a) the nafir, b) hired labour and c) sharaka.

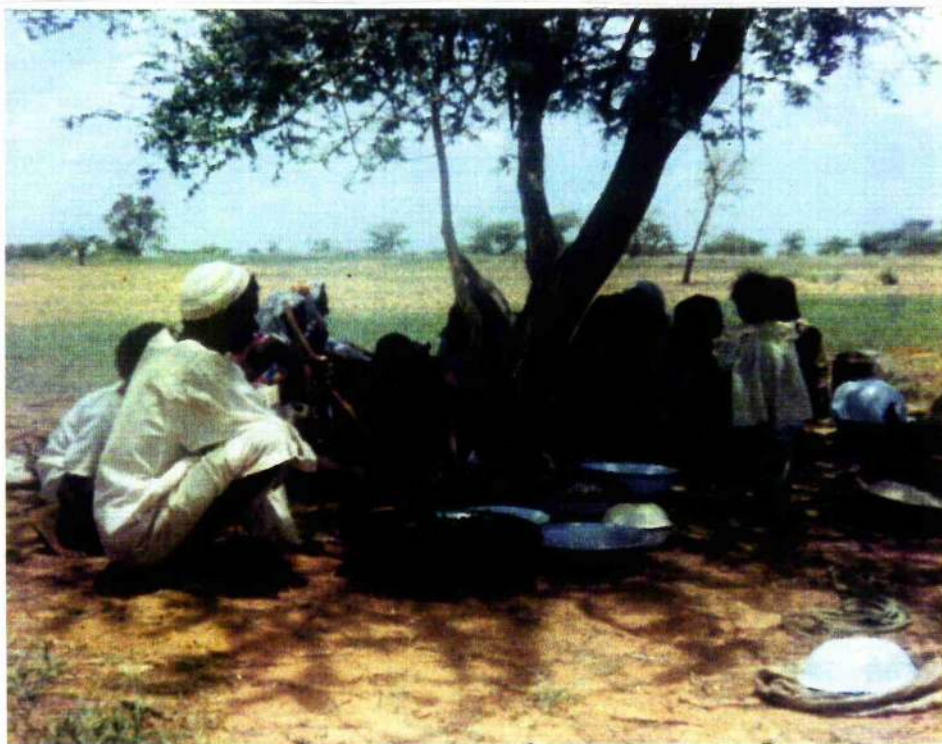
2.4.1.a Nafirs In Dirra, Murabaat and El Halfaya Villages:

During the weeding phase through July and August 1990 Dirra, Murabaat and El Halfaya villages had organised a large number of nafirs which were systematically reciprocated by the participants and the organisers. Only nafirs arranged among farmers participating in ENSAP project are treated here. The following, from the villages mentioned above, are given as representative of nafirs in the project area. There was obvious practical difficulty in enumerating all nafirs summoned in the project villages due to a) their multiplicity and b) the mobility of the researcher from one village to another at the time such activities were organised.

The following case studies are presented to reveal the nature of the relationship between the organiser of the economic activity and the participants.



An active nafir: El Hafaya, 1990



Entertainment of nafir participants: El Halfaya, 1990

2.4.1.b Nafir in Dirra 11. 8. 1990:

<u>organiser</u>	<u>participants from</u> <u>the domestic group</u>	<u>neighbours from</u> <u>same village</u>	<u>participants</u> <u>from an areet</u>
Omara Eisa	2 brothers 1 wife 1 F.B 1 son	4 close neighbours distant neighbours	1 from Um Darota 1 from Um Sa'ata
totals	5	7	2

2.4.1.c Nafir in Rasheed; 12.8.1990

Adam Salih	1 wife 2 sons 1 brother 1 sisters' son 1 daughter's son	9 close neighbours 7 distant neighbours	2 from Ahmadia 1 Jidada 3 Jadel Sid
totals	6	16	6

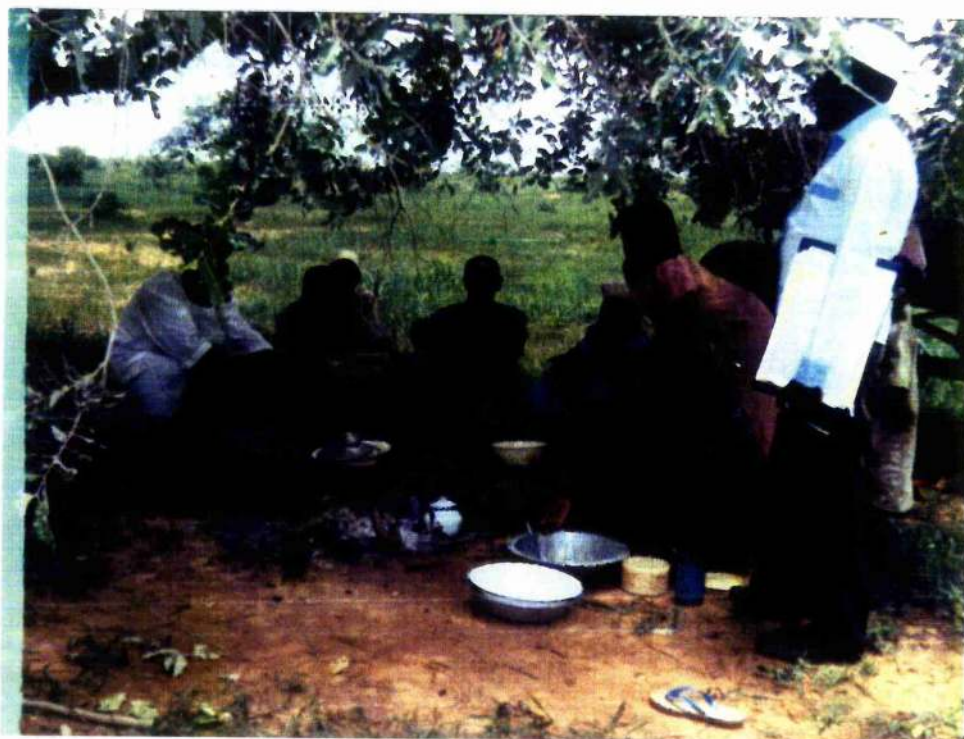
2.4.1.d Nafirs in Murabaat; 13.8.1990:

nafir No. 1

Hamid Hamdan	1 son	15 close neighbours 4 distant neighbours	none
totals	1	19	



nafir in Murabaat, 1990



Murabaat: food preparation for nafir participants,
AFE watching, 1990.

<u>organizers</u>	<u>Participants from</u>	<u>neighbours from same</u>	<u>participants</u>
	<u>the domestic group</u>	<u>village</u>	<u>from an areet</u>

nafir No. 2

an old woman	1 grand son	
	1 daughter	1 female (close) neighbours
		4 distant neighbours
totals	2	5

nafir No. 3

sheikh's nafir

(verbally gathered)	10 kinsmen	52 close+distant neighbours	38 all
			participants
			from an <u>areet</u>
totals	10	52	38

2.4.1.e nafir in El Halfaya; 14.8.1990

Ajab Ahmed Ajab

	11 brothers' sons	same kinsmen	
		also close neighbours	none
	3 brothers		
	6 sons		
	1 wife		
	4 brothers' daughters		
	2 daughters		
	2 sisters		
totals	29		

The cases make it clear that the contribution of the participants from the non-domestic group recruited for economic co-operation is well above that of the members of the domestic group organising the activity.

2.4.2 Hired Labour Involving Local Village Members:

Hired labour is generally in short supply within most of the project villages. Thus the most common form is to hire a labourer from another village. But farmers who do hire internally justify their decisions on moral grounds, as providing services to distant neighbours instead of favouring a non-villager. Hired labour occurs largely between local farmers and labourers who come from neighbouring villages, and only occasionally does it occur between farmers from the same village community. But here are some cases.

a) El Sadig Omer is a farmer from Um Sidair village who participated in the ENSAP project in the 1990 season. He is married and lives with his family. As his own children were too small to graze his animals he employed his sister's son to do the job. This was not a paid job, however, but he rewarded his sister's son by giving him ENSAP loans since he himself thinks it irreligious to use loans (this case has been mentioned earlier in this chapter). The loan is then given back to El Sadig at the end of the harvesting season to repay it to the project credit staff. Had ENSAP not been available, El Sadig states, he should have rewarded his sister's son by giving him a newly born sheep in return for one year's work. Others, he claimed, follow this latter rule. In this case El Sadig's justification was that it was advisable for moral reasons to employ his sister's son as the reward passing to the latter would ultimately boost the economic standing of the whole domestic unit. Should he employ a distant villager or an outsider then he would risk losing such an advantage.

b) Osman El A'ajib employed two distant neighbours from his own village, El Riteirit, at LS 150 per makhamas to do the weeding labour in his farm in the 1989 season. He heads a family composed of two children who belong to his long-absent brother and for whose responsibility Osman has for the time being, received no economic reward.

c) Hamad Na'man employed a distant neighbour for weeding his farm at LS 200 per makhamas. He is married and has three daughters. His wife and daughters were fully engaged in the cultivation of the jubraka crops while he devoted his time working on the main farm. He often arranges a nafir should hired labour prove difficult to recruit.

d) Zeinab Mastur, a widow farmer with three little sons and a daughter over five years of age lived in Wida'a village. She employed an acquaintance of her dead husband to do the farm work. The relation between the dead husband and the labourer was established when both were staying in another area called El Majrur. When in 1988 the labourer was passing through Wida'a village looking for hired work he preferred to work with Zeinab by virtue of his friendship with her dead husband. He did not claim monetary payment at the ruling wage rates but received free entertainment and justified his refusal on moral grounds.

2.5 Sharaka (sharecropping):

Sharecropping is a form of economic arrangement in which a land owner recruits a migrant labourer (usually a Dinka) to perform agricultural production operations, usually on a half-share basis. Though, in rare cases a labourer from the same locality may be a part of the sharaka deal. It is usually established on behalf of the production of cash crops (groundnuts). The arrangement lasts for one season though success can lead to future renewal (this is fully elaborated in chapter 3).

2.5.1 Cases of Sharaka in Selected Villages:

Ideally, sharaka occurs between a village farmer and outsiders, given that security measures can be obtained, normally in terms of trust. The following cases of sharaka, which obtain between members of the same community (or as the result of intermediation by a village member or a relative), are largely based on strong social ties between the farmer and the labourer. Close social ties which obtain as a result of friendship, acquaintance or neighbourhood are deemed satisfactory to ensure mutual trust and honesty. When the parties are not so related illegal acts are liable to prosecution at the court. But such measures would not be applied against someone who is considered to be related to the other partner since in this

instance non-fulfilment would be a matter of 'shame'. The following cases of sharaka are largely based on "relatedness" by friendship, acquaintance, neighbourhood or even by the ritual of "eating together from the same dish", locally referred to as lingi (this ritual rules out any probability of dishonesty (see below).

a) El Sheikh EL Tigani, a married farmer lived with his family in the middle of El Riteirit village. He employed two unrelated villagers from El Riteirit on a sharaka basis for the production of groundnuts. His children were below the working age of seven. The two villagers are on a lingi relation with his brother, and consequently, lingi applies to him as well.

b) El Tom Suleiman, a married farmer with a big family of ten members lived in El Riteirit village. He contributed two sacks of groundnuts for a sharaka arrangement with his friend who supplied seven sacks (in 1989) on his part. The proceeds of the sales after the harvesting period were then divided according to the share of each part in the arrangement. El Tom was unable to solicit Dinka labourers for the sharaka due to the latter already supplying their labour on a sharaka basis elsewhere.

c) Halima Ahmed, an old widow in a family composed of three children lived in Wida'a village in the neighbourhood of the village sheikh. Her sons were at a marriageable age (late twenties and early thirties). She engaged in a sharaka arrangement with a poor unmarried labourer from the same village in 1989. The labourer had an acquaintance relationship with one of the sons who helped him arrange the sharaka with his mother. The son had found it reasonable to recruit a person of acquaintance to do the sharaka work since he himself was engaged in off-farm employment.

These forms of sharaka were considered as situations of economic help within the one village community and thus largely differ from the sharaka in its pure economic form as arranged with outsiders (i.e. the Dinka). Fuller analysis of sharaka is given in next chapter.

2.6 Co-operation At Social Events:

Co-operation at social events is exemplified by the organisation of rituals in one community which involves the participation of other communities.

The following is a case of a funerary ritual in Dirra village in 1990 which is typical of rituals in the other project villages in terms of recruitment of the participants. The funeral ritual was organised in the sheikh's house.

Funerary ritual in Dirra ,11th August 1990:

<u>Organiser</u>	<u>Villages Sending Participants</u>	<u>No. of participants</u>
<u>Sheikh</u> Mohamed Ibeidalla		
	Rasheed	21
	Safi el Din(<u>areet</u> for Rasheed)	4
	Adam Abbakar(<u>areet</u> for Rasheed)	5
	Abdel Bagi (<u>areet</u> for Rasheed)	6
	Himeir Salim	13
	Ghubeish town	9
	En Nahud town	4
	Tyba	5
	Sineinat	1
	Ibeid	6
	Al Li'ayit Abu Hibeilat	2

Participation in social events is largely guided by the norm of reciprocity.

Where organiser and recruited live in two independent villages the recruitment of participants is determined by personal knowledge of the organiser of the ritual and by friendship, kinship or marriage ties. Usually the information about the ritual comes to the participants either through a word of mouth or by gossip among the villagers in common places such as the village

market, or else by sending a letter through intermediary acquaintances. The funerary ritual of Dirra (above), though representative of funerary rituals in the area, in fact recruited a large number of participants relative to the average of those organised by ordinary villagers. The reason was that the sheikh of Dirra has a broader scope of personal knowledge and social relations than the average village man.

2.6.1 Karama:

Karama is a form of offering based on religious beliefs and is locally considered as sadaga (lit. the Islamic form of almsgiving). It strictly differs from sadaga in that it is offered in public by a group of people in the form of commensality, while sadaga is paid to the poor on an individual basis (for more detail on commensality see below).

Karama is intended to ensure the favor of supernatural forces (mainly God) or else is made as thanksgiving on behalf of a recently recovered seriously ill person. It is also observed to be practised to ward off bad omen days, such as Wednesday in the Wahid (Arabic: Saffar) month. The most commonly practised karama ritual in the project villages is that for ensuring a good harvesting season. Thus Rasheed village arranged two karamas in the 1990 season, one for rainfall and the other for the Wahid month carried out on Wednesday. Barnawi village, on the other hand, arranged two karamas in August 1990 to break a long subna (drought). El Halfaya and Seranbi villages also each arranged a karama in the same season for rainfall.

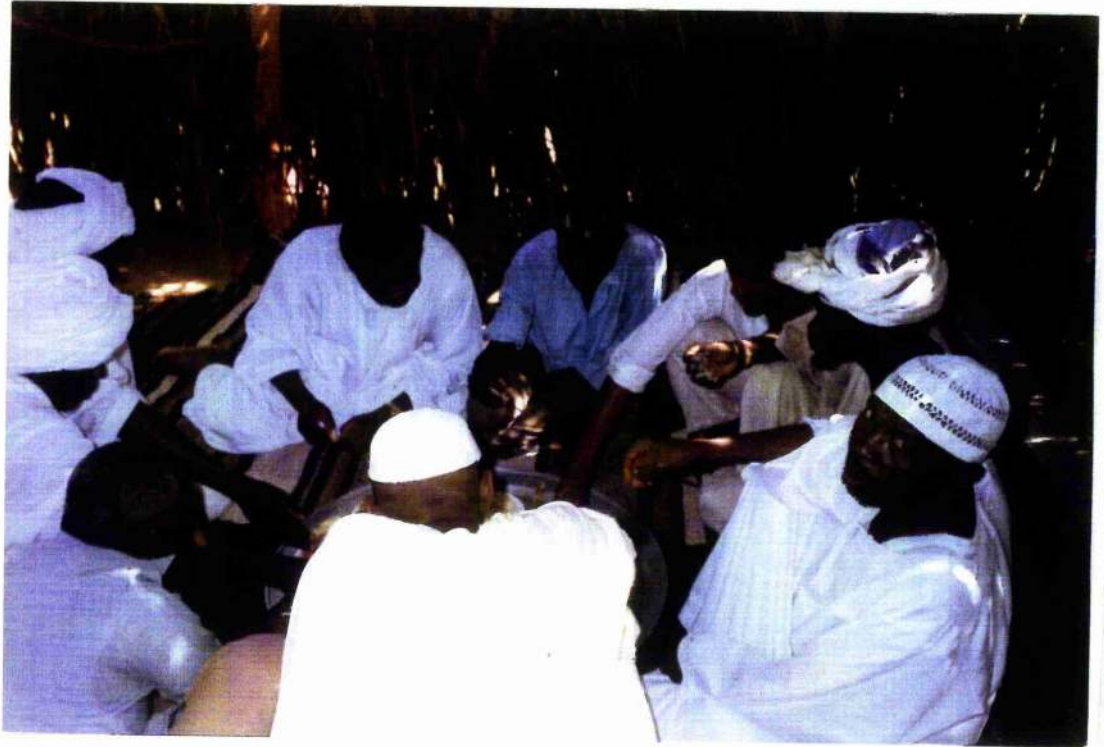
A karama ritual is decided upon by a group of farmers who congregate in a common place in the village. The idea is first raised by one of the participants who mentions that the farm's fortunes are gravely affected by a long subna. He then suggests that it would be helpful to arrange a karama. Others express their agreement and a plan is made to raise money for the ritual. On the appointed day a sheep is killed early in the morning and all men participants share in the preparation of food. Passers-by are invited for entertainment as the ritual is usually performed in the street so that a large number of people may test the food to secure more blessing.

The karama has its principal participants those who planned the ritual and raised the financial donations and a secondary group who join later in the preparation and distribution of food. An average cost of a karama in the villages in 1990 was LS 300. The participants are entertained with meat and tea and upon the conclusion of the ritual a collective du'a (invocation of God, see chapter 7) is performed and the gathering dissolves.

A Wahid karama is usually planned two to three weeks in advance, the planning starting approximately during the middle of the month preceding Wahid. It has become a custom that information regarding Wahid is mediated by the elders since it is the elders who keep their records in terms of the Islamic calendar. As local villagers get informed that Wahid is approaching volunteers eventually visit their neighbours for donations for the imminent ritual. A sacrificial animal is bought (a goat or sheep) and the participants move outside the village to perform the ritual. As usual the ritual gets started with the sacrificial killing and is concluded by a collective du'a. This time the objective is not rainfall but for the supernatural to spare the villagers the bad omens of this particular day in that particular month. The people of Rasheed village who arranged the Wahid karama in the 1990 season stated that "the reason for arranging this ritual particularly on Wednesday of the Wahid is that the Arabs [meaning the Hamar] believed that the grave of prophet Adam was dug on this specific day..and for this reason we do not go to work on Wednesday of Wahid". Recruitment into a karama ritual is according to neighbourhood relations, though kinsmen or persons from the same domestic group could be among the participants.

2.7 Commensality:

Eating together is usually practised among the members of the same domestic group, or occasionally the participants in social events such as wedding, funerals and karama. Men eat separately from women. Food is served in the rakuba (see the photo below) where men congregate, and the young children serve the food for the men. Guests also share the domestic group's food. What has been observed by Stuchlik (1976:173) with respect to the Mapuche



Commensality in En Nahud.

misa (food eating ritual) is the same for the villagers of Dar Hamar: future behaviour and the social relations between two persons is influenced by who has eaten from the same dish. Thus the term lingi refers to a relationship that has been established between two persons, mostly friends, as a result of sharing the same food for a prolonged period of time (not by chance or once and for all). The difference between the Mapuche misa and the Hamar lingi, however, is that while misa between two persons can be "done ceremonially with the purpose of instituting a misa relationship, or more or less by chance" (1976:174), lingi gets established only when one party has lived with the other in his home for some time and without intending that a lingi relationship will be instituted. Moreover a lingi, once established between two persons can apply to their respective families.

A lingi relationship, once established, sets well defined rights and obligations for both parties who should abide by its rules. Rights and obligations involve mutual help when conditions necessitate, respect and, above all, trust. People in fact usually talk of lingi when one party has already 'broken' the lingi. Criticism is voiced through gossip that these people had eaten the lingi with one another yet one of them had betrayed his partner (partnership in terms of a joint business, trade or friendship). Once broken it would be too difficult to restore. As a matter of fact no actual case of lingi was observed in the fieldwork, though it is expressed in people's verbal statements.

2.8 Egocentric Versus Polyegocentric Group:

Nafir is organised as an egocentric group while Aljuhda sha'abi, funerals and karama rituals involve a polyegocentric group. Stuchlik deploys the concept of egocentric group to refer to situations of recruitment in which

the participants do not enter the situation on the basis of any relationship they may have among themselves, but on the relationship each of them has with the organiser. In fact, this group is composed of a series of dyads all of which have one constant member (1976:188).

We have seen that participants in a nafir decide on participating according to the relationship they have with the organiser, in our case locality and kinship being important but not necessarily determinant of recruitment. This is typically egocentric in the sense that nafir composition cannot be derived from the existence of any particular perduring group defined in terms of kinship or locality. Egocentrality in recruitment should reveal distinct social preferences which relate to socio-spatial distance. Thus more preferred will be close neighbours who are also close relatives (as we have seen in the case of the nafir arranged by the Halfaya villagers, cited above), then a distant relative who is also a neighbour, then distant neighbours (neighbours are within the village).

A polyegocentric group is formed in situations where it is not a single individual but a group which organises the affair, and which recruits a large group of associated participants.

Thus in the case of a karama the collective organiser is a group of kins-men and neighbours, for aljuhda sha'abi it is the village community and for a funeral it is a section of the village. The process may be easily understood as a series of egocentric groups each with single organiser and participant recruits linked together at the level of organisers to form one collective group: thus the polyegocentric group. The point to be established here is that in the process of recruitment the organising group does not work corporately. Since the individual organisers recruit their own participant groups which then merge together, the polyegocentric group which results does not (similarly to the egocentric group) form a perduring group (cf. 1976:189). This results in recruitment organisation varying along a spectrum from a situation in which a participant/organiser clearly recognises those with whom he is involved as his own relations, to another situation where he recognises no such relationships (since these participants on their part have relations with other organisers from the polyegocentric group). Thus, in aljuhda sha'abi, for instance, where the mass of local people is mobilised for, say, building a school it is likely that an organiser (or one of the organisers) works hand by hand with a participant whom he personally does not know. Typically a polyegocentric group is formed when each organiser forms his own network of social relations independently of the

rest of the domestic group with whom he shares the same house. Thus, a member of a household who happens to visit an awarrat or a neighbouring village market for business could form acquaintance relations with some of its residents which later could result in them being brought in as active members in a funeral arranged by him. Such was the case with the funeral arranged by the sheikh of Dirra in 1990. Some of the participants in the funeral whom the sheikh did not recognise were close friends of his neighbour who later told him that they were his own guests who also came to share in the ritual.

The concept of the egocentric group has refracts on certain aspects of the ENSAP project. Since ENSAP works through a Jamaa (lit. group) which revolves around a particular damin (guarantor), then this group in its process of formation would follow the procedure of recruitment into an egocentric group (group or Jamaa formation is discussed in chapter 4). Suffice it to be mentioned here that each guarantor selects participants (i.e. members into his Jamaa) on the basis of physical proximity such as the same awarrat or a neighbouring areet.

An 'association' (an organised development grouping which is composed of many Jamaas, see chapter 4) in ENSAP is a good example of a polyego-centric group. It is formed by the merging together in one body of the respective groups representing different Jamaas. Thus we have the following Jamaas in selected project villages which collectively form an 'association'.

Table (2)

<u>Village</u>	<u>No. of Jamaa</u> (i.e. No. of egocentric group)	<u>Total No. of members recruited into</u> <u>the 'association'</u>
Wad Gassim	5	18
Wad Mitgil	5	15
Dirra	8	48
Rasheed	6	31
Um Sidair	8	61
Tamba	8	43
Barnawi	8	35
Sernbi	6	19
Murabaat	16	112
El Halfaya	7	36
Abu Geid	7	47
Sabi	11	73
El Riteirit	12	67

Source: fieldwork.

One fact occurred to me concerning the way interaction develops within the polyegocentric group, which was not mentioned by Stuchlik. It was observed that in the early days of an 'association' (i.e. polyegocentric group) individual farmers would tend to initiate interaction solely around their own Jamaa due to previous social relations with the co-Jamaa members (thus polyegocentricity). Eventually however, as time passed and the 'association' meetings and activities became more intensive and frequent (after several months in most of the cases) members from one Jamaa within the 'association' started to enlarge the sphere of their interaction by developing further interaction with members from the other Jamaas in the 'association'. Towards the end of the season, and working together in the project, all 'association's' members had merged together by virtue of the newly established links of social

relations. As a result, and this is the point to be established here, the polyegocentric group lapsed into a form of egocentric group as one member from the whole association could now recruit every other member for situations of economic help such as the nafir or the karama. Thus have argued the farmers of El Halfaya to whom the case pertains.

2.9 Inter-village Relations (between neighbouring villages):

The independence of every village is frequently disturbed by market contact with neighbouring villages, by children's attendance at schools located in a neighbouring village and by the sharing of particular social services with other villages (e.g. health unit, grain mill or water yard).

Market villages are recognised as distinctive venues and the people gathering every week in the market become permanently interrelated, and therefore well known to each other, as for example, specialist merchants and their customers. For instance, the merchant at Abu Rai serves up to ten neighbouring villages. These markets are open all days of the week but become crowded during the market days of Monday or Wednesday. In the markets, merchants supply grain and consumption goods such as sugar, tea, coffee and cooking oil. Women from the village or neighbouring villages supply eggs, chicken, cowpeas, cucumber, pots, firewood, yoghurts, pepper and home made handicrafts such as mats bags and hats. Hawkers supply farm implements such as knives, axes, hashasha (weeding tool) and threads for making angareibs (lit. beds). Some supply animals such as goats, sheep, donkeys, camels and cattle.

A village market opens as early as eight o'clock in the morning and lasts until five in the evening. First suppliers come carrying their goods and later come the buyers from the same village, from the areet and from the neighbouring villages. The market place provides an arena for gossip, sociability and flow of information. Such news as weddings, funerals and divorces taking place or about to take place in the area is quickly spread between the merchants and local producers and their customers and then still further when they return home. Farmers,

especially, consider the main village markets as indispensable for procuring agricultural tools and chemicals such as aldrin which is also supplied by the project to the farmers participating in ENSAP. Moreover, farmers will have developed linkages with the villagers living in the market villages, resulting in friendship and acquaintance. Visits are made by people from the distant villages to their friends in the market villages and gifts are often exchanged. In addition to the marketing business the villagers enjoy making trips to these neighbouring villages and consider it as a break from the routine of the village life.

Again, the areet of the main/administrative village which usually seem quite separate become well integrated with it in the day market as all villagers merge together.

Market villages have played a significant role in disseminating information related to ENSAP project. Farmers from the different villages will gather in the village market to discuss matters related to the project. For instance a project team which was surveying some villages for the delivery of loans or agricultural inputs might upon concluding its tasks in one or two villages declare that it intends to cover other specified neighbouring villages as well. When farmers from the villages visited by the project team meet in the village market with other farmers participating in ENSAP whom the team has not yet reached, then the latter get ready to receive the project team with full attendance.

Equally, when ENSAP's visiting team approaches the project villages in preparation for the delivery of services the village markets are taken to provide a favourable occasion and place to meet with participating farmers. Farmers who met the project team in the village market will in turn inform their fellows about the results of the meeting when they return to their villages. Also in the market farmers in a village who had not succeeded in performing well in applying the 'propuxure' chemical recommended by the project for combating local pests would hear positive views from other village farmers who had succeeded in applying the chemical. Again, illiterate farmers from Seranbi village would meet in the village market Murabaat farmers who were relatively more literate, and would benefit when the latter could explain the

information embodied in Daleel ENSAP (lit. ENSAP's guide; it is a newsletter by which extension messages are disseminated) which the project distributes to supplement the extension messages delivered by the AFE's.

The market villages also play the role of financing rural farmers in occasions of need. A buyer who had established strong social relations with a merchant in the village market would approach the merchant for the purchase of items he needs without paying in cash. Repayment would usually be postponed until after the harvesting period, preferably when the farmer had marketed his crops. Farmers who approached the village merchant in the weekly markets appreciated being able to borrow from the latter without running the risk of having their crop prices underestimated. Were the village merchant to refuse to lend money to the small farmer then the farmer would have to borrow from the sheil merchants (money lenders) with the probable adverse consequence of the value of their produce being underestimated.

Most of the administrative villages possess a nahas (i.e. chiefly drums; this was described in the previous chapter) kept in the sheikh's house. Adjacent villages which share social services with the main/ administrative village have developed with one another strong relations of mutual defence and the nahas is used as an alarm to announce and summon villagers from such neighbouring villages for collective action against an impending danger (e.g. robbery of animals etc.). The villagers thus summoned arrive in numbers to defend their main/administrative village against the intruder.

Intervillage religious practices were confined to Friday prayer when the people from the smaller villages join a mosque in a neighbouring village.

Rain-making rituals would also bring people from the neighbouring villages, especially during drought periods when the lack of rainfall affects all the surrounding villages alike. These activities are more intense, however, between a main/administrative village and the surrounding areet than between two large main/administrative villages.

As the commercial economy has penetrated the rural villages of Ghubeish the farmers have become increasingly dependent upon the imported goods and services not locally produced. Thus the market towns supply the local farmers with their basic needs of clothes and consumption items such as tea, coffee and sugar. This has resulted in greater contact between the village community and the outside world.

The most prominent market towns immediately beyond the villages presently participating in ENSAP and with which greater contacts were developed include Sug'el Jamal in the north of Ghubeish rural council and En Nahud town in the north-east of Ghubeish. The villages in Ghubeish rural council which lie closer to En Nahud town, such as El Halfaya village, tend to approach the town market for trade. Moreover farmers from El Halfaya village have built trade relations with merchants from En Nahud town who purchase the agricultural produce supplied by these village farmers. The farmers of the El Halfaya are motivated by the lucrative prices offered by the merchants in En Nahud town - thanks to the Daleel ENSAP which the project supplies to its participating farmers in which crop prices ruling in En Nahud are included.

Chapter 3

Agricultural And Economic Patterns

This part of the thesis attempts to delineate the pre-existing farming system in the project area so that we may be allowed to later evaluate the fitness of the ENSAP project, including how it is likely to affect the traditional farming patterns. Overall, it provides a descriptive analysis of the basic features and agricultural and economic patterns, of the traditional system. we will reveal that the traditional system is constrained from expanding production for the market by both capital shortage and simplicity of techniques, as well as environmental hazards. This also results in low incomes to farmers. It will also be shown how both household and hired labour are assigned to the various agricultural operations, in addition to the recruitment of communal work groups (nafirs) for the weeding operations. Sharaka (which partly discussed in the previous chapter) is also fully demonstrated to occupy a modest place in the traditional farming system. After comparing the sharaka with the hired labour system it is suggested that an alternative system of hired labour is most conducive to ENSAP project smallholders if the project is to achieve its target of "significantly increasing the levels of income for the participating farmers".

3.1 Evolution of the Traditional farming system:

In line with Making (1967), the transformation process relating to the evolution of peasant farms could be described in three stages: traditional, transitional and commercial farming. In the first stage the techniques of production are static and traditional, in which case the farm is inseparable from the household. Production is primarily for consumption. It is also characterized by the absence of scientific research, and extension, credit and marketing facilities. The second stage marks a slight weakening

in the farm-household relationship with the development of an orientation to purchase part of the agricultural tools or inputs from the market. Credit, extension and marketing become more important. In the third stage the farm-household relationship tends to become severed and production decisions come to be based on rational calculations and expectations of economic returns by orientating the farming enterprise into commercial business. Institutions are well developed to back farmers in producing increasingly for the market.

Applying this model to the project area we find that the majority of the villages in the farther northern part of the project location were (before the project was implemented) still in the first stage, pursuing traditional agriculture with the use of simple and traditional implements. The use of chemicals was entirely absent. Marketing bottle-necks adversely constrained production for the market which is therefore effected on only a limited scale, while production for household consumption is characteristically predominant. Located in the savannah (with erratic rainfall) zone, the respective villages (eg. Rasheed and Dirra)were handicapped by poor soil fertility from producing cash crops such as the groundnuts and sesame - these are produced in the zones in the southern parts of Ghubeish which enjoy better soil fertility. Only a few of these far northern villages have become involved in the project.

However, the bulk of the villages touched by the project were already passing the second stage and were at the threshold of the third stage , since such institutions as the Plant Protection Department, the Cooperative Department, the Agricultural Office of the Ministry of Agriculture (MOA) and the Agricultural Bank of Sudan (ABS) had been recently making strenuous efforts to assist farmers in improving their traditional techniques and in increasing their production for the market. The majority of these villages passed into the transitional stage through the 1960's and 1970's with the introduction of the groundnuts crop into the area on a massive scale. However, any further transformation into the 'third stage' was hampered by the absence of

extension, research, modern credit and marketing institutions. By and large the major inputs injected into the area have been mainly the different varieties of groundnuts and the improved pesticide known as aldrex-t. Villages which could be depicted at this stage include Murabaat, Kirja, Dirra, Barnawi, Seranbi, Wad Fadol, Widaa, El Riteirit and Ghabash Hammad (to name some of the villages covered by the research).

The third stage, then, was entirely absent prior to the introduction of the ENSAP project, and it is the task of the ENSAP project to get this stage initiated. This task lies with the extension component of the project which purports to initiate within the traditional smallholder rain-fed sector a sustainable extension/credit system. The placement of the Agricultural Field extensionists (AFEs) among the village farmers is meant to upgrade farmers farm management and technical skills thereby resulting in rational decision-making in farming and a greater orientation towards commercial business.

Having articulated the farming system of Ghubeish communities in terms of the transformation model (i.e most of the project villages being placed in the second 'stage' prior to the introduction of ENSAP) we now move to touch on the major agricultural and economic patterns of the village relating to this stage.

3.2 Agricultural And Economic Patterns:

A distinction between 'large-scale/progressive' and 'small holder/transitional' farmers (cf. Ortiz, 1973:177), is also applicable to the project village producers. This distinction is made for three reasons. First, villagers themselves make such a distinction, contrasting those who cultivate relatively large areas of land from smallholder farmers. Second, the project agency makes such a distinction when it identifies the beneficiary group: It screens those farmers who are characterized as

'large-scale/progressive' and targets only those who are labelled as 'smallholder/traditional' farmers. Third, I deploy this concept in an endeavor to show the emerging trends of economic aspirations in Ghubeish communities affected by the project. Most of the data provided below derives from 'smallholder/transitional' farmers (because these constitute the vast majority of farmers, roughly more than 95%). The maximum area put into cultivation by these 'smallholder/transitional' farmers is 40 makhamasat (including the land for gum Arabic). For this reason this figure is taken as the demarcating line between 'smallholder/transitional' farmers and 'large-scale/progressive' farmers. 'Large-scale/progressive' farmers, on the other hand, cultivate up to a maximum of 60 makhamasat. But one 'large-scale/progressive' farmer was found to own up to 119 makhamasat, including the area devoted to the production of gum Arabic.

The combination of household labour and hired labour is influenced, amongst other things, by the composition of the household and the age structure of the household members. The average household size is 7.2 persons and the maximum number of household members reported was 13. The following data on the composition of the household is broken down into categories of married men, married women, bachelors, unmarried women, boys older than five years of age, girls over five years of age, and children under five years of age. The age of five years was chosen because after the age of five children begin performing small tasks in the field (e.g. bird-scaring, assisting in the seeding operation etc.) and contribute to family labour in farming activities. However, household composition is, generally, represented by the following percentages: adults make up 50.7% of the members of the household (of these married women make 18.6%, unmarried women 8.4%, married men 16.5%, bachelors 7.2%) ; while 26.4% are children older than five years of age (boys 13 %, girls 13.4 %) and 22.9% are children under five Note that the number of dependent children is overall

relatively high . Households with many children (both over and under 5 years of age) can not make use of the full labour of a sizeable proportion of their members and are thus economically disadvantaged in relation to other households where the bulk of family members are of working age(those of working age are generally referred to as the economically active portion of the household). This is one of the reasons why households with large family size in the project area can not adequately expand the areas cultivated. Other restrictions include the type of technique and environmental hazards.

The farming system of the project area evidences a largely uniform pattern. The bulk of the land is owned by individual smallholder farmers and the average landholding size is about 28.2 makhamas (1 makhamas = 1.79 acres) (as estimated in ENSAP project survey, 1989:10). This included those areas devoted to the tapping of gum Arabic as well as those for both cash and consumption crops. Farmers practice fallow cultivation, though, the number of years an area of the farm would stay fallow varied between a minimum of two years to a maximum of eight years. Women own jubraka (kitchen garden) near to the house, in which early maturing food crops are cultivated. The most important crops grown in the jubraka include cowpea, okra, maize, sorghum, cucumber and pumpkin. Nearly 90% of all rural households have jubrakas; but women also assist their husbands in the main farms. All farmers grow groundnuts (and some grow sesame which has been only recently introduced and is not yet widespread) as a cash crop and millet as a food crop. Other crops cultivated include sorghum, watermelon, cowpea, hibiscus (karakdi) which are largely inter-cropped with the two major crops. The allocation of the total landholding in all project villages among the existing crop varieties is presented as follows (including the jubraka):

Table (3): Field Crop and Jubraka Mix

		<u>percentages</u>		
Crop	Locale	Farmers	Area	Average area /farmer (in makhamasat)
Millet :	field	100%	61.1%	17.3
	<u>jubraka</u>	35.5%	38.5%	.5
	total	100%	60.1%	17.8
	(ie. field+ <u>Jubraka</u>)			
Groundnuts:				
	field	100%	25.1%	7.1
	<u>jubraka</u>	6.5%	7.7%	.1
	total	100%	24.3%	7.2
Sesame:	field	45.2%	2.1%	.6
	<u>jubraka</u>	3.2%	0.0%	.0
	total	48.2	2%	.6
Sorghum:	field	25.8%	2.1%	.6
	<u>jubraka</u>	38.7%	15.4%	.2
	total	61.3%	2.7%	.8
Watermelon (intercropped)				
	field	93.5%	45.6%	12.9
	<u>jubraka</u>	3.2%	0.0%	.0
	total	93.5%	43.6%	12.9
Watermelon (sole-cropped):				
	field	22.6%	6.4%	1.8
	total	22.6%	6.1%	1.8
Others:	field	64.5%	3.2%	.9
	<u>jubraka</u>	77.4%	38.5%	.5

	total	90.3%	4.7%	1.4
Gum Arabic (non-cultivated land) :				
	--	96.8%	--	53.6
TOTAL	field	100%	---	28.2
	<u>jubraka</u>	87.1%	---	1.3

Source: ENSAP Base Line Survey, 1989, p.11.

The table shows that millet is obviously the major food crop and groundnuts the primary cash crop, occupying, per farmer, an area of 17.8 and 7.2 makhamasat, respectively. Recently introduced sesame and sorghum are both minor crops in the farming economy of the villages. Each occupies an area of less than 3% of the total cropland on average. 'Others' referred to in the table include hibiscus, okra, cowpea, maize, cucumber and pumpkins. Farmers know of a number of crop varieties for groundnuts, millet, sesame, sorghum and watermelon. Thus groundnuts has two varieties- Abu fraisha and barbeton. Abu fraisha is the traditional crop, which was replaced by the barbeton variety which was introduced into the area in the late 1950's and early 1960's. Its advantages over the traditional variety (now entirely absent) were stated by farmers to lie in facilitating weeding and harvesting, and in being relatively higher yielding. It also matures in ninety to one hundred days.

Millet has three varieties, identified as dimbi, sharoba and hammir. Most preferred of these by farmers were sharoba and dimbi for the main field; and sharoba and hammir for the jubraka. Sesame is of three varieties. These are the red, white and herahiri, listed here in order of their preference to the farmers. Sorghum has the wad el mirghani, nagad, dagoga, zunnari, salula, kurki, yellow, white and wad a'akkar varieties (the most important of which are zunnari and wad el mirghani). Watermelon varieties include white, um dam, hamari, baladi, pink and kaka (again, listed according to their importance to the farmer). With regard to all these crops, some of the

varieties have been newly introduced from the outside, such as wad a'kkar (sorghum) which was brought from the Nuba Mountains in Southern Kordofan region. The salula and kurki varieties of the sorghum were also newly introduced, to the extent that a large number of villagers do not know them.

Farmers do not follow a systematic land allocation pattern for the various crops and the areas allocated to each crop variety vary from one season to another as well as from one village to another (and even from one household to another). But in general the majority allocates a larger size of the plot for the production of the staple crop, millet, relative to the other crops.

The most important determinants of land allocation in this region were the household's economic status (in terms of its financial standing), its farm's soil fertility and its labour resource. Being in a good financial position, with a large amount of land, a household could opt to allocate a relatively large size of plotland for the production of the cash crop since household subsistence would not be risked because the area of land concerned remained small proportionate to the whole. A poor farmer, on the other hand, would not risk devoting a great deal of land for the production of groundnuts since for all smallholder cultivators household subsistence viability is the overriding concern. Generally, for both 'smallholder/transitional' and 'large-scale/progressive' farmers, the proportions of the food and cash crops areas to be put into cultivation are decided on the basis of the current household needs for cash and food, the ruling prices for both crops and the ready cash in pocket. Soil fertility also influences the land allocation pattern since farmers had through experience come to know those types of soil which suited a specific sort of crop variety more than another. Thus the most fertile land is devoted to the cultivation of the millet crop and groundnuts, rather than

for the production of sorghum or sesame. The nature of the agricultural season also can affect the land allocation pattern since farmers could be tempted to increase the area under cultivation for all crop varieties in a 'prosperous' rainy season.

Table: (4): Highest And Lowest Areas And Yields For Groundnuts, Millet, Sesame and Sorghum Relating To 1983 Season (Source: Base Line Survey, 1989:16)

% of farmers	Groundnuts	Millet	Sesame	Sorghum
Planting this crop	93%	96%	41.9%	32.3%
Average Area planted (in makhamasat/farmer)	8.0	13.6	1.2	1.6
Maximum Area/farmer	40.0	35.0	3.0	4.0
Minimum Area/farmer	1.0	2.0	0.3	0.5
Average Yield/farmer	6.3	1.0	1.9	2.1
Maximum Yield/farmer	18.0	2.3	5.0	5.0
Minimum Yield/farmer	0.0	0.1	0.7	0.2

Overall, prior to the introduction of the ENSAP project farmers undertook the following pattern of land allocation. The table (above) specifically refers to the 1983 season since, for the area, this is the most representative of a good agricultural season (the area was affected by recurrent seasons of drought and crop failure during the 1980's). The table shows the highest and the lowest areas and yields for millet, groundnuts, sorghum and sesame (both smallholder and large-scale farmers).

Thus it is clear from the table that farmers vary their allocation of land for groundnuts between a minimum of one makhamas and a maximum of 40.0 makhamasat with an average of 8.0 makhamasat. However, the figures should be treated with caution; they largely depend on farmers' memories, since they were asked to recall a period five years before the project implementation.

As was shown in the table (3), the average area cultivated, per farmer, (excluding the jubraka) is 28.2 makhamasat. This was to be allocated to the various crop varieties according to the determinants of land allocation cited above. There were, however, differences as to the various crops mixed together on the one plot of land. Thus, a farmer would either have a plot of land solely cropped by millet or else have the millet inter-cropped with watermelons. Similarly, the groundnuts crop would either be sole cropped or inter-cropped with the watermelon crop. By and large, the inter-cropping pattern predominates, with a relatively larger percentage of the land being inter-cropped with millet and watermelon compared to that with the groundnuts with watermelon. The convenience of inter-cropping is that watermelon production does not compete with either of the two major crops in terms of labour allocation. The watermelon crop

is usually planted late in the season shortly prior to the harvesting of the major crops, and it depends for its growth partly on the cold weather. The watermelons are planted in the bare spaces between the plants of the major crops, thus not involving extra labour to weed it. Moreover, the watermelon does not compete with the other farming operations of harvesting or marketing since it is usually harvested in the post-marketing period of the two major crops.

'Large-scale/progressive' farmers are profit maximizers and are ready to undertake large-scale business agriculture. 'Smallholder/transitional' farmers, in contrast to 'Large-scale/progressives', plan ahead the amount of land to be put into cultivation, and the corresponding labour needed, both of which are allocated at the right time [Ortiz (1973) refers to decisions thus made as 'decisions made in the course of the activity']. It is these 'large-scale/progressives' who first introduced the sharaka (share-cropping) system in the area. This was mainly because expansion of the area cultivated above the average for the village starts to conflict with constraints relating to the allocation of the available labour supply, as well as the extra labour which can be recruited on a reciprocal basis (nafirs). As a result large owners were prompted to engage in share-cropping with Dinka labourers coming from the Southern province. Financing the share-cropping enterprise is made possible by the large landowner's possession of substantial capital, usually in the form of animal ownership. 'Large-scale/progressive' farmers own between a minimum of 15 to a maximum of 300 heads of herds (mostly sheep and goats, and to a lesser extent, cattle and camels). Animals could be sold at anytime during the agricultural season to finance agricultural production, or household subsistence needs during the 'hungry season'. For this reason, and in contrast to 'smallholder/transitional' farmers, 'large-scale/progressive' farmers do not work as hired labourers on others' farms. In hiring labour to accomplish the weeding and harvesting tasks large-scale/progressive' farmers do not forsake the traditional nafir

system, as has been the case with other parts of the Sudan (eg. Ahmed, 1977), or other similar cases (eg. Ortiz, 1973:177). In these other cases the forsaking of the reciprocal communal work system by large landowners occurs either due to the impossibility of abiding by the norm of reciprocity (Ahmed, 1977), or due to the 'progressive farmers' disdain of this traditional system of labour recruitment (Ortiz, 1973:177). In the case of Ghubeish villages this does not apply since the norms of reciprocity are not put in jeopardy by 'large-scale/progressive' farmers. A 'large-scale/progressive' farmer even if he does not himself attend an active nafir arranged by fellow villagers, may be represented by one of his household members (an undertaking which is consistent with the norms of reciprocity). But that said, 'large-scale/progressive' farmers do not depend on reciprocal labour for weeding their own farm, to the same extent as 'smallholder/transitional' farmers do. With enough cash at his disposal a 'large-scale/progressive' farmer would opt to hire wage labourers rather than to compete with 'smallholder/traditional' farmers over communal work groups. This is mainly because a farmer who needs to recruit nafir labourers must plan such recruitment in such a way that his own nafir should not concur with others' nafirs (a situation which too often happens because all farmers start the weeding operation at the same time). Concurrence of nafirs leads to fewer participants attending each nafir since an invited farmer cannot attend more than one nafir at a time. So, hiring wage labourers guarantees the prompt supply of labour.

Smallholder/transitional' farmers, on the other hand, do not make such accurately planned decisions, mainly because such decisions are made while the agricultural season has already commenced. For example, a 'smallholder/traditional' farmer who plans to put into cultivation 15 makhamasat of the millet and groundnuts crops, could by later deciding to hire out his labour in rich farmers' farms, end up weeding only about 10 makhamasat on his own farm. The reverse is also true: A farmer who supplies his

labour on others' farms may suddenly cut this supply and decide to accomplish the weeding activity on his own farm, arrange a nafir, or a combination of both. The farmer's cash needs (or economic standing) are often involved in the formation of such decisions. Partial hiring out of labour contributes to redressing cash shortage problems arising during the agricultural season. Such decisions made during the course of the activity (such as a sudden withdrawal from hiring out one's labour) can also adversely affect 'largescale/progressive' farmers concerning the recruitment of labour. Since he is not certain of the actual number of days a hired worker may continue to work on the farm, a 'large-scale/progressive' farmer is often forced into spending a considerably long period of time looking for labourers to continue a task started by a previous hired worker. The final result would be a less amount of land weeded (well below that actually planted).

The relative animal wealth owned by rich farmers has often led to such wealth being considered contrary to the common ideology, as their main source of well-being, not agriculture (see eg. Holy , 1987). However, 'large-scale/progressive' farmers' clinging to agriculture during the aftermath of the 1984/85 drought in an attempt to redress cash shortage problems (resulting from the death of their animal herds) points to the importance of agriculture for 'large-scale/progressive' farmers. Comparable observation relates that when rich farmers leave farming and engage in trade they do so only gradually, after they have strongly established themselves in this new business (cf. Ibid, 1987). 'Large-scale/progressive' farmers also own large gum Arabic fields which ensure additional source of income. These farmers' gum Arabic trees are tapped by hired labourers after the harvesting season (December to February). Gum Arabic fields vary in size between 15 makhamasat and 40 makhamasat. 'Smallholder/transitional' farmers, on the other hand, own gum Arabic fields in the range of 2 to 20 makhamasat. Ownership of animal herds coupled with large gum

Arabic fields provide a good annual income for 'large-scale/progressive' farmers. 'Smallholder/transitional' farmers who produce gum Arabic are able to augment their income earnings and to assure a basic level of security.

3.3 Seed Availability, Seed Dressing And Use Of Chemicals At The Various Agricultural Phases:

The major agricultural phases for the farm communities of the project area include land clearing (warshal), early planting(rameil), planting proper (seeding), weeding (kadeib), second weeding (junkab), harvesting (hasad) and threshing. The intensity of labour applied in the various types of agricultural tasks is also governed by the simplicity of the techniques and tools, which remained largely traditional. Although a handful of smallholder farmers owned animals in the villages of the project, the separation of animals and the farm is a characteristic feature of the smallholder farming system of Ghubeish communities, and the use of animal drawn implements is entirely absent. Tools and seeds and, often, aldrext chemical (pesticide) are directly obtained from the market. Of the total seed used, a certain proportion is usually provided from the farmer's own stock from the previous harvest, which is stored in the matmura (underground pit). The remainder of the seed must be purchased from the local village markets or from the distant markets at En Nahud, Ghubeish, Abu Rai or Sug'al Jamal. The table below shows the percentage of seed purchased for the major crops and the average price paid for seed, with the total cost per farmer.

Table (5): Percentage of Seed Purchased (1988/89 season)

Crop seed	% purchased	Average amount (<u>malwa/kantar</u>)	Average price (LS)	Cost per farmer (LS)
Millet	33.2%	4.2 <u>malwa</u>	7.8/ <u>malwa</u>	32.7
Groundnuts	35.6%	2.4 <u>kantar</u>	47/ <u>kantar</u>	110.8
Sesame	64.3%	0.3 <u>malwa</u>	4.6/ <u>malwa</u>	1.3
Sorghum	39.4%	----	N.a (included in 'other crops')	
Watermelon	17.2%	-----	N.a (included in 'other crops')	
'other crops'	N.a	-----	N.a	14.9
Total	---	----	---	159.8

Source: Base Line Survey, ENSAP Project, 1989, p 22.

One malwa equals approximately 3 kilograms for millet, sorghum and sesame; and one kantar of each of those crops equals about 15 kilograms. One kantar therefore equals 5 malwa for these crops (a malwa is normally a measure of volume rather than quantity).

The high percentage of seed purchased, in contrast to the amount provided from the household matmura (storage), is explained by the fact that the previous agricultural season left the farmers with an inadequate amount of seed for replanting.

With respect to the traditional use of the aldrex-t chemical, the Ministry of Agriculture recommended an application rate for the chemical of 3 wagia per kantar, equivalent to 0.25 pounds (ratls) per kantar) for all crops. The following quantities of seed dressing, per kantar, were actually being used by farmers (source: ENSAP Base Line Survey,

1989):

Millet	0.75 <u>ratl</u>
Groundnuts	0.22 <u>ratl</u>
Sesame	3.45 <u>ratl</u>
Sorghum	2.85 <u>ratl</u>
Watermelon	0.45 <u>ratl</u>

The figures show that the smallholder farmers clearly applied concentrations of chemicals to their various types of seeds which are higher than the rates recommended by the Ministry of Agriculture. However, the farmers justified this on the grounds that their previous tests with the chemical resulted in limited control over the agricultural pests. As the aldrex-t chemical is usually supplied through local merchants it was well known that the chemical supplies were adulterated and thus do not give the desired results. Farmers also used the chemical for purposes other than those for which it was intended such as the poisoning of rats. This had inflated the figures for application. The table below gives an indication of the average number of ratls of aldrex-t that were used per makhamas and per farmer.

Table (6): Average Seed Dressing Used Per Makhamas And Per Farmer (1988/89 season)

Crop Seed	<u>Ratls</u> Used Per	
	<u>Makhamas</u>	Farmer
Millet	0.04	0.67
Groundnuts	0.21	1.47
Sesame	0.23	0.20
Sorghum	0.21	0.27
Watermelon	0.05	0.60
Others	N.a	0.28
Total	---	2.72

Source: Base Line Survey, ENSAP Project, 1989, p 24.

The average aldrex-t price reported by farmers was LS 21.7 per ratl. As shown in the table, the average amount of aldrex-t used by the farmers who used aldrex-t was 2.72 ratls. The average cost of the chemical used by the farmers was therefore LS 49.50 per farmer.

3.4 Farm Implements:

As we have mentioned above the farm implements used by farmers in the project villages remain largely traditional. But while many farmers retained their farm

implements from previous seasons, the number who purchased tools in the 1988/89 (before project implementation) season was relatively large. The table below shows the number of tools purchased, average prices and the average tool costs per farmer.

Table (7): Farming Tool Kit, Prices And Costs (1988/89 season)

Type of Tool	% of Farmers Purchasing (per season)	No of tools purchased (per farmer)	Av.Price	Total Cost (per farmer)
Axe	38.7%	0.7	8.8	6.3
Rake	51.6%	0.9	12.0	10.4
Hoe	77.4%	1.9	7.0	12.4
Hashasha (for weeding)	87.1%	4.0	7.4	29.9
Knife	9.7%	0.2	4.3	0.8
Other	61.3%	---	---	---
Total	93.5%	----	----	88.3

Source: Base Line Survey, ENSAP Project, 1989, p. 25.

The first column in the table indicates the percentage of farmers purchasing each of the types of tools listed. The number purchased (second column) is the average number of tools for all farmers including those who did not need to purchase any for the 1988/89 season. The average number purchased should represent the tool kit that a farmer would purchase if he had to purchase tools every year. The total cost is the average total cost for all farmers. It is the average number purchased times the price. The slight differences in the table between total cost and the product of the number purchased and the price are due to rounding.

Having provided information on the agricultural techniques, crop varieties, and use of chemicals, we now turn to the particular agricultural tasks on which such allocation of labour occurs (starting from land clearing to the harvesting of the crops).

3.5 Labour Inputs For The Various Agricultural Operations:

Land clearing (warshall) is a land preparation activity which is usually started in April and is focussed on the clearing of the small bushes from the farm as well as the residues of the stalks of the plants from the previous season. These plants were believed to compete with farm crops for the limited water supply and to provide favourable ground for the multiplication of agricultural pests. This activity, however, was utterly opposed on the part of the project extension agents on the grounds that clearing the bushes would accentuate desertification and result in low rates of moisture. However, farmers were still observed to practise warshal in the 1990 agricultural season. The bushes were collected and used for fencing the farm and this- or so farmers argued in defence of the practice- resists desertification since it implies a barrier against the blowing winds. Being cleared of the small bushes and plant residues the land gets prepared for rameil, i.e., the seeding activity proper.

Rameil is an early sowing activity conducted by farmers shortly before the full start of the rainy season. This activity, however, is not practised by all farmers since it involves high risks should the rain fail to come early or prove inadequate. For this reason rameil is observed to be carried out by those farmers who boasted a good deal of farming experience. These farmers, who are mostly from the elder generation, have kept notional records about the onset of the annual rainy season which they used as a calendar for reference to the major fluctuations of rainfall (see chapter 7). According to

this calendar (which I refer to as the kharif calendar, which means calendar for the rainy season) these farmers would commence their agricultural operations in accordance with what they believed were "precise expectations". In other words, most of the farmers who practised rameil would expect the rain to fall within a maximum of two weeks time. Should rains come according to these "expectations" then the plant would be at its best since it would make full use of the available water, unlike other farms which had been planted at a later stage. Rameil is practised in early May, and the farmers involved profess being well satisfied with the activity. Among the villages where cases of rameil were observed and cited were Murabaat, Seranbi, Kirja and El Halfaya.

The weeding operations usually get started immediately after the planted crop grows a few inches and the weeds start to rival the plants in size. The weeding operations are divided into two phases; the kadeib (first weeding), and the second weeding. The kadeib is the most important, requiring both to be got started at the optimum time (lest it should be too late) and to have proper planning with regard to labour mobilization.

It involves both the weeding and the thinning of the plant; both are conducted simultaneously. It is the most laborious activity, claiming a large part of the farmer's time and labour. Household labour, hired labour and communal work groups (nafir) are fully utilized and reach their peak intensity during this period, which starts in June and continues through July and into early August. The second weeding is less labour demanding and involves no reliance on nafir, though hired labour may be summoned.

Farmers practise thinning during kadeib because seeding seeds are applied at rates slightly higher than the optimum rate recommended by the Plant Protection Department

(PPD). The farmers' reasoning for this lies in the fact that due to widely spread agricultural pests such as rats, traditional experience had shown that at PPD rates, the number of plants which would grow would be too few to afford a good harvest. Applying more seeds would mean a guaranteed growth of plants out of which some would be cut out in the thinning operation, the rest would be the number of plants judged optimum on the part of the PPD. The extension agents of the project seemed to discourage farmers from practising thinning and instead recommended the application of chemicals to combat the infestations of agricultural pests.

Harvesting and threshing are concluded during the peak 'hungry' season towards October and September and for this reason significant numbers of farmers outside the project villages often took to seasonal migration to neighbouring villages in search of wage employment on the farms of rich farmers in order to secure the wherewithal for immediate household subsistence. This often implied that such farmers delayed their own harvesting to a later stage when they returned to their villages. An alternative to wage labour is the sheil (traditional money lending, discussed below) system through which the poorer farmers secured enough cash to buy food through this 'hungry' season. These various agricultural activities were often supported by ritual practices such as rain-making or the use of various types of farm amulets (charms) which draw from the society's belief system. This is dealt with in chapter 7.

We need to see how labour is allocated to the various agricultural operations in the project area. As this calls for supportive figures we present them from the Base Line survey of ENSAP project (1989:16-20) since this amounts to a good summary of labour inputs in the project villages on behalf of the various crops and through the different agricultural phases.

The tables, excepting table 10, provide information about the average labour burden overall project villages calculated in terms of person days per makhamas for each operation and the cost of hired labour in Sudanese pounds per farmer per makhamas. These labour burdens exclude the cost of nafirs which the farmer summons should he be constrained by time or lack of labour supply. The relatively large proportion of hired labour clearly indicates the quite high degree to which households can cope with bottlenecks in labour supply relative to their limited internal membership sizes.

Table (8) Labour Inputs For Millet And Millet/watermelon (L/c = cost of hired labour in Sudanese pounds per farmer per makhamas) :

Operation	<u>Millet Only</u>		<u>Millet With Watermelon</u>	
	PersonDays	HiredL/c	Person/Days	Hired/ L/c
Clearing	1.4	2.2	1.7	0.4
Rameil	0.3	0.5	0.5	0.0
Seeding	0.8	0.1	1.5	0.0
1st Weeding	5.1	19.1	4.3	2.5
2nd Weeding	1.0	4.5	3.1	1.3
Harvest	1.7	7.2	1.8	8.4
Threshing	0.4	4.5	0.6	4.0
Total	10.6	38.1	13.5	16.7

Table (9):

Labour Input For Groundnuts And Groundnuts/Watermelon

Operation	Groundnuts only		Groundnuts/watermelon	
	person days	Hired L/c	person days	hired L/c
clearing	2.5	0.0	3.4	1.8
<u>rameil</u>	1.8	13.8	1.3	8.2
seeding	3.5	6.4	1.4	0.3
thinning and weeding	4.7	12.2	5.2	16.2
second weeding	1.6	0.0	3.3	4.2
harvest	7.3	38.8	5.7	20.1
threshing	2.0	7.4	1.7	4.1
Total	22.0	72.2	24.1	61.0

Table (10): Labour Inputs For Millet, Groundnuts And Watermelon By Type Of Planting:

proportion of labour per type of crop)

Type Of Planting	Millet	Groundnuts	Watermelon
Millet (sole cropped)	61%	-----	----
Millet inter-cropped with watermelon	39%	-----	----
Groundnuts (sole cropped)	----	21.6%	---
Groundnuts inter-cropped with watermelon	----	78.4%	----
Watermelon sole cropped	----	----	10%
Watermelon inter cropped with Millet or Groundnuts	89.3%

Note that groundnuts inter-cropped with watermelon is more labour consuming than millet inter-cropped with watermelons (exactly double the amount of labour for the latter). The main reason is that due to the closer spacing involved in the groundnuts planting the weeding of this crop consumes a relatively large amount of labour. This also later makes the interplanting of watermelons in the bare spaces labour consuming.

Table (11): Labour Input For Minor Crops, Jubraka And Gum Arabic

<u>Operation</u>	Minor Crops		Jubraka		Gum Arabic	
	<u>Person Days</u>	<u>Hired L/c</u>	<u>Person Days</u>	<u>Hired L/c</u>	<u>Person Days</u>	<u>Hired/L/c</u>
Clearing	2.8	0.7	3.1	1.5	0.0	0.0
Rameil	0.0	0.0	1.2	0.0	0.0	0.0
Seeding	3.1	0.0	2.4	0.0	N.a	N.a
1st Weeding	5.1	0.5	4.6	0.0	N.a	N.a
2nd Weeding	4.1	0.0	0.7	0.0	N.a	N.a
Harvest	6.9	5.0	5.6	1.6	0.3	2.3
Threshing	0.6	0.0	1.2	0.0	0.1	0.2
Total	22.6	6.2	18.8	3.1	0.4	2.5

Minor crops refer to okra, hibiscus (karkadi), and beans which occur in the field either inter-cropped or sole-cropped. Jubrakas were the kitchen garden plots cultivated by women and are close to the house. Note that as gum Arabic is not a cultivated crop it shows only small figures. Tapping is done independently of the other farming activities, in the post harvesting period (towards December).

Table (12): Labour Inputs For Sesame And Sorghum

Operation	Sesame		Sorghum	
	Person Days	Hired L/c	Person Days	Hired L/c
Clearing	3.3	0.0	3.0	0.0
Rameil	0.4	3.6	1.2	0.0
Seeding	2.9	0.0	1.5	0.0
First Weeding	4.4	0.0	7.0	15.5
Second Weeding	1.3	0.0	4.5	0.0
Harvesting	2.2	7.6	3.5	8.6
Threshing	0.7	0.0	1.0	0.0
Total	15.2	11.5	21.2	24.1

The fact that sesame and sorghum involve a smaller amount of hired labour, relative to millet, points to the low importance attached to them by the smallholder producer, with limited cash at his disposal.

The figures in tables (8 - 12) are also partly explained by the availability of hired labour. The hired labour supply varies from one village to another, but in general, and as shown in the tables, hired labour contributed the larger proportion of the farm labour input. The exception is the labour input for the jubraka and the minor crops which clearly involved a higher amount of household labour. In the case of the former because of the proximity of the jubraka to the house (women thus having not to spend any time reaching it) and because of the relatively small size of the jubraka plot which makes it optimally manageable within the capacity of the women farmers.

A differential supply of hired labour in the project village communities is explained in terms of the ruling wage rate in a given village relative to the other neighbouring villages since the wage rates vary from one village to another. Being able to secure information (through gossip) on the different wage rates in the project villages the worker would opt to supply his labour to the villages which offered lucrative wage rates. Thus, in the 1990/91 agricultural season the wage rate for weeding ranged between LS 200 to LS 230 in Murabaat, Kirja, Um Sidair, Ibeid and Barnawi, whilst in El Halfaya, Abu Geid and Wad Fadol it was LS 240-250 for the same operation.

The overall economic conditions of the village seemed to be a strong reason behind this differential wage rate. Unlike those villages which had partially succeeded in their efforts at village improvement, the villages which lacked basic welfare facilities were trapped into offering higher wage rates in order to solicit the hired worker who would then work under relatively harsh economic conditions. One major factor which discouraged wage workers from approaching the relatively disadvantaged villages relates to the availability of water. Villages such as El Halfaya had been experiencing a regular drain of their members (prior to the introduction of ENSAP) through the process of out-migration, largely because of the problem of inadequate water supply. This had led the village members to rely increasingly on nafirs to assist in the accomplishment of the weeding tasks (information on nafir is given in chapter 2). Having provided a detailed coverage of land and labour as two factors of production, we now move to give some account of the traditional credit system, sheil, as this provides the main means of capital to smallholder farmers.

3.6 Capital Supply: Sheil System:

Sheil refers to the mortgaging of farm crops for cash payment prior to harvesting. A farmer (mainly after concluding the weeding operation) who is in need of money to

spend on household consumption (or, in agriculture) would approach a moneylender (e.g. a village merchant) to assist with the supply of adequate capital. The sheil deal stipulates that the borrower (i.e, the farmer) agrees to sell in advance (at the time of borrowing) a specified quantity of his (forthcoming) crop in return for the money he needs to receive from the sheil merchant. A contract may often be signed by both parties in addition to a third party who is a witness. What the two parties need initially do is to agree on the price at which the farmer should sell his crop, in advance, to the moneylender. The sheil merchant alerts the farmer of the current price of the specific crop (sheil is made mostly for cash crops), and then bargains on that basis until finally the farmer accepts the bargain (whose price is called sheil price). The difference between sheil price and the real price goes (as revenue) to the moneylender for his service. But because sheil prices are usually less than the prices prevailing in the market some farmers (and later on the agency) argue that sheil amounts to usuary whereby moneylenders exploit local farmers. The majority of smallholder farmer interviewed in my fieldwork were found to have engaged in sheil deals .

3.7 The Sharaka System:

One important aspect of labour which was traditionally confined mainly to the relatively large land owners and which seems to have some bearing on the ENSAP project is the sharaka (share-cropping) system. A handful of cases were observed among the project farmers currently receiving loans from ENSAP. As this particular form of labour arrangement seems to pose some challenge to the project staff who had partly voiced their worry about the sharaka system it is appropriate that I consider it in some detail. Sharaka occurs only for groundnuts production.

Sharaka was an institution introduced in the 1960's. It consists of an arrangement between an owner of the means of production and 'owner(s)' of labour. It is primarily a form of share-cropping whereby the proceeds from cultivating a cash crop are to be divided in halves between the two sides of the arrangement. Although not exclusively so, the labour part in the agreement is usually made with people from the Dinka ethnic group who started to migrate into the northern Kordofan area in large numbers in the 1950's and early 1960's, at a time when labour demand for agriculture was considerable.

The sharaka arrangement specifies the responsibilities for both the owner of the means of production and the worker. The owner of the means of production has to provide the seeds, fertilizers, land and part of the consumption expenses for the worker(s). The worker's responsibility lies with undertaking the various agricultural activities, from land preparation to the harvesting of the crop. Proper farm management is also the responsibility of the worker and the land owner may visit the farm frequently to ensure that the work is proceeding smoothly. To assist the worker in adjusting to the local farming conditions, as well as to ensure proper farm management, the landowner constructs a small thatched hut for the worker to live in on the farm. This not only cuts down the time the worker spends getting to and from the farm, it means the labourer can guard also farm against animal trespassing which is quite widespread; in addition the labourer will guards the farm against crop theft. But the worker also lives on the farm because he has no land of his own (see also Stuchlik, 1976).

The arrangement as such is usually made for one season. But it is observed that some sort of client/patron relationship exists whereby the worker(s) approach(es) the same landowner for several seasons. This relationship is one of paternalism whereby the

landowner shoulders the responsibility of looking after the labourer so as to motivate the labourer to continue the partnership over the subsequent agricultural seasons. Thus, the landowner provides medication during the labourer's illnesses; and shelter, before and during the agricultural operations (this is elaborated below).

The sharaka, though not extensively practised by local farmers, is among the current labour forms occupying a modest place in the village farming system. It marks a shift away from the wage labour system to a form of partnership. In addition to such reasons as the shortage of labour supply sharaka may indicate an abandonment of the cash wage system as unsatisfactory. The point here, which hopefully could be generalized to other areas in Africa sharing similar characteristics, is that in circumstances of chronic labour shortage a farmer gains security in labour supply by resorting to sharaka rather than depending on the sporadic soliciting of hired labour. This is mainly because the sharaka is a 'tied' system which goes on for several years, unless broken by one party for one reason or another.

There is yet another advantage of the sharaka system, in contrast to the wage labour system. Land owners believed that the sharaka system suits a local farming system which is characterized by scarcity of cash. Under the sharaka system the land owner is said to be able to spread the spending of the limited income at his disposal over a relatively longer period of time, while in the case of the wage labour system he has to pay the labourers all the amount payable in cash. To this is attached particular importance since a regular payment of wages would continually conflict with other demands for cash (eg. household consumption needs).

Smith quotes Brook in describing the share system in Georgia between 1865-1912, which is also pertinent to the sharaka system;

under the share system, the landlord supplies every thing to make the crop, except the manual labour, and the owner and tenant are in a sense co-partners in the undertaking. since the landlord has undertaken all the risk, he claims the right of complete control over the tenant and the crop, just as in the case of the day labourer (in Smith, 1940:508).

This description is typical of the sharaka system in the project area. Not only does the land owner claim the right of complete control over the labourer, he may also call in hired labour to undertake the agricultural operations when he feels the partner is deficient, or too idle to carry them out sufficiently. In this case the cost of the hired labour is discounted from the income from the marketed crop. In other words, the tenant bears the cost of hired labour. It was also observed that some land owners may summon nafirs to undertake the weeding operation in the sharaka farm (e.g as in Dirra, Rasheed and En Nahud). Other costs, similarly discounted, include the purchase of chemicals, if any are used, and the expenses of preparing the crop for the market.

3.8 Recruitment Of The Sharaka Labourers:

The recruitment of sharaka labourers partly occurs the moment they are needed, if sufficient numbers of labourers are already supplying their labour in the area. Otherwise it can happen by chance; as some land owners state, "we met in the town by accident as the agricultural season was approaching, talked to each other, and decided to engage in a sharaka partnership". Or a particular farmer may announce to his co-villagers that he needs his farm to be cultivated by sharaka labourers if he can succeed in soliciting them. Through communication the other farmers would get to know and if one of them was in contact with Dinka labourers wanting to supply their

labour for a sharaka arrangement he will then refer them to the farmer in need. However, some farmers travel to the main towns of Ghubeish, En Nahud and Sug'al Jamal directly to solicit Dinka labourers for a sharaka.

Trust in the labourer should be guaranteed if partnerships are to be entertained, for an unfaithful labourer may run away upon the start of the heavy part of agricultural operations such as weeding. Since the labourer has up to this stage incurred no expenses out of his pocket, and bearing in mind that he had been allowed to freely subsist for a period often exceeding a month, an unreliable labourer might indeed be tempted to run away. To secure the good faith of the labourer successful land owners tend to establish a good rapport with their labourers. The land owner may take the labourer to the local health unit in case of illness and would provide him with some advances in the form of used clothes and nutritional food. In addition the land owner should tolerate or even respect the customs and traditions of the labourers who may need to observe some of the rituals which the land owner considers as conflicting with his own culture.

A good example is the custom of swearing among the Dinka. For a Muslim land owner swearing must be made with reference to the Quran or mentioning the name of Allah (as by saying wallahi which means in the name of Allah). But a Dinka (who is the labourer) swears by taking a piece of sand in his fingers which he then takes to his tongue and refers to as neiyalik (which is his god). This indicates to the Muslim land owner a reference to sand instead of to Allah, which is, for him, tantamount to shirk (lit. polytheism). But this is respected and tolerated by successful land owners lest they offend their labourers and risk the termination of the sharaka on the part of the Dinka for the subsequent seasons. In addition, Dinka group dancing should not be

interfered with. The often locally held stereotyping which labels these labourers as nuius (lit. polluted), or slaves, is largely restrained and neglected by landowners and their household members. Sharaka labourers who succeeded in establishing a sustained partnership relationship with their land owners are welcomed affectionately as they return at the start of the subsequent agricultural season. Cases of labourers running away are rare in the project area.

Land owners who have had at least an elementary level education keep written records of the sharaka agreement in which the total expenses incurred throughout the agricultural season are registered. As to others, one may cite Smith (who presents a case from South Africa, 1940:511-12) on the following merits and demerits of the sharaka system in general. The merits of the sharaka include,

- i) It stimulates industry by giving the labourer an interest and pride in the crop. It has been found by experience that only a small minority of sharaka labourers has been influenced by these stimulants, but this nonetheless is a positive factor.
- ii) It is regarded by the labourer as a higher form of contract, and is, therefore, more likely to secure labour, especially in undesirable localities.
- iii) It gives the labourer a motive to protect the crop.
- iv) It does not subject the farmer to loss from a failure of, or decline in, the value of his crop.
- v) It secures labourers for the year, with less likelihood of breaking the contract, a thing the labourer might be tempted to do when the hard work begins (1940:511-12)

The disadvantages of the sharaka include,

- i) The difficulty of discharging hands when they become inefficient or refractory.
- ii) The great difficulty of carrying out the general work of the farm, the tendency being to drift into an exclusive concern with the one particular crop, a pernicious state of affairs that can lead to idleness on the part of the labourer for a large part of the year, to indolence and indifference on the part of farm owner, to decay and ruin in the farm, and a general decline in the productive resources of the country.
- iii) Cultural or moral perplexity for the farmer due to tolerance of the labourer's idiosyncrasies.
- iv) The disadvantage of having the labourers dictate methods of cultivation according to their own notions, which may not be the right ones (1940:512).

The ENSAP project, however, up to the present stage has made no interference with the sharaka system, including those farmers in the participating villages(PVs) of the project.

Both the sharaka system and the wage labour system have their advantages. Paradoxically, the points outlined above as disadvantages for the sharaka system indicate certain advantages for the hired labour system. These include;

- i) It gives the farmer control over the labour, he having the power to discharge.
- ii) It stimulates industry and enterprise in the farmer. Profits go into his pockets, losses come on his shoulders.
- iii) It leads to economy in labour, causing the farmer to reduce the labourers to the smallest number consistent with the execution of the work

iv) It enables the farmer to carry out a general system of improvement on his farm; to keep the fences.. in proper repair and to pay attention to crops other than groundnuts..

v) It necessitates close personal attention from the farmer, forcing thriftiness upon him and preventing indolence, for the very essence of the system lies in constant and active supervision (1940:512).

3.9 Land owner's Self-criticism:

The general impression of the landowners who engaged in sharaka arrangements with the Dinka labourers indicated self-criticism on the part of these land owners through their overt statement of grievance relating to the partnership. But despite this opinion some land owners still cling to the sharaka system. Some sort of indifference is clearly observable on their part. Farmers made the point that shares from the sales revenue which revert to the land owner (in instances where farmers can provide figures) were considerably low relative to the Dinka's share; moreover farmers would question the efficiency of the whole sharaka system (the estimates of the shares of the sharaka as given by the land owners in the project area are provided below).

The Dinka labourer, on the other hand, sees that in a favourable agricultural season he enjoys a good share of the revenue, while in a case of crop failure the cost to him could be minimal since he did not contribute to the various agricultural inputs(seeds, chemicals, implements etc.). But the Dinka also bears the brunt of forgoing the opportunity cost of working as a hired labourer and guaranteed wages. But when the wage rate is not much above subsistence level (as it could be given the rising cost of living and the effect of inflation on food prices) then the Dinka may still be losing nothing: the bulk of the subsistence costs for the labourer is already born by the land

owner as part of the original agreement (see below). This could enable the Dinka to ensure subsistence until shortly prior to the harvesting period at which stage the Dinka starts to make jarura (lit. drawing cash from the land owner; who would later deduct it upon the sale of the crop). The Dinka, however, seems to well appreciate the fact that the most affected in conditions of crop loss is the land owner. This was clear from my interrogation of Deing Kwaj (a Dinka of 30 years of age who was engaged in sharaka in En Nahud in 1990) concerning his reaction in conditions of crop failure, which he summarized dismissively in the phrase "wad neiyalik" (lit. "it is an act of God").

In the following I provide my data on two cases (which are generally descriptive of sharaka in the project villages) in which land owners provided their own estimates to show the low shares they secured by engaging in the sharaka system.

The sharaka agreement stipulates a number of duties for the land owner which would enable the agricultural production process get started. These include the following as per village:

Case One: Murabaat Village:

- i) The farmer supplies 6 kantars of groundnuts for the labourer who decorticates the crop off-farm before planting; this is done over the summer period (April and start of May). The farmer takes away these inputs immediately after harvesting the crop.
- ii) The farmer should give the labourer cash money of LS 80 with each sack of groundnut initially provided (i.e 6 times LS 80).
- iii) The farmer should provide 10 malwas of millet and cash money of LS 100 as "summer subsistence expenses" to enable the labourer to subsist over the summer

period and before finally moving to the farm itself on the 15th of June. During this period the labourer must have finished the decortication of the groundnuts crop and concluded the preparation of the land;

iv) The farmer should supply a sack of millet (30 malwas) for the labourer which enables the latter to subsist throughout the weeding operation and until the harvesting period; the farmer bears the costs of grinding the millet;

v) The farmer should bear the cost of building a thatched hut on the farm for the labourer;

vi) The farmer should supply the labourer with water (for drinking) on a regular basis according to the needs of the labourer;

vii) The farmer should not ask for a collateral from the labourer as a security measure;

viii) The farmer should be able to provide jarura (ie. cash loan on request) for the labourer in case his subsistence needs are not met by the millet and cash money earlier supplied by the farmer;

ix) The farmer receives a half share upon the sale of the harvested crop.

The estimation of the costs, the sales and the shares reverting to each part is indicated as follows:

costs of 6 sacks of groundnuts	6x LS 150 =	LS 900
cost of 40 malwas of millet (10+30)	40x LS 10	LS 400
cost of grinding 40 malwas of millet	40x LS 5	LS 200
total cash given to the labourer	LS 100+ 480	LS 580
cost of building a hut		LS 150
cost of water supply (4 barrels per month)	4x LS 120	LS 480
total cost		LS 2710

The farmers' estimates of the average annual yield for 6 sacks of groundnuts is 50 kantars (sacks). Of these 50 kantars, the farmer retain 6 (which he provided at the begining of the season).

1 kantar fetches LS 150 in the market;

Thus total sales value $44 (50 - 6) \times \text{LS } 150 = \text{LS } 6600$

Share to the labourer $\text{LS } 6600/2 = \text{LS } 3300$

Share of the land owner (including the sale price of the 6 sacks he takes away upon harvesting i.e LS 900) $= \text{LS } 3300 + (900) - 2710 = \text{LS } 1491$

The land owner believed , and the figures confirm it, that his share from sharaka is less than one third of the total sales revenue. To what extent are such estimates generalizable for the other project villages. Let us consider the case of EL Halfaya village.

The basic statement of the agreements in El Halfaya village sharaka are the same as

those for Murabaat village. There are, however, some differences in the cash paid to the labourer along with each sack of groundnuts initially provided, as well as in the amount of cash given to the labourer for subsistence for the period of summer and until the labourer moves to the farm. In El Halfaya the farmer is required to pay the labourer LS 60 with each sack of groundnuts (rather than LS 80). In addition he gives the labourer LS 20 (rather than LS 100) as cash money to subsist before he finally moves to the farm. There is also some slight differences in the prices of milling as well as of the millet crop (millet is more expensive here). Another difference relates to soil fertility and to the estimated total yield (my informant reported during a period of favourable rainy seasons which afforded him an average yield he could easily estimate). The results are given as follows:

Case Two: El Halfaya

cost of 6 sacks of groundnuts	6x LS 150	=LS 900
cost of one 40 malwas of millet	40 malwas xLS 25	= LS 1000
cost of grinding 40 malwas of millet	40x LS 4	= LS 160
cash money of LS 60 per sack + LS 20	= 6x LS 60 + 20	= LS 380
cost of building a hut		= LS 150
cost of water supply	4 x LS 120	= LS 480
Total cost		= LS 3070

The farmer's estimated average annual yield under the same environmental condition is estimated at 100 kantars of groundnuts for the 6 sacks (6 sacks will not be offered for sale, as in Murabaat); therefore total gross margin of the sales as well as the shares of the two parts will be as follows:

The Sharaka System

- i) Risk averse.
- ii) Indolence/Indifference.
- iii) Land owner presumes on labourer.
- iv) Lack of control over labour.
- v) Utilization of labour unspecified.
- vi) Control and supervision of land lies outside the hand of the PFs of the project.
- vii) Project benefits partly leak outside the village communities of the project site.
- viii) Extension advice not directly applied by PFs.
- ix) Farmer not perceived by the AFEs.
- x) Encourages apathy towards the project.
- xi) Paternalistic.

The Hired Labour System

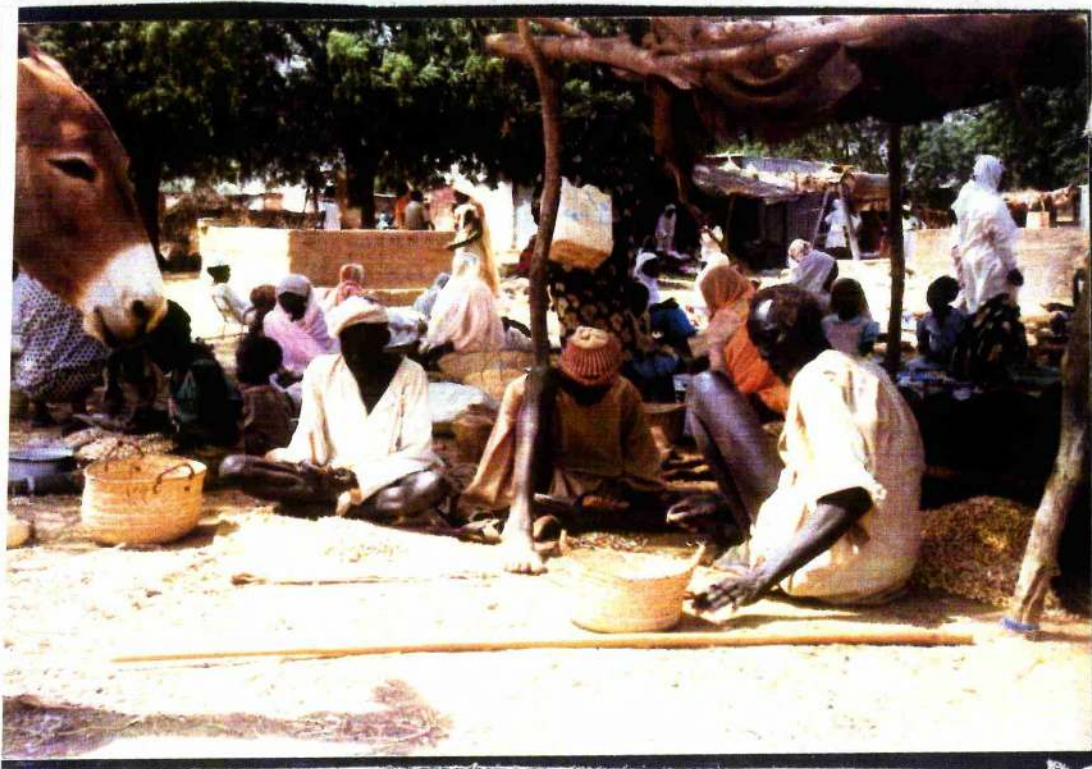
- i) Risk involved.
- ii) Encourages thrift.
- iii) Encourages self-reliance.
- iv) Tight control over labour.
- v) Optimum utilization of labour.
- vi) PFs of the project control, supervise and manage their farms.
- vii) Project benefits the communities of Ghubeish targetted by the project.
- viii) Farmer applies the recommended extension techniques and innovations.
- ix) AFEs can easily contact the PF in the farm.
- x) More commitment to the project
- xi) Farmer himself and wholly the client to the agency.

The contrast makes the hired labour system unquestionably the form which is most consistent with the project target such as up-grading farmer skills and, more importantly, linking together all the project phases with the goal of 'sustainability'. The most dangerous part of sharaka which makes it not preferred within the ENSAP project, is that it leads to the development of indifference and apathy towards the project.

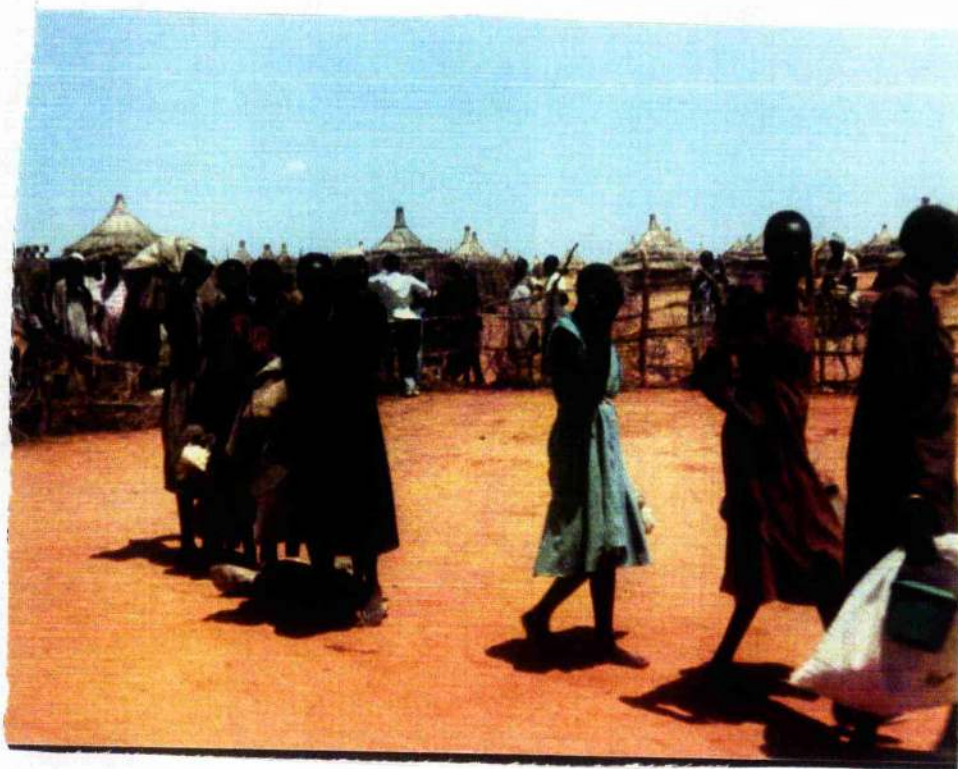
The nature of the social relations guiding the sharaka system is such that it is basically paternalistic. Paternalism implies too much a dependence of the labourer, economically and psychologically on the part of the land owner. With the larger proportion of sharaka income going to the labourer, this is equated by sharaka landowners, to the father-son relationship where the father confers a relatively larger share to his son without being sensitized by the outcome. At least the father is satisfied with the social relationship in which he assumed the 'privileged' position. For why else, given the concrete figures supporting their contention that sharaka is inefficient, does the land owner persist in the arrangement ?

3.11 Decline In The Sharaka system:

We mentioned above that the sharaka system was started in the 1960's with the introduction of the groundnuts crop into the area. It then made a remarkable expansion up to the 1970's. But by the early 1980's the sharaka started a declining trend and consequently a number of large landowners who traditionally relied on sharaka labourers were forced to compete with the smallholders (who did not rely on sharaka labourers to the same extent) for the available hired labour supply. The reason for the



Dinka in sababa market (En Nahud): decorticating the groundnuts



Dinka in the Displaced Persons Project in En Nahud
Queing for food, 1990.

decline in the sharaka system was two fold; a) for security reasons related to the breakout of the civil war in the South, the number of Dinka labourers migrating to the area significantly declined; b) the drought of the 1980's adversely affected the project area and so the Dinka cut the supply of their labour to the region. Also related to the second reason is the declining farm productivity throughout the 1980's, compared with that of the pre-drought period, which implied lower returns for the Dinka labourers.

However, the decline in the supply of Dinka labourers had unfavorable consequences for the land owners. It has meant that the limited number of Dinka labourers has become strategically well placed to dictate the conditions concerning the sharaka agreement which gives them more independence and results for them, in greater financial returns. This is partly indicated in the figures above which show that although the land owners in El Halfaya offered their labourers only LS 20 for subsistence over the summer period, in Murabaat the Dinka labourers stipulated a full amount of LS 100 for the same purpose. This larger sum will absolutely reduce the land owner's share income from the sharaka arrangement.

The recent trends in the area also work to impose unfavourable conditions for the land owners who relied on the Dinka for agricultural production. The migrant Dinka's preference to join the camps of the Displaced Persons Project (DPP) in En Nahud town deflected a sizeable number of potential labourers who originally worked as sharaka partners. Food, clothes and shelter freely provided to the camp population provided a lucrative incentive for drawing the Dinka labourers into the DPP camp. This is reflected in the relatively small number of sharaka cases observed for the 1990/91 season and was supported by the farmers' verbal statements which confirmed the declining trend in the sharaka system. The table below shows the variation in sharaka

occurrence in the selected villages of the project for the 1990/91 agricultural season.

Table (13): Number Of Sharaka Partnerships And Variation Between The Selected Project Villages (among the PFs of the project)

(Farmers engaging in sharaka)

Village	No. of <u>sharaka</u> partnership in 1990/91	No. of <u>sharaka</u> labourers/village
Rasheed	2	4
Dirra	6	7
Murabaat	10	6
Abu Geid	3 (land owner not a PF)	4
El Halfaya	12	40

(this last figure, i.e. 40, is because one farmer recruited a relatively large number of labourers ; but for the rest of farmers the average of sharaka labourers is 4 per village)

Seranbi	2	6
Wad Fadol	0	0
Barnawi	0	0
Ibeid	3	3
Um Sidair	4	6

Source: Fieldwork.

According to Siddle and Swindell (1990) the context of the implementation of such a

partnership system is a need to redress demographic imbalances within the household, while Robertson (1987), who gives a similar view, argues that the persistence of the share-cropping system is due to the inherent instability of domestic groups combined with the economic uncertainties of national and international environments within which they are located. The cases of sharaka in Murabaat, Seranbi, El Halfaya, Dirra and Rasheed partly corroborate Siddle and Swindell's and Robertson's argumentation concerning the reasons for the persistence of the partnership in general.

In these villages the major reasons for the recruitment of the sharaka labourers was the temporary movement of the household members outside the village (this was especially true of El Halfaya village due to the water shortage problem), economic uncertainties and the risk of crop failure (the cases of Ibeid and Murabaat), and the inadequacy of the household labour to do the various agricultural operations. However, in general, the majority of the sharaka cases occurred on behalf of those land owners with relatively large land holdings, and also (it is evident) large family size with many young dependents. Yet other factors are also involved, as the cases below reveal.

Mohammed Abdallah of Dirra who heads a family composed of nine members has engaged in a sharaka with the Dinka labourers for the past few years. He cultivated a farm of about 27 makhamasat in 1990 agricultural season, with 12 makhamasat devoted to the cultivation of the groundnuts crop, and 15 to the millet crop. To optimally allocate household labour among the various agricultural plots he preferred to assign household members to the production of millet for subsistence and engage in a sharaka for the cultivation of the groundnuts crop. This will ensure some cash surplus from the share of the partnership income. In addition to the shortage of labour his main reasons for engagement in the sharaka was that it enabled him to devote part of

his limited time to look after his herd which is composed of 15 goats, 8 cows and three donkeys. In addition he worked as a sababa (middle-man who buys animals and resales them for some profit; a sababa may also occur in the trading of agricultural crops). This represented the best combination to account for household subsistence, trade and animal husbandry.

Seranbi village provides another example of a sharaka whose land owner heads the largest family in the village. Mohammed Ali Bulluck, a forty year old farmer, heads a family of 16 members. He engaged in a sharaka arrangement with Dinka labourers in 1990 agricultural season. Realising that a considerable portion of his household has either children below the working age or had temporarily moved out of the village for seasonal employment he ensured the livelihood of his large family by increasing the size of the area he gave over to the millet crop, relative to that for the groundnuts crop. He put into cultivation an area of 10 makhamasat for the groundnuts and a full 30 makhamasat for the millet crop. This would be difficult without the sharaka labourers. The sharaka Dinka operated the 10 makhamas of the groundnuts, while the household labour was assigned to the cultivation of the food crop. However, despite the low returns from the sharaka due to the severe crop failure in the 1990/91 agricultural season, Mohamed Ali appreciated the sharaka arrangement, maintaining that it offered the most convenient form of production relationship "provided that the costs were kept at a minimum level". The costs, according to him, often increased due to the labourers' illness which imply additional expenses to be born by the landowner (for medication) without being deducted at the end of the harvesting period. Expenses also rise because of increasing food prices during the summer period before the labourers finally move from the house to the farm.

Mohamed Hamdan, a forty year old who lived in Murabaat with his family which is composed of 13 members follows a strategy which is a combination of those advocated by Mohamed Abdallah and Mohamed Ali, though he cultivated less millet, relative to Mohamed Ali. He needed both to cling on to his work both in radio repair and as a porter while producing agricultural crops from his family farm. Thus he recruited sharaka labourers to cultivate 10 makhamasat of the groundnuts crop, and assigned the household labour (which he himself organizes and occasionally assists in weeding) to the cultivation of 15 makhamasat of the millet crop. This gave him the freedom to repair radios for the village. But realizing the limited income to be drawn from radio repair due to the limited number of radio owners in the village, he used his cart (drawn by a horse) to port water to the neighbouring villages as well as for obtaining wood from the nearby forest. This augments the meagre income generated from agriculture, and represented, to him, the optimum combination of household labour, sharaka and off-farm employment.

In Dirra village Idris Haroun, a forty five year old farmer heads a family of 12 members most of whom were economically dependent and below the economically active age. His farm cannot be adequately cultivated by household labour since this would imply subsistence production falling short of satisfying household needs over the summer period. The total amount of loan of LS 1700 which he received from the ENSAP project in 1990 was inadequate to finance hired labour as well as the other agricultural inputs which had to be paid for in cash. He had no other job in the village to provide for the extra household needs, but he owned 25 goats, one cow and three donkeys. To fill the financial gap resulting from the deficiency of the project loans he was able to sell some of his goats and engage in a sharaka for the cultivation of 25 makhamasat of groundnuts. The rest of the household members provided the labour required to cultivate 5 makhamasat of millet for household consumption. The main

reason for his engagement in sharaka was an inherent demographic imbalance (cf, Siddle and Swindell, 1990; Robertson, 1987), due to the large number of the dependent children in the household.

Zaki Hamdan (61 year old polygynist) who headed two separate families (each in its own household) with a total of 13 members, received a loan of LS 3500 from ENSAP project and this was thought to be adequate to finance his agricultural operations in the 1990 season. He was also able to mobilize household labour (which was reasonably sufficient since most members were economically active) for the cultivation of the 25 makhamasat of the millet crop. This ensures his household subsistence, but not his cash requirements since he needed to expand the capital he allocated to working as a sababa (middleman). So he recruited sharaka labourers for the cultivation of 15 makhamasat of the groundnuts crop and continued his work as a sababa. He purchased millet, groundnuts, okra, sheep and goats from the village during the harvesting period at low prices and sold them at lucrative prices in the neighbouring villages. However, despite the fact that this ensured him both subsistence and part of his cash requirements he was critical of the sharaka arrangement. His criticism was based on the fact that in the hired labour system agricultural income is conferred solely on the farmer rather than being shared by the farmer and the labourers.

The general view concerning the sharaka cases observed in the selected project villages is that they occurred mostly among the farmers who had another source of income to augment the income from agricultural production. Thus, being a sababa, or owning animals enabled these farmers to finance the sharaka labourers and the agricultural inputs. This is specially important during the summer period which is a period of peak

demand for cash money. It is the ability of these land owners to finance part of the Dinka's subsistence needs which enabled them to recruit the sharaka labourers. A poor land owner is financially handicapped to support additional labourers along with his own household members. It was also observed that the farmers who engaged in sharaka owned relatively large makhamasat of land but could not adequately expand the area cultivated due to the environmental hazards of low rainfall and agricultural pest infestations. In the project villages maximum landholdings ranged from 35 makhamasat in Dirra and Murabaat (reported for Adam Hussein (60 years old) and Abdel Salaam El Neil, respectively, to 45 makhamasat in Seranbi reported for Mohamed Ali Bulck (cited above), and to a maximum of 100 makhamasat in Dirra reported for Ahmed El Sweid (this farmer is characteristically rich in terms of animal ownership and is arguably a large-scale as opposed to smallholder farmer). These individuals certainly engaged in sharaka.

One important opportunity provided by the sharaka for the Dinka, and which the Dinka well exploit to their advantage relates to jarura. Jarura is an interest-free cash withdrawal the Dinka make from their future crop revenue during the pre-harvesting period (e.g. for spending on consumption). This doubly benefits the labourer. The reason is that if the labourer were to approach the money lender for borrowing this would imply a considerable reduction in the total income to be realized upon the sale of the harvested crop. The reduction is accounted for by the interest on the total money borrowed. Thus jarura saves the labourer this certain cost of borrowing from external sources.

In the second place jarura implied that the land owner subsidizes the labourers over the preharvesting period, during which time the purchasing power of the money lent to the

labourer was relatively higher than that during the post-harvesting period. The fact to be established is that the food prices during the pre-harvesting period were lower than the food prices during the post-harvesting prices due to national inflationary pressure (roughly estimated at LS 250% in 1990). Since the land owner received his money back relatively later, this amount in real terms, does not represent the actual amount of money lent to the labourers. An amount of LS 25 lent to the labourer on which he subsisted for one day in September 1990 automatically rose to LS 40 if he was to subsist on the same food in December when the groundnuts crop is marketed.

Given these circumstances under which the sharaka system functioned it would be theoretically ill-advised to impute to it the Marxist notion of "land owners' exploitation of their tenants". Bhaduri offered a theory in which he argued that the concurrence of a money lender and land owner in one person is so advantageous to the land owner that he will work to impede any likely external innovation which might lead to free the tenant from borrowing (see Bhaduri, 1973). The Marxist idea focuses on the lucrative income which the land owner, it is supposed, reaps through the high rate of interest on the money borrowed by the tenant. If innovation were introduced, Bhaduri posits, the additional income realised from the improved productivity would enable the tenant to clear his debt (which traditionally binds the tenant to the land owner) whereupon the land owner will no longer be able to reap sizeable profits through lending to his tenant. But since the land owner in our sharaka system works not only to ensure 'free subsistence' for the Dinka labourers before the start of the agricultural operations proper, but also 'subsidizes' the Dinka labour over the pre-harvesting season through jarura, it is likely in this system, that exploitation is largely reversed to the disadvantage of the land owner. This is well realized by the land owners themselves who came to argue (supporting their claim with concrete figures) that their share from the partnership system is , in fact, less than one third rather than being half of the sales income.

3.12 Low Yields Of The Food Crops And Off-farm Employment:

The village communities targeted by ENSAP project were touted as being the most suitable for the cultivation of cash and food crops, relative to the rest of the villages lying within the confines of the district rural councils. The cultivation of the food crops in this area contributed to the villages' self-sufficiency and had put them in an advantageous position to absorb the whims of the past droughts of the 1970's and 1984/85. But the recent drought season of 1990/91 adversely affected every one of the village communities targeted by the project due to the meagre amount of rainfall. According to Hill who observed similar declining yields of the millet crop among the Hausa the production of these crops "required a well distributed rainfall with an absence of prolonged droughts..." (Hill, 1982:161). Figures showing this low yields of millet and sorghum crops are shown in chapter 5. Suffice it be mentioned here that in addition to the shortage of and the erratic distribution of rainfall and crop infestation are also responsible for the low yields of the food crops. Poor families are mostly affected by this low yield and for this reason they have borne the partial mobility of their household members outside the villages despite the fact that they received ENSAP loans. The poor cash income obtained from agriculture hardly sufficed for meeting the household's cash needs during the off-farm season and the poor households had to seek other opportunities to make ends meet until the onfall of the next agricultural season. The table below shows the major sources of household income in 1990 for the selected project villages (on average).

Table (14): Average Household Income (LS) By Source In The Project Villages, 1990

Source of income	Total income (LS)
crops	1400
livestock	500
off-farm employment	800
total	2700

Source: fieldwork.

If this is compared with the average family expenditure on the farm (which according to my estimates was approximately LS 1050, in 1989) then it follows that the household is left with only a meagre cash income on which to rely from December (the end of the agricultural operations) to May in the next agricultural season.

The relatively better-off farmers decreased their dependence on seasonal migration by their ability to sell part of their animal herds (goats and sheep) to bridge the financial deficits brought about by the low yields of the food crops. We have seen above, in connection with the sharaka, how some of the land owners combined petty-trade as sababa as well as relying on their herds to cope with their financial deficits.

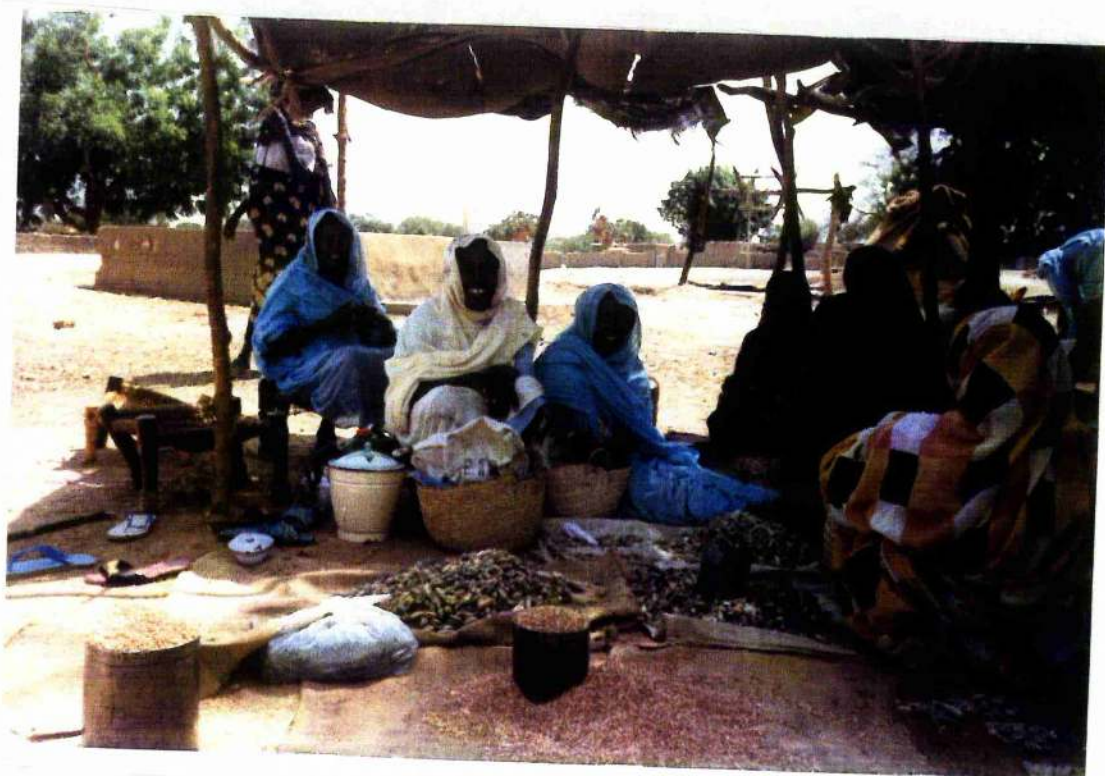
Thus, despite being generally referred to as smallholders by the project agency these farmers vary in their income sources (if we subtract animal sales from the table above it

appears that the poor farmers, who do not own animals, have yet a smaller amount of income). The common thing about these farmers, however, is that all of them put into cultivation, or normally stated that they had put into cultivation, only small proportions of the total landholdings. Among other reasons, this is due to the fact that farmers tend to present figures which tally with figures stated in the eligibility criteria of the project. The villages in 1990 which were economically advantaged by being able to sell part of their animal herds to cope with the low millet productivity included El Halfaya, Dirra and Murabaat. The proportion of household members which took to seasonal employment is relatively lower in these villages than it is in the remainder of the project villages. Abu Geid was particularly affected by the low yields in the food crops which prompted a large number of its able-bodied members to migrate to the bahar (meaning the prosperous towns bordering the Nile). However, the poor in the other villages which seemed better equipped to cope with the food deficit, also suffered equally with the poor in Abu Geid village. Thus Salim Hamad (40 years old), of Murabaat village, was too poor to provide for the subsistence of his household as a result of the crop failure. Neither did he find an alternative source of employment to augment the poor yields from his farm of only 10 makhamasat (4 makhamasat of millet crop and 6 makhamasat of groundnuts crop). Instead he relied on his brother who was relatively wealthy in terms of animal ownership. Through this borrowing from his brother he was able to survive the hard four months' period, from December 1990 to April 1991, the threshold of the new agricultural season. A smaller amount of income was generated during April from the collection and sale of wood, a task which was mainly undertaken by his wife. This brings us to the contribution of women in the household economy to which we turn.

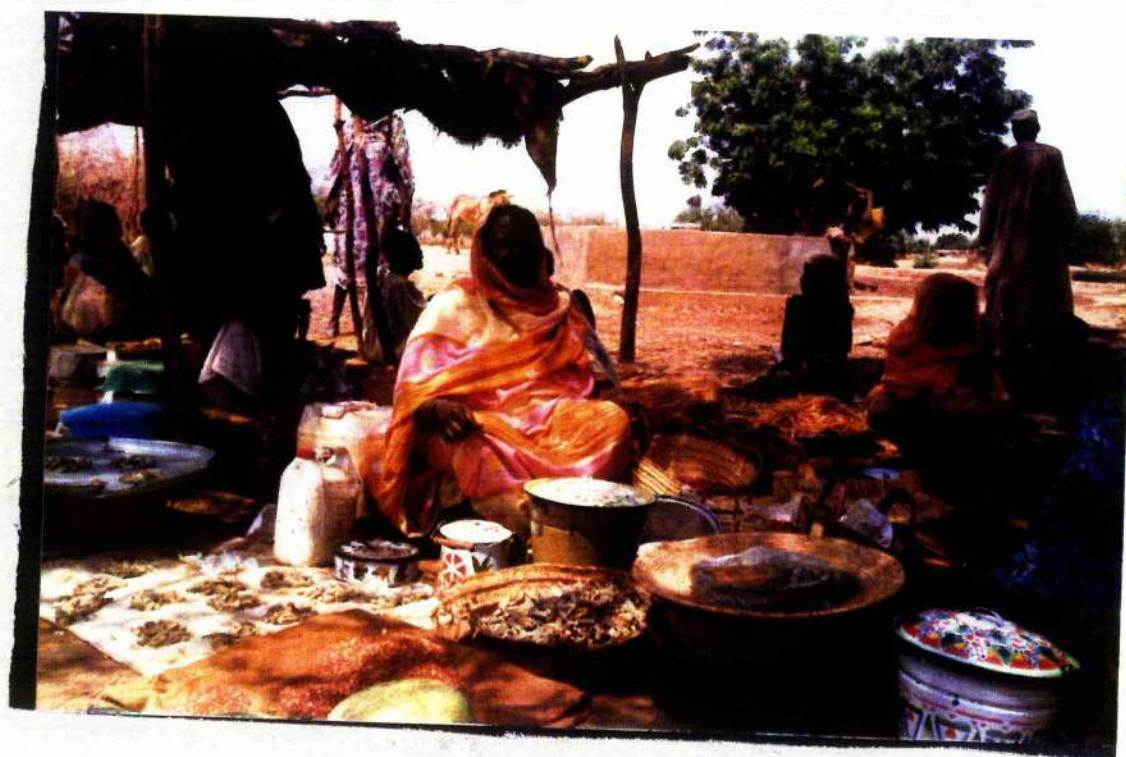
3.13 Women's Contribution To Household's Income:

The women's major source of income is the sale of the jubraka crops grown in the vicinity of the house. Women often had a second type of jubraka field close by the village but not very unlike the main field operated by the males. The average size of the jubraka was 2.5 makhamasat. The income generated from the sale of the jubraka crops is spent on the purchase of utensils, food, spices, cloth, perfume, sugar, salt, sheep, water, and the educational expense of the children, as well as on social events (marriage of a relative, funerals etc.). The major crops sold are okra (dried and fresh) cowpea, cucumber (tibish), maize, watermelons, najad (another variety of millet) and groundnuts.

Off-farm sources of income to women include locally made shamla (carpet made of animal wool), tabag (flat winnowing basket), guffa (basket), hababa (fan) and birish (mat, all made of dome tree leaves); and the sale of home-made foods such as zalabia (made of grain flour) and bread. However, these activities varied from one village to another and do not occur to the same degree in all of the project villages. While the average income earned from the combination of the jubraka production and handicraft was reported to reach a maximum of LS 1240 for Wad Fadol village (who intensively made shamla, birish, and baskets), in the other villages, such as Seranbi, and El Riteirit, it was at a minimum of LS 400 (in 1990 one shamla was sold for LS1240, costing LS 600 to make; a hababa realizes a net income of LS 1, and a basket a net income of LS 8). El Halfaya women, on the other hand, made use of their proximity to En Nahud town and in 1990 temporarily supplied items such as groundnuts, yughurts, butter (samin), dried okra, dried cowpea and cucumber, which were purchased by a group of sababa (middlewomen). The dependence of women on such towns as En Nahud had resulted in the development of a women's market there which brought



Women's Sababa market, En Nahud, 1990.



suppliers from the neighbouring villages, and consumers from the main town.

3.14 Crop Storage:

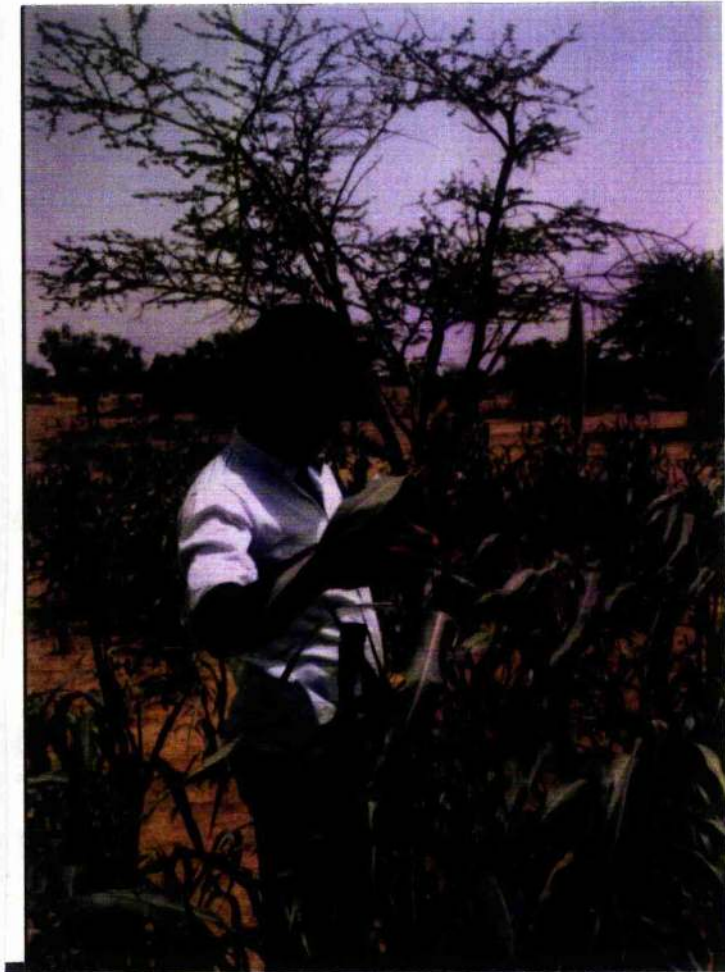
The matmura (traditional underground pit) is used in almost all the project villages for the storage of the millet crop. In the near past the matmura was constructed in the wadi (field), but recently it was moved to the village and located in the vicinity of the household. Often one may observe two matmuras in the same household which implies that the yield was in plenty. The matmura admits from 10 to 50 sacks of the millet crop. The crop is stored mainly for the provision of food surplus on which the household relied during the hungry months. The efficiency of this storage practice is supported by scientific research and the project did not interfere with it. The millet can keep well for up to three years without being affected by the crop storage pests which are widespread in the village communities. The pit is usually dug some metres down into the ground and the bottom is lined with the spikelets and auns of the heads of the millet crop after threshing and before grain loading. The sides are also lined as the pit is being filled. The matmura is touted by the project staff as being best suited to the local environment and as a safeguard against theft and fire.

3.15 Crop Pests:

Almost all the crops grown in the villages are severely attacked by crop-specific pests which ultimately result in low crop yields, if not damaging the entire crop. The pests attack the crops at certain stages of plant growth and feed on the plant.

The groundnuts crop is attacked by the *microtermes* (soil termites) at the collar of the

Agricultural Coordinator examining the millet plant for pest infestation.



Locusts attacking the gum arabic trees.

top roof, which causes wilting of the plants. At a later stage this pest also attacks the maturing pods and lead to considerable loss in yields. A bug (Elasmolomus sordidus) which is locally referred to as um sufut feeds on the kernels when the plants are stalked to dry after harvesting the crop. This leads to low oil content. The germinating seeds and seedlings are also attacked by a local surfa (millipedes) with the result that plants only appear in relatively low numbers. Grasshoppers also attack the crop at this stage and contribute to crop loss.

The millet crop is attacked by the stem borers (Chiloparcellus and Sesamia cretica) at the seedling stage, which causes dead heart to the millet crop and a low plant population per unit area. The millet head worm, locally known as nafasha, is the most damaging pest in the area. Sari el leil (local locust species) occasionally visits the millet fields and feeds on the crop in the milky stage, shortly before harvesting, resulting in severe crop loss. This pest equally affects the sorghum crop.

The sesame crop is mostly affected by the seed bug (see above) while the crop is left to dry at the harvesting stage, and is also attacked by grasshoppers which attack foliage.

The watermelon crop is attacked by the watermelon beetle, known as himayri, which attacks the seedling leaves; and the melon bug known as um bagga (Asmpongopus Viduatus) inflicts additional damage to the leaves.

In the jubraka gardens the okra crop is attacked by grasshoppers which result in low quantities of leaves, and the zurnakha (Mylabris Ligata) feeds on the flowers and

results in crop loss. Um kassara is a locally known disease caused by termites which attack the roots of the okra plant and lead to wilting.

Sorghum is attacked by grasshoppers, and by the pests which attack the millet crop.

The cowpea is mainly attacked by grasshoppers and the blister beetle. Hashab (gum Arabic trees) on the other hand, is attacked by the locust species which feed on the leaves leading to low crop yields.

All these agricultural pests result in additional expenses being born by the smallholder producer for the purchase of pest control chemicals, and this leads to increased production costs. The danger which these pests posed to the farmers in the project area is second only to the hazards of droughts and rainfall shortages.

Now to recapitulate and conclude. We have shown at the begining of the chapter that the majority of the ENSAP project villages were (in the pre-scheme period) passing through the second stage of agricultural transition. In this transitional stage there occurs a slight weakening in the farm-household relationship, with the development of an orientation to purchase part of the agricultural tools and inputs from the market. Here, also, credit, extension and marketing become more important. We have also shown how the simplicity of the agricultural techniques and the absence of institutions (such as research, extension, credit and marketing) to back farmers has restricted these villages from passing through the third (commercial and advanced) stage of agricultural transition. After thus articulating the pre-existing farming system we proceeded to delineate the major agricultural and economic patterns of the villages relating to this

transformation.

An outstanding feature of the agricultural system is the distinction between 'large-scale/progressive' (those who cultivate an average land area of up to 60 makhamasat) and 'smallholder/transitional' farmers (cultivating an average land area of 28 makhamasat). This distinction points to the emerging trends of economic aspirations in Ghubeish communities affected by the project. We have thus shown that 'smallholder/transitional' farmers constitute the majority of farmers (roughly over 95 %). 'Large-scale/progressive' farmers held the bulk of capital in the project area, especially animal wealth (sheep, cows, camels and goats).

These characteristics of 'large-scale/progressives', among others, indicate the fact that rich farmers have the advantage over smallholders of being strategically placed to make use of the limited supply of hired labour during the peak weeding season. Having plenty of cash at their disposal, 'large-scale/progressives' are better placed to recruit adequate labourers during the weeding period (in this period smallholder farmers experience deep shortages in cash income). Another important point which emerges from our distinction between 'large-scale progressives' and 'smallholder/transitional' farmers relates to the agricultural decision-making processes. We have shown how a decision made by one class of farmers unavoidably affects the other. For example, we have shown that decisions made by a smallholder during the course of the activity (such as the sudden withdrawal from hiring out one's labour), can also adversely affect a 'large-scale/progressive' farmer concerning the recruitment of labour. This may result in having less amount of land weeded (i.e. below the planned target , and consequently low income). Decisions made by progressive farmers also may adversely affect and/or ellicit a response from, a smallholder farmer. A good example is a case in which

progressive farmers opt to raise the wage rate to attract more hired labourers to do the weeding operation. Being unable to compete with rich farmers in the recruitment of hired labour (due to the high wage rate), a smallholder farmer would need to decide on summoning a nafir, engage in sharaka, or hire out his labour. Another possible effect could also be the activation of a persistent seasonal migration among smallholder farmers. While a smallholder's income from hiring out his labour on this process may increase, there is also the adverse effect of having the supply of household labour in one's own farm significantly reduced (and this could lead to the weeding of only a smaller part of the household farm , which means less production and income).

In addition we have pointed to the fact that some smallholder farmers started to 'emulate' large-scale farmers by engaging in sharaka with immigrant labourers (sharaka has been introduced by rich farmers). Farmers believed that sharaka results in spreading the risk due to loss or low returns, to both parts of the partnership. This held despite their acknowledgement that sharaka confers only a smaller share from the gross revenue. We have shown that, in fact, the sharaka works mostly to the advantage of the labourer. Thus I have argued in favour of an alternative hired labour system as this is most conducive to the project's goal of "significantly increasing the incomes of smallholder farmers". Increasing farmers income could, consequently, help these farmer eradicate the problems inhering in the traditional farming system by dealing promptly with the shortage of agricultural inputs such as seeds, chemicals (to combat farm pests), and labour (both off-farm and hired labour).

PART TWO

The Project;

Agency Versus Clients: Views, Conceptions And Goals;

The Project Impact

Chapter 4

The Project

In this chapter we move to deal with the ENSAP project itself (as mentioned before, ENSAP stands for En Nahud Smallholder Agricultural Project). We touch particularly on major issues related to the implementation of its credit and the extension components as well as the various innovations the project introduced into the traditional smallholder sector of the Ghubeish communities currently participating with the project. The project is located in En Nahud district of northern Kordofan province and was planned to cover two rural councils, viz, En Nahud and Ghubeish. However, the project initially concentrated its operations in Ghubeish rural council for the area is well known for its better soil fertility which is appropriate for the production of the major cash crop, groundnuts, sponsored by the project. Food crops were attributed some importance in the project, and the women were involved in a food and cash crops production programme to account for household's needs beyond basic provisioning.

4.1 The Location Of The Project Area:

Ghubeish rural council covers an area of 13500 square kilometres and is situated in the south-western part of En Nahud district of northern Kordofan. The area is located between latitudes 11° 45' and 12° 38' north and longitudes 28° 45' and 28° 15' east. The area lies in the savannah vegetation zone having a generally sandy soil topography with rich vegetation in the southern part and gradually moving to poorer soil fertility in the north. The further northern parts are largely semi-arid, experiencing poor rainfall. Species of acacia trees are widespread in the central and southern parts which provide for a rich vegetation belt, in contrast to

the soil erosion and desert encroachment in the further northern parts. Rainfall ranges between 250 and 550 mm. per annum.

The population of Ghubeish rural council was estimated in the 1988 municipal council's census at approximately 92 159 persons and is currently estimated to have arisen to 110000 of whom 90% are villagers and the remainder live in Ghubeish town.

There are about 140 officially recognized (administrative) villages comprising Ghubeish rural.council. The previous population census of 1983 had estimated Ghubeish population at 76649 persons. With a 20% increase from the 1983 census, the present-day population of Ghubeish rural council may be characterized as having a fast population growth.- inspite of being the most populous of the district rural councils, relative to the rest of the rural councils making up En Nahud district. However, Ghubeish rural council displays the least population growth The table below shows the percentage increases in population for the various councils of En Nahud district.

Table (15) Populations Of The Rural Councils Of En Nahud District (1983-1988 censuses)

Council	1983 census	1988 census	increase	% increase
Ghubeish	79649	92159	15510	20
Abu Zabad	56815	88055	31240	56
Khwei	39742	68922	29180	73
Wad Banda	61204	97961	36757	60
Odaya	56149	92592	36443	64
Sug'al Jamal	36719	44430	7771	21
En Nahud	64552	93412	28460	47
En Nahud town	61534	80732	19196	31
Total	452776	658263	204487	45

Source: District council, En Nahud, 1990.

4.2 ENSAP Project:

ENSAP is a development project implemented in En Nahud rural council, 1988/89 through to 1993, with its final goal (as per document) "to affirm and reinforce traditional small scale agriculture as a viable and profitable livelihood in at least 50 villages of En Nahud district, through the establishment of a self-sustained credit/extension programme appropriate for the needs of farmers cultivating under fifteen hectares". It is considered as a 'pilot/experimental' project since (by way of

being the first of its kind in Ghubeish communities) it is assumed to spearhead the process of development in the area.

4.3 Counterparts of The Project:

Two governmental (national) organizations and one NGO are involved in the project's design and implementation. The two governmental organizations are represented by the Agricultural Bank of Sudan (ABS) and the Extension Administration of the Ministry of Agriculture (MOA). The NGO is represented by CARE/SUDAN (an international charity, see later details). Each of the counterparts is assigned specific tasks towards the achievement of the final project goals.

The ABS is expected to sustain, on its own, the provision of credit to the project beneficiaries once the project phase is over, in 1993. In the context of the project itself, it was assigned the following obligations:

- a) The ABS is responsible for the secondment of three trained staff (agricultural Inspector, accountant and credit officer).
- b) ABS coordinates the delivery of inputs, such as improved seed varieties, pesticides, fertilizers and animal traction implements approved by the Steering Committee of ENSAP.
- c) ABS coordinates the project location, strategy development and training provided by ENSAP with similar components of projects located elsewhere in Kordofan in consultation with the chairman of the Steering Committee of ENSAP.

d) ABS prepares all steps and procedures for phasing in its responsibility for the project operations within the fifth year of the project.

e) Participation in the mid-term and final evaluations of the project.

f) Chairmanship of the project Steering Committee, as described in the project proposal ; and

g) To manage and sustain project operations from the fifth year, once the phase of project implementation is completed (see above).

The Ministry of Agriculture (MOA) is represented by its Agricultural Extension unit. The obligation of the Agricultural extension unit is the secondment of agricultural staff, and coordination of its activities with the agency.

The obligations of the NGO (CARE/SUDAN) were specified as follows:

a) Provision of the necessary funds, vehicles, materials and equipment in a timely manner.

b) The recruitment of, and the provision of salaries and benefits for, the Team Leader (TL) and Extension Adviser (EA) and the Sudanese staff hired by CARE.

c) The provision of any necessary field allowances and per diems.

d) The selection of, and payment to, Sudanese or expatriate consultants; and

e) Training of the ABS staff assigned to the project, through an in-service training programme, through providing internal training opportunities, or through short training courses, conferences and workshops outside the Sudan in consultation with, and after the approval of, the ABS management.

Accordingly, the three counterparts provided the following staff, which constituted ENSAP's organisational structure:

ABS	MOA	CARE/SUDAN
i) one part-time .	i) one project manager based at	i) one team leader.
branch manager.	El Obeid.	ii) one extension adviser.
ii) one agricultural.	ii) one extension coordinator.	iii) one community development
inspector.		officer.
iii) one credit officer.	iii) one <u>jubraka</u> extensionist	iv) one <u>jubraka</u> extensionist.
in) one loan accountant	iv) one senior extensionist.	
	v) five agricultural field extensionists (AFE's).	

The project is administered at the Board of Directors level by five members of the ENSAP Steering Committee, representing the MOA, the Ministry of Finance and Economic Planning, the ABS, the Regional Ministry of Agriculture and CARE/SUDAN. The Steering Committee. of ENSAP is responsible for a) authorizing major programmatic changes; b) establishing the policies of ENSAP; and c) coordination between the three counterparts involved in the implementation process.

At the regional level, ENSAP activities are coordinated by the MOA's regional manager of agriculture based in the regional capital El Obeid, who is a part-time manager. From the El Obeid base the project manager is responsible for i) providing insight on project implementation ; ii) representing the interests of the seconded staff; iii) facilitating communication between the regional government of Kordofan and related government departments; iv) organising ENSAP Steering Committee meetings; v) coordinating financial inputs from the project's contributors (see below); and vi) political liaison with government organisations.

4.4 Project Finance:

ENSAP's finance was provided by the Government of the Netherlands through CARE/SUDAN and with a smaller share from the government of Sudan. The contributions of the two counterparts are, \$ 2,837,996 from the Government of the Netherlands and \$ 35,000 from the government of Sudan (totalling \$ 2,872,996). The Government of the Netherlands contribution to the project's budget includes the following items for the full project life time of five years, from February 1988 to January 1993:

Vehicles and maintenance	\$ 250,000
Equipment, supplies and services	152,145
Personnel salaries	1,026,351
Administrative costs	1,217,000
Miscellaneous	24,000
Total	2,837,996

A considerable part of the above budget (approximately 1.2 million dollars) is devoted to credit services (loans to farmers, administration of loans etc.).

4.5 Project Goals:

The project has clearly stated goals which are expected to be achieved within the limited period of implementation of five years. These goals are firstly, to establish a self-sustaining agricultural credit system that is appropriate to the needs of farmers cultivating less than fifteen hectares and women farmers cultivating jubrika gardens. Secondly, to increase, significantly, the incomes of traditional farmers by improving their agricultural productivity.

These two goals were meant to be achieved through a set of intermediate project goals. These intermediate goals include the following:

- a) to increase the average annual area cultivated by 5000 farm families by 25% by 1993. Labour and other agricultural inputs will be increased proportionately.
- b) to increase the average per hectare crop yields of the major crops (groundnuts, millet, gum arabic and watermelons) by 10% by 1993 for the 5000 farm families.
- c) to decrease the average farm-gate costs of cultivation per unit output by 30% for 5000 farm families by 1993.
- d) to enable 5000 women to establish and maintain seed stocks for household vegetable gardens by 1993.
- e) to institutionalize within the ABS branch of En Nahud a proven system for providing credit (as an alternative to sheil) to smallholders by 1993.

Taking into account its ambitions on behalf of 5000 farm families ENSAP's project design planned that 50 villages in the area should be covered, according to the following phased activities:

Operation Year One, 1988: To select and provide extension (advice, training, agricultural inputs) and loans for 20 farmers from each of 5 villages to be served by the project for 1988 season, making a total of 100 farmers. Concurrently, 20 women farmers in each of these villages to be selected and provided with extension and in-kind loans to grow jubraka crops, making a total of 100 women.

Operation Year Two, 1989: To select an additional 15 villages for participation, targeting 600 men and women farmers to receive extension and credit services.

Operation Year Three, 1990: An additional 15 villages to be selected, and all villages now in the scheme introduced to animal traction implements if judged feasible.

Operation Year Four, 1991: additional 15 villages to be selected, now making a total of 50 villages, each having approximately 80 men and 80 women beneficiaries.

Additionally, for the purpose of evaluating the project impact some further villages were to be selected as controls. As the project unfolds their 'undeveloped' agricultural performance is then compared with that of the participating villages (PV's). These

control villages (CV's) were expected to be fully up-graded to participation in the subsequent season. Note, however, in the eventuality rather fewer control villages were incorporated in the scheme (see e.g. map No. 2 in the end pocket).

4.6 ENSAP's Participating Villages (PV's):

The candidate villages and farmers were required to meet the specific eligibility criteria of the project before being selected for participation. Immediately after selection for participation in the project, farmers are asked to form their village committees (whose membership is represented by the village sheikh, as chairman, and a group of guarantors). The eligibility criteria which the village should meet are defined as follows:

a) the village should have a good reputation. This is established by the project survey teams which interview the village sheikhs, shartai (ie. boss for the sheikhs, see chapter 8), district municipal council officers and the tribal nazir (ie the boss for the tribe) concerning village history, and the village's internal and external relationships.

b) willingness to participate. This is ensured by first introducing the project to the villages through a description of the project goals, and then leaving the initiative of participation to the village through requiring a written application subject to testing against other eligibility criteria.

c) the village should have at least ten years of existence.

d) the village should have no internal leadership conflicts.

e) the village should have no external conflicts with neighbouring villages.

f) the village should not have security problems.

Individual applicant farmers, however, were also required to meet ENSAP's farmer selection criteria. These eligibility criteria for a farmer's participation include;

a) the farmer must be the head of the household (note that in the case of joint-extended family households each family 'component' is eligible for participation if it owns a plot of land),

b) he should be a land owner who enjoys a good reputation,

c) the applicant should occupy himself predominantly in a farming within the village,

d) the applicant must have been practicing farming for the past four years in the village,

e) the applicant should be recommended by the sheikh, and

f) the farmer must be guaranteed by a member of the village committee, formed by ENSAP, to ensure the repayment of the loans.

Loan guarantors, it should be noted, were not meant to repay the loans on behalf of a defaulted farmer. Rather a guarantor is assumed to present defaulted farmers to the district court for prosecution. ENSAP distinguishes between willful defaulters and those who defaulted for reason beyond their control such as drought and crop failure (i.e an arrangement will be made for rescheduling loan repayment for non-willful defaulters, whilst willful defaulters are prosecuted).

The main emphasis of ENSAP project from its initial conception as an idea was to be a test-bed for innovative ideas in the provision of agricultural credit to smallholder farmers (Vincent,1990:1), the resulting system of which should be taken over by the ABS and institutionalized. Thus, the project had developed well defined

policies for loan disbursement and a specific extension methodology. The formation of project-related local groups has been the main pre-requisite for the delivery of the project loans and services. Thus ENSAP project staff's basic step after the selection of the villages for participation has been the formation of the jamaa (sub-groups of farmers, each consisting of around ten persons), the committee of dumman (guarantors, sin. damin; each damin is responsible for a single jamaa) and the 'association' or cooperative. These three main institutions were established to contribute to the project's goal of ensuring loan repaying through 'peer pressure' by the jamaa members. Note that jamaa committees give rise to the so-called "jamaa system".

4.7 Jamaa: Social Dimensions:

The thrust of ENSAP's goal of 'sustainability' was the the formation of local organizations which ,by 1993, could effectively take over the project activities with additional technical assistance from the project management. The jamaa system was a genuine step towards that end. From its inception the ENSAP project has been successful in understanding (through village surveys) the social , economic and, partly, the cultural background of the project site. Village surveys enabled the project staff to come to grips with the villagers' interests and felt needs and their indigenous institutions of group action and cooperation. In addition village surveys demonstrated that the villagers had not only known about the importance of group dynamics but had also already formed village institutions locally referred to as lijan (lit. committees; sing. lajna) to cope with the specific problems that affect village development. Thus, the majority of the project villages had a pre-existing mosque committee, school committee, water yard committee, grazing land and grain mill committees. These were democratically elected by the community members in the so-called ijtimaa (meeting) that brings all the village members together.

Based on this understanding of the traditional institutions representing group action, ENSAP project has made the jamaa system central to its lending system. The advantages dumman committees were assumed to have in the project relate to the fact that a) committees do not conflict with local culture (which is very inimical to socialist forms of institutions), nor are they imposed from outside; b) committees formed at the village level are symbolic of popular participation and democracy; c) committees help initiate local self-reliance; d) committees give prestige to the work; e) committees give continuity to the work; and more importantly, f) committees involve local traditional powerholders (the village sheikhs) which obviate conflicts which would likely have been posed if these traditional powerholders had been kept outside the project's local administration.

The main features of the traditional village committees are that they are organizationally simple, composed of local people, and are not integrated into the external governmental or non-governmental bodies which would usually involve coordinated efforts and a considerable commitment of labour. But the traditional committees, being too often handicapped by financial constraints, were short-lived or functioned on only a short term basis. The new village committees formed by ENSAP, on the other hand, were required to be self-sustaining and well coordinated over a long period of time. Additional tasks expected of the new committees were pointed out by a group of committee members who told me: "today we are involved in complicated 'programmatic' and 'planning' undertakings which means that we should have more training in book-keeping and recording" (from Murabaat village, 1990).

ENSAP's credit component is devised to work closely with two types of formal group organisation which function in place of providing loans services directly to individual farmers. This has been partly to comply with ABS regulations and pre-conditions for loan delivery which stipulate that the ABS disburses loans to cooperatives or similar organizations, in contrast to individuals. Here ENSAP advocates the formation of either cooperatives or 'associations'. In the formation of cooperatives organized by the ABS staff the Cooperative Department (of the Sudan government) would detail its representatives to attend the meeting. As a necessary condition the Cooperative Department stipulates that membership should at least be fifty if the village is to be eligible for a cooperative society and thus receive facilities such as subsidized services. Associations, on the other hand do not have to satisfy this membership requirement and could form with a minimum of membership. The following are the differences between cooperatives and associations:

Cooperatives

Associations

- | | |
|---|---|
| i. Formation should be accomplished attendance of the delegates of the C.D. | i. Formation solely accomplished by ENSAP agents |
| ii. Membership not less than fifty | ii. Membership specified by the group itself. |
| iii. Should be registered with the C.D. | iii. Not registered with the C.D. |
| iv. Assigned share of LS 20 per member | iv. has no share capital in the restricted sense |
| v. Liable to expand into other purposes | v. May not be liable to expand into other purposes. |

The distribution of the two institutions among the project's PVs shows a marked tendency for the farmers to prefer the formation of associations, as opposed to cooperatives (see below). Cooperatives are clearly more formalized and organisationally complicated than the association. When ENSAP teams approach the villages for group formation the farmers are given the option to choose from these

two basic forms. 'Associations' have been touted by the project as an innovation that suits project communities and is appropriate to their needs and capabilities. It does not impose any financial burdens on local people (members do not have to buy shares), hence does not limit membership participation. In the case of the ENSAP project, however, there is no clear evidence to say whether the 'association' is better than the cooperative or vice versa. Experience of both organizational forms with the project lends support to this fact. Thus, for instance, while the cooperative in UM Zaggaya village was unable to meet the 80% level of loan repayment specified by the credit staff, the 'association' of Dirra was able to repay more than 80% of its members' loans in 1989 season. It is the ease with which the 'associations' are formed that has partly resulted in a majority of the villages siding with 'associations' in preference to cooperatives. This is shown in the table below.

Table (16): Distribution Of Associations And Cooperatives Among The PVs

Village	Association	Cooperative	Year
El Riteirit		+	1988
Widaa		+	1988
Wad Fadol	"		1988
Sabi	"		1989
Ghabash Hammad	"		1989
Ibeid	"		1989
El Halfaya	"		'89
Seranbi	"		'89

Rasheed	+	'89
Dirra	"	'89
Balila	"	'89
Murabaat	"	'89
Um Zaggaya	+	'89
Migeilima	+	'89
Barnawi	+	'89
Wad Mitgil	" control village	'89
Wad Gassim	" control village	'89
Abu Geid	"	'90
Um Sidair	"	'90
Kijeira	N.a	'90
Wad Dinga	N.a	'90

Thus, out of a total of fifteen villages participating in the ENSAP by the 1989/90 season a total of nine opted for associations and six for cooperatives.

Upon selection as being eligible for participation in the project the village farmers concerned are required to select their own officers. The chairmanship of the cooperative/'association' and the dumman committee is served by the village sheikh when judged eligible by the project staff. The committee consists of elected leaders who are to act as the dumman (guarantors) for the other members of the group. A

damin is usually responsible for presenting a defaulted farmer for prosecution, as we mentioned earlier, rather than repaying his loans on behalf. Each group of, theoretically, up to ten farmers has a damin. The dumman themselves are guaranteed by the sheikh who is the damin el dumman(the guarantor of the guarantors). The committee then, is formed from these dumman, and includes a chairman, secretary, deputy secretary and treasurer. In order to guarantee the repayment of the loans the project gets the sheikh (who has no damin) to swear on the quran. The sheikh, acting as the damin el dumman, should ensure that membership in the 'association'/cooperative should meet the eligibility criteria of the project. If a farmer fails to get his personal damin he will be refused to participate in the project.

Prior to the disbursement of loans a tripartite agreement (the committee, guarantor and the farmer) for each Jamaa should be signed and witnessed by ENSAP; this is known as the jamaa agreement. This specifies the channels for loan disbursement and repayment, ensures access to a defaulted farmers' crop which is considered as collateral for the project loans and indicates the consequences (legal or otherwise) of loan default. Before the disbursement of loans a contract is signed in which the loan term, purpose, charges, security and consequences are stated. It was generally observed that for a significant number of jamaas of the ENSAP project membership draws on familial, social and neighbourhood ties. For a large number of cases the members of the jamaa come from the same areet, section of the village or village quarter.

The project committees at the village level were intensively involved in the decision-making processes relating to project loans, through systematic planning and consultation with the project credit staff. These committee members were able to provide the initial estimates of loans demanded by the PFs (participating farmers)

and to recommend the specific amounts, which would be finally approved by the project staff. Being in close contact with their fellow villagers, these committee members were well equipped (better than outsiders) to provide accurate and reasonable estimates of the loans which the project should provide for the individual farmers. Empowered with training in book-keeping methods these village committees seemed to escape the criticism often directed at traditional group institutions which come to play their traditional functions in connection with rural development. Thus Kloppenburg (1983:314) argues in this respect that "traditional forms of group action alone have often proven inadequate in providing a framework around which new forms of group activities appropriate to the demands of the development situation could be structured".

4.8 The Credit Component:

According to ENSAP's mission statement the principal beneficiaries of the project are smallholder farmers cultivating less than fifteen hectares (approximately 26 makhamas). But ENSAP's credit system is meant to be sustainable within the ABS once the project phase is over. For this reason ENSAP had from its inception to account for both its own goals and also the requirements of ABS in terms of what is sustainable within the latter's system. Thus, the ABS was found already to be delivering loans to large-scale business. For this reason ENSAP adjusted its goal and incorporayed these ABS clients in its loan arrangements. Another reason for delivering loans to large farmers was the plain fear that these groups could thwart the project effort if excluded from participation: being strongly placed as powerholders large farmers are well equipped to distort project goals to their own benefits.

4.8.1 Loan Purpose And Size:

ENSAP advocates a participatory loan delivery system. The determination of loan size lies with the farmers themselves, provided that the amount requested by the individual farmer falls within the limits specified by the credit staff. "Since farmers and their peers know best their capacity to repay, this flexibility allows individual circumstances to be taken into account in the determination of loan size" (ENSAP report, 1989:5).

ENSAP disburses two types of loans to smallholders. The first instalment, delivered in May and June, is the production loan meant to cover the costs of land preparation and planting. The second, planned to be disbursed in late August, is the consumption loan which was meant to replace the sheil system, as the small farmer traditionally used to approach these money lenders at this period to provide for household consumption needs. The main purpose of the production loan is to assist the farmers' purchase of seeds and seed dressing not made available through ENSAP's extension unit. In addition it is meant to cover hired labour costs for the weeding operations. Farmers, however, use part of this production loan to cover household consumption needs on behalf of those household members who would traditionally absent themselves from the village to work as hired labourers. Movement of household members outside the village, in the past, resulted in reduced household labour being deployed in household farms and in turn a smaller makhamasat area being operated. Thus consumption loans at this time contribute to the stabilization of the household members in the village and to increasing farm productivity.

Two factors are taken into consideration when determining the limits to loan size. Firstly, the total amount of loan disbursed in the first instalment is determined by the total amount of land actually put into cultivation. Secondly, in the second instalment, the area cultivated, the quality of rainfall, the farm status and the household size are to be taken into account. Even so ENSAP has its own upper limit which was defined relative to the project mandate to develop services for smallholders. ENSAP's aim is to spread loan benefits to as many smallholder farmers as possible rather than ending up limiting the number of clients because of delivering relatively large loans to a few larger-scale farmers.

Each individual farmer gets his loan size estimated and approved by his damin (lit. guarantor) in the jamaa (group) and the amounts requested by the farmers should pass through these damins and group leaders before being submitted to ENSAP for approval. The ENSAP project then puts its own estimates which could be lower than the amount requested but not higher.

In the pre-ENSAP period, the ABS disbursed loans in three instalments. The first is for land preparation and planting which is the same as ENSAP's first instalment; the second is for weeding; and the third is for harvesting which is considered by farmers as tantamount to the consumption loan offered by ENSAP as most of the harvesting activities are carried by household labour. The justification for ENSAP's dropping ABS's second loan was that the administrative costs of this instalment would be too high to make loan delivery a viable enterprise. Moreover, the delivery of two instalments should not necessarily imply that the overall amount of loan per makhamas be smaller.

The farmers, however, attack ENSAP's credit policy on the ground that provision of loans on the basis of makhamasat cultivated does not square with their farm planning and decision-making processes. The disbursement of the production loans which are delayed until mid-May (to allow ample time for ENSAP teams to make accurate estimations of the number of makhamasat put into cultivation) would mean that the farmer had already made his production decisions which, since the loans could not be taken for granted, would be conservative ones. This will in turn result in a lesser amount of loan being received by an individual farmer. Had the credit teams disbursed the production loans around late March and early April, the farmers argue, their agricultural planning could have been much enhanced and a larger amount of makhamasat put into cultivation. ENSAP's justification for the late delivery of the loans lies in the plain fear that loans be misused with the consequence of unavoidable loan default.

In 1988 a number of farmers were critical of ENSAP second loan (the consumption loan) which was limited by the project to a maximum of LS 75 per household member. Their view was that the amount set by that limit was gravely inadequate (the agency disburses this loan particularly to allow farmers not to deal with sheil merchants). To account for the financial shortfall these farmers would resort to the traditional sheil lenders for the sale (in advance) of part of their farm crop during the preharvesting period. This is ironic since the project was originally aimed at the eradication of the exploitative sheil system. Consequently, the project readjusted its credit plans for the following season, 1989; a suggestion was made that the loan amount should be increased provided that the quality of the rainy season promised a good yield to the farmer. Thus the project teams would visit the project farms in July to evaluate the quality of the rainy season and the status of the farms. This procedure seems to be well received by the participant farmers.

ENSAP also provides agricultural inputs such as aldrin, diazinon and propoxur (pesticides) and improved seeds (Uganda millet and Barbeton groundnuts) to farmers who voluntarily request it at a price determined by ENSAP. Rather than considering these inputs as in-kind loans ENSAP deducts the price of these inputs from the loans delivered in the form of production loans.

4.8.2 Loan Security:

ENSAP deploys two forms of loan security. The first is the assured access to a defaulted farmer's produce to cover both the amount of loans delivered as well as the marketing costs of this produce incurred on the part of the project. This is clearly stated in the loan contract and the jamaa agreement.

The second form of security is the 80%, 90% and 100% jamaa system. This system stipulates that to qualify for loans the in next season a) the membership of a cooperative/ 'association' should in sum, repay at least 80% of the total amount of the loans; b) The membership of a jamaa should in sum, repay at least 90% of the outstanding loans its members had received; and c) an individual farmer should repay the full 100% of his outstanding loans. The project, however, makes provisions for crop failure due to factors beyond the control of the farmer such as drought, in which case loans will be rescheduled to be repaid over the future period.

This 'jamaa system' is considered as an innovation by ENSAP project which harnesses peer pressure on behalf of loan repayment. Failing to repay 90% of the loans will lead to the disqualification of the whole jamaa group; and failure to repay 80% of the loans by the association/cooperative will result in disqualifying

the whole village from participation in the project. For this reason the sheikhs and the dumman exert much of their influence (both formally and informally) to ensure members' repayment. Farmers who willfully default their loans run the risk of being taken to jail. Local farmers link prosecution notions of shame and dishonour. As has been observed by the project consultancy team of mid June 1990 "the farmers felt that the shame of being put in jail would result in finding assets (donkeys, goats etc.) to pay what was owed. Confiscating a donkey could be extremely serious because this is how farmers carry the water they need" (mid-term evaluation report, 1990:10).

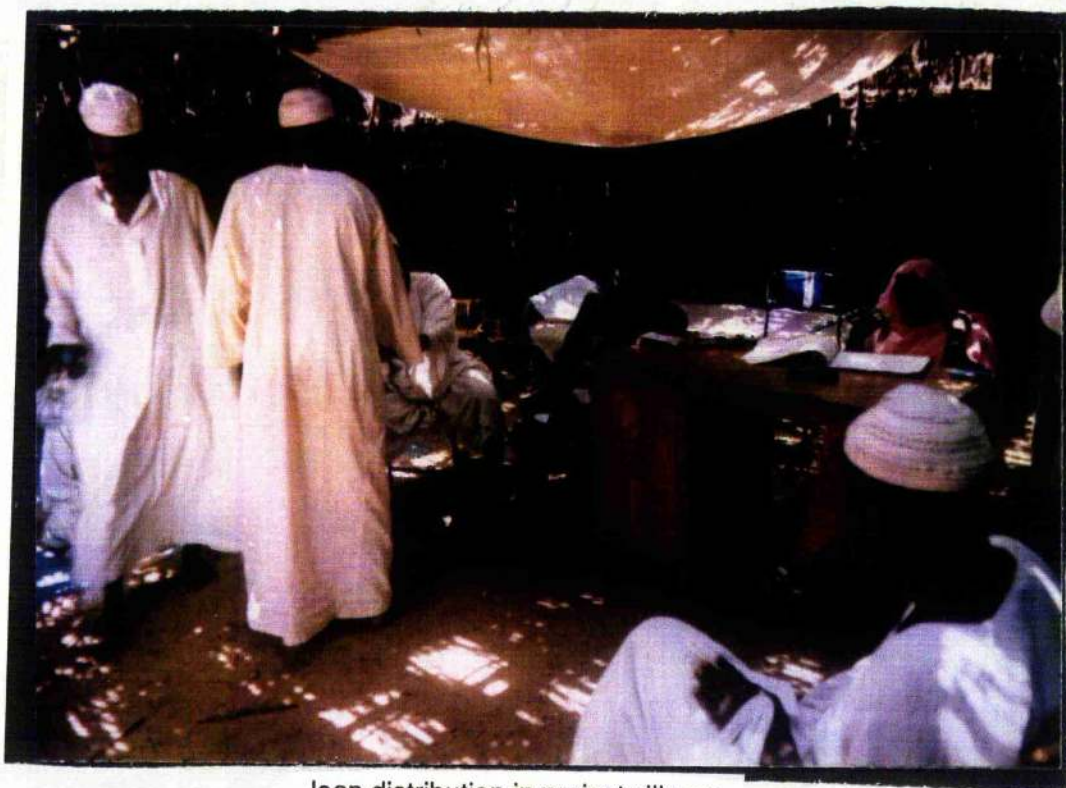
A few farmers object to loan rescheduling (see above), claiming that this reduces the amount of loan received in each subsequent season. The farmers have made their own recommendations that a thus partly defaulted member should be allowed to receive the full amount of loan for the current season while being requested to repay both the amount defaulted and that received this season by the end of the current season. This is justified on the ground that rescheduling otherwise means that the producer will have too little capital to invest in agriculture in the current season and would also lead to a higher probability of future default and a vicious circle of debt. To be allowed the full amount of the loan will, in contrast, lead to larger investment , larger returns and thus, higher probability of repayment. However, the farmers' recommendations have so far fallen on deaf ears.

4.8.3 Interest on Loans:

ENSAP loan repayment is due by the end of December and up to February of each subsequent year. While ENSAP encourages its farmers to reduce their loan charges by repaying earlier, it also allows the farmers plenty of time to repay,



El Halfaya farmers receiving their loans, 1990



loan distribution in project villages.

allowing them to make the most of sales prices rising to incentive levels, provided that repayment is made within the duration specified by the project. ENSAP's provisions toward the viability of its lending system is to charge 2% (in the second lending season raised to 2.5% and in the third to 3%) per month. The philosophy behind charging the interest rate on a monthly basis is to provide an incentive to those farmers who repay their loans early. But the experience shows that the farmers are not responsive to this incentive as the majority tend to wait until the prices go up in January and February.

Islam prohibits dealing with interest and the ideal, so far as the farmers of the project are concerned, would be to have an interest free credit system. However in its later stages ENSAP was partially able to get its farmers to believe that the loan charges were rather different from an interest rate in the proper sense and were meant to pay for certain costs - of administration and supervision (CAS), loan delivery, transportation, as well as the salaries of the credit staff.

4.8.4 Loan Book-keeping:

For the interest of 'sustainability', ENSAP's long term objective is to gradually delegate the bookkeeping job to the committee officers (i.e the damins). The advantage of this approach is felt to be in its significant reduction of the transportation costs. In order for ENSAP to accomplish this goal the committee officers are trained in the business of keeping accurate repayment records, in loan monitoring and disbursement, and in the estimation of repayable loan size.

4.8.5 Inventory Loans:

ENSAP project is highly concerned about its PF's (participating farmers) marketing problems, which result in increased costs and lowered income returns to the farmers. Therefore, the project is currently planning to introduce an inventory loan policy for marketing PFs' crops at an incentive sales price. The policy had originated from ENSAP's recognition of the farmers' tendency to sell their crops at low prices, only for crop prices to rise dramatically later in the year with sizeable profits going to the merchants. The inventory loan policy calls the PFs to sell their harvested crop to the project at an initially reduced sales price (i.e slightly lower than the ruling market price). When the prices later rise to perceptibly high rates then ENSAP will complete the purchase of the PFs' crops at this price, deducting a minimum percentage of this revenue to cover the project's supervision and storage costs. The ultimate benefit goes to the farmer thereby maximizing his income gains. As almost all the PFs of the project faced this marketing problem, this policy seemed to attract their interest with greater success.

4.9 The Extension Component of The Project:

The extension component of ENSAP project assumes the task of extending technical information and inputs to the project beneficiaries to assist with the realization of its goal of significantly increasing farm productivity, by 10%, for 5000 farm families by 1993; concurrently it should assist 5000 women farmers to establish and maintain seed stocks for the jubraka (kitchen garden) plots by 1993.

As we have mentioned earlier the intervention was meant as "a test-bed for innovative ideas in the provision of agricultural credit to smallholder farmers the resulting system of which the ABS could take over and institutionalize" (Vinscent,

1990: Na). Ultimately the extension innovation should be sustainable within the ABS if it is to succeed in being continued on when CARE terminates its activities in 1993. Thus, from the inception the Agricultural Extension Administration of the MOA was involved in the running of the extension unit of the project with the insurance of this 'sustainability' in mind. This 'sustainability' was viewed in terms of the provision of services which are economically viable and practical (given the financial and technical constraints of the MOA and the Sudan government), in addition to being capable of reaching the farming communities both during and post the project life.

The theory behind ENSAP's AFE's extension plan is that the AFE's upon being placed in core villages (i.e. central village amongst a cluster of villages), should spend their time among the village people, become acquainted with village culture, develop amicable social relations with the inhabitants and thereby stimulate the farmers' assessment and identification of their needs in response to ENSAP's innovative inputs. By so doing the AFE's were viewed as being able to gain the trust and confidence of the farmers. But this had resulted in considerable delay in the execution of the extension unit's planned activities since such rapport requires a relatively long period of time to establish. Moreover, the intensity of the tasks which the AFE's were required to accomplish often conflicted with the establishment of such a rapport with the village farmers. AFE's were placed in the core villages to carry on the following tasks:

- a) they should be culturally adapted to work close to PF's (participating farmers) by living among them, hence enabling better understanding of their problems, concerns and needs.
- b) they should provide technical assistance to farmers on the spot as they arise.

c) their placement enhances community participation in the project through daily contact between AFE's and farmers.

d) their monitoring and supervision of the demonstration fields (ie. experimentation farms in core villages for demonstrating the soundness of the innovation; they are strategically placed as to be observed by all PFs) would be more intensive and vigorous by their timing close by these plots.

The placement of AFE's in core villages was also considered as an innovative step in that it squares with the goal of 'sustainability' since the donkey transport by which the AFE's tour the neighbouring villages implies low transportation costs which are absolutely manageable within the MOA once CARE hands over the project in 1993. The donkey transport was particularly recommended because of i) the low cost relative to other animals, ii) ease and low cost usage and upkeep and iii) the lower value and hence lower likelihood of theft.

The rest of the extension staff were office based and often launched team trips to the project villages for supervision, monitoring, evaluation, follow-up and reporting on project performance.

4.9.1 The Extension Coverage:

The extension service of ENSAP project was from the start beset with a number of constraints which limited its coverage capacity. One constraint was the inaccessibility of most of the PV's villages to the AFE's due to the limited distance a donkey can travel effectively. A good example was that in 1989 the small village cluster of EL Riteirit and Widaa' did not receive adequate extension services. The AFE who was based in El Riteirit found the four hour ride to

Widaa' intimidating and was not able to provide services to that village (Project Report, 1990). Similarly, those villages closer to Ghubeish town received too little an extension advice in 1989 as the Senior AFE in charge of these villages was withdrawn to En Nahud town to assist in office work. Other villages such as EL Halfaya were entirely isolated from the rest of the cluster villages and were poorly covered by the Agricultural Coordinator from the base of En Nahud. Chronic fuel shortages also exacerbated the lack of coverage problem (from the office base in En Nahud) throughout 1989 towards the mid of 1990.

ENSAP adopts a 'team work' principle to encourage a feeling of 'team spirit' among its staff to avoid the general problems of 'apathy' and 'low motivation' that otherwise tend to characterize government institutions' seconded employees and which result in low productivity. Moreover, the government seconded staff of the MOA were paid higher salaries compared with the salaries they got prior to joining the project. This had boosted staff morale and employee performance. But it also poses some future problems, relating to the sustainability within the MOA upon project 'phase-over' in 1993, since the government of Sudan is already beset with financial bottle-necks. This lucrative payment to the MOA staff had also stimulated a feeling among the MOA seconded staff that in the post-project implementation phase work with the MOA will not be attractive and alternative work should be sought with the other NGO's currently launching development programmes in the area such as the IFAD¹ (International Fund for Agricultural Development) project.

¹ IFAD launches a similar project in En Nahud district, and provides lucrative salaries to the seconded agricultural staff. It provides loans to cooperatives through the Cooperative Department of the Sudan government.

In the first operating season, 1988, ENSAP extension services were confined to a) the provision of agrochemicals (diazinon) and sprayers to be used in the control of um farrara (a local locust specie) ,b) launching an aflatoxin (against a fungal disease which attacks the groundnuts crop) campaign; and c) the issuing of the weekly newsletter in which market prices were introduced to the PF's in the three villages (Widaa, Wad Fadol and El Riteirit) receiving services in 1988. As the project expanded through the second season over 1989 to cover 971 farmers in the fifteen PV's the extension service of ENSAP was able to implement a range of interventions. These included i) the procurement of sodari variety of groundnuts and the Ugandi millet for experimentation and demonstration purposes. Both varieties were identified as high yielding varieties and drought resistant. The supplier was the National Seeds Administration (NSA) at Sennar town. Selected farmers were provided seed varieties of Ugandi millet and the sodari groundnuts on credit. AFE's provided technical assistance for the selected farmers; ii) the provision of limited quantities of agro-chemicals (aldrex-t, diazinon) and sprayers for pest control. The ABS was financially handicapped in providing foreign currency for the purchase of adequate quantities of these inputs and only limited quantities of sprayers were made available to the PF's, which were distributed through the latter's associations. Sprayers were hired out to the PF's on usage rate and the practice was monitored by the AFE's; iii) provision of aldrex-t seed dressing used to protect seeds against storage pests and soil borne pests, diseases and fungi. Supplies were procured through the ABS and distributed to the PF's on a credit basis.

The introduction of these inputs, however, interfered with some of the PF's' traditional practices such as the rameil (ie. planting prior to the full start of the rainy season; see chapter 7) operation. PF's were advised not to practice rameil in the planting of the new millet and groundnut varieties (i.e the Ugandi millet and sodari

groundnuts). In their traditional system the farmers practiced rameil to allow the plant to make the maximum use of water during the planting season since the amount of rainfall at this particular time is very limited. If rains happened to come immediately after a crop being planted this will imply greater productivity than if the crop is planted after the rains come. The farmers would use their knowledge of the kharif (autumn ; see chapter 7) calendar which tells them the expected time of rainfall and would make their agricultural decisions accordingly. ENSAP project, however, sees the rameil practice as involving high risks should the rains fail to come at the exact time of rameil planting. This is also coupled with the risk that PF's will develop a bad impression of the newly introduced innovations. In the event, both a lack of sufficient rains and pest infestation in the 1989 season, resulted in severe crop failure for the new varieties. Mostly affected was the Ugandi millet crop which largely failed due to susceptibility to the millet head worm, locally called nafasha, which was prevalent in the area at the time. Ugandi millet was also observed by the PF's to be liable to lose its superior characteristics very quickly in the succeeding seasons unless the seed stock is continuously supervised- a practice which is entirely impracticable in the traditional smallholder sector. A fourth extension service intervention in 1989, d), was the consultancy provided to professor Siddig (from the university of Khartoum, who is a specialist in the derivation of chemical extracts from local resources) to investigate the feasibility of utilizing neem (*Azadirachta Indica* A Juss) extracts for the control of a wide range of local pests. Neem extracts of both the seed and leaves were demonstrated as seed dressings, crop dusting, sprayers and for use in the underground pits (matmura) for the storage of the millet crop. The idea was to provide low cost and locally available chemicals for the PF's of the project. This would be as an appropriate alternative to the traditional, costly and health-hazard chemicals currently used by farmers. As the neem tree grows well in the area it was thought to provide a sustainable supply of chemicals within the reach of the local farmer. Indeed farmers are now able to prepare neem extracts for the control of

farm pests with remarkable success. A fifth intervention e); a sonki tool for the tapping of the gum Arabic crop was introduced as an alternative to the traditional axe. The traditional axe was judged to be destructive to the tree and to shorten its productive life. To stimulate the sonki tool's adoption by PF's local blacksmiths were identified to supply the tool at prices closer to the prices of the traditional axe. However, the adoption rate for the 1990 season was still low since the farmers were not fully satisfied with the tool and offered their own suggestions to the project which might improve the tool and influence greater adoption. Other achievements for the extension programme for the 1989 and 1990 season was the intermittent use of Radio El Obeid for the broadcasting of extension messages to the farmers in their remote villages. Lack of radios and the high prices of batteries, however, resulted in little impact being achieved through this delivery system.

4.9.2 Formal Training to Selected Farmers (VPCs):

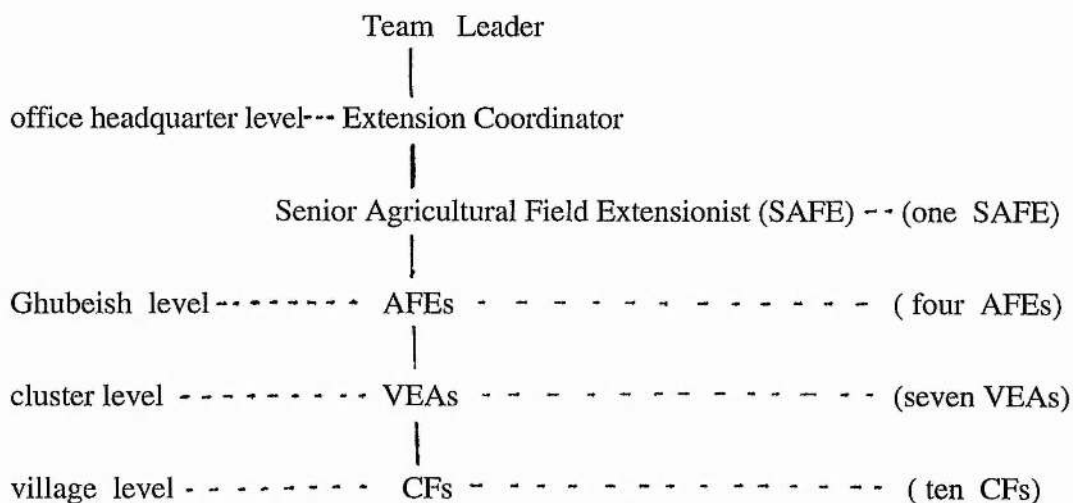
The ENSAP extension component was characteristically poor in its coverage outreach. The reason was the poor staffing (in terms of quantity, as the project expanded its activities over the numerous villages in subsequent seasons); in addition there were the recurrent fuel shortages which limited the staff's outreach from their base at En Nahud. As a result a decentralized extension approach was adopted in which participation by local farmers was encouraged to fill the gaps in the extension coverage.

One step towards the encouragement of local participation has been the selection of the village pest controllers (VPCs) from local villages which volunteered to send members for training in pest control. The first training course was held in Murabaat village in 1990 to upgrade the skills of the selected farmers who could

by the end of the training period go back to their villages and assist their fellows in adopting the scientific methods of pest control. VPCs were given basic training in the use of chemicals and applicators with special attention paid to the operator's safety and health. Emphasis was put on alternatives to agrochemicals such as the neem extracts. Assistance in the training of the VPCs was received from the Plant Protection Department and the Ministry of Health. The VPCs training included both men and women volunteers. But from a total of thirty six volunteers from the fifteen PVs only eleven were able to attend the training course held in Murabaat village from 11th March 1989 through the 19th of the same month. The project plans to appoint at least two volunteer VPCs from each of the PVs of the project.

The experience of the VPCs was later extended to appoint more local extensionists to augment the extension coverage of the project. Thus a proposal was developed by the Agricultural Coordinator in 1990 to designate 'contact farmers'(CFs) and village extension agents (VEAs) to assist the AFE's as the project expands. VPCs were not salaried employees but payment from the small mark-ups in the prices of the in-kind agricultural inputs (other than chemicals) was suggested as an incentive against apathy and low motivation. CFs and VEAs were thought to be remunerated by recruiting nafirs on their behalf for the weeding operations. This plan is likely to be of little practical success due to the lack of understanding on the part of the project staff of the realities of traditional agricultural institutions (this is elaborated in the next chapter).

According to the overall plans of the extension unit, as well as the currently functioning staff, the structure of the extension system of ENSAP project could be depicted as follows:



The selection of VEAs and CFs is planned to be achieved jointly between the project and the PFs. Thus each jamaa will be requested to select one member who could volunteer to be their CF. Selection of CFs, however, will be subject to the following eligibility criteria:

- a) the volunteer must be a member of the association/cooperative,
- b) he should be accepted by his jamaa and the whole association/cooperative,
- c) the volunteer must be a reasonably successful farmer but not the most progressive whose fellows would tend not follow his example,
- d) he must be willing to try out the recommended practices of ENSAP and allow the other farmers to visit his farm when necessary,
- e) he must be willing to cooperate at all levels,
- f) the volunteer should preferably be literate.

The CFs were located at the lower level of the extension service to be directly in contact with the PFs, each covering approximately ten farmers in his jamaa group.

VEAs, on the other hand, were placed above the CFs and below the AFEs and were charged with filling the gaps due to the poor coverage and reach-out by the AFEs. Thus, they were suggested to receive formal training to upgrade their skills to properly convey the extension messages. They are also required to supervise and provide occasional advice to the CFs. VEA also have to meet the eligibility criteria of the project in the selection process. These criteria stipulate that:

- a) the volunteer must be active, confident and trustworthy;
- b) he should be accepted by his community;
- c) he should be willing to cooperate with the project at all levels;
- d) he should be able to understand the situation in which he/she is working;
- f) he should be innovative;
- g) he should be a good teacher;
- h) he should be willing to cooperate in the community's social events;
- i) his age should be in the range 25-50;
- j) he should be respectful; and
- k) he must necessarily be literate.

VEAs expect frequent training being provided on the part of the AFEs when the VEAs visit the AFEs' village base. The context for this training could range from formal to informal meetings according to well scheduled plans. Likewise, the VEAs on their part were required to conduct formal training to the CFs through personal visits to the farms to provide on the spot advice which in turn should be

demonstrated by the CFs to the PFs. VEAs were each expected to supervise a maximum of ten CFs.

But, there is yet the impending danger that the training AFEs are required to provide for the VEAs could add to the burden on them in terms of extension coverage thereby conflicting with other calls on their time and in turn, leading to poor outreach to the PVs under the supervision of the AFEs.

4.9.3 Extension Methodology:

ENSAP's extension unit have developed the following methodology which characterizes its overall activities and innovative interventions to assist PF's with the appropriate inputs and services. The methodology shows the types of activities carried out and their purpose and target.

<u>Activity conveyed through</u>	<u>purpose and target</u>
Group meeting and discussion	Allow Extensionists to bring a group of farmer together to discuss particular topics or problems.
Demonstration	Practical demonstration to allow extension staff to introduce a new concept, tool or technique to farmers (aflatoxin campaign,sonki use, cultivate new varieties of sodari and ugandi).
Field visits	Extensionists visit farmers in their fields and provide advice and assistance where required (also supported by group discussion &demonstration).
Daleel ENSAP (i.e newsletter)	An extension tool to dessiminate knowledge through AFEs, and to allow feedback and comments to be later incorporated in future editions of the Daleel
Use of Radio	To broadcast crop price news to project farmers through Radio El Obeid station.
Use of audio visuals	Use on a limited scale three portable slide projectors powered by batteries charged

by solar panels. Tape players have been little used as yet. Blank tapes, though, are very limited in supply.

Training

This is formal training for farmers by the Extensionist staff (e.g for VPCs).

Source: As viewed by Vincent, the ex-Extension Adviser, (1990).

Formal training for the VPCs (ie village pest controllers) has been very limited and confined only to those farmers who are more or less better educated than the average farmers. ENSAP's extension unit recognizes the fact that the target group of farmers is predominantly illiterate and would be unable to receive formal training. For this reason the extension unit advocates the informal approach in training in sympathy with local farmers. Meanwhile formal training is systematically provided for the extension staff through a number of ways. The following were the major forms of providing formal training for the extension staff of the project (from the 1988 operation season through 1990):

- i) Training arranged by the Western Sudan Agro-forestry Research Project (WSARP) in Kordofan Farming Systems in EL Obeid town in January 1989 and in En Nahud in September 1989 (all extension staff attended).
- ii) Attendance at CARE/Sudan workshop in a) administration, November 1988; b) training of trainers, December 1989 (for the Agricultural Coordinator, Adviser and Jubarka Extensionist).
- iii) Consultancy visits, also constituted training activities; a) pest management specialist from Khartoum University, October, 1988, Dr. Mohamed Ragab; b) Regional

Technical Adviser (RTA) for extension, West Africa and Sudan, February, 1989, Christine Holding; c) neem consultancy, September 1989, professor Siddig Ahmed.

iv) Field visits to Save The Children (USA) project in Um Ruwaba, November 1989 (for the Coordinator and jubraka extensionists).

v) Regular training in data collection for the Base Line Survey (as world Bank does, see Salmen, 1987) and Project Impact Surveys throughout 1988-1989 seasons (all the extension staff).

vi) Agroforestry extension workshop organized by Kordofan Agro-forestry Extension Project (KAEP), June 1989 (for the Coordinator and jubraka Extensionists).

vii) Occasional mini- workshops for the AFEs when they visit EN Nahud . So far the AFEs have received training in a) the preparation of neem extracts; b) the use of knapsack sprayers; c) the maintenance of knapsack sprayers; d) the facilitation of the VPCs course; e) the use of slide projectors; f) the use of the sonki tool; g) the planning of extension calendars and reporting systems; and h) the collection and recording of rainfall data.

viii) The Extension Coordinator was sent to the American Farm School in Thessalonika, Greece, to attend a three weeks' workshop, June 1990(as result of this trip the Coordinator was inspired into developing the proposal for incorporating the CF and VEAs system into ENSAP's extension unit).

ix) Training for the AFEs in credit policies and procedures, 1990.

x) Consultancy in the extension system of ENSAP, Dr. Awadalla Mohamed from the University of Khartoum, 21st of May, 1991.

Mostly benefitting from this training were the AFEs due to their poor academic backgrounds, especially in the field of reporting and message delivery to farmers.

One of the basic tools which ENSAP project views to be of vital importance towards strengthening the extension and credit systems is that of coordination. Coordination, as I conceive of it, is to be achieved at three basic levels. The first is the agency/client level; the second relates to the intra-agency coordination; and the third is the coordination between the agency and the existing governmental and NGOs. The importance of coordination lies in the development of linkages between the interested parties which leads to mutual benefits. Benefits arising in respect of coordination could range from close communication and exchange of ideas (such as that between ENSAP and the Save The Children Project in Um Ruwaba which led to the replication of certain aspects of one project in the other), to the direct involvement of one party in certain aspects of the activities of the other party, such as the need for ENSAP to involve the Cooperative Department in the registration and selection of ENSAP's cooperatives). Thus we can describe coordination in the ENSAP project to be resulting from communication either between the agency and its client, intra-agency, or between the agency and other departments (whether located in En Nahud or outside it). These three main areas of coordination could be presented as follows:

<u>Agency/client</u>	<u>intra/ agency</u>	<u>agency/other departments</u>
i. village committees and the project teams (<u>damin</u> /credit team).	i.credit/extension staffs. jointly arrange the mini-workshop course;	i. ENSAP/Coop Office (relating to ENSAP's cooperatives).
ii.training VPCs ,CFs and VEAs;	ii.team trips jointly launched.	ii.supply of seeds from the NSA of Sennar.
iii. <u>ijtima</u> a between the clients and the staff ;	iii.orientation seminars for the staff;	iii visits to Save The Children's office.
iv. remunerating CFs,VPC,VEAs;	iv KAEP (a CARE project in Elobeid town) workshops.	iv consultancies.
v. AFEs participation in village <u>nafirs</u> .		v.Radio El Obeid's news to project farmers;
vi. village training centres;		vi. IFAD workshop attended.
vi. <u>sheikh</u> 's accommodation of the project visiting teams;		by ENSAP staff; ii. supply of chemicals and seeds through MOA.

The above presentation shows the various levels of coordination which were established as a result of project implementation and which need to be strengthened through effective communication. One of the ironies of the lack of coordination in ENSAP is its formation of the cooperatives independently of the involvement of the government Cooperative Department in the selection and registration processes. One official in the Cooperative Department in En Nahud office was critical of ENSAP staff forming agricultural cooperatives without consultation and involvement of the Department. He remarked (to me in 1990) that "neither of the ENSAP's cooperatives that are currently being formed had been registered with the Cooperative Department, nor does the project staff effectively communicate with us in that respect". The impending danger from this lack of coordination between the Cooperative Department and ENSAP, is likely to be that farmers who opted to select cooperatives in contrast to associations start to develop apathy upon the 1993 phase-over of the project, especially when they continuously experience the malfunctioning of their cooperatives due to the Cooperative Department not being prepared to provide facilities to unregistered cooperatives.

Equally important is the coordination between the agency and its clients. This importance derives from the fact that coordination at this level leads to the gradual transfer of the project experience down to the village due to the strong linkage between the project office and the project villagers. This will also amount to the encouragement of peoples' participation in the running of project activities which, in the end, will have to be unilaterally carried out by the people themselves (this is especially true for the communication between the project staff and the CFs, VEAs, VPCs and the village loan committees). Only when such linkages are strengthened and developed will ENSAP's extension unit be practically practising what it calls the 'decentralized extension approach'. But this 'decentralized' extension approach has both merits and demerits. These could be outlined as follows:

merits of the decentralized extension approach

- i. sound coverage through ancillary services;
- ii. increases local people's confidence in their skills;
- iii. leads to more participation;
- iv. creates more communication links within the extension unit of the project; hence the timely solution to problems as they arise.

demerits of the approach

- i. additional burden to clients (eg CFs); especially if not supported by material incentives;
- ii. it develops a sense of 'dependency' and 'presumption' among the various task groups e.g AFEs on VEAs, CFs and vice versa;

Lack of communication was largely observable in connection with the women jubraka farmers. Due to cultural impediments relating to effective contact being made between the project AFEs and women farmers the extension coverage to the female groups was characteristically poor throughout the project villages.

4.9.4 Jubraka Extension Messages:

The seeds and advice relating to jubraka extension were mainly provided by the female extensionists who are office-based for the large part of their time. The messages were mainly conveyed through group meetings held in the villages or through the medium of the Daleel ENSAP which the local jubraka committee member (mainly the chair-woman) reads for the rest of the group members. The male AFEs were considerably impeded (by cultural factors) for reaching these jubraka women. As a result, only the following extension messages were delivered to the women jubraka producers:

a) Pest control in jubraka. The promotion of low cost, low health risk and sustainable methods of pest control was emphasized; in 1989 (the first season of the implementation of the jubraka programme) this meant the introduction of neem based extracts for pest control. The response had been very positive as a large number of women applied the chemical in their jubrakas.

b) Soil fertility maintenance. The women's group were advised of and introduced to the use of crop residues, animal manure and weed mulches in their jubrakas. Composting was also discussed in the village meetings and covered in the Daleel ENSAP.

c) Seed selection. The female extensionists provided jubraka women with advice on the selection of the best quality seed to be replanted in the subsequent season in order to maintain the quality of each succeeding crop.

d) Improving the self-image of the village women.

The jubraka programme, however, was beset with a number of problems which limited its impact. Among these was the lack of fuel for staff to conduct fieldwork, the limited number of project female staff working with women (only two female extensionists who were required to cover a total of 50 villages by 1993; in 1989 these two female staff were serving a total of 553 women in fourteen villages). The idea of introducing a cash lending programme also remained a paper prescription throughout the 1990 season due to the lack of funds to get the proposal fully operationalized.

Generally, the extension system of ENSAP project can claim to have been largely successful in innovating a low-cost, 'sustainable' and village oriented extension system that interacts directly with the PF target. Reliance on donkey transport in the villages reduces the costs and ensures that the services reach farmers even when engine oil

and diesel are in short supply. In addition the AFEs were able to build intimate relationships with farmers that would not be possible with centralized system. Farmers came to the AFEs as friends, sharing their lives and problems rather than seeing them as privileged government employees. The disadvantages of the extension unit, however, lie in the inability of the innovation to reach the PVs which were out of the village cluster (or located farther away from the core village). In addition the supervision of the AFEs by the senior staff was characteristically poor due to the vast distance between the project office (based in EN Nahud) and the AFEs based in Ghubeish villages. Lack of systematic visits and effective supervision could have resulted in the AFEs' poor reporting and overall work performance. As we shall see in the next chapter, even the senior staff of the team who occasionally visit the village sites, tend to work with only a particular section of PFs to the neglect of the poorer group of farmers who needed the services most. To this and other issues relating to the project impact we will turn in the subsequent chapter.

4.10 Participating Villages (PV's) And Control Villages (CV's):

ENSAP In Process

As we have described earlier ENSAP teams approach the project site at the start of every season to select the villages which will participate for the season while at the same time selecting a few others for control purposes (the latter are referred to as the 'control villages', or CV's). The CV's are promised that they will be fully upgraded to participate with the project in the subsequent season. The project teams make occasional trips to these CV's to gather data on the selected control purpose farmers to enable comparison with those on participating farmers (PFs), and this will allow the project to weigh the real impact of its intervention. The project expects the areas cultivated, as well as the per unit yield, for the PFs to be significantly greater than that for the CF's (control-purpose farmers). The project,

however, for both technical and financial constraints was bound to reduce its hoped for target of reaching 50 villages, following the recommendations of the mid-term evaluation team of 1990. Due to inflationary pressure, the costs of loan delivery, as well as fuel shortages, the project was forced to reduce its planned activities and its reach out. Thus, in the first season of project operation, 1988, ENSAP selected Widaa', Wad Fadol and EL Riteirit villages for participation; and Ibeid, Ghabash Hammad and Sabi villages for control purpose. From February to June 1988, ENSAP spent a total of \$ 26443 on its initial operations. In the second season 1989/90 the number of PVs' rose to fifteen and the project spent \$811142. And in the third season 1990/91 the number of PVs' rose to seventeen and a cost of \$1191722 was spent. Jubraka women were selected in the second season of project operation, 1989/90, with a total of 591 women receiving in-kind loans in fourteen of the fifteen PV's(one village refused, viz, Barnawi).

The complete placement of ENSAP's extension programme facilities was delayed till the end of April 1989, until the final placement of the Agricultural Field Extensionists (AFE's) in core villages, the production of the extension newsletter and the launching of a number of extension campaigns. Mainly the extension campaigns focussed on the use of knapsack sprayers, control of the aflatoxin disease in the groundnuts crop and the use of the sonki (a gum Arabic tapping tool) for tapping the gum Arabic crop as an alternative to the axe. Later the project extended the newsletter into a complete extension guide, Daleel ENSAP. This includes sections dealing with extension messages, credit, women's activities, farmers news and marketing information. The Daleel is produced on a monthly basis and the AFE's were sent copies which they should read to their PF's. Among the major operations of the project were the formation of the village committees, jamaa, cooperatives and 'associations'. These were meant to coordinate and assist in the implementation of the credit and extension activities.

ENSAP, however, depends largely on the involvement of the chairman of the village committee (the committee is represented by the chairman, secretary and the treasurer), the village sheikh and the guarantors for loan assessment, delivery and repayment. The project also tested the feasibility of introducing animal traction technology (using the experience of the En Nahud intermediate technology project which was operative in the area since the early 1980's). The findings of the test, however, had shown that the available technology (oxen drawn implements) was fairly expensive and involved the delivery of intermediate term loans. Moreover, the new technology was found to be consistent only with those farmers classified as the most progressive and wealthy farmers. These were not the real target of the ENSAP project; and the idea was refused. As a result of project implementation, which started in the 1988 season (though due to delay in project operations the services which were provided by the project were delivered after the PF's had started their planting operations and thus, in that season, the loans delivered did not lead to significant change in the PFs' decision-making processes, and the area cultivated of the crops was not increased), and continued until the 1990/91 season, the project was able to cover the following villages.

Table (17) Participating and Control Villages For 1988, 1989 and 1990/91 Seasons

ENSAP (PV's)	Seasons of Participation	CV's	Season
Widaa'	1988, 89	Sabi	1988
El Riteirit	1988, 89,90	Ghabash Hammad	'88
Wad Fadol	'88 , '89	Ibeid	'88
Sabi	'89		
Ghabash Hamad	'89		
Ibeid	'89		
El Halfaya	'89 , '90		
Seranbi	'89, '90 (Kirja)	"	
Rasheed	'89, '90		
Dirra	'89, '90		
Balila	'89, '90		
Murabaat (or, Kirja)	'89, '90		
Um Zaggaya	'89, '90	Wad Mitgil	'89
Migeilima	'89	Wad Gassim	'89
Barnawi	'89, '90		
Wad Mitgil	'90		
Wad Gassim	'90		

ENSAP (PV's)	Season of Participation	CV's	Season
El Tamba	'90		
Abu Geid	'90	Jaruda	'90
Wad Danga	'90	El Bweitol	'90
Um Sidair	'90	I'yal Na'eem	'90
Kijeira	'90		

Of these villages, my field work was focussed on ten selected villages (which were described in chapter 1). These villages were Dirra, Rasheed, Ibeid, Wad Fadol, Um Sidair, El Halfaya, Murabaat, Abu Geid, Seranbi and Barnawi. The selection was guided by a concern to take account of those villages with a good repayment record, those with bad repayment (and which thus dropped from participation), as well as to account for geographical variation and ethnic composition of the villages. Moreover, those villages which played the role of control for the other PV's, and which were later upgraded to full participation in the subsequent season, were also represented in the coverage. In chapter six I proceed to measure the project impact on these villages.

Chapter 5

Agency Versus Clients: Views, Conceptions And Goals

5.1 Introductory:

As more and more development projects aimed at improving the quality of life of the rural people in underdeveloped countries fail to bring about the desired results, planners, policy-makers and social scientists find themselves increasingly challenged into probing deeper to investigate the real reasons behind such recurrent failure. In this chapter one possible reason for failure is investigated; that a gap exists which separates the views, perceptions and goals about development of planners, policy-makers and social scientists from those of the people at the grass-roots. This fact will be illustrated by striking some contrasts between local views and conceptions and those held by development agents. The point is, people at the grass-roots do not receive development inputs 'unquestioningly', though in reality they may feel that 'development' constitutes one of their overriding goals. For instance, people might question whether the terms concomitant with the provision of credit are consistent with their value system before making the decision to participate in a development project.

In this regard traditional development approaches which view the rural people as incapable of lifting themselves out of the vagaries of dire poverty, and who necessarily need the guidance and intellectual support of outsiders clearly have to be discarded. Agents tend to hold such views.

Anthropological micro-studies have shown that, contrary to such approaches, rural people retain their own views, goals and conceptions on what constitutes a better way of life. They know the possible solutions, given the resources and the main constraints. Thus, a number

of empirical studies have recently emerged to warn planners and policy-makers against unthoughtful interventions into the indigenous institutions of rural folk (Schultz, 1964; William, 1981; Davis, 1971; Wallman, 1971; Alan, 1974; Donatus, 1980; Wenger, 1982).

In this dissertation we therefore importantly include the views, goals and perceptions relating to the ENSAP project, pertaining to both the agency and its farmer clients, which undoubtedly reflect on the unfolding of the project; indeed, we shall see that the clients' views and goals may be dealt with from two rather separate perspectives. In this particular chapter we directly consider the clients' views, goals and perception of development. In addition we shall consider the agency's views and perceptions of development as held by the project staff and project planners. Meanwhile, in chapter 8, on local government, we examine the views of the clients as these are represented by the local government officials.

In the previous chapter the main elements of the ENSAP project were outlined. This chapter then describes how the various parties experience it, and how this has bearing on its fortunes. As such the chapter is a direct contribution to the study of innovation, the more so since it is concerned with "finding out what people think" (Bailey, 1973: 11) when something new comes along (i.e. ENSAP's innovations). Bailey defines innovation to broadly mean "to put an item in a context in which it was not found before" (1973:8). Being mainly concerned with the institutionalization of an innovation (cf. Wade, 1973: 219), this chapter supports the point that when something new comes along people "make guesses about its consequences by setting it into an already existing matrix of values and beliefs" (Bailey, 1973:11). An assessment of expected costs and benefits (material, social and cultural) is also made by coming to grips with people's knowledge of the "world around them, what they want out of life, what they think can in practice be got, and whose advice they are willing to accept on these matters" (Ibid.: 11).

Some major issues relating to innovation are dealt with here: concepts about village leadership, stereotypes, conceptions related to fear of failure, communication and feedback, and the main values guiding the agency's programmes. Thus local people who assign their village leaders certain tasks associated with village development feel that the cost of doing so, in terms of the opportunities foregone, is high (cf. Wade, 1973: 240, Bruce, 1976:140). Paradoxically, the consequence of this burdensome obligation on community leaders is the development of sound coordination brought about by avoiding conflicts likely to arise if the number of men involved together in the development becomes proportionately large. Another point about leadership relates to the effect of social organization on conflict (an issue which is grossly neglected by anthropologists (see eg. Wade, 1973 : 250). As will be shown below, the social relationship developed as a result of groups of people coming together and frequently interacting, leads to the formation of groups (jamaa) seemingly to provide properly organized potential participants. However organizing on the basis of jamaa, leads to conflict between the project and other farmers (who are not represented in the project's beneficiary group), since such organization does not make full representation of these other farmers. On the matter of the analysis of stereotypes and concepts relating to fear of failure, we refer to the fear of accepting a practice whose consequences are unclear which is generally referred to as "the inhibiting effect" (see Layton, 1973: 62) since it can negatively affect the future adoption of such a practice. By and large, such fear is related to considerations of social and economic losses which follow experimenting with new techniques. In the empirical case discussed here, in addition to material loss (in terms of income), other relevant uncertainties include the lack of security and the likely loss of farmer's 'independence'. Communication and feedback, however, are shown to reduce this "inhibiting effect", thereby stimulating greater adoption by farmer clients. Overall, this chapter shows the effect of different perspectives which clients and other segments of the community, and the project agents bring to bear on the solution of social and economic problems.

The Ghubeish client farmers' views and perceptions of their own development are represented in their verbal statements as well as in their past and present-day efforts at household and community improvements.

5.2 Cultural Context:

A correct account of innovation should start from labelling innovation as a 'process' in the sense of unfolding events rather than an abrupt and once-for-all change. This points to the location of innovation in a well defined economic, social and environmental context as the main point of departure. This will allow us to come to grips with changes already taking shape and to account for changes arising in the new context (implied in the new interventions) which can in turn lead to further changes. The importance of such an approach lies in the fact that it allows us differentiate changes that are intrinsically the outcome of previous processes from those resulting from the new situation (cf. Redclift, 1973:118). This argument therefore, poses 'interpolation' as central to the analysis of innovation. I have already furnished some material on the socio-economic background of Ghubeish communities in the previous chapters (2, 3 and 4). However for the convenience of the reader some of the salient features of Ghubeish communities are recapitulated here as a starting point to our analysis. Explicit in the analysis below is my support of the fact that "the problem of the study of change lies in the nature of the descriptive concepts we habitually use" (Ibid,1973:119).

On the role of the government, welfare measures at the grass-roots are grossly neglected. As a result poverty remains unresolved and in coping with it the local people must depend on their own initiative. The main problem facing the government was and is the existence

of a vast number of scattered village communities awaiting social welfare amenities. The majority are predominantly rural. Their cultural and value systems are well integrated with the basic forces and relations of production. The village people, all sharing one common way of life, are closely related by ties of kinship (ahal), ethnicity, religion (Islam), language (Arabic), locality and common interests. Basic social categories pertaining to both individuals and villages are dictated by social relations, economic pursuits and ecological circumstances. Production is largely for subsistence, with additional provision for a marketable surplus to cover extra-subsistence household needs. The village communities subsisted on millet and dura (sorghum) cultivation. Those villages located in the northern parts of Ghubeish are beset with high risks in the market sector due to relative land infertility and rain shortages. Those located towards the southern zone enjoy better land fertility which makes commercial production and agricultural expansion highly appealing. However, poor infrastructure in terms of lack of improved roads, transportation, water and marketing facilities, coupled with high levels of illiteracy, seriously impaired such potential expansion.

The agency had, therefore, to launch its project activities in the context of this precarious background. The agency, however, advocates a cautious, exploratory and non-interventionist approach that is primarily based on bottom-up planning. Thus, it strongly favours providing opportunities for smallholder farmers to increase farm productivity and incomes through the provision of credit loans and technical assistance through extension and improved agricultural inputs (seed varieties, implements and chemicals). The agency recommended these innovative interventions with a view to the development of cash cropping. The project implementation and planning was preceded by a micro survey at the village level which assessed local resources constraints, needs and production patterns and practices among traditional small-holder farmers. The underlying assumption has been that with technical information, inputs and loans, and by being backed with close supervision

and management, small-holders are likely to make a significant break into the production of marketable crops.

The ultimate focus of the agency is on the individual smallholders with secure land holdings, who are to be up-graded to 'master farmers': ENSAP was developed and implemented to 'create' such farmers. A key assumption, however, was that this had to be obtained through rationalizing, as opposed to radically changing, the indigenous institutions, and adapting them to the needs of the economic opportunities of the project. Underlying this conception was an appreciation of the scale of grass-roots problems. In this regard, the mobilization of groups provides an appropriate means likely to boost such local administrative tasks as village improvement since to attend to the difficulties inherent in the traditional agricultural setting, uncoordinated individuals may be deemed too slow and organizationally handicapped. Traditional leadership was therefore involved which allowed for the relevant political variables and minimized potential conflict. Looked at in terms of its approach and respect for traditional culture as well as its provision for local needs and goals, ENSAP seems to escape criticism. However, there are a number of factors impinging on its implementation as the project unfolds which will have influenced its outcome. These factors have to do with local people's perceptions of leadership roles, and with clients' personal relationships with their leaders.

5.3 Concepts Related to Village Leadership:

Traditional common consensus among Ghubeish villagers implies that certain individuals, eg., sheikhes, shartais (the sheikhs' boss) etc., play the leadership roles on behalf of their communities. Indigenous communities express clearly recognized needs in terms of goals such as the achievement of a more sanitary water supply, and the building of local mosques, schools etc.- all directed to the common good of the community. Thus leaders

were expected to lead their groups towards those goals. Sheikhs in all village communities play the role of organizing self-help projects. The moral gratification from this was, in turn, an incentive to the village leaders to consolidate their positions by manipulating local and/or external initiatives promoting 'collective good' projects in local communities. Thus, when during the previous drought periods of the 1970s and 1984/85 foreign agencies approached local communities for the distribution of relief food and the provision of health facilities, the sheikhs had to make available the extant distributive channels through traditional leadership procedures. That this increases the responsibilities of traditional leaders, is well accepted by the people and intensifies the salience of the community's public goods. Sheikhs appreciate their people's commending of them as cooperative, active and innovative.

This local conception about local leadership will enhance the likelihood of success of any external intervention which places traditional leaders in the spearhead of the respective programmes. Thanks to the organizing and mobilizing capabilities of local leadership, the initial reactions of leaders largely influence grass-roots responses. Furthermore, "the rewards of leadership, heightened by role expectations and perhaps some prodding, can induce organized activity for the success of voluntary collective action" (Bruce, 1976:140).

Attaching primacy to traditional leadership for the realization of public good in village communities is bolstered by yet another body of indigenous thought, concerning the costs and rewards of providing collective goods. As the indigenes see it sheikhs, who have taken office through succession from ancestors, are blessed with inborn skills and qualities which unquestionably makes them the sole candidates for leadership. Their paramountcy is moreover acquired by being brought up in leadership homes. Secondly, locals realize that being a leader implies social costs, including the responsibility of making a greater than average contribution to the common good (c.f, Bruce:140). As a consequence, by letting

another (the leader) do the larger part of the particular task, each member of the community would enjoy the maximum reward and minimum cost in respect of publicly provided goods. ENSAP staff, as well, recognized this fact, bearing in mind the resources ENSAP would contribute to the local economy. And to minimize the dependence of clients from thinking of these resources as free gifts, both local jamaas (i.e groups) and village sheikhs were involved in the project. The clients' thinking in terms of free gifts might be encouraged by the agency's provision of relief food to Dinka families who had been displaced by the war and drought, and who were resettled by the agency in its camps in En Nahud town. Thus the involvement of leaders has been a pre-requisite of successful mobilization and support for the project. ENSAP has benefitted from the fact that traditional leaders, who were often high-status individuals (e.g. the sheikh of Dirra village) , are generally "opinion leaders" (see eg. Bruce, 1976) who could easily rally grass-roots support by influencing the opinions of others. This marked a remarkable success, for the ENSAP lending programme could never have been possible had local leadership voiced their opposition. Clients proclaim that their acceptance of ENSAP loans had initially posed them social costs: the interest rate which they have to pay to the project administration has shaken the sanctity of the religious institutions of the society and made them the target of criticism from religious people. This feeling of guilt on the part of clients was repressed through common participation and discussion with local leaders.

By involving local leadership ENSAP benefitted from other aspects of traditional social institutions: the sheikh's home is the centre of face to face contact within the village. As observed in Diraa village, groups of individuals come not only for consultation with the sheikh on matters relating to everyday conflicts, they have made the sheikh's home an arena for gossip and conversation. This results in the formation of primary groups, small, naturally-organized groups, capitalizing on the social gratification of face-to-face contact through gossip and sociability. It is this traditional institution of the primary group which

has formed the basic target group for the project: the jamaa. Investigation of the previous social ties between the members of ENSAP jamaa shows that most of the members were already involved in primary group activity (i.e. constituting a first instance reference group in situations of mass mobilization for provision of public goods or organizing social events). Those farmers who form a jamaa which is not recruited in terms of kinship or ethnicity will certainly have been involved in the primary group. This, as well as being empirically observable, is supported by the respondents' verbal statements that what links them with the rest of the jamaa members is the ties of ushra. Ushra refers to close and long term acquaintance and belonging together.

The advantage to ENSAP of capitalising on the primary group has been a) soundly organised groups forming project jamaas, and b) less potential friction among the group members of the jamaa thanks to their previous traditional ties. Yet this opportunity for the ENSAP project is not without its disadvantages. The organised primary groups coalesce around and form the jamaa who are the main beneficiaries of the project. Some primary groups are also those who are closer to the sheikhs and thus, influenced by his opinions. The members were also closer to one another by virtue of the ushra ties which consolidates the group into a unified unit. However, the village community has a wider social network system and clients have social relations with other segments in the community. Due to the intensity of personal knowledge and acquaintance a person will have social relations with others who are not necessarily included in his primary group. As these other persons are more likely not to be represented in the jamaa and thus the project, since they do not draw from a primary group, they are in a position to voice their grievance at being excluded from participation in the project. So it was that they criticised the project for directing its benefits to in-groups related by ties of kinship, ushra or even ethnicity (as respondents from Dirra have remarked). They met the eligibility criteria of the project (in terms of

being landholders, heads of households and being committed to agriculture for the past five years), yet were denied any involvement.

Thus, ENSAP's emphasis on groups for the reason that they can provide for what the project calls 'peer pressure' on jamaa members to repay project loans, have made it the target of accusations of being biased towards particular segments in the village community. This leads us to the conclusion that where specific groups exist in the community seemingly more strategically placed to manipulate the benefits of intervention programmes, these groups are more likely to be the target of the benefits, irrespective of whether they are already 'progressive', or of the rich segment of the community. Thus those generalizations (eg. Ahmed, 1977) which state that most projects in developing countries tend to favor specifically the 'progressive' or the 'rich' should be revisited to account for evidence for alternative or additional explanations in terms of 'peer group', or 'social group'. Common about all these groups (including progressive ones) is that they are related together by a common interest, whether social as in the case of our primary group, or, economic as in the case of the progressive and rich. This obviously extends Chambers generalization that "the poor are residual, the latest in the land, the most difficult to find, and the hardest to learn from. Unless paupers and poverty are deliberately and persistently sought, they tend to remain effectively screened from outside enquirers" (Chambers, 1983:19).

In general sheikhs display a recognized influence over their subjects such as by their capacity to suppress local conflicts such as the disputes over grazing lands, as well as by their continuous efforts at village welfare. Village sheikhs in the project area do not distinguish themselves from the average villagers in terms of house style, dress or general economic standing. Their houses are typical of the village buildings, being composed of one or two thatched houses, a rakuba (thatched square building for reception and entertainment of guests), and a neighbouring jubraka. In addition to the clients' dependence

on and recognition of the importance of their sheikhs in dealing with major issues related to village welfare, the sheikhs themselves have their own vested interests as office incumbents (such as prestige and social status). This, probably, has cemented their support to the project agency. Observation has shown that :

village leaders are jealous of their power. If they find some one attempting to usurp their rights, without paying the price their suspicions are aroused. If they discover a villager is being drawn away from them at any one point, they become antagonistic toward the agency which is drawing him, and eventually devise some means of forcing him back. This accounts for the failure of many a cooperative society which has reached past the leaders and drawn its membership from dissatisfied followers (King, 1965:45).

But the villagers themselves (to the extent that they are dissatisfied with their traditional leaders) also make their own evaluations as to whether to replace their sheikhs by new forms imposed by the agency. The evaluations they make are guided and influenced by their past experiences with traditional leaders, their influence on the local and external world and their success in dealing with village welfare affairs. In the main, the majority of villagers are not critical of their sheikhs. Moreover villagers evaluate the new benefits to be received from the project in relation to the effectively everlasting services they are apt to secure through their sheikhs. Thus, for instance, villagers in the project area well acknowledge that they would receive a package of services and financial assistance by participating with the project for at least five years of its operation. But on the other hand, they feel they cannot be sure that the inflow of these services will continue when the agency passes the project to the government by the end of the fifth operating year, since they traditionally have no trust on the government. They weigh this against the overall benefits they receive from their sheikhs in terms of interfering on their behalf on matters related to conflict over grazing rights in agriculture, representing them in front of the

government and raising disputes at the district level. To sever their ties with traditional leadership could even be more difficult when it involves personal and social relationships, especially if connected with subdivision alignment. Villagers have found it socially unacceptable to replace their sheikhs on merely financial grounds for it is in their mores and proverbs that the "ushra is worth more than money".

However, as has been intimated, ENSAP had a relatively great scope for success as it was introduced with the support of local leadership. The majority of the project village sheikhs had proved cooperative and approachable. The sheikhs who have recognized the importance of cooperation for the success of ENSAP project have enthusiastically accepted the new role assigned to them by the agency as the Damin al Dumman (lit, the guarantor of the gurantors). For example, among the villages participating in the ENSAP project, Dirra has performed fairly well, with the cooperation of its sheikh, Mohamed Ibiedallah. This village did not limit its ambitions to the new services provided by the agency; in addition, thanks to the innovativeness of its sheikh, it also fostered the development of the village through its efforts to form agricultural committees to solve the problems facing individual farmers in the village (such as supplying poor farmers with tools and agricultural inputs). It had already extended the village welfare activities in the realm of market supervision and school maintenance operations. Dirra, by advocating long-term village level improvement, seems to particularly exemplify the agency's goal of sustainability.

Seranbi, on the other hand, could endanger the agency's goal of 'sustainability' as a result of its non-aquiescent sheikh whose behavior towards the agency could be described as at best, ambivalent. In the 1989 operating season of the project the sheikh himself was actively participating in ENSAP. In the subsequent season the sheikh turned to be against the agency's credit system. Being influenced by the opinions of religious people, the sheikh then voiced his resistance to ENSAP's interest rate on the basis of it being un-

Islamic. Eventually the sheikh decided to opt out. The danger which lingers in the future, however, is that the sheikh might make his subjects (especially the jamaa) lukewarm to the agency through this opinion. Up to the present date, however, that opinion had not been diffused among the other participants in Seranbi who still continue to receive ENSAP loans. Among other things, the sheikh of Seranbi's response is partly attributable to misunderstanding between the agency and its clients, a misunderstanding which was an outcome of diverging views and thoughts concerning project aims and goals. These are often evident in the stereotyping one party has of the other.

5.4 Stereotypes:

Clients have their own stereotypes of the agency, though these stereotypes may be conflicting. Thus the indigenes view the agency Whites as irreligious 'kafirs' (lit. infidels), but also as non-liars. This seems contradictory since telling lies should be seen from an Islamic point of view as an attribute of 'kafirs'. This has had its effects on the project, partly desirable and partly not. For example the people of Wad Fadol village have this contradictory stereotyping of Whites which is verbally expressed in their group gossip. Farmers who defaulted on their loan repayments *at first* did not care about such misuse of the agency's financial resources. They saw the agency was providing free food relief to the displaced Dinka people in EN Nahud town, and this led them to view ENSAP loans as grants as opposed to repayable credit. Consequently when the credit staff of the project approached the village for discussion about reforming the participating groups for the subsequent season, the clients did not attend the meeting and the agency had to drop them from the project. *Later on* when asked to explain this irresponsible behavior towards the agency the clients stated that they now knew from the agency's warning that defaulters would be taken to prison and they said the agency 'tells no lies'. Thus despite the fact that the agency had no intention of taking its defaulters to court the outcome had been the disqualification of the village from participation.

Another case of racial stereotyping comes from Murabaat village.

In mid-July 1990 the project staff approached Murabaat to evaluate its agricultural status on the basis of which they would make their estimations of the amount of loan subsequently to be disbursed. Some of the participating farmers had been adversely affected by the subna (lit. a drought interval) and consequently stood to have their loans considerably reduced. Thus when they assembled in the AFE's house the credit staff decided to visit selected farms to get an impression of the circumstances of the project farms. An old farmer who was present at the time said that he would be delighted if the staff would escort him to see his farm. When I told him that it might be the Agricultural Coordinator who would accompany him he was pleased, "I would like that White (to do so)". The farmer did not know the White was in fact a Sudanese. The point was, should a White monitor a farm whose performance the farmer was happy about, the farmer believed that the loan he would receive would certainly meet his aspirations. In other words, this would not have been the case were his farm to be monitored by a non-White staff, for the latter, it is believed, do not keep up their words.

Clients have yet another set of views and conceptions of the agency which have influenced their participation in the project:

- a) Villagers thought the agency would go about christianizing the indigenes thereby corrupting their traditional religious faith and beliefs. The agency being run by 'Whites' is an indication of that.
- b) The agency aims to experiment with local farming and to produce crops for the international markets.
- c) The agency must have its own 'hidden interests' which obviously are not mainly to the advantage of the rural farmer. For, "how else could one logically interpret the sizeable amount of money spent by the agency roaming from one village to another distributing

small amounts of seeds to jubra women producers". In the rural farmers' opinion this is tantamount to lavish spending (which they do not see as a general feature of 'White' society). The CAS (cost of administration and supervision) which is paid by the participating farmers will obviously never cover these expenses.

d) Some clients view the 'White' as communists who are probably likely to spread their ideological 'poisons' among the sacred village cults.

Villagers say that if it happens that one of their sons studying in school in the towns be accused of adopting communist ideas, his parents would not hesitate to send him out of the house. People could not tolerate being gossiped about by the rest of the community of having one of their house- hold members being converted to communism.

e) (related to d) The clients' thought that the agency had come to propagate collective and cooperative institutions, a lifestyle modelled after that of foreigners. 'Associations', groups, Jamaas and cooperatives were the devices for achieving these goals.

f) A few clients thought that the agency aimed to emancipate rural women, turning them into liberal citizens. To recommend separate women's programmes from those of men is to allow for much freedom and independence for women. The rural society will thus no longer be male dominant. This in some villages, had resulted in men's refusing their wives to receive project loans (e.g. Barnawi village).

However clients stated that they later altered some of these views as a result of open discussion with the agency as well as the involvement in project administrative tasks. Thus it was argued that the agency's non-intervention in Islamic practices connected with agriculture, such as the zakat (lit. payment of alms), which farmers pay out of the agricultural surplus, had overruled the villagers' negative views about the agency. Appointment of local farmers in administrative positions such as Village Extension Agents (VEA's), Contact Farmers (CF's) and Village Pest Control agents (VPC's) had, inturn,

overruled people's fear of foreigner intervention into the sanctity of village life. Moreover the AFE's placement among village people and their sharing with them of the hardships of village life had further reassured them.

Equally important to our analysis are the views and perceptions of the agency versus clients about cooperative societies. A characteristic feature of Ghubeish village communities is their lack of pre-project local cooperative societies to render services to village farmers. The Cooperative Department based at En Nahud has recently been established with the aim of providing and encouraging the formation of cooperatives at the village level. Only a handful of villages in Ghubeish presently have cooperatives. ENSAP administration thought it would be to the advantage of both the project and the participating villages to form farmer cooperatives. The greater potential security of providing loans to cooperatives as opposed to individual farmers would benefit the project. Via the cooperative, assured repayment of loans stems from the cooperative's share capital resources out of which a likely default could be met. Individual farmers, on the other hand, have little by way of assets to provide for repayment.

Furthermore, farmers were believed by the agency to be stimulated by the economic incentives which cooperatives enjoyed but which individual farmers could not get. Among these, local cooperatives enjoy the benefits of tax exemption on their farm produce as well as securing fuel prices at rates below black market prices which are absolutely high. This will ultimately reduce transportation costs to the advantage of cooperative members.

Given these economic incentives the village farmers' response has not been as anticipated by the agency. As we mentioned in the previous chapter, ENSAP staff had pointed out to the participating villages the advantages and disadvantages of both cooperatives and associations, the major group forms recommended by the project as the prerequisite for

loan eligibility and a large number of villages opted for associations as opposed to cooperatives. Even those villages which opted for cooperatives were not fully committed to cooperatives ideals. Project staff, on their part, seemed apathetic about these 'dysfunctioning' cooperatives, without coming to grips with the reasons for this poor response. For the project administration the reason lay with the people themselves rather than a deficiency on the part of the project. This can be inferred from my interrogation of the project team leader, Jordan Holtum, concerning the reasons for this bleak outlook with project cooperatives. In reply to my question, "what is your problem with these cooperatives?" his answer was "rather the problem with them"?, implying that the project for its part had succeeded in the formation of these cooperatives and it is the task of the farmers to get their cooperatives 'sustained'.

This inherent nonviability of project cooperatives should not unthoughtfully be taken to imply a lack of a spirit of cooperativeness at the individual or at the community level. At the individual level the existence of the nafir points to cooperativeness on the part of the farmers. At the community level the multiplicity of self-help projects (locally referred to as aljuhda sha'abi) points to the independence and self-reliance of village communities. The answer to the evident misgivings about cooperatives is apparent in the people's verbal statements. In my talk with a village farmer in Abu Geid village about the lack of preference for cooperative societies the answer was that "being impaired by the vagaries of poor infrastructure and pauperism we are not yet well-equipped to have viable cooperatives". The farmer stated that the meagre incomes generated from smallholder farming which is frequently beset with environmental hazards of poor rainfall and agricultural pests would not allow for long-term investment in cooperative ventures (eg. buying shares). Thus, it became clear that people's views about development and a better life squares with the agency's goal: sustainability. As to the cooperatives which were established in ENSAP, the members shared this negative apprehension, although this was not realized by the agency.

Worry about this lack of 'sustainability', implied in people's verbal statements, was augmented by the villagers' previous experiences with the government. We have seen that local people hold negative views about the government, which provided no appreciable welfare services to the villages in their remoteness. Forming a cooperative implies that its members should frequently approach governmental departments for cooperative facilities. This would become more acute when the project administration is phased over to the government by the end of the fifth year of project operation. This unreliable dependence on government will ultimately jeopardise the 'sustainability' of potential cooperatives.

A related factor, also, is the reality that villages in the project tend to learn from the experiences of other villages which have been convinced by the project to form cooperatives, developing hope that the former will 'emulate' the success of the latter. However the 'emulating' villages had found that project cooperatives were not so successful as to stimulate 'emulation': They had observed that ENSAP administration were unable to convince the Cooperative Department (presumably because of its pre-occupation with forming new cooperatives in other parts of the district) to get project cooperatives 'officially registered' - a procedure without which the services of the Cooperative Department would not be accessible to any cooperative.

The experience in the Kordofan region has been a general disillusionment with cooperatives. In respect of the Southern Kordofan province Omer (1982) recommends the formation of cooperative societies on the grounds that this would reduce the tax burden on farmers, create favourable atmosphere within which poor farmers would maximize their revenues and, consequently, lead to more savings. Being aware of the potential constraints which are obviously likely to arise when projects imposed from outside and instigated

without due attention given to local circumstances, Omer (1982: 21) recommends the sort of cooperative that must :

first and foremost be organizations that are closely associated with indigenous socio-cultural factor that largely avoid the application of unquestioned 'imposed models, and that reduce the impositions of institutions on people.

In counter-argument to Omer, and specifically in the context of the Habila scheme (the area where Omer recommends cooperatives), I have established (see Adam, 1989) that cooperatives, among all institution- alized forms of developing traditional agriculture, commanded little interest- a fact which was originally documented by Affan (1978). I have argued first, and this equally applies to our Ghubeish communities, that development plans initiated from outside are invariably looked askance at by the so-called receivers of development inputs. And second, that development, whether through cooperatives or otherwise, must be "subject to social choices and agricultural values proper to the developing community itself" (Baumann, 1984: 459). The presence of some traditional form of cooperation (eg. nafir, jamaa or committees), though necessary, is not enough as to provide favourable basis for modern cooperatives. Nafir exists both in the context of the Southern Kordofan province as well as in the context of Ghubeish communities. Yet in both contexts planners were disillusioned from the failure of modern cooperatives to be facilitated by the existence of such a cooperative institution. A more appositely stated argument in this respect holds that:

however suitable a foundation a traditional system apparently provides it will inevitably contain elements 'dysfunctional' for cooperative development (Riches, 1977: 215).

5.5 Conceptions Related to Fear of Failure:

A set of local conceptions were related to the fear of failure. Among smallholder farmers in the project villages this relates to the limited resource outlets and alternatives to rely upon in conditions of failure. A farmer who is faced with an opportunity of adopting a new farming technique would, first of all, think of the adverse consequences to his household in terms of food deficiency and income. Farmers argue that "the experiences of the past droughts of the 1970's and 1984/85 have taught us how a foregone opportunity of producing food for the household is costly in terms of social and economic imbalances". Indeed the large family size each farmer is required to support exacerbates his fear of loss and points to the potential magnitude of such social and economic imbalance. In other parts of Africa where fear of loss and failure has been observed it is also found that this is connected to a fear of loss of prestige through this failure. Thus Fogg (1971:590) argues for the Ibo smallholder farmers of Nigeria that a farmer who tried a new technique and failed, however, would be called a fool and would lose a good deal of face in his community. This should have its implications for ENSAP farmers who were required to make a significant break with traditional agricultural techniques and to produce more cash crops in proportion to the production for subsistence. Thus, I came across a farmer who 'blames' a fellow farmer when the latter complains of the relatively low amount of gum arabic yield he produces by using the Sonki tool which was recommended by the project as an alternative to the traditional axe. The complaint is that by merely making superficial scratches on the tree the yield is not up to the traditional standard. My farmer's reply is that "do you think that they [the agents] know our environment better than we do..., after all, they do not have hashab [i.e gum arabic trees] in their native countries". By this statement my farmer disparages the complainer, who loses face.

Such views are yet related to another set of conceptions held by both the agency and the clients. These conceptions are to do with target goals and imply inherent shortcomings

relating to the identification of target aims. These shortcomings are, firstly, the underestimation of the difficulties to be faced at the grass-roots; and secondly, the overestimation of the agency's influence over smallholder production (see, eg. Making, 1967:32). The fact of the matter is that agency and clients diverge in their assessment of the target goals (though these were clearly stated in the project document). The agency, when evaluating target goals, looks for evaluation yardsticks in terms of the number of farmers attending AFE's meetings, the number of farmers applying the recommended extension techniques and the increase in area cultivated and in production of cash crops as a result of the project. The clients on their part make their assessments in terms of the project's contribution to the villagers' ideology of self-sufficiency. In so far as their participation in the project had ensured a sufficient food production for the sustenance of the household then they are satisfied with the outcome, which is tantamount to the achievement of their target goals. This, however, may not reflect the target goals perceived by the agency in terms of achieving a break with the traditional production patterns and the 'sustained' production of cash crops (as stated in the project document referred to in the previous chapter). Thus, clients would see themselves contributing to the final goal of the project even though they did not expand cash crop production 'significantly' (as the agency document states) in proportion to the production of the food crops. This satisfaction will be cemented if loan repayment is concomitantly appreciated by the credit staff.

In short, ENSAP has thus been considerably constrained in its attempt to achieve a predetermined target goals in terms of output. The project has its main techniques in the form of loans, extension services and improved inputs (seeds, tools and chemicals). Neither of the main project components (viz, credit and the extension package) seem entirely satisfactory in the eyes of project clients. The credit component is affected by clients' religious beliefs and conceptions (see e.g. chapter 7), fear of failure and stereotypes.

There are also some salient views about spending. Smallholder farmers were of the opinion that what matters most in terms of income disposal is to provide for family needs, social events (marriage, funerals etc.) and then, according to preference, for community-felt needs. A farmer thinks of educating his children, buying livestock for family ownership, assisting relatives and contributing through effort and small financial contributions to the collective good of the community. Such spending, however is mainly guided by an ideology of providing for the immediate future. Spending on social events and relatives is immediately reciprocated, "what we give away today will certainly come back after some time as our village life is one of recurrent social events which necessitate reciprocation". ENSAP's ideology, however, upholds long-term goals. Studies have shown that "the time horizon lengthens with the level of education and the amount of capital available" (Fogg, 1971: 591). As the majority of the project villagers are illiterate, the introduction of ENSAP project might accentuate such social spending. For the time being it is too early to detect such a trend.

Another factor bearing on the credit component of ENSAP is the clients' perception of some degree of 'independence'. This holds despite their recognition of the worthwhileness of the project loans. The relevant fact here is that for a significant number of participating farmers ENSAP loans are not adequate to provide for all the production inputs needed as well as to cover household consumption needs over the harvesting period. Thus farmers still have to use their limited capital resources to supplement ENSAP loans. But farmers believe that the project is an experiment and involves a factor of risk to which they are traditionally averse. Now that they are apt to receive project loans they were unavoidably exposed to that risk. Thus, an imminent crop failure is likely to tax not only the project through default of loans, but also their own money which farmers add to the project resources. Now this effective sharing in the project resources on the part of participating

farmers is received by them in terms of notions of 'independence' which results in negative views about loan repayment. Based on the belief that they are being subjected to the agency's experiments, which might not be very useful to them, participating farmers would opt to default in conditions of low agricultural yield rather than repay their loans and thereby lose that part of the money they contributed from their own limited resources.

Participating farmers also feel that the project implies other social costs which traditionally never existed. For example the presence of an AFE means that a farmer spends more time on his farm to make a good impression, even though this does not involve additional agricultural work. The cost to these clients is viewed in terms of the leisure time forgone. "no longer do we find enough time to sit together and talk.. except when participating in an active nafir". Farmers in the project area usually start agricultural operations as early as eight o'clock in the morning and return home at about four o'clock in the evening. The farmer then has a rest for about one hour's time, to have his meal, and then goes out to chat and gossip with fellow villagers under the shade of a tree. This continues until the sunset prayers time (Maghrib). Or, otherwise the farmer may greet visitors in the rakuba where guests are entertained. It implied a lot of cost to discount such 'social time' as it is highly valued.

This has adversely reflected on the performance of the extension system of the project. Adoption of the recommended techniques of the extension unit has been too slow and sporadic a process. This is partly attributable to farmers' appreciation of their traditional techniques which they do not want to abandon (such as the rameil and seed application rates and the axe). Villagers speak not only about present-day successful 'traditional' farmers, but also of ancestors who passed down their 'farming experience' to the present generation. Such traditional practices and techniques are considered by farmers as 'tried' and practically 'proven' to be fit and sound for agriculture. Thus being largely

experimental, the project should be based on these 'tried' techniques and practices. These notions, held by the participating farmers, have been paradoxically bolstered by the agency's responding to some of the suggestions and feedbacks concerning the use of the recommended tools of the project. Thus when the project agency returned some of the sonkis to the office in 1990 as a result of the participating farmers' suggestions for further improvements, the farmers' positive image of their own competence was further cemented. The farmers' stereotyping of the agency itself also has bearing on their motivation towards, and adoption of, the project innovative techniques. Thus it has been the perception of a significant number of project farmers that experimentation with their agriculture was guided simply by the agency's goal to further its research ventures. "the fact that most of the project personnel, consultants and visitors coming to our villages carry with them their note books, cameras and pens justify our views about them....These foreigners know that we have non-human resources which are not available in their home countries and which they need to experiment with for their own interest... for, what do you say about the neem (*azidracta Indica* A Juss) tree extracts which the agency have experimented with and later told us to use as an alternative chemical to aldrex-t". In fact, the experiment with neem extracts was welcomed by participating farmers who subjected them to test and reported positive results. But a farmer who, early on, applied the recommended chemical was asked later to report on its 'safe' adoption lest he be accused by fellow villagers of an unthoughtful break from tradition, as happened in the case of the sonki (see above). The relevant context here is that participation in a trial is likely to arouse concern on the part of the whole community since this (the community) is closely interwoven into a unified social network system. This has been observed to be a common phenomenon:

one value of revitalizing useful traditional practices is that in many societies a traditional practice in one field is linked by an elaborate and comprehensive network of social institutions with many practices in other fields. It is often impossible to

pick out one existing practice from the network and replace it with a new one without affecting or undermining the fundamental spiritual and social consensus of the society (U.N. 1953:340).

ENSAP's foreign staff, however, do not fail to understand this likely friction between project values and clients' values, thanks to experience gained through working among 'other cultures' for decades. Rather, the agency directly contributes to minimizing such conflict through fostering the so-called intangible social goals of the project. These intangible social goals include :

- (i) Developing a spirit of local self-help and initiative.
- (ii) Encouraging a sense of human quality and of the potentiality of the human being.
- (iii) Creating greater and more effective community solidarity and cooperation.
- (iv) Encouraging greater appreciation and revitalization of local traditions.
- (v) Helping to make life spiritually and emotionally more rewarding for the people on their own terms and within their own culture.
- (vi) Finding ways of embedding improved practices in local society without causing too sharp a change in those existing spiritual, cultural or social frameworks which give meaning, satisfaction or security to the people (Ibid.: 330).

The main problem with these social goals lies precisely in their being intangible to the clients, who tend to overlook them, especially during the early period of project implementation. They are means rather than ends in themselves since they are devised to pave the way for achieving the final tangible goals of the project (however, these social goals have not been made clear to the farmers, they are mere statement in the agency's documents). The agency perceives that developing good working relations within the local culture will insure that these intangible goals lead to the realization of the final tangible goals. Good working relations were to be secured through:

(a) Familiarizing the project staff with indigenous practices, local vernacular and techniques developed and used by local people. For example, from among these the project had acquainted itself with local vernacular relating to agriculture (eg. subna, rameil, areet, budra (i.e powder) neem, sonki, riba, ijtimaa, aljuhda sha'abi tajammu'a (ie 'association'), karama, zakat etc.).

(b) Consultants procured by the project for specific tasks (eg. evaluation or suggesting appropriate devices for the improvement of a specific aspect of the project) to be briefed about local conditions before talking to the people at the grass-roots and offering their advice.

(c) In order to secure full benefits from the project consultancies ENSAP selects university lecturers and experts rather than researchers. It is stated that these type of personnel are more sociable and skillful in communicating with local people than researchers who are primarily concerned with eliciting information from their respondents (Ibid.:338).

(d) Stimulating grass-roots identification with the project through developing a feeling that the success of the project has been the result of the people's, as opposed to the agency's, efforts. ENSAP did this successfully through commending those villages which had reported the best repayment results of their loans of the 1989 season. The letters of congratulation sent to village sheikhs were warmly welcomed by the whole village as this amounted to the publicization of village competence within the project area. This squares with the views of scholars dealing with working relations between development agencies and their clients. Thus it has been argued that "working cooperation will be greater if the outside expert shuns publicity and lets indigeneous leaders receive credit for any innovations or improvements" (Ibid.:338).

(e) Consultation with and, orientation towards local officials (the nazir of Dar Hamar, shartai, municipal council officers etc.) as well as native experts such as local blacksmiths and experts on local chemical uses in traditional agriculture (eg. the neem consultancy of Dr. Siddieg in 1989).



From right to left: ENSAP Team Leader,
Dr. Awadalla (consultant) and the Agricultural Coordinator.

(f) Consultants' neutrality to be strongly advised, which will lead to their sympathetic understanding of local people and respect of local knowledge, especially because these people are predominantly illiterate. To give a case in point: In his consultancy for evaluating the performance of the extension component of ENSAP in mid-June 1990, Dr. Awadalla's respondent told him that he applied 'samad' (lit. fertilizer) in accordance with the recommendations of the project staff; in fact the chemical concerned is not a fertilizer but a pesticide (locally called budra or samad). However, recognizing that the majority of smallholder farmers are illiterate Dr. Awadalla by-passed correcting his informant. According to Dr. Awadalla, to have done so would doubly jeopardize the project. In the first place it would develop a feeling of offence in the informant and undermine his knowledge of which he was proud. Secondly, being informed that the chemical was a pesticide (budra) the informant would tend not to apply it since fertilizers count as more important to him than pesticides for which he has a number of local alternatives.

(f) Native i.e Sudanese staff were required to brief foreign personnel in matters relating to the project in order to show their willingness to learn more about the local culture. The fact that ENSAP personnel work as a team has resulted in mutual cooperation through the desire to learn from one another's experiences. The project Coordinator, however, feels that excessive briefing is boring and time consuming.

5.6 Communication And Feedback:

Briefing, however, is mainly important when it comes from the clients, on their own initiative, especially relating to matters which local people consider to require privacy. This is so because should the agency impose direct questioning it would be difficult to induce real answers from clients who clearly appreciate that the disclosure of certain facts would give offence to the agency providing them with financial assistance. Clients certainly

perceive that what conflicts with their own culture could be an ideal in the case of another culture such as that of the agency's.

This perception is clearly manifest with ENSAP loans which touched directly on the society's sacrosanct values. ENSAP loans were tantalizing to smallholder farmers. On the one hand they implied attending to people's needs in terms of making cash available to remove a main constraint on smallholder farming. On the other they implied the involvement in illegal practices which are religiously prohibited (such as the payment of interest on project loans). In this respect three groups emerged. In the first category were those farmers who were most recalcitrant to ENSAP loans, and thus refused to participate in the project. Among these was the sheikh of Seranbi village. For this group the payment of the interest which loans imply is tantamount to committing adultery with one's mother. The second group includes those who reluctantly receive the loans. These were observed to take the loan but either refuse to repay the interest rate, or deflect its use by forwarding it to a relative (who himself may not be eligible for a project loan), as was practiced by some farmers in Murabaat village. This conflicts with ENSAP's recommended use of the loan as stated in the project document. This corroborates the argument that the introduction of improved technology in underdeveloped societies "runs into formidable obstacles if it seems to impinge on religious institutions, beliefs and practices" (Watson, 1971: 495). The third group includes those who positively responded to the project loans and continue to receive it.

An effective means of persuasion was later followed by the agency to get participants adapted to the idea of project loans. This was as a corrective to the agency's implicit and erroneous assumption that "where the chronic lack of adequate fund had been a major factor in holding back the rate of development there was perhaps a tendency to assume that development could be bought if there was enough money to buy it" (Making, 1967:35).

Face-to-face communication with clients would redress the fact, which the agency presumed, that project aims, stated in the documents as being 'non-profit', had not explicitly been made known to the clients. The importance of communication between the agency and its clients on this matter was evident to the agency from open dialogue in the project villages such as that between Mike, the then team leader in 1989 and Hamad, a farmer from Murabaat village. The agency perceives this particular instance as instrumental in influencing greater support for the credit component, and so the case is worth documenting:

Hamad: ...let's forget about the matter of repayment for a while..if you have any doubt about the repayment capacity of our village ,then come in December [the start of the repayment period] and you will see for yourself.

Mike: I do not doubt...rather, I would like to let the farmers know about the repayment policy of our project.

Hamad: When should we repay the loans?

Mike: It is up to you...whenever you like from now[December] up to the end of February.

Hamad: How much profit per pound should we pay out of pocket for the loan to the agency.

Mike: O Hamad, our loans do not claim profit....instead, we stipulate that the cost of administration and supervision be borne by the participating farmers. In other words, the costs of getting out the loans are levied directly on the farmers in their villages, including the cost of fuel and the salaries for the the project staff.

Hamad: Yet, you have not told me the size of the cost of administration and supervision.

Mike: Be patient Hamad, and I will tell you...the costs of administration and supervision are calculated on a per month basis,not per annum. This means that for every 1 Ls there is

an extra repayment of 2 piasters per month . Those who repay early will therefore incur the least cost.

The conversation points to the importance of listening to the people at the grass-roots rather than stating the goals for villagers (the majority of whom are illiterate) in the project documents. However, despite this importance, a large number of villagers participating in ENSAP state that they do not get the opportunity to express their views in a direct communication with the project staff. As a consequence they remained vague about the aims of the project and its real targets. But, even though the successful case of Mike and Hamad was not typical of the communication network of the project, its inclusion as an illustration in Daleel ENSAP, which was widely circulated to the farmers, resulted in bridging the gap between the farmers, who did not have the opportunity to directly secure such information, and project staff.

Local farmers are also observed to be selective of project inputs . They opt to follow those which square with their needs and discard those which do not suit them. For instance, ENSAP disburses loans to the participating farmers to expand the area cultivated by cash crops as a wealth-enhancing gambit. But farmers, on their part, base their farming decisions on whether expanding the cash crops results in greater food security (e.g. enabling the purchase of food from the market) than if the farmer chooses not to expand it. Moreover they state that even with the help of the project loans expanding the area cultivated implies increasing costs in terms of labour and capital: "this will eat our loans". Being unaccustomed to seemingly large amounts of cash on behalf of capital investment had resulted in some farmers' keeping part of their loans lying idle in their pockets until repaying them at the end of the farming season.

Judged in terms of the limited time of project implementation, 1988/89 through to 1992/93, it would be safe to argue that underlying the agency's more particular aims was a rapid modernization of smallholder agriculture of the project communities of En Nahud district targeted by ENSAP. This is implied in the project objectives which included a) heavy financial inputs as loans for a widely scattered number of villages (5000 farmers targeted); b) increased efficiency and farm management through extension support to significantly increase productivity by 10% by the end of the fifth year; and to increase the area cultivated by 25%. This in terms of theory looked plausible in terms of identification of causes and prescription of remedies which most of the recent theorists of 'modernizing traditional smallholder agriculture' would support (eg. Schultz, 1964 ; Making, 1967). However, the project was considerably hampered in getting its AFE's to motivate the farmers to raise their managerial capabilities (by investing more of their time combating farm pests, and proper application of the recommended techniques) sufficiently to achieve the targeted efficiency in project farms. It has been argued in this respect that "it is necessary to recognize,...that when capital is made available to an agricultural industry in the early stages of development the stage is quickly reached at which the capital injection will become wasteful unless it is complemented by adequate gains in management ability" (Making, 1967:41). One major reason for this deficiency in the extension component of ENSAP project stems from two conflicting aims, relating on the one hand to the government seconded staff in the extension unit of the project, and on the other hand to the foreign staff at the higher level of the administration. The conflict was attributable to differences in work experiences and institutional rationale. The government seconded staff are drawn from government agricultural departments which are used to implementing their agricultural plans using government funds *with the aim of pursuing the government policy*. This would not necessarily be concerned with making profit since any losses would be covered by subsidies. The agency, on the other hand, had as its purpose to provide loan assistance

with the objective of profitably enhancing the production process (though this profit was assumed to accrue to the farmers).

This divergence of purpose relating to how an NGO's capital, technology and management are combined on behalf of smallholder agricultural production, relates in this instance to the fact that the NGO's capital is drawn from the NGO's own resources but is backed by the government of Sudan's financial support. Thus, the agency's aim is guided by a concern, however undisclosed, to ensure a profit at least to pay for the project's CAS; but the government's concern is more focused on total farmers' income, part of which goes to the government in the form of production taxes. The difference between the national-seconded staff and the agency itself therefore lies in this :the objective of the agency is the expansion of production for the purpose of profit making, while that of the government seconded staff is the expansion of production for the execution of the government policy (c.f.,e.g. Making:43). Such inherent conflict of ideas within the NGO , one would suppose would likely be resolved, at the level of project impact, in favour of the ideas of the government-seconded staff since it is they who execute the project, as the AFE's, the senior AFE and the Extension Coordinator. Here we note that government-seconded personnel will be influenced by having worked, during the large part of their office experience, among smallholder producers whose aims were the production for subsistence and self sufficiency. This does not square with the agency's aims which are influenced by technical and cultural experiences largely at variance with the peculiarities of the indigenous smallholder production.

An important factor related to this point is the observation that the AFE's themselves, being Sudanese nationals, do not dwell sufficiently on the recommended practices and extension techniques of the project which they are required to impart to participating farmers of ENSAP. Apart from the first season of project operation, which was guided by

enthusiasm, the AFE's never heeded too much when participating farmers avoided applying the recommended techniques of the project. Their enthusiasm was later retarded still further by the feeling of apathy and low motivation due to work in the harsh rural environment. As a result an ample number of participating farmers resorted to their traditional techniques. This defeated the agency's view that once got started with the innovation, clients would follow the new techniques without being provided with technical assistance and supervision. The case of the Dirra farmers participating with the project who eventually resorted to their traditional farming practices upon the transfer of its AFE to another village is a good example. Murabaat farmers' who resort to their traditional farming practices would avoid the AFE, Mohamed EL Nil, lest this lead to confrontation with the agency. Faced with a similar phenomenon among smallholder farmers under external intervention Yudelman quotes the remarks of a disillusioned interventionist:

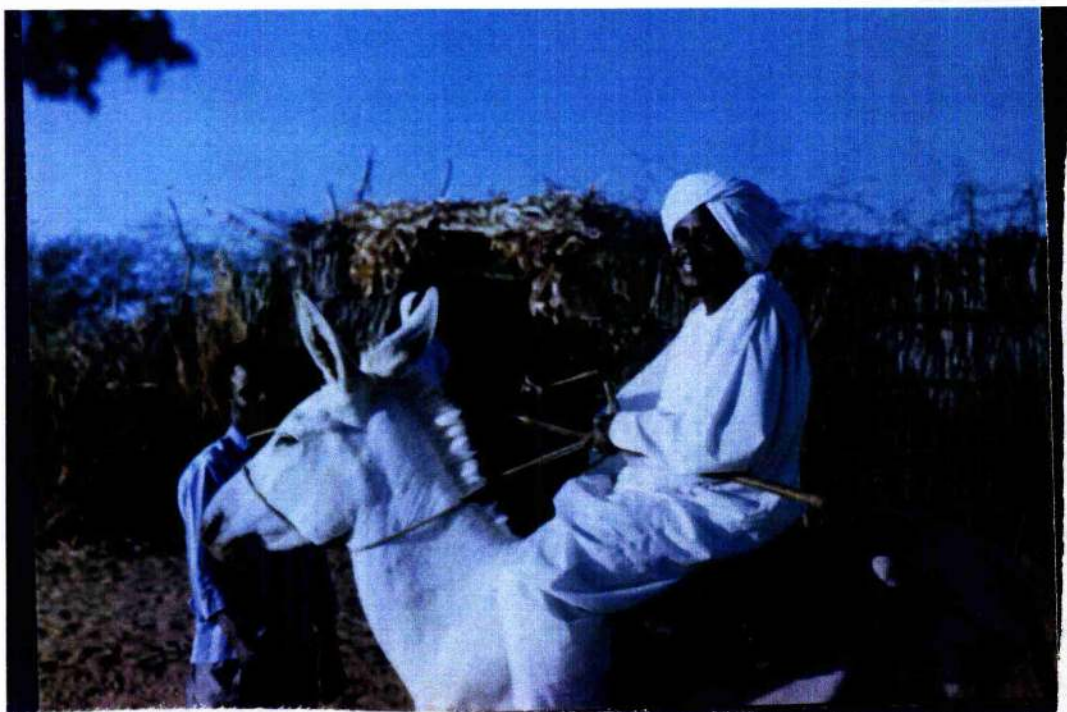
if the demonstrators are withdrawn or moved elsewhere, it will be found that the ploholders and cooperators, notwithstanding the fact that they have been shown, and have actually carried out the new methods, will slip back into their old ways. It is necessary to put this on record in order that we do not deceive ourselves in dealing with an uncivilized native population (sic.) by assuming that because a native has been taught how to carry out what is 'modern', that he will continue to do so as soon as the controlling authority is withdrawn (1964:146).

This arguably has its implications on the 'sustainability' of the extension component of ENSAP project. On the one hand, the AFE's were too few in number to adequately supervise participating farmers. This poses a first problem in the short run. Then, in the long run, as ENSAP's AFE's are expected to be replaced by indigenous VEA's, CF's, VPC's etc., this trend of slipping back into the traditional ways is likely to be accentuated.

Roaming around Kirja, Seranbi, Abu Geid and back to his base village the AFE of Murabaat village, Hamad El Nil, had a lot to say about the ambitious production targets of the agency which are basically guided by the target concept in development planning which aims at rapid modernization of agricultural practice. Despite being theoretically sound, in reality we have come to notice that at the practical level there are a host of problems which render the management practices of traditional farmers too difficult to change. Hamad El Nil says that " the basic features conducive to efficient farm management, proper seed spacing, timely cultivation, proper use of tools and application of chemicals, disease and pest control and timely preparation and marketing of crops, are not compatible with the conditions of smallholder farmers cultivating small plots, using simple tools and guided by the ideology of producing for subsistence".

In addition to these, other barriers in certain aspects of the social system, such as beliefs and religious practices (see eg. chapter 7), kinship obligations, and views about the 'tried' and 'proven' agricultural practices of the past had imposed themselves so as to circumvent the agency's goals, views and perceptions.

The divergence, therefore, between the agency and its clients lies in the differences in views preceptions and the final goals held on both sides. The agency is guided by a view to expand agricultural production. The villagers on the other hand are guided by the ideology of self-sufficiency and producer welfare in general. As Making states (1967:52) and, indeed, as we have seen, the producer approach is through extension, supported by credit aid and the provision of services, but it has become wasteful as ENSAP has spread this support over widely scattered villages. Equally, the production approach makes much much greater use of capital and managerial ability in relation to labour and land but with ENSAP, because of the inherent inefficiency in management and the inadequacy of the loans provided to smallholder producers, it has run into difficulties on this front as well.



Hamad El Nil (AFE in Murabaat) on his donkey transport.

ENSAP's goal of sustainability could add further difficulties in achieving its final targets. The agency's concern about 'sustainability' is justified by its recognition of the inadequacy of government resources, and particularly the scarcity of trained and experienced personnel which are to provide basic project execution by the end of the project life. This has led the agency to reduce the extension available to a large portion of the small-holder producers to the extent that a large body of participating farmers remain not effectively reached by extension services. Seen from this angle, we could argue that the agency's conception and views about sustainability have victimized the clients who are denied the opportunity to secure the maximum benefits of the extension services. In order to bridge this gap, however, the agency has resorted to the deployment of its NGO resources in terms of its other basic principle: local participation. The victims of the extension services are considered to be better reached if local volunteers are drawn into the 'on the ground' extension unit to serve as catalysts in their villages, thereby contributing to 'sustainability'. In my view, this would still not escape the criticism of being in contradiction to the goal of 'sustainability', for, how could the newly appointed VEA's, CF's, and VPC's be remunerated? If they are to be considered as salaried personnel then this would imply added costs to the Ministry of Agriculture which is assumed to carry the project operations upon phase-over to the government. Recognizing this difficulty, the Agricultural Coordinator of the project who was highly concerned about the involvement of these local level farmers in the extension services of ENSAP prepared a draft paper (without consulting the people at the grass-roots) suggesting that these new staff be rewarded through nafirs being recruited on their behalf by the other farmers benefitting from extension services. However, it is doubtful that this in fact amounted to a reward (see below).

5.7 Micro Versus Macro-level Derived concepts:

Clients' concepts are generally derived from the grass-roots level and these form the bases of their decision-making processes. The agency, on the other hand, relies on macro-level information due to the professional nature of the staff forming the top-level planning body. Thus their decisions are affected by their own disciplines. These personnel were often referred to as development experts, implying that they possess skills which they may project on their clients at the grass-roots level (see eg. Briggs, 1980:103). But these decisions do not always square with those of the indigenous people. Wenger states in this respect that

Already it can be seen that the selection of expert by the government or agency involved in itself represents a value judgement, which can affect the nature of the policy which will be ultimately adopted. The role of the professional legitimizes the social construct of the policy-maker and devalues the local construct (Wenger, 1982:7).

In respect of the ENSAP project the decisions taken by the staff were those which the agency perceives as appropriate for its goals (sustainability).

Thus, information is sought according to the disciplinary perspectives guiding such 'development experts' rather than stepping down to the people at the grass-roots for empirical information. The case of the Agricultural Coordinator (cited above) is a good example to elaborate here. As we mentioned the Agricultural Coordinator was faced with the problem of poor coverage in the extension project, and this in the 1990 season had resulted in poor application of the recommended techniques of the agency. He was then to design a plan for bridging the gap in the extension coverage. In my interrogation of him concerning what he perceives to be the appropriate solution, he remarked that " I am very

tempted by the idea of the training and visit system in the literature of extension". According to this, local volunteers are to be selected from the grass-roots and designated as 'contact farmers' who are to visit the participating farmers of the project in their farms and homes and provide them with extension advice (see e.g. Yudelman, 1976a:378). As a result the extension Coordinator designed his extension model (which had worked successfully in other contexts) to fit into the culture of Ghubeish farmers without consulting them about the intervention. The agricultural Coordinator, however, was faced with the problem of rewarding these 'contact farmers'. His initial goal in referring to local volunteers was that this would imply less administration costs to the agency, hence contributing to the agency's goal of sustainability.

The agricultural Coordinator believed, as I have mentioned, that the best way of rewarding the suggested 'contact farmers' would be through there being nafirs on their behalf since the nafir participants will have benefitted from these 'contact farmers'. But doing this without consultation with the CF's would ultimately not solicit local volunteers to work with the project agency even though the idea seemed to depend on a pre-existing indigenous institution. My interrogations, also supported by direct observation, have shown that, according to the volunteers themselves, a nafir on their behalf would not amount to being rewarded. The fact is these volunteers were already enjoying nafir 'credit' accrued to them from participating in other farmers' nafirs in the past. They expect these other farmers to reciprocate in order to clear their 'debts'.

This links us with yet another point, which is to do with information flow.

This relates to the real impact of the project, as assessed by both the agency and its clients. ENSAP staff draw their information about project performance on inferences derived from the reports of loan repayment. The loan staff do not draw such information about loan success through communication with their clients. Despite the fact that the project staff is

happy with the repayment performance of the participating farmers there are still some farmers who expressed their doubts(to me) about the reliability of the project loans. This scepticism was voiced by those farmers who had to resort to the sheil merchants to supplement ENSAP loans. They were of the opinion that the better repayment results should not be taken by the project agency to imply that they had really benefitted from the project having made their repayments from an improved 'surplus' income. Rather loans were repaid to 'guard their honour' against local criticism directed mainly by non-participants at defaulters who would be taken to court. Another category of farmers argues that repayment is complied with because they come to believe that 'debt is bad', and should be avoided (c.f. Riches,1971:22).

Thus, while information for the agency is aggregate and based on the reports of the the project in the form of 'quantity', that of the clients is largely 'qualitative' and different. Wenger, who observes the same phenomenon, argues that local information sources "...are..experiential, specific, based on small areas, include a subjective component and know- ledge of social and psychological aspects of the situation not immediately available to professionals" (Wenger, 1982:7). The unwitting result has been that in the evaluation phase of the project both the local project staff and the visiting consultants had remarked that the sheil system had entirely disappeared as a result of the project.

The communication channels also differ for both the agency and its clients.

The clients' ideal of communication is through word of mouth in face-to- face contact and traditional local channels. These were reflected in the local ijtimaa (meeting) that brings people together, ranging from a small group of village committee members , to a council of elders, to a large meeting calling all community members such as for communicating an idea about aljuhda sha'abi (requiring, for instance, fund raising for the construction of a local water-yard).

Another simple way of communicating information is where a kinsman assumes the responsibility of conveying a specific message (e.g. an invitation for a wedding feast or important news about the village community). For matters relating to village welfare, such as the building of a local school, health unit or a water-yard, the village sheikh's house provides the appropriate arena for the participants to convene for communication. Traditional communication channels are constrained by the limited institutional structures for interaction (the majority of villages lack local clubs or community centres in which to launch an ijtimaa) due to the limited nature of local resources. In the past the bulk of local projects launched through aljuhda sha'abi were preceded by information being passed to the participants in an ijtimaa being held sporadically in a village school, in the open yards or through word of mouth. The effectiveness of these local communication channels varies from one village to another. In a small village such as Al Halfaya, communication through word of mouth seems effective. This effectiveness is bolstered by the strong kinship ties that link the village members together as well as the proximity of the agnatically related households to one another. In the larger villages such as Dirra and Rasheed the ijtimaa is the most appropriate means of communication. To insure that such an ijtimaa is fully attended the village sheikh will beat the nuggara (drum) which calls immediate attendance.

This diverges from the channels propagated by the agency for communicating important information. Major ones include policy documents or even the use of the regional mass media (such as radio El Obeid for broadcasting the extension messages to ENSAP farmers in their villages). In response to the use of radio El Obeid as a means of extension coverage local feedback (recorded by myself and the agency) has shown that clients are generally concerned that radio messages are out of reach of smallholder farmers the majority of whom do not own radios. Even the negligible number of farmers who owned radios maintained that the prevailing high prices of batteries (a pair cost LS 50 in 1990) meant that

listening to the radio had become too costly as this amounts to foregoing two days' household consumption spending.

This points to the inherent divergence in respect to means by which each side views the whole situation relating to both, before and after the implementation of ENSAP project. Wenger (1982:5) provides an apt summary to what has been covered in this section:

It is now accepted theoretically that development planning should be based on some form of consultative relationship between the planners and the recipients of development programmes..but the problems continue to arise in the implementation of planed changed. Part of the reason for this may be the effect of different perspectives which different segments of society bring to bear on the solution of social or economic improvement. Problems of communication arise even when the perceived objectives of the separate groups are seen to be the same; they think they agree.

5.8 The Basic Social Values Guiding The Agency's Programmes:

Along with the agency's specific targets as raising the agricultural productivity of smallholder farmers, broadening the investment scope for the rural people through increased earnings, the agency attaches importance to the value of establishing greater confidence in smallholders to help themselves. The involvement of 'locals' in the impementation and planng processes finds its expression in terms such as 'community organization' and 'effective participation', as well as 'sustainability'. The terms were often summed up in the phrase,'the bottom-up' approach for community development, which assumes self-planning as opposed to planning by outsiders for the rural people. In the rest of this chapter we deal with these three ingredients in the agency's approach to designing and implementing community development projects. But since these terms raise some

problems as to what exactly they mean I will start with some of the currently circulated definitions.

5.9 Community Organization:

The following are some of the salient definitions of community organization:

1. ...a community identifies needs and takes action, and in so doing...develops cooperative.. attitudes and practices (Murray, 1955: 39).
2. [Community organization] may be chiefly concerned with problems of accommodation and social adjustment...it is concerned with the interrelationship of groups within communities, their integration and coordination in the interest of efficiency and unity of action. In a wider sense it may also include the Adjustment of a local community to the larger social unit of which it is a part (Steiner, 1930: 20).
3. ..the general aim of community organization is to bring about and maintain a progressively more effective adjustment between social welfare needs. This implies that community organization is concerned with a) the discovery and definition of needs; b) the elimination and prevention of distress and disabilities, so far as possible; and c) the articulation of resources and needs, and the constant readjustment of resources in order better to meet changing needs (Robert, 1939: 500).
4. ...community development is a process dealing primarily with programme relationships and is thus to be distinguished in its work setting from those other basic processes, case work and group work, which deal with people.

Those relationships- of agency to agency, of agency to community, and of community to agency- reach in all directions from any focal point in the social work picture. Community

organizaion may be thought of as the process by which these relationships are initiated, altered or terminated to meet changing conditions; and it is thus basic to all social work" (Kurtz,1940: 401-402).

5. Community organization in its generic sense is deliberately directed effort to assist groups in attaining unity of purpose and action. It is practiced, though often without recognition of its character, whenever the objective is to achieve or maintain a pooling of the talents and resources of two or more groups in behalf of either general or specific objectives (Wayne, 1947: 110).

Central to these definitions are the phrases "development of cooperative attitudes and practices", "the problems of accommodation and social adjustment", "the articulation of resources and needs and the constant readjustment of resources", "dealing with relationships between agency and community", and the "integration and coordination of groups in the interest of efficiency and unity of action". It is ideally the combination of these which collectively define community organization. But why is community organization necessary for the interfering agency? The answer is that the agency considers community organization as the primary institutional base within which the various groups and individuals targeted by the project may have their activities coordinated and delivered. It is this objective, of institution building that is central to commuity organization.

However, community organization needs at least two igredients in order to get established and maintained. These ingredients are captured in the notion of effective participation and sustainability. Community participation in the institutional base is clearly important in that it brings together the interested parties, groups and individuals who are to be mobilized to form 'community organization'. But participation is an elusive term and is widely

discussed in the literature on rural development. The following are some of the salient definitions of participation.

1. Participation means... to sensitize people and, thus to increase the receptivity and ability of rural people to respond to development programmes, as well as to encourage local initiative (Lele, 1975:73).
2. Popular participation in development should be broadly understood as the active involvement of people in the decision-making processes in so far as this affects them (Uphoff and Cohen, 1979: 79)
3. Participation includes people's involvement in decision-making processes, in implementing programmes.... their sharing in the benefits of development programmes, and their involvement in efforts to evaluate such programmes (Lisk, 1973:19).
4. [participation means]...the organized efforts to increase control over resources and regulative institutions in given social situations, on the part of groups and movements of those hitherto excluded from such control (Pearse and Steifel, 1979:8).
5. ..the creation of opportunities to enable all members of a community and the larger society to actively contribute and influence the development process and to share equitably in the fruits of development (U.N,1985:5).

Common to all these definitions is the 'involvement' of local people in the process of their development. As development planners are increasingly dissatisfied with imposed models for social development the tone of development planning is gradually being shifted from being patron-biased to being client-biased. The United Nations have spearheaded the bottom-up planning and implementation approach and considered the approach as an

alternative to state bureaucracy interventions in which little attention is paid to the people at the grass-roots. It is indeed an attack at the stereotyping (by the often arm-chair planners and scholars) which labels the rural people as 'passive receivers' of development benefits. CARE agency considers such stereotyping to have no justification in the context of local communities which have traditionally organized their efforts to get community improvement underway.

CARE advocates 'participation' with a view to achieving two short-term and one long-term goals. The two short-term goals are mass mobilization of local resources, and local level needs identification and assessment. The long-term goal is the 'sustainability' of the achieved development targets. Since the achievement of the two short-term goals, of local resource mobilization and the identification and assessment of local needs, is largely dependent on the efforts and collaboration of the local people the interfering agency needs first to build on the trust of local people.

5.10 Building On The Trust Of Local People:

The need to build on the trust of local people stems from the recognition of the fact that the participating villages (PVs) of the project are assumed to develop largely on the basis of the pre-existing human and material resources both during the agency's presence and after its withdrawal. It is these villages which state, and share in, the evaluation of their needs and potentialities: the realization is that the problem relates to 'them', i.e the people as opposed to 'us', the agency. Based on people's faith in the process of their development the agency directs its material and technical assistance resources contending that such 'bottom-up' planning leads to goals and objectives which are more precisely formulated and realistic.

The agency identifies three categories as essential for participation in a project. The first is the local government officials who tend to have some influence in the process of village

development by virtue of their traditional authority over local welfare affairs. This group includes the municipal council's administrative officers, the shartai and the nazir of Dar Hamar. The nazir and the administrative officers were involved only in rendering advice concerning the historical background and the reputation of the villages applying for participation in the project. As the agency receives a large number of applications from the villages out of which the agency selects some for participation and rejects the rest, such information effectively leads to the selection of villages most eligible for participation.

The second basic source of participation in the project is the village leadership. Village sheikhs are involved in both the process of farmer selection as well as in the execution of project tasks at the village level. Thus the village sheikhs brought to swear on the Quran when recommending their village farmers for participation with the project according to the agency's eligibility criteria for member selection. The sheikhs are also brought in to assume the leadership roles in the locally institutionalized cooperatives and 'associations' through which the major project services are delivered and coordinated. Replicating the village leadership in their traditional positions implies, for the agency, the absorption of conflicts likely to arise should the agency by-pass these leaders who have vested interests in leading their communities.

The third group the agency calls for participation are the local farmers who are selected from among the principal project beneficiaries to play 'catalyst' roles for delivering services to their fellow farmers. The participation of these volunteer village agents is particularly important in that it constitutes the first step towards the delegation of project implementation to the local community. Such roles played by the VEAs (village extension agents), VPCs (village pest controllers) and CFs (contact farmers) would back the coverage of the extension services of the project and lead to local people's identification with the project. When the skills of these 'catalysts' are up-graded to fully shoulder the

responsibility of handling the project extension tasks, then 'sustainability' is ensured, since upon the withdrawal of the agency the project could continue without external assistance. This invites us to deal with this particular concept invoked by the agency: sustainability.

5.11 Sustainability:

Central to the agency's project implementation approach is the concept of sustainability. This is well stated in the agency's project document: "the final goal of [ENSAP] project is to affirm and reinforce traditional, small-scale agriculture as a viable and profitable livelihood in at least 50 villages of En Nahud district, through the establishment of a self-sustained credit/extension programme appropriate for the needs of farmers cultivating under 15 hectares".

The agency loosely defines sustainability as the potential continuation of the project activities after donors have ceased to provide funds. The task of the agency, therefore, lies in identifying those aspects which could lead to sustainability and make them operational; and at the same time in avoiding those which would prove unsustainable without the backing of the agency. There are certain indicators for sustainability which the agency seeks to be met when introducing an innovation or a new technique:

- i. The extent to which it dovetails with the macro-economic circumstances of the country in question and national government policy.
- ii. The quality of the management and administration of the project, particularly the ability to analyze external changes and to relate them to the circumstances of the project, and the ability to mobilize the political support necessary to influence external circumstances.
- iii. A secure long-term financial base, which is necessary to facilitate the necessary investments and to cover operating costs.
- iv. The need to anchor the project in the social and cultural context of the region or country, so that the population- particularly the target group- will accept the activities,

support them, take part in them and wish to continue them. This requires, among others, a careful choice of technology and organizational arrangements.

v. The need to take account of environmental conditions and the potential of natural resources in the area.

vi. other external circumstances such as political and economic stability (Project Document, N.a :16).

Putting into consideration the above requirements the agency then tests sustainability against the following key ingredients of project implementation:

- i. Whether the goals and aims of the project square with the clients' goals and aims.
- ii. Whether the project activities will continue to be funded adequately by the national government after the withdrawal of the agency.
- iii. Whether overburdening the local people and the environment is avoided and minimized; and
- iv. Whether the project innovation is accepted and backed by the community's support.

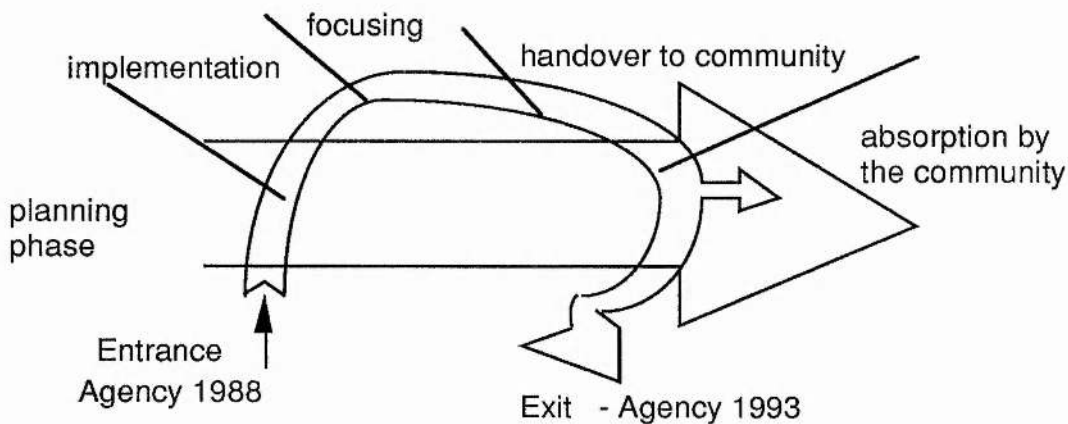
Sustainability depends on two independent but interrelated factors. The first is the local resource base; and the second is the external donor resource inflow. There exists the danger that excessive funding by donor agencies creates 'dependency' on external assistance to the extent that when the donors withdraw it becomes too burdensome for the local element to carry on with project activities. A reliable local resource base, therefore, should exist if local people are to keep faith with the formidable task of assuming the responsibility of continuing the project implementation process without external assistance.

The project agency has so far achieved the following targets which it judges sustainable in the context of the governmental institutions constituting the counterparts of the project:

1. The creation of a credit system that is well adapted to the needs of smallholder producers hitherto neglected by the previous credit lending institutions. The ABS could easily take over the innovation and institutionalize it within its credit system.
2. The initiation and implementation of a low-cost extension delivery system based on the placement of extension agents within the rural communities targeted by the project, thereby enhancing greater extension coverage. The AFEs who are supported by donkey transport were able to live among local village people, identify with them and share in their hardships.
3. The mobilization of local support through the organization of local people into cooperatives, associations and jamaas (groups) leading to an optimum combination of agency and local resources for the realisation of project objectives. These organizations were based on the pre-existing indigenous institutions such as the lijan (committees) of the villages.
4. The utilization of the local material resources such as the neem (*Azidrachta Indica A Juss*) extracts which are used for pest control, the sonki (locally manufactured tool for the tapping of the gum Arabic trees) and the local seed dressing prototypes for mixing the seeds with chemicals.

With regard to the project activities to be realized the agency plans the gradual devolution of project activities to the local institutions as the implementation process proceeds rather than delaying this process to the final stage of project phase-over. The whole idea of devolution hinges on building coordination links at two levels: a) the national level represented by the ABS, MOA and the other governmental institutions such as the Cooperative Department and the National Seeds Administration which provide input supplies for the project, and b) the local level, through organizing task forces for local action. The two levels represent vertical and horizontal linkages, respectively. The vertical linkage, of the project beneficiaries with the ABS, leads to familiarizing the clients with the

latter institution as a lending system attending to their needs on behalf of the NGO. The second is a horizontal linkage, which is basically an organizational strategy whereby the village institutions are supported and devolved responsibilities within the project. The process of gradual devolution of project activities to both national and local institutions can be well understood with reference to the following model which exemplifies community involvement in the participatory project planning and implementation processes.



Life cycle of a project in which the agency
bases on community participation

Interpretation Of The Model:

In order for the community to be effectively participating in the planning and implementation processes of the project a number of considerations should be made. In respect of ENSAP project these considerations include:

A. The planning phase:

- i. The enlightenment of the community leadership with the agency.
- ii. The enlightenment of the community with the agency.
- iii. The identification and formation of the local planning group.
- iv. Setting the tasks and responsibilities for the planning group and the methods to be followed.

- v. The identification of community needs.
- vi. The identification of the priority needs to be met.
- vii. The selection of the target group (beneficiaries) according to the priorities.
- viii. The identification of the goals to be achieved.
- ix. Setting out alternative (probable solutions) techniques and methods.
- x. Review and prioritizing the alternatives in accordance with a) the feasibility studies, b) the available resources, c) the community's support, d) the applicability of the alternatives, e) continuity and sustainability, f) the support of the counterparts g) the lessons drawn from other similar experiences.
- xi. The appropriateness of the intervention (staff should be mostly experts).
- xii. Identifying the particulars for the selection of the project committee.
- xiii. The formation of the project committee.
- xvi. Drawing up the proposal in which the goals, the activities, the needed resources and the execution of the project are clearly stated.
- xv. Planning the execution of the project.
- xvi. Preparation of the follow-up and monitoring plan.
- xvii. Preparation of the project evaluation plans.
- xviii. Scheduling the hand over of the project and the final exit of the agency.
- xix. Defining the tasks to be accomplished by the local project committee members and the way the tasks are organized.
- xx. Defining the roles and responsibilities of the agency and the counterparts.

B. The Implementation Phase: This phase includes;

- i. Approaching the community.
- ii. The involvement of the local community in the preparation of the action plan.
- iii. Designating the project staff.
- iv. Training the project staff.
- v. Conducting the base line survey.

- vi. Initiating the experimentations and demonstrations.
- vii. Evaluation and review of the project performance.

C. The Focusing and Concentration Phase: This phase experiences the focusing of the agency on those aspects of the project which proved sustainable and the implementation process draws on the results of the evaluation of results of the previous phase. The major activities conducted in this phase include;

- i. Finalizing the project implementation plan on the light of the project evaluation and review.
- ii. The execution of the finalized plan.
- iii. The exchange of the gained expertise.

D. End Of Project Life And Phase Over: This phase includes the,

- i. review and finalizing phase over as per project plan.
- ii. Local community assumes the task of project execution (administrative and financial).
- iii. the development of the follow-up and evaluation plans for the post phase over stage.

The agency practiced this participatory planning and implementation process through the following steps.

- 1. The selection of the villages for participation.

In this stage the selection of the villages for participation with the project lies with the project agency which states the eligibility criteria for selection. The sheikhs, the shartai (sheikh's boss) and the administrative officer were involved in distributing the application forms to the candidate villages and in participating in the selection process (by recommending the villages most eligible for participation). The local police, the court (which is assumed to later prosecute the loan defaulters), the extension administration and the Farmers Union were called in to participate in the selection process. According to the

recommendations of these parties the project agency selects the optimum number of villages among the candidate villages.

2. Selection of the individual farmers.

In this stage the sheikh is called to swear on the Quran his recommendation of the village members for participation.

3. To be fully participating in the project, the candidate farmer should have a guarantor. This calls for the organizing of the participating farmers in jamaas (groups) each headed by a guarantor responsible for his group.

4. The candidate should also be a member of the association or the cooperative. This gave rise to the formation of associations and committees the executive committee members of which assumed the responsibility of coordinating local tasks with the project agency.

These constituted the basic forms of community organization and participation at the local level.

By the end of this stage the implementation process gets started with the simultaneous involvement of the local people in running project activities. At a later stage the appointment of the local VEAs, VPCs and CFs and the mobilization of local community resources such as the neem extracts, the sonki tool and local seed dresser prototypes constituted the optimum utilization of local human and material resources for project development. Meanwhile the training of the executive committee members of the associations and the cooperatives in book-keeping and accountancy marks the up-grading of local skills in behalf of assuming credit allocation tasks upon the project phase-over.

By this stage the project will be fully focussed towards the achievement of the set goals most of which were partially realized. These included the raising of farmers incomes and agricultural productivity as well as the expansion of the area cultivated. At the same time the institutional framework represented by the newly established cooperatives and associations will be strengthened and up-graded to handle the tasks of delivering credit and extension

inputs. This marks the gradual devolution of the project tasks to the local community which on its part needs to absorb the innovation and institutionalize it. The most practical step towards this end has been the movement of the ABS branch office from EN Nahud to Ghubeish, the main site of the project villages, in mid-1991.

Up to this stage the project's achievement of its set goals is rather piecemeal due to the environmental hazard of low rainfall which led to considerable loss in yields and crop failure. Sustainability of the innovation without external support depends on continuous project success in terms of increased productivity and income which in turn leads to guaranteed loan repayment. Without this continuous success sustainability will be jeopardized by the successive decline in project finance due to the persisting decline in loan repayment which had characterized ENSAP's credit component.

To sum up it is well to draw a comparison between the project's overall approach to project planning and implementation with the rural modernization strategy pursued by the United Nations. This enables us to locate ENSAP among the international approaches to rural development.

5.12 Comparative Profile Of ENSAP Strategy With The Rural Modernisation Strategy As Viewed By Rondinelli and Ruddle (1978:493-94):

ENSAP Strategy

Approach

5.12. 1 Target:

50 villages of Ghubeish, mainly smallholder farmers.

5.12.2 Objectives:

- i. Increase agricultural output and productivity.
- ii. Diversify the economic base of small-scale producers by the production of food and cash crops.
- iii. Reduce the number of people living in relative and absolute poverty.
- iv. Reduce out-migration from the villages.

Rural Modernisation Strategy-United Nations

low income farmers and peasants living in rural areas, outside cities, towns and industrial enclaves.

- a) transform rural regions from subsistence to commercial agricultural areas.
- b) modernize rural inhabitants and change attitudes towards development.
- c) increase per capita income of economically active population.
- d) ensure minimum food supplies and basic nutritional requirements.

5.12.3 Major Assumptions:

1. Rural poverty results from low agricultural productivity and lack of economic diversification.
 2. The poor have limited access to services and technology.
 3. Vested interests (e.g. sheil lenders) limit opportunities for productivity and income expansion.
 4. Quality of life in rural areas can be improved through the mobilization of the limited capital and labour resources if backed by external assistance.
- i) low productivity is due to persistence of traditional attitudes, mores, and institutional structure.
 - ii) small proportions of national resources are now invested in agricultural production.
 - iii) traditional land systems perpetuate subsistence farming.
 - iv) Coordinated inputs of services, facilities, and infrastructure can transform traditional communities.

5.12.4 Operational Premises:

1. Successful rural development requires the effective participation of communities and counterparts.
 2. Rural programmes can be designed to reach large numbers at low cost.
 3. Inputs must be supplied through low cost delivery service.
1. Adverse geographical and ecological factors must be analyzed and of local communities and appropriate solutions to problems tested within each rural region.
 2. Programmes must generate economic resources for investment in directly productive enterprises and social services.
 3. Institutional and social change must be induced in order to transform and modernise rural communities.

4. Rural associations and cooperatives essential elements of the administrative system.

5. appropriate and adaptive technology packages should be developed for rural areas.

6. National government institutions equally involved in project execution.

4. Political and administrative mechanism must be designed specifically to implement rural programs.

5. Agricultural technology must be transformed and new technology adopted to increase output.

6. services, facilities, technical and administrative inputs and infrastructure must be combined into 'minimum packages'.

5.12.5 Approaches To Implementation:

1. Bottom-up approach:

Experiment with Other countries' experiences with participatory approaches to project planning and implementation.

2. The agency to provide financial and technical assistance in project design, implementation and evaluation.

3. The NGO provides technical assistance in strategy and evaluation of successful projects for potential replicability into other countries, or parts of Sudan.

1. No single approach recommended:

rural transformation should be the basic objective of any integrated strategy.

2. Evaluate on-going programmes in various developing countries and determine how they can best be expanded into integrated projects.

3. United Nations to provide technical assistance in strategy and evaluation of successful projects for potential replicability into other countries.

One of the striking differences between the two approaches is that the United Nations' 'Modernization Strategy' broadly deals with the poor in both sectors of the economy (urban and rural), whilst ENSAP focuses on specific target group (poor smallholder farmers) living in rural areas.

Another distinctive feature of the agency's overall intervention is its tendency to be guided by a set of predetermined principles. These principles are followed not only by ENSAP project but find reflection in the majority of the CARE's programmes. These worldwide programming principles include:

a) Significant Scope:

The problems to be addressed by the project are common to a significant number of people throughout the project area. The project will affect not only the direct beneficiaries, but also create benefits for other disadvantaged groups(eg. labourers) outside the project.

b) Fundamental Change:

ENSAP will encourage local participation of the poor households and address their felt needs in a significant way as to bring about changes in the behavior and outlook of local participants.

c) Working with the poor:

This principle is expressed in the CARE statement of purpose: CARE's purpose is to help the developing world's poor in their efforts to achieve social and economic wellbeing (project document, Na).

d) Participation:

Full and active participation by the local villagers and local government officials is central to the meeting of the goals of the project. 'bottom-up' problem identification and project planning by villagers will be combined with the technical expertise from CARE and the government.

e) Replicability:

Basic approaches to development problems will be simple and appropriate to the social, economic and physical environments, and will thus be adapted elsewhere for other areas.

f) Clustering:

The agency works with a cluster of villages rather than with geographically dispersed villages. In addition to its merit of reducing supervision and administration costs this clustering of projects is viewed to bring about "developmental synergisms through the strategic linking of two or more interventions"(Ibid, N.a).

g) Critical mass:

Village development organizations will be trained to identify projects which can fill gaps in the developmental process, and thus create the critical mass of socio-economic conditions required to initiate and sustain long-term development.

We have seen that the agency's views, perceptions and goals were largely guided by these 'worldwide' programming principles which are by and large 'scholarly formulations'; while those of the clients are problem related and characteristically 'indigenous'.

To sum up and conclude: We have discussed the project clients' views, perceptions and goals and contrasted them with those of the agency. This included both clients' pre-existing views, perceptions and goals as well as those which unfolded while both parties experienced the ENSAP project. We then showed how these had a bearing on the EnSAP's fortunes. The major issues at the centre of the discussion were local peoples' concepts about leadership, stereotypes, conceptions relating to fear of failure, communication channels and feedback, and the values guiding the agency's intervention. I have argued that some of these variables are conducive to project development: the apparent contention on the part of local people that local leadership is suited to guide them towards the achievement of the

common good of the community (both prior to and with the introduction of the project) - thus conflict on who should play in the leadership role in the project was successfully avoided. Similarly, conflicting stereotypes were promptly solved by closer communication and by "listening to local people" (c.f. Salmen, 1987).

However, it later came to be realized that locals' views, conceptions and goals were predominantly micro-level derived (from the grass-roots), while those held by the agents are influenced by their disciplines and are largely macro. Some of these macro- views, conceptions and goals are even undisclosed to the clients (such as the intangible social goals. We have also examined, and contrasted, the overall approach of the agency, by referring to project documents, with that advocated by the United Nations. It appeared that to a large extent the agency tries to replicate some of the United Nations' approaches to development. I included these 'prescribed solutions' (in the agency's documents) because we need to put them into consideration when we turn to evaluate the project impact in the following chapter.

Chapter 6

Project Impact

In chapter 4 we furnished some facts on the major issues that related to the implementation of the credit and extension components of ENSAP project. These ranged from the main project credit policies, village and farmer selection procedures and jamaa formation, to the extension methodology itself, its innovations and its various devices for interpreting the extension unit's 'decentralized extension approach'(seen in terms of the project's predilection to incorporate local farmers, e.g. CFs, VEAs and VPCs, in the administration of the extension services at the grass-roots). We made no mention of the real impact such implementation had on the current PVs of the project. In this chapter I turn to deal with the real impact ENSAP project had and is likely to have on the present-day Ghubeish villages targetted by the project. We will be dealing with both the economic impact as well as the social impact of the project. But before doing this some light will be thrown on some of the issues that relate to the project's own methods of evaluating its current activities since these also relate to our evaluation of the project impact.

6.1 Evaluation And Research:

Evaluation refers to the measurement and assessment of the project performance with an eye to weighing the successes and failures on behalf of future improvement, termination or continuity of the project implementation activities. The aim is to find out what impact the project had during a particular phase of implementation. In our case the evaluation is made against the project's stated objectives and goals. Included in project evaluation is research that is conducted both prior to and after the evaluation process. It depends on the previous records and trip reports furnished by the project staff at various stages of project development. These are important in guiding the evaluation teams (whether foreign or national evaluators and consultants) and in providing clues for future evaluation phases. But evaluation puts greater

emphasis on the research carried out by directly the *evaluation team*.. Project surveys of the PVs provide evaluation teams with information on the existing farming system, major project activities, potentialities and constraints as well as the peculiarities of the local culture (however dearth the latter may be). The facts are then recorded to be weighed by the evaluation team against the final goals which the project purports to achieve. The evaluation itself could in the end show whether the original objectives stated by the project administration are realistic or unrealistic, depending on the project's capacity to reach them or fall short of achieving them.

The project agency procures the evaluation teams mainly from outside the project staff. This, I posit, is an advantage since it relates directly to 'objectivity'. The evaluation is deemed objective as it draws the evaluators from sources independent of the project administration. But there is also the danger that the evaluators, academically oriented as they are, be tempted by their theoretical disciplines and background and arrive at a biased evaluation of results. This could also lead to imprecise conclusions. The facts arrived at by the evaluation team are also governed by the time period spent in the field. The results of an inadequate evaluation would be a failure to uncover the shortcomings in the programme and suggest remedies (this problem of time constraint had particularly arisen in respect of the mid-term evaluation team of 1990, as the foreign staff faced some problems connected with entry visas to the Sudan; as a result an important component of the evaluation team was unable to participate).

Another strength of CARE consultancy is that the evaluators are requested to comment on only one field (i.e. credit or extension), or an interdisciplinary team may be recruited if what is to be evaluated involves both components of the project. Focus on specific fields leads to conclusions more precise and honestly stated. This is mainly because the evaluators are usually drawn from more or less one specialized discipline. But as the programme in its totality should not be viewed

simply as the sum total of the different fields it also needs an overall evaluation. So far (towards the mid-term of project implementation) this is not forthcoming. Moreover, the evaluations carried out by the foreign teams had overlooked a number of equally important aspects: the extent to which the project neglects non-member smallholder farmers, denying them project loans even though they are eligible; some of the cultural practices related to the project which either affect it or are being affected by it (see e.g. chapter 7) and the villagers' views and conceptions (see chapter 4) as well as their attitudes towards the new institutions (e.g. cooperatives/'associations', jamaa, etc.) and, above all, the negative attitudes and the indifference factor with respect to the project.

One of the most important views put by the evaluation team concerned the realism of the project's stated goals, and relates to the recommendations (put approximately towards the mid-term of project implementation) which led to the project's scaling down its target of reaching 5000 farm families to one half of that number. This was necessitated by the financial constraints which faced the project, the fuel shortage problems as well as the understaffing problem, especially with respect to the field-based AFEs. However, an evaluation could often have some adverse effects on particular aspects of the project or its personnel. I observed this for Dr. Awadalla's consultancy of 1991 in respect of the extension unit's performance. Dr. Awadalla's evaluation, which criticized the AFEs' qualifications, brought about dampened morale and lack of enthusiasm and distress. This will ultimately have some implications on the AFEs' future performance.

A related process is, also, the project routine staff's evaluation of ENSAP. Needless to say, this is an assessment by ENSAP of its own performance. The refresher training which the staff hold in the project office is a forum whereby this sort of self-criticism is elicited as ideas flow to and from the AFEs, senior AFE, the Agricultural Coordinator and the team leader.

6.2 The Economic Impact Of The Project:

The project impact evaluation, as we will see below, shows that the project's achievements by the mid-term had fallen short of the stated planned targets. However, the newly adjusted targets (i.e to cover less than 5000 farm families) could be more realistic over subsequent seasons, given that other constraints should not appear and hamper project operations. The figures below compare the planned project targets with the actual achievements for the past three years of project operation.

Table (18) Planned and Actual Targets:

Year	No. of PVs		% of target achievement	No. of PFs (beneficiaries)		% of target achievement
	planned	actual		planned	actual	
1988/89	5	3	60%	200	191	95.5%
1989/90	20	15	75%	1600	971	60.7%
1990/91	35	17	48.6%	2800	907	32.4%

Source: Fieldwork.

The table shows that in terms of village coverage the project had displayed a fairly good performance in the first and second seasons of project implementation. In the third, 1990/91, the project had considerably fallen short of achieving the target of reaching 35 villages. Instead, it achieved only 48.6 percent of the planned target. This is clearly reflected in the number of beneficiaries receiving project loans. The corresponding figures for the three seasons were 95.5%, 60.7% and only 32.4%, respectively. Moreover, despite the high figure for the actual number of villages reached by the project in the second season (a total of fifteen villages), the number of clients who received the loans for the same period was relatively small. So, the number of villages covered by the credit project in the second season does not tell us about the actual number of beneficiary PFs reached by the project. As we have seen in a previous chapter, the technical, financial and logistic constraints

which were largely responsible for this poor coverage were even more pertinent as the project expanded through the third year, resulting in the achievement, in that year, of only 32.4 % of the planned client target. Hence the idea of reducing the planned target of the beneficiary group from 5000 to 2500 in the 1990 season.

6.3 Impact on PFs' Income:

Farmers income depends on the size of makhamasat put into cultivation, loan size, environmental factors and the availability of the agricultural inputs such as the improved seeds, chemicals and labour. Furthermore, as a result of the provision of loans, farmers' incomes could rise relative to the reduction in the cost of production such as the abandonment of the sheil loans. In its intermediate goals, ENSAP requires a 10% increase in the average per unit area crop yield of the groundnuts, millet, watermelon and sesame; an increase of 25% in the average area cultivated (all crops); and 30% decrease in the average cost of production per unit output. Costs per unit of output are used rather than costs per mahkamas because the introduction of new inputs such as chemicals will actually increase costs per makhamas. The project, however, considers the corresponding increases in yields, and by evaluating costs per unit output yield increases are taken into account. Eight types of costs are compared, including costs for tools, pesticides, nafirs, capital, marketing, hired labour and household labour. The project, however, expects to have little impact on tools (and seeds in the first year of project operation) because no activities were targeted specifically to them and other activities were not expected to affect the levels of costs associated with them. For some inputs such as pesticides, the project expects costs in PVs to be higher than in CVs. The project also expects costs of nafirs to be lower in PVs. Nafirs are mostly summoned by those farmers who are late in concluding the weeding activity because they have spent the bulk of the time working as hired labourers. When they returned to their village farms they had no alternative but to organize nafirs so as to accomplish the weeding operation before it is too late. Project loans work to stabilize PFs in their farms and farmers are thus committed to spend most

of their time labouring in the farm. Consequently the costs of nafir will be dramatically reduced. Cost of capital (2.5 percent per Ls. per annum) is lower than that from sheil merchants (sheil is mostly made for cash crops). Sheil cost, relating to the advance sale of crops in order to raise capital, is usually the difference between market prices and sheil prices (the total will be multiplied by the total number of sacks sold). Sheil prices are usually below market prices for the same item, the difference representing a return to the merchants. Among other costs which the project expects to increase in PVs are the costs of household labour and hired labour. Hired labour increases are triggered by the availability of cash loans for weeding and harvesting. It should be stated here that the project (at the time of fieldwork) expects only little positive impact as a result of its services since the delivery of inputs started after farmers had already concluded the planting activity in the 1988/89 season (the project was able to provide consumption loans and pesticides at a later stage).

Low rainfall and crop infestation in the subsequent seasons, however, had adversely affected farm productivity during this period and resulted in poor yields and, consequently, low income earnings. The amount and distribution of rainfall was fairly low, relative to the pre-drought period of 1984. The rainy season which starts from May up to September was disturbed by long periods of subna (drought) especially in the 1990 season which was largely a drought season.

ENSAP's Impact Survey of 1989 had reports that the average per makhamas yield for the groundnuts crop 'increased' from 6.3 kantars to 9.7, a percentage increase. This 'increase' is not an increment at the present period from that of the previous year. Rather, the project makes a comparison between yields in the same season of the CVs and PVs. This is mainly because the agency believes that an accurate evaluation of project impact on yield should include all factors which come to bear on productivity. This mainly refers to environmental factors (such as rainfall, drought, pests etc.). Thus 'increase' on yield is calculated on the basis of the overall effect of

these environmental factors. Therefore, according to this evaluation a present period's yield could be said to be greater than a previous year's, despite the fact that the latter is numerically greater than the former). Rainfall for the 1988/89 season was, as it happens, described by the farmers as better than average. Due to the fact that the project provides only millet and groundnuts seeds to its beneficiary farmers, evaluation is made only of these two major crops (sesame itself is not widely cultivated, and sorghum cultivation is, in fact, on the decline due to emphasis on millet). The table below shows comparisons for the average yields for the main cash crop, groundnuts, and the main food crop, millet, for the PVs and the CVs over the periods, 1988/89, 1989/90 and 1990/91.

Table (19): Average Yield in PVs and CVs For 1988/89, 1989/90 And 1990/91 seasons (per makhamas)

(yield for groundnuts is in terms of kantar while for millet it is in terms of sacks)

Year	1988/89		1989/90		1990/91	
	PVs	CVs	PVs	CVs	PVs	CVs
groundnuts:						
average yield	9.7	6.3	5	3	0.5	0.45
millet:						
average yield	3	3	2	1	0.0	0.0 (crop failure)

Source: Senior AFE (Bashir), 1991, and ENSAP, 1989 report.

The table shows that compared to the average yield for the CVs, and given the constraints of rainfall shortage and pest infestation, the project was able to obtain some significant increases in yields for both the groundnuts and the millet crop.

The average area cultivated of the cash crop and the food crop reveal that in the second agricultural season PFs reduced the cultivation of the millet crop relative to that of the cash crop. But eventually in the subsequent season, 1990/91 the trend has been reversed, with relatively increased areas being cultivated of the food crop. My own figures for the selected villages show that the PFs put into cultivation larger

makhamasat for the production of millet in 1990; moreover the farmers stated that they planned to cultivate the same proportions for the two crops in the subsequent season, 1991/92.

Tracing the trend throughout the three seasons we get the following fluctuating figures for areas cultivated of the cash and food crops (including in the farmers' statements, from the third season on there is a decline in the area cultivated of the cash crop and a corresponding increase in the area cultivated of the food crop):

Table (20)

Average Area cultivated (per <u>makhamas</u>)	1988/89	1989/90	1990/91
groundnuts	7.2	9.9	8.8
millet	17.3	16.2	17.9 (yet to rise for 1991/92)

The following figures, given for selected PVs , are a breakdown of the figures on the table above.

Table (21) : Average Area Cultivated Of The Two Main Crops,1990/91 season:

Village	Average Area (per makhamas)	
	groundnuts	millet
Seranbi	7.5	18.8
Dirra	12.7	19.4
Rasheed	11.2	21.3
Barnawi	7.9	18.8
Um Sidair	7.7	17.9
El halfaya	9.8	16.4
Murabaat	6.9	18.7
Abu Geid	6.8	11.9
Averages	8.8	17.9

Source: Fieldwork.

The reason behind the PFs' subsequent emphasis on the production of more millet relative to groundnuts is not far to detect. In the first and second seasons of project implementation the PFs could see that the cultivation of large areas of the cash crop received more attention from the project (given the fact that the project supplied larger amounts of the groundnuts seeds and only a smaller quantity for the Ugandi millet). Thus the PFs believed their emphasis on the cash crop would result in larger amounts of loans being delivered by the project. This resulted in the corresponding increase in the area cultivated with the groundnuts crop in the second agricultural season. However, towards the end of the 1989/90 season and throughout the 1990/91 season the prices of the food crop on local farmers significantly increased and by the end of the 1990 season there was a huge food deficit throughout the area. This resulted

in the PFs' decisions now to opt for more food production (to save having to buy food) rather than the production of the groundnuts crops (adverse rainy seasons in 1989/90 and 1990/91 made farmers unable to provide precise figures on cash incomes). The continuation of this trend will pose serious problems for the project in its attempt at significantly increasing farmers' incomes through increased production for the market; we will stress this point to see its implication for the future of the project.

It is generally contended that innovative interventions aimed at increasing agricultural production should rely on incentives to the farmer if they are to elicit a response (Parikh, 1971:291). Farmers are directly affected by such interventions in that changes in the allocation of resources and pattern of production will imply change in their traditional decision-making processes and, in consequence, a need to adjust to the new fluctuations in prices and agricultural income. It is well stated that the "effectiveness of price in causing changes in production patterns depends on the extent to which the prices actually change, the relative profitability of the different farms, and secondly on the farmers' attitudes to new profitability relations" (1971:291). This is absolutely supported by ENSAP PFs' case as it emerged throughout the 1990 and 1991/92 seasons. The case of ENSAP's PFs shows that a farmer's option to cultivate a particular kind of crop variety depends on his evaluation relating to other options, of the alternative benefits that might accrue to him in terms of cash income generated as well as household subsistence. This evaluation is made in terms of price relations (i.e whether the change in the price of one crop leads to a more lucrative income than changes in the price of the other crop).

Prices of the food crops (millet and sorghum) have increased dramatically, as we said, in the second and the third seasons of project implementation. This increase in food prices, however, was not matched by a corresponding, or proportional, increase in the price of the groundnuts crop, as my data indicate (see table No. 22).

Table (22): Changes In The Food And Cash Crop Prices, 1988,'89,'90 (LS)

	1988/89	1989/90	1990/91
Groundnuts crop	68	90	140
millet crop	175	350	430
sorghum crop	130	250	330

Source: fieldwork.

These figures are supported by the municipal council's Agricultural Survey of October 1990 which assessed the food deficit situation in the 1990 season and its effects on smallholder farmers. In line with my findings, the number of smallholder farmers purchasing food crops is shown to be continuously rising over the three past seasons. Hereunder are the figures:

Table (23) Percentages of Farmers Purchasing Food For The 1988/89, 1989/90 And 1990/91 seasons in En Nahud District:

Year	1988/89		1989/90		1990/91	
	No.of Farmers	%	No. of Farmers	%	No. of Farmers	%
Had not purchased	236	82.8	190	66.7	113	30.6
Purchased food	49	17.2	95	33.3	172	60.4

Source: The Agricultural Survey, October, 1990.

Farmers adduce other reasons for their shift to the production of food crops. They argue that their experience in the past with producing more cash crops relative to food crops was bolstered by the lucrative revenues generated from the production of the cash crops which could be used to purchase food crops not produced by the household. But the present situation showed that the revenues generated from the sales of the cash crops could not cover the cost of food purchased by the household (this is aggravated by large family size). This, farmers argue, holds true even when they are supported by ENSAP loans. Should ENSAP credit staff urge farmers to

further increase the areas cultivated with the groundnuts crop, then the ultimate result will be that farmers will perceive that little income has been generated as a result of their participation in the project. Or, as often happened, farmers would report to the credit teams inflated figures for the total areas they actually put into cultivation and, secretly, would devote larger areas of their plots to the production of the millet crop. The fact that the control of the means of production (land and labour) lies with the PFs rather than with the project facilitating this. William, speaking generally about peasant production strategy, had this to say about the problem:

Peasants control over their means of production gives them a certain independence and security, which enables them to protect their own way of life. Peasants have responded to new opportunities and have organized production in new ways to improve and protect their conditions of life. They have refused to give up their way of life, and regard with suspicion the plans of outsiders to transform or improve it. The recalcitrance of peasants to outsiders' conceptions of progress and the peasants' place in them, defines the peasants as a problem (William, 1981:29).

If this definition of the peasants as a problem has to be directed to our PFs of ENSAP in their present conditions, then such an accusation could be categorically misplaced as far as the PFs themselves, and indeed as I myself, view the situation. Moreover, PFs know that even when their incomes increase as a result of producing more of the cash crops, this increase is only attained at a relatively higher cost of production (in terms of total inputs, rather than per unit of output). These costs of production are represented by the hiring of more wage labour for the weeding operations, more chemicals for pest control and larger marketing costs. At its best the project has opened up new economic opportunities for the PFs, who perceive them, however, quite differently from the way the project agency views them. We have stated earlier that the project aims to reduce costs per unit output in PVs compared to CVs (e.g. due to reductions in costs of nafirs, see above). But farmers themselves stated that costs of

nafirs are not necessarily reduced because the expansion in the area cultivated as a result of joining the project implied an additional demand for labour. This demand is met by mobilizing nafirs, especially when hired labourers are in short supply. So, while the project agency thinks in terms of average costs per unit output, farmers are mainly concerned with total production costs (these costs are especially unaffordable to poorer farmers who get inadequate loans from the project).

ENSAP's policy towards the food supply problem is to encourage jubraka women producers to produce kitchen garden crops to cover household subsistence needs thereby enabling the male farmers to devote relatively more resources to production for the market. As we mentioned earlier, the jubraka programme is based on providing in-kind loans (seeds) to women producers in order to increase food (kitchen garden crops) as well as cash crops (such as watermelons) production.

This programme is seen as resolving the potential conflict that might arise consequential to the emphasis of cash crops at the expense of the food crops. However, the performance of the jubraka programme was very poor, thus not alleviating the PF's dilemma over rising food prices and the production of the cash crops in favour siding with the production of food crops. The table below shows the performance of the women jubraka programme.

Table (24) Average Yields (per Makhamas) For Women Jubra Crops For 1988/89 (in En Nahud demonstration fields), 1989/90 and 1990 (in sacks, except for water melons)

Year	1988/89	1989/90	1990/91
Average yield:			
okra	.75	1.5	0.0
maize	0.0	0.0	0.0
water melon	0.0	£15000	0.0
cow pea	3.0	2.0	(25% of average annual yield)

Source: Jubra Field Extensionist (Fatima), 1991.

The table shows the obvious failure of the jubra crops in achieving significant yields in the PVs. The main reason is that these crops are not drought resistant and largely susceptible to pest infestation which requires closer management, which is very difficult for the village women who are trapped into other tasks related to household management and child rearing.

The poor economic impact of the jubra programme, which allocates only in-kind loans, has prompted the project administration to consider the feasibility of delivering cash loans to women.

The food deficit partly resulted in reducing the total amount of disposable income of the PFs as they devoted a large part of their agricultural income to the purchase of food crops. This also resulted in declining loan repayments with the project. The main reason is that faced with the option of either of defaulting or forgoing present consumption the farmer would opt to default and thereby ensure household subsistence. The overall repayment trend with the project is presented in the table below.

Table (25) Repayment Profile For ENSAP PFs For The 1988/89, '89/And 1990/91

Seasons

Year	1988/89	1989/90	1990/91	1991/92
Loans Disbursed	LS 105,715	LS 2,049,457.50	LS 1,885,362	LS1,469,740
No. of instalments	1	2	2	1(1st Instl.)
Average loan/ farmer	LS 553	Ls 2111		
Repayment Rate	99.3%	80%	est. 20%	N.a
Interest rate	2%	2%	2.5%	3%

Source: ENSAP Credit Officers, 1991.

The good repayment rate for the first season was attributed to the project's jamaa policy (see chapter 4) which stipulates that the repayment should be 80%,90%and 100% for the 'association'/cooprative, the jamaa and the individual farmer, respectively. This policy made use of peer pressure on the PFs for repayment. But with the 1990 crop failure this policy was subsequently abandoned.

My default survey revealed that the main cause of loan default was crop failure due to subnas and environmental hazards. Willful default ranked second. Inability to repay ranked third; and the malpractices of the dumman last. The table below shows the percentages of total default.

Table (26): Cause of default in loan repayment among ENSAP PFs

Cause	Percentage of total default
Crop failure	56.3
Willful default (some farmers considered loans as grants)	19.7
Inability to repay	16.1
Malpractice of the dumman	5.5
Fuel Shortage (limied field repayment trips)	2.4

As cited by the farmers the reason for willful default was as a response to the strong opinion of religious people against interest-related transactions. Instead of paying interest the farmer would opt for total default on his outstanding loans. The malpractice of the dumman was explained in terms of the damin failing in his responsibility (in terms of fully representing his group and repayment of the whole group's loans to the agency) by absenting himself during the loan repayment period or directly by pretending not to be able to repay his own loans. When the damin fails to repay his own loans the whole jamaa under his guaranteeship is disqualified from future loans. However this does not pose an unreconcilable conflict since the (social)pressure from the jamaa members (works to redress such potential conflict).

6.4 Indifference Factor:

Despite the fact that ENSAP loans worked to assist smallholder farmers increase their agricultural productivity there are still those PFs who seem indifferent to these loans. Among these are those farmers (a very small number) who are trapped by the inadequacy of ENSAP loans to resort to their traditional sheil lenders to supplement the project loans. Their indifference related to the fact that these farmers still view no appreciable improvement in the quality of their lives. However the impact of the project on the sheil system varies among the PVs of the project. The following table show the impact of the project on the sheil system in some of the PVs of ENSAP, 1990/91, in terms of the percentage of farmers who still practice sheil borrowing.

Table (27) : Project Impact On The Sheil System (% age of Farmers dealing with the sheil) For the1990/91

The most tangible impact of the credit system of ENSAP

Village	Percentage of PFs borrowing from sheil merchants
Dirra	0%
Rasheed	2%
Murabaat	3%
Barnawi	0%
El Halfaya	0%
Um Sidair	0%
Abu Geid	3%
Seranbi	1%

Source: Fieldwork.

The table shows while the percentage of PFs borrowing from the sheil merchants in four of the eight selected villages is small the other four villages have been able to entirely eradicate the sheil system. The reason for the success of these villages is explained by the availability of the credit loans from the project. But, most importantly, some of these villages were able to dissuade the PFs against the sheil merchants. The sheikh of Dirra village said that he was able to politicise his farmers against the sheil merchants with the result that by 1990 season the percentage of PFs borrowing from the sheil merchants dropped to nil. Some of Dirra farmers, as well as from the other PVs which had been able to eradicate the sheil system, remarked that the most tangible effect of the project was that they were able invest their surplus income in the purchase of sheep and goats which is the major form of wealth in these villages. One farmer in Dirra remarked that he was able to finance the naming ceremony arranged by his wife for his newly born child and could entertain his guests --this was thought to have been absolutely difficult had he failed to secure the project

loans. Another farmer in Dirra argued that he needed to express his contentment with the material benefits of joining the project by naming the goat which he bought, after the project, i.e, ENSAP, since his children depended on the goat for the milk it supplied.

One of the significant socio-economic impacts of ENSAP project had been its ability to stabilise the PFs in their villages during the planting period. Prior to joining the project the farmers resorted to hire out their labour to other people's farms. This often conflicted with the time which they needed to spend planting the family farms (for they would return late in the season). The loans which they now receive from the project allow them to get sufficient money for financing the agricultural enterprise as well as to provide for household subsistence. However, there exists the impending danger that the PFs of ENSAP increase their traditional dependence on the sharaka system as the number of PFs who engage in sharaka with Dinka labourers is still significant. Dependence on the sharaka system will conflict with the objective of the project of up-grading PFs' skills through the technical extension assistance provided by the AFEs. Being engaged in the sharaka implied that the PFs will not commit themselves to farm management themselves as the Dinka run the farming business on their behalf.

6.5 Impact Of The Extension Component:

We have dealt with some of the major achievements of the extension unit of ENSAP in chapter 4, in which it was shown that despite the fact some positive responses were observed, in which PFs started to adopt ENSAP's innovative inputs (chemicals such as the diazinon, aldrex-t and the neem extracts; and the tools such as the sonki, prototype sprayers etc.) , most of the formal training went to the VEAs and VPCs who represent a negligible section of the village community. Also we have mentioned that mostly benefitting from the formal training were the extension staff (AFE's, The

Agricultural Coordinator and the jubraka extensionists). Hereunder are some of the claims of the smallholders about the extension unit of ENSAP.

The needy smallholders were often invisible to the senior staff of the extension service and claim to receive little contact with them, even though they often invited the senior staff to their farms. The case of Ibrahim Abdel Daayim and the project visiting team to Murabaat village (discussed in chapter 5), was but only one example. While the poor farmer was desperate for advice and tried to solicit the senior staff to come to his farm, the visiting team turned down the invitation. The team was preoccupied with the time factor and was wanting to cover as many PVs as possible in too short a period of time. It was also clear that the poorer farmers got less attention than the relatively better-off PFs within the same association or cooperative. This was mainly because the relatively better-off farmers were economically advantaged for entertaining the visiting teams upon their arrival in the PV.

My observations of the team's visit surveys are that upon their arrival at the village the team is welcomed by a group of farmers among whom will be those who will eventually invite the team to eat. While being thus entertained, the group will gossip for a while and the farmers then solicit the team to their farms and get the appropriate extension advice. The basic feature of the team's survey is the tendency to cover only a representative part of the PFs thereby leaving a large section of poor farmers unreached. In his description of a similar phenomenon among poor farmers, Chambers (1974:81) had this to say: "These farmers have a low capacity for demanding services, negligible sanctions to exercise if they do not receive them, and little or nothing to offer in exchange; and they are often caught in a trap of little land, poverty, ill-health, large families and apathy".

The eligibility criteria for the selection of the VPCs, VEAs and CFs also carries in its content a sort of inherent bias towards those who are potentially progressive

farmers. To be 'innovative', 'successful', 'literate' as the main requirement for selection implies that the training to be provided will ultimately benefit those who need it least. Since the majority of the PFs do not satisfy the literacy criteria the selection of the CFs, VPCs and VEAs is likely to create and accentuate a class of progressive farmers within the poor smallholder farmers of the jamaa and 'association'/cooperative.

The extension staff, however, recognizes this danger of siding with a group of progressive farmers and this was clear in the phrase "but should not be the most progressive, whose fellows tend not to follow his example" (see chapter 4). To partially avoid this problem of being biased towards the progressive farmers, then, the senior extension staff should not dominate the selection process (i.e. concerning which farmers should be brought into the project, since they simply do not know the village farmers as do the PFs themselves.

Among the PFs of the project were also those farmers who are too poor to fully apply the recommended inputs (chemical such as the propuxure, aldrex-t etc.) since they were financially constrained (this was especially true for farmers with large family size in Murabaat, El Riteirit and Wad Fadol) from purchasing these inputs. The solution to this problem lies in intensive face-to-face contact between the extension staff and the farmers so as to discover those who needed the extension services most. This happened in the first season of project operation when the project team was able to launch such contacts in its visits to the PVs of El Riteirit, Widaa and Wad Fadol. This was facilitated by the small number of villages to be covered in the first season. When the team members discovered that a small number of PFs were financially handicapped to apply the chemical aldrex-t in their farms their immediate reaction was to duly recommend the delivery of adequate loans to these needy farmers. ENSAP's endeavour to ensure closer contact with PFs could be summed up in the following measures:

a) AFEs convenience to work with groups of farmers rather than with individual farmers. This method was observed to have been adopted by the AFEs in Murabaat and Dirra in the 1990 season.

b) The Issuing of Daleel ENSAP in which, among others, the farmers were advised to contact their AFEs should need for advice arise. This method is generally referred in the literature of rural development as mobilizing farmers demand for extension services (Chambers, 1974 :82). It also enables the AFE to record, through personal contact, the number of farmers contacted or visited. One result of Daleel ENSAP's contribution to more tangible benefits to the extension was that (as the project AFEs noted) "one farmer [in 1989] reported that he was able to produce a neem suspension using the instructions provided in the Daleel. He applied the chemical to his okra and is now an outspoken supporter of the neem product" (ENSAP Report, 1989)

c) The extension methodology's adoption of an MBO (management by objectives) method in work organisation which specifies particular targets for the extension staff to guide their job performance. Thus, according to this methodology, the AFEs were able to keep records of the farmers contacted and the services delivered within the period of time specified in the extension calendar kept by the AFEs. This helps the extension unit make assessment of the actual number of farmers reached by the AFEs.

In general the impact of the extension coverage is quite limited (i.e the core villages on which the AFEs are based tend to receive greater attention) and it also varied from one PV to another. For the PVs selected in the research the extent of impact has been cited in the following declining order: Murabaat, Dirra, Rasheed, Seranbi, Um Sidair, Barnawi, Abu Geid, the least, El Halfaya. However the average coverage for all selected villages is 24% which is absolutely small.

6.6 Wage Employment And Income Redistribution:

ENSAP project impact should also be assessed in terms of its contribution to providing extra benefits to poor villagers not directly targeted by the project. We have argued that one of basic programming principles of the project agency is 'significant scope' by which it is intended to touch on the problems relating both to groups participating with the project as well as those outside the project. One such effect relates to the provision of wage employment as this leads to income redistribution and equity. This effect is stressed because the project works with only a limited proportion of Ghubeish villages- the majority comprising poor peasants producing partly for the market and partly for subsistence. Yet other villages have already applied to participate in the project and await the lucrative loans and services of the agency. Thus villages outside the project (which included Jama'a Kokada, Himeir El Wali, Atrun and Jidada) were able to supply hired labourers to the project villages and receive lucrative income which augmented their limited earnings from traditional agriculture. They were able to combine hired labour and bildat (lit. farm) cultivation. The main project villages which were able to absorb the hired labourers from these villages included El Halfaya, Seranbi, Abu Geid, Murabaat and El Riteirit. The benefits from wage employment with the project varied according to the proximity of the sending villages to the project sites. Distance works to adversely affect villagers who combine hired labour with bildat (traditional farm) cultivation because the hired labourer needs to return to his village before it is too late to undertake the agricultural operations of his own household farm. The latter is heavily relied upon for the household's subsistence which could certainly not be secured entirely by selling the member's labour. Smallholder farmers outside the project with low income can thus, potentially and sometimes actually, considerably improve their wellbeing through this strategic combination of occupations.

But competition between ENSAP's PVs for the limited labour supply has resulted in differential wage rates ruling in the various PVs. Thus while the wage rate in Murabaat village was around Ls 230, in 1990, it was LS 250 in Seranbi and LS 275 in EL Halfaya.

The remoteness of El Halfaya was the main reason for offering the lucrative wage rates to solicit a greater supply of hired labourers. This is also coupled with the problem of water shortage. Thus farmers in Murabaat village voice their complaint against other PVs' raising the level of the wages which has resulted in a dearth of hired labourers in their village. Competition over the limited supply of hired labour is believed by such farmers in Murabaat as leading to lower revenues being realised since the increased hired labour cost "eats the additional benefits from the project". Thus hired labourers were reported to derive a level of income of LS 1050- 2000 (per person per season) from the project villages which was absolutely high (by the village standards in 1990).

For the hired labourers' part the combination of hired labour and bildat cultivation can often conflict with the optimum allocation of labour resources since this implied less time devoted to the cultivation of the household farm. Distance and logistic problems often prevented the hired labourers from returning home in due time to do the weeding operation. Mostly affected by such constraints were the labourers from Himeir El Wali who supplied their labour to El Halfaya village which due to its remoteness lorry transport seldom approached.

One of the important reasons behind this competition for hired labour is the expansion of the area cultivated in PVs as recommended by the project agency. Farmers participating with the project, particularly those who seemed indifferent about the project benefits, voiced the claim that traditionally they never relied on such outside labour to the extent of conflicting with an optimum allocation of

labour. These particular farmers were of the belief that expansion in the area cultivated was not matched by a corresponding proportional increase in the income realized. As a result they still had to partially rely on the traditional sheil lenders to provide for their extra financial needs. The common trend, however, is for the demand for hired labour to increase proportionately with the farm size, despite the large average family size in the project villages. The agency, however, originally assumed that the claim on wage labour as a result of the project would not be problematic since part of the household labour which traditionally left the village on seasonal migration would be stabilized in the village and would augment household labour.

But the project also works to adversely affect those families outside the project which traditionally relied partially on hired labour to accomplish the agricultural operations (including families headed by widows). Thanks to the ENSAP project these households were handicapped in competing with the PFs for the limited labour supply. PFs were now able to afford the cost of hired labour, because of the loans they regularly received from the project agency. As a result these disadvantaged farmers often reduced the area cultivated to well below the traditional optimum size. Particularly targeted for reduction was the size of the plot traditionally devoted for the cultivation of the groundnuts (cash crop). The size of the area cultivated of the food crop was not proportionately reduced since subsistence production was given primacy over production of the cash crops. Ironically, these households were often tempted into reverting to the sheil system to cope with their predicament. This is ironic since the project was particularly launched to combat the sheil system. As such the project rather accentuates economic divisions within the village.

Another effect of the project on the PVs is its contribution to redressing the problem of long-term migration. Prior to the implementation of the project some

household members would migrate to al bahar (the Nile borders) in search of urban employment. This had resulted in only low returns both because these illiterate villagers worked in low paid jobs in the urban centres and because the wage incomes were partly spent in financing the cost of transportation on return to their communities (this was estimated at LS 350 in 1989). What was left at their the migrant's, disposal was judged insufficient to provide for household requirements. Migration also implied an additional burden on the migrant's relatives(usually father and brothers) who were assigned the responsibility of looking after the migrant's family. Mostly engaged in such urban migration to al bahar were the villagers of Abu Geid, Rasheed and El Halfaya.

Critics would argue that wage employment with the project would in the end lead to the creation of a wage labour system which in turn could result in low investment in traditional agriculture. However, in a previous work I have made the point that " cash incomes in traditional agriculture are low; yet along with the security provided through kin groups traditional land farming at least enables households to maintain themselves at low cost by producing subsistence crops"(Abdel Raouf, 1989:118). But where seasonal employment with the project conflicted with labour allocation in the household farm the effect is a diminished investment in traditional agriculture. It is stated in this respect that:

on the whole, however, the periodic and sustained absence of the most productive elements in the labour force must retard agricultural development. Although there is under employment in agriculture, it is not necessarily the size of the labour force that is of overriding importance in considering the relation among land, labour and capital in peasant agriculture. The composition and quality of the labour force is as important as its size (Yudelman, 1964:133-134).

The effect of labour supply to the project villages on traditional agriculture can be well grasped since it is reported that the project villages required over 31,500 mandays for accomplishing the weeding and harvesting operations in 1990 agricultural season. The table below shows the seasonal labour requirements in ENSAP PVs for the 1990/91 season.

Table (28)

Seasonal Labour In ENSAP Project Villages, 1990

Operation	total Mandays	No. of Hired Labourers	Period
Weeding	13,500	1,050	Jul.- August
Harvesting	18,000	2,600	Oct.-November

Given the large household size the effect of the project on overall employment is absolutely significant. This implies that the project is drawing a significant proportion of labourers from their traditional farming occupations to assist with the weeding and harvesting operations.

While this works to contribute to equity by providing gainful employment to poor households outside the project its effect on retarding investment on traditional agriculture could counter-balance these benefits.

6.7 Impact On Jubraka Women Producers:

As we have mentioned earlier, the project started the delivery of its services to the jubraka women producers in the second season of project implementation and was yet to have a significant impact on the women producers for the 1989 and 1990 seasons. The latter season, in particular, was one of severe rainfall shortage which affected the jubraka farms most. Also men farmers were to some extent resistant to having their wives participate in the jubraka programme for cultural reasons, as we again mentioned before. This ranged from covert reluctance, as in some villages whose

women the project reported to having returned the loans without using them, to direct resistance as observed for Barnawi village in which only the men participated in the project. But a large number of women in the village covered in my field work who could not participate in the project, despite their enthusiasm towards the jubraka programme, voiced their grievance at being excluded from participation. The main reason cited was in fact the program's eligibility criteria which they could not meet. These eligibility criteria were stated as follows:

- a) Ownership of jubraka ;
- b) Not indebted to a sheil merchant or any other institution;
- c) Having an interest in the programme;
- d) Having a history of practicing jubraka for at least the past three years;
- e) Should be married (with a household);
- f) Husband participating with ENSAP;
- g) An old woman, grandfathers and grandmothers.

Mostly cited among these as restricting women participation were criteria e), f) and, to a less degree, b). Thus unmarried women who owned and practiced jubraka farming for a long period of time were mostly affected. Poor women who resorted to sheil merchants for financing their jubraka activities were also excluded despite being the most needy (in relation to those who do not practice the sheil and since the sheil is always practiced as a last resort).

The poor economic impact of the jubraka programme on women producers could be seen from the relatively small number of women reached by the project in the process of its development. The table below shows the number of jubraka women receiving in-kind loans (watermelon, okra maize and cowpea) interpreted in financial figures:

Table (29)

Year	No.of beneficiaries	No.of villages	Value of the loan	Location
1988/89	84	2	LS 6700	En Nahud R/C
1989/90	533	14	LS 30500	Ghubeish R/C
1990/91	418	17	N.a	Ghubeish R/C

Repayment rate for 1989/90 = 83.2%

Source: Jubraka Extensionist, Giseima, 1990.

The number of women beneficiaries dropped from over five hundred to 418 as a result of Barnawi village's opting out from participation. This also points to the fact that as the project expanded towards its mid-way the jubraka programme had largely failed to reach the target specified in the goal statement document (i.e 25000 women). However, one major benefit for the jubraka women was cited by the evaluation team of June 1990 (p, 23), that "the programme has helped village women build a preliminary resource management capability which will significantly improve the potential success of the women's cash lending program which will begin this year [1990/91]". The fact that the project has expressed its satisfaction with the repayment capacity of women, which stood at 83.2 for 1989/90 ,(which the project sees to be better than that for men) had stimulated a high concern on the part of ENSAP administration to get the suggested women's cash lending programme implemented

6.8 The Social Impact Of The Project:

Anthropologists have noticed the profound impact capital has on the kinship structure of agricultural societies. Meillassoux (1984:xi) has emphasized the importance of relating kinship systems to the underlying forces of production. This emphasis derives from the recognition of the fact that the family and kinship systems of these societies effect and are affected by the material conditions of production. Moreover it has also been argued that while in African societies which have been enmeshed in commodity markets investment is often evaluated in financial terms,in

other societies evaluation may be based on prestige, honour, social dependents and the ability to accumulate power (Bates,1990:154).

Such divergence concerning the proper way of investment of capital could lead to conflict between the project planners, whose goals behind the provision of financial assistance are primarily based on the material aspect of investment, and the village people who have other aims and goals such as spending on social dependents or the accumulation of power. As ENSAP project is primarily concerned with the 'sustainability' of its credit component, it is ideal that we analyse the loan system in light of the people's values influencing their notions of wealth and financial investment.

We have seen in chapter (1) that the Hamar tribes of the project area were transformed over time from pastoral nomadism to follow a sedentary form of agriculture. We argued that towards the end of the past century the tribal wealth in terms of livestock exceeded the wealth of the other tribes but as a result of their wars with the Kababeesh they lost the larger part of that wealth. The Hamar tribes of the present-day Dar Hamar still have these glorious days in memory and aspire to the nostalgia of that era. Today the importance of animals still rides high in the tribal economy. Both the ownership of animals and the farming business make claim on financial spending. But spending on animal ownership is affected by the household's spending on family members. We have seen that most of the project villages, being largely sedentarized, have recognized the importance of education and thus have made remarkable efforts towards raising the levels of their children's education (aljuhdal sha'abi has played a significant role in getting the elementary schools established in the majority of the villages covered by the field work). Parents devote a significant part of their capital to children's education with the hope that the latter could support them in old age.

The farmers of the project would remark that despite the high cost of investment in the education of children the expected returns could be absolutely high as to offset that cost. Getting a salaried job in the towns, farmers argue, is more secure and lucrative than investment in agriculture which is faced with the vagaries of recurrent drought (pointing to the 1984/85 and 1990/91 droughts) and the sinister attack of pests. The expected remittances these salaried people send back to their parents can supplement household income, especially in adverse agricultural seasons when it was quite difficult to get a return from agriculture.

As observed in other parts Africa (see, e.g. Bates, 1990:155), people in the project area tend to withhold resources from present consumption and invest them in their children. Thus, a farmer who owned some animals will opt to sell one or two head to meet the cost of sending his children to secondary school (this was cited for such villages as Abu Geid, Murabaat, Dirra, Rasheed, Um Sidair and Barnawi). Or, equally observed, a mother who had reaped agricultural surplus from her jubraka garden would spend part of the marketed revenue in a child's education rather than devote it to household consumption. For this reason the villagers dietary structure was very poor and nearly similar throughout the project villages. The meals consisted mainly of asida (millet or sorghum porridge) or kisra (another version of the same millet or sorghum porridge) with sauce made of meat (often dried), onions, okra or potatoes (or the sauce may be a mixture of locally collected wild vegetables such as abadeih (a local wild plant) which has characteristics similar to the okra) cooked with yoghurt. Fruits and vegetables were largely absent from the diet ingredients, except those which are cultivated in the jubraka gardens such as cowpea, cucumber and watermelons which appear for a period of darat (lit. when the agricultural crops are harvested and plentifully supplied in the market, usually from November up to February).

Risk aversion in traditional agriculture provides yet another reason for people to seek alternatives such as investment in children. High risk in African agricultural systems

has been widely documented in anthropology. It has been argued that in poor savannah zones rainfall is so unreliable that it generates limited amounts of moisture (see, Little, 1989). Yet, other authorities stated the adoption of a number of devices and techniques in such zones (such as those of the villages in the northern part of the project area) for spreading the risk:

they develop means for storing their crops, they domesticate plants species that on average do less well than others yet are more likely to crop even in years of drought; and they diversify their crops and sources of income, maintaining cattle as well as farms..A principal way.. is through the lineage system...the lineage.. .confers upon the members of its household access to a portfolio of assets (Bates, 1990;157-158).

Generally observed for the PVs of the project, the villagers spending on the education of their children was meant to provide the insurance against life hazards.

Another source of spending which involves kinship support is animal husbandry. Animals are raised by the PFs for a number of reasons. Among these, animals, as we mentioned before, are a means for storing the wealth of the household, they provide prestige to the household members and also other benefits such as transport, carrying water and the provision of milk. But animal husbandry entails laborious work for grazing and herding. In such conditions support is sought through kinship. Families which realize the importance of kinship support for the tending of animals will, in return, ensure every assistance to kinship members in conditions of need. Thus, even uncles would provide financial support for a brother's son since he can solicit the latter for a specific duty which would pay for the cost of this support. We have seen that in Um Sidair, Omer Mohamed (a pseudonym) who received ENSAP loans would pass the loan to his sister's son in return for the latter's attending of his animals. Noting a similar phenomenon in Africa Bates argues that possessing a broad-based lineage enables the households to spread the risks since they "disperse their cattle to

family members located in different contrasting settings; drought in any particular area is therefore likely to affect but a small portion of the individual's herd" (1990:158). This also happens in Ghubeish villages.

As is the case with investment in children, keeping animals also provides insurance in old age (due to inability of the breadwinner to continue labouring in the farm) and promises future improvement in the household's quality of life as the result of benefits in terms of material support (e.g. when the herd expands as a result of reproduction). But spending on the education of children implies less investment in animals. Those families in the PVs with relatively large herds (e.g in Dirra , Murabaat and El Halfaya) maintained that possession of large numbers of animals was accompanied by a dearth of spending on child education. Moreover these families were often obliged to keep their children out of schools to attend and graze these animals. This fact holds especially true for the previous generation, which attached lower preference to education in that time before aljuhda sha'abi could be mobilized for the establishment of local schools. The fact that more than ninety percent of the elders of Ghubeish PVs remain illiterate reflects this fact. In another article Bates (1976:160) has made a similar observation, "that increased holdings of cattle strongly correlate with reduced levels of literacy, schooling, and urban migration".

As a result of project implementation we have seen the preference towards keeping more animals (though actual investment on animals is observable for only a handful of farmers) while investment in children is said to stay at the same pre-scheme levels. Farmers argue that until they can ensure sizeable returns from the project, spending in schooling has to stay at the same previous levels. The argument is based on the grounds that returns from schooling are long-term goals . Investment in animals on the other hand, finds strong support and a large number of farmers is still willing to invest in animals should the returns from participation with the project promise adequate surplus income. Animals, it is believed, provide an additional asset as well as

a collateral the farmer can rely upon in conditions of controllable default on the farmer's outstanding loans. PFs realize that their farms are liable to animal trespassing and pest infestations which may lead to crop failure. To ensure the future loans being secured from the project the farmer needs to repay present loans even if his crop proves a failure (e.g. of PFs citing this are those farmers drawing from the PVs of Dirra, Rasheed, El Halfaya, Seranbi and Murabaat). One way of overcoming the problem of animal trespassing as we have argued before (chapter 1 for Dirra), was the formation of the animal grazing regulation committees which stipulates fines on animal owner for trespassing other villagers' farms.

As the project recommends that farmers expand the area cultivated by 25% by the end of the project life, farmers who owned animals came to realise the benefits of such expansion. As farmers argued and, indeed, I observed, in addition to the increased potential incomes from farming the remains of the stalks of groundnuts provided additional staple nutrition for their animals. This encourages farmers to purchase yet more animals should surplus arise since the farmer sees the cost of feeding his animals increasingly reduced. The importance of animals for ENSAP project will be fully recognized as the project administration has been testing the feasibility of introducing animal traction implements in the smallholder farming system. The initial feasibility study had found that at least at this stage, such innovation is unfeasible since the introduction of animal drawn implements deflects the focus of the target group from smallholders to large-scale farmers. In the long run, however, and as more of these smallholder farmers have adequate number of animals, ENSAP could succeed in stimulating smallholder farmers to use their own animals in the farm enterprise with impunity. If smallholder farmers could increase their income sufficiently so that more animals were to be bought and reinvested in agriculture (e.g. in plowing), then it could, in the long-term, lead to bridging the economic gap between smallholder/'transitional' farmers and those large-scale/'progressives', in Dar Hamar. This economic equity being measured in terms of animal wealth has been widely

observed by anthropologists who studied east African traditional systems (see e.g Holy, 1987; Shneider, 1979:10).

6.9 Cultural Change:

Apart from changes in traditional agriculture there existed several trends of cultural changes which have their bearing on agriculture and the whole community. In the old tradition(several decades ago) prestige in the village was from getting a household matmura (underground pit) filled with the food produce to ensure subsistence carry-over into the subsequent season. The land provided a good economic incentive for good cultivation. This prestige was second only to the prestige of being a sheikh or a shartai (cf. De Schlippe, 1956:235). In present-day Ghubeish village communities prestige derived from getting a salaried job, wearing cloths brought by sons who were expatriates in Libya, Saudi Arabia and the Gulf States. We have seen that a large number of village members took off to neighbouring countries prior to the implementation of the project. Concern for such prestige had prompted villagers to invest in educating their children (often at the expense of investing in agriculture).

Education, which is the avenue towards securing a 'salaried job', ultimately draws youth out of agriculture. The villagers recognition of the importance of education had resulted, as we have seen, in extensive efforts through self-help to get schools locally established. At the present time (1990/91) the number of schools is still very small and is unable to satisfy this demand for education of the growing young generation in the project communities. The prestige attached to salaried people has been expressed in the village women's songs:

dahaban fi sanduga
naktib leika-y wasifuka
al-wasifa leik mabruka; which could be translated as;

the gold is there in its box
we write you [an amulet!] so that you will be a personnel in office
and we congratulate you for the job.

The song relates 'gold' which is the symbol of wealth to the 'salary' which is the prerogative of the office incumbents and which is the means of securing wealth. The ritual element of writing an amulet also has its implications. The amulet is meant as a guard against a bad omen which usually befalls things which are highly valued.

By increasing incomes the project on its part could lend support, however minimal, to households which consider educating their children as a new avenue for investment and economic incentive.

PART THREE

Rituals, Religious Beliefs And Development;

Local Government;

Conclusion

Chapter 7

Rituals, Religious Beliefs And Development

Modern development approaches view the commercialisation of agriculture as leading to specialization in cash crop production and sustained improvement in people's quality of life. Advocates of this approach assume that once such a process of commercialisation gets started, internal transformation follows whereby traditional producers become increasingly innovative, propagating sound economic decision-making processes (see e.g. Mendonsa, 1980:275). When such transformation fails to come about justifications are proposed which label farmers as the main constraint. It is often argued that farmers include non-economic factors in their decision-making processes which ultimately block the transformation process (Foster, 1962). An array of factors such as social and ritual practices and traditional values should accordingly be considered among the non-economic factors inhering in the process of transformation. Thus, it is argued, to make transformation more successful, such traditional values, ritual beliefs and practices should be radically altered.

But there are counter-arguments, which view traditional producers as, in fact, not tradition-bound. Rather, in the context of the distinctive logistical predicaments of peasant farming, farmers are considered as rational decision-makers and/or profit-minded (Shultz, 1964). According to this view peasants can readily be seen not "as irrational, but as conservative people who tend to maximize actions that ensure security" (Mendonsa, 1980:275). For Shultz the reality has been that traditional agriculture has reached an equilibrium point where further internal investment is no longer profitable. To inject innovative inputs into traditional farming a solution should be sought from external sources. Now, "actions which ensure security" in the absence

of such external inputs (or packages) include the manipulation of rituals and religious practices. Therefore when assessing the totality of farmers' economic decision-making it is important that we investigate the ritual practices as an inherent part of the decision-making process. In the space below we deal with some of the ritual practices and beliefs connected with agriculture in the project area. An attempt has been made to see how the project affects or is affected by such beliefs and practices.

Farmers in the project area thus effect their decision-making in accordance with a host of factors. Some of these factors are ecological (e.g, what sort of soil type to cultivate that best suits a particular seed variety), some are economic (relating to the estimation of farm size to put into cultivation; hired labor etc.). Then there are social factors, such as the value of cooperative relationships with community members on behalf of nafir recruitment, and cultural factors stemming from the belief system. The latter are the notions farmers have developed through generations of experience with agriculture. In this chapter we deal with this system of thought as it pertains to and guides farmers' decisions. The relevant notions are primarily cosmological and some are religious. These beliefs are largely held more by elders than by the younger generation. We will start with a discussion of local peoples' notions on the various seasonal variations giving a particular emphasis on the rainy season as this relates directly to the indigenous farming system. It will be shown how local people mark time by building on their previous experiences with climatic changes, and how this influences part of farmers' agricultural decision-making processes. Inspiration is drawn from de Schlippe's observation of similar phenomena among the Zande of the Southern Sudan (de Schlippe, 1956). Then in the rest of the space we will be dealing with some of the rituals and religious practices among Hamar farmers, covering aspects relating the overall Hamar economy and culture. Comparative analysis is made with reference to the available literature on ritual and religious practices among other tribes in the Sudan (e.g. Buxton, 1973; Douglas, 1964; Holy, 1991; Osman, 1983; Nadel, 1946; Trimingham, 1949).

7.1 A'ina (autumn signals):

The a'ina are weather signals which local people take to refer to specific intervals, or to a period of time, during a season, especially during the rainy season (khariff). It denotes a sign for distinctive weather, and, correspondingly, certain phase of agricultural operations which should therefore begin. For example, during the khariff (May or June - October) the a'ina indicate a state of the weather in which the people will experience continual rainfall. Thus somewhere in aina following the first showers is the so-called batnal khariff (lit. the centre of the rainy season) in which people experience heavy rainfall and intensive plant growth. Then the khariff a'ina stops for approximately one week, during which the weather is characteristically alternating, between a day hot and a day wet. Then toward the end of August and the onfall of September the air changes its direction from rih (lit. north) to sa'id (lit. south). This is the start of the shita (lit. winter). People know this from observation of the location, direction and distribution of the clouds. When the clouds are widely scattered and located towards sa'id, this is a prelude to a waning khariff. At this point the agricultural activities have to be adjusted accordingly. The watermelon plants need to be cleared of the weeds and pesticides should also be applied to combat the bug which attacks the watermelon plants at this time. Farmers state that this particular aina is suitable for the growth of watermelons. In the following passages some specific ainas are considered in detail.

7.1.1 Tarfa:

Tarfa refers to the first showers preceding the full start of the khariff. The tarfa is in three stages locally known as the first, second and the third tarfa (or first, medium and final tarfa). The time interval between each is estimated to be forty days making a total of one hundred and twenty days for the whole pre-khariff. However, these stages of tarfa contain a number of intervals which are in turn known through other signals also each referred to as the a'ina of that specific

interval. The three stages are identified according to the intensity and colour of clouds. Intensive and dark clouds imply that khariff is approaching, and scattered white clouds indicate that khariff will take a longer time to start. Farmers attach more emphasis on the khariff ainas due to these ainas' direct relevance to agriculture. To these various ainas we turn below.

7.1.2 Angareib (the bed):

The angareib refers to a traditionally known constellation of four stars whose distribution over the sky forms the shape of an angareib (bed). Nearly all the communities in the project area refer to these four stars as the angareib. The angareib has three stars beside it called banat el angareib (lit. the daughters of the bed). The angareib and banat el angareib collectively provide signals for the khariff.

In the khariff the angareib and its three daughters appear in the direction of rih. As the angareib fades away there is said to be an a'ina. Also its two back legs each denote an a'ina when they disappear. And the disappearance of the three daughters also marks the onfall of a a'ina. The angareib is said to disappear in the north-east and reappear in the east. When the two front legs of the angareib reappear this is a a'ina. Upon the appearance of the two back legs there is a further a'ina. When each of the daughters appear there are corresponding a'inas. The a'ina of the second and the third daughters are called suheil. Locally there is a common proverb about suheil a'ina, "suheil alma agabha seil" (lit. "suheil that will never be followed by a rainfall"). This marks the end of the khariff. But, according to this belief, if it happened that rains follow suheil then this is mere chance, and those communities which experience such rains are referred to as bukhat (lucky). Accordingly, the rains that follow suheil are known as matar al bukhat (lit. the rains of bukhat). But even these bukhat rains are expected to be meagre and sporadic. These angareib ainas allow the

farmers to get prepared to concluding their agricultural operations due to the gradual disappearance of the rainy season. the particular activity to be targeted here is the harvesting. Farmers who make their agricultural decisions on the basis of these ainas can often have some advantages over other farmers (who do not respond to these ainas). A good example is when it happens that suheil rains fall heavily and destroy a crop which has just been harvested but still left on the ground due to failure to respond to angareib ainas. In this case the delay of the harvesting operation results in either total crop damage or smaller agricultural produce.

7.1.3 Tiraeya:

The tiraeya is a local star which provides khariff a'ina as well. The tiraeya usually disappears in the west making an a'ina. But in case it disappears without being followed by rainfall, then it will instead be followed by a haboob (wind). If the tiraeya disappears in this way there will certainly be an aina on its reappearance. This certainty of a'ina derives from the belief that tiraeya's disappearance and reappearance will never both be without an a'ina. The a'ina following the disappearance of tiraeya signals rains called bitein. This bitein rainfall comes at the end of April or the start of May. It is advised that the farmer should start planting his crops during this bitein a'ina since the probability of success is reckoned to be a hundred percent. There are also ainas preceding bitein, referred to as hoot (shark). In case the shark and the bitein rains come concurrently then this marks the signal for a full khariff. In addition, shortly before the disappearance of tiraeya there is a rainfall called natah. This is known for its ability to cause tree trunks to break. Observation of trees will provide the local farmers with information about the nearness of the khariff.

In case rains fail to fall on the appearance of tiraeya then it is certain that rain will accompany the appearance of the so-called abu raeya (a local star) and

its issi (lit. sticks) which accompany it. Abu raeya is locally known to appear after the appearance of tiraeya. As is the situation with the angareib and its daughters, the appearance of abu raeya itself marks an a'ina and the issi each would have an a'ina. Also in the process of their disappearance a'inas follow.

Apart from these a'ina there are other a'inas, appearing during khariff, which are more specific and attached to particular dates which are conceptually represented as 13.3 days apart. These are kept by Dirra and Rasheed farmers. There are seven such a'inas, as follows:

Type of <u>A'ina</u>	Date	Interval (days)
<u>Natra</u>	21st of July	13.3
<u>Tarfa /bukkay</u>	3rd of August	13.3
<u>Jabha</u>	16th of August	13.3
<u>Kharsa</u>	29th of August	13.3
<u>Sarfa</u>	13th of September	13.3
<u>I'wa</u>	26th of September	13.3
<u>Simak</u>	10 th of October	[end of <u>khariff</u>]

7.1 4 Natra:

The natra marks the inception of the rainy season which falls on the 21st of June of every year. It is said that when the 'natra falls' the village will be self-sufficient in its water resources. This self-sufficiency is implied in the local proverb "hilla ma tardi hilla" (lit. "a village never fetches water in another village"). Such self-sufficiency saves villages which lack local water yards a lot of time and money, especially for women who spend a great deal of their time fetching water for both household consumption and livestock.



An old-timer who is knowledgeable about khariff signals (right) with the AFE (middle) and a participant farmer: Murabaat village, 1990.

7.1.5 Tarfa /Bukkaya:

This alludes to the notion of tarfa, mentioned earlier above, but in this case is more specifically located as to occur between the natra and the jabha. The time interval between the start of natra and the start of tarfa (also called bukkaya, which literally means the weeper) is estimated to be 13.3 days. According to its name the bukkaya is usually accompanied by a lot of thunder. This a'ina lasts for 13.3 days and is succeeded by the jabha. Farmers reckon this tarfa to be the optimal time to start the planting operation since the rains which succeed this aina are expected to be at least above average.

7.1.6 Jabha :

This a'ina experiences a moderate rainfall that makes even the solid and dry sand more fragile and easy to dig. There is also a local proverb addressing the jabha, that "the summer's hole if not opened by the jabha will never open". This implied that the jabha's rains provide the most suitable time for farmers to start planting plots with characteristically solid and dry soil since the land is still easy to dig.

7.1.7 Kharsan /deaf :

This a'ina is characterized by a lack of thunder while the rainy season is in its middle stage (thus its name 'the deaf'). This also lasts for 13.3 days and is succeeded by the sarfa. Farmers are advised not to delay the start of weeding beyond this stage.

7.1.8 Sarfa:

The sarfa is the a'ina which marks the gradual slow-down of the rainy season . It can be marked by intermittent subnas (lit. intervals of lack of rainfall). The sarfa lasts for 13.3 days and is followed by the i'wa. Farmers who fail to return on time from seasonal migration (hired labour) will be disappointed when they start weeding their own farms at this stage because the subsequent rains will be very meagre.

7.1.9 I'wa:

This a'ina is the prelude to khariff's end which will mean a long interval of time before the rains start falling again. During these last rains the clouds start to move away toward the south as the air reverses its direction from the rih to the sa'id.

7.1.10 Simak:

The simak a'ina marks the end of the rainy season and the start of shita (winter). The main signal is still more scattered clouds and then their gradual disappearance. The agricultural operations should accordingly come to a halt before harvesting is started (as this is the period when the plant ripens). So farmers consider this stage as a break which they can spend on leisure or other social events. Farmers may need to make frequent visits to supervise the early performance of the water melon plants which grow better at the start of the winter.

In general the natra, tarfa and the jabha a'inas stipulate the heaviest rains in relation to the rest of the khariff a'inas and farmers adjust their operations to take full advantage of these a'inas. Farmers generally expect the end of the khariff to be the 21st of October of every year. The proper phrase for the simak a'ina which ends the khariff is as follows:

Ya matar kafak
arja' bi gafak
ya rabbi amsik mak; i.e :

O rains that's enough
please go back
O lord hold your waters.

The timing of rainfall is not static. The local people do not seem to be clear about the occurrence of this change . However, the information provided by the farmers of Sabi village presents a calendar for the date a'inas with dates which differ from the a'inas as they apply to Dirra and Rasheed villages. This difference in dates in the onfall of the a'inas points to a shift in the general timing of the start of the rainy season which has occurred over the past decade, rather than a change in the timing of the rainy season in the same year reflecting different geographical locations. The calendar held by Sabi farmers ,however, being mostly known to the elders (rather than the younger generation) also supports this general shift in the timing. Thus if (hypothetically) the younger generation had a calender for the khariff a'inas then I suspect its a'inas would have dates approximately the same as those of the Dirra farmers. The Sabi farmers' calendar for the onfall of the khariff a'inas looks as follows:

Traditional calendar for Khariff a'inas kept by Sabi Farmers

Type of <u>a'ina</u>	Date	Interval
<u>Bitein</u>	5th	May 13.3
<u>Tiraeya</u>	18th May	13.3
<u>Hana'</u>	1st June	13.3
<u>A'gaba</u>	14th June	13.3
<u>Diran</u>	28th June	13.3
<u>A'ssa</u>	11th July	27 [nearly double the above intervals]
<u>Jabha</u>	8th Sept.	16
<u>Makhareeg</u>	24th Sept.	13.3
<u>Sahraa</u>	7th October	6 [half the interval]
<u>Suheil</u>	13th October	[end of <u>khariff</u>]

Today the elderly generation of Sabi farmers who keep such records state that the first three a'inas i.e., bitein, tiraeya and han'a do not correspond with (they are calendrically earlier to) ainas held by other villages and as a result the khariff fully starts with the onfall of the a'gaba a'ina. The performance of the rest of the a'inas (diran, assa, jabha, makhareeg, sahraa and suheil) is more or less similar to that described above in the calendar kept by Dirra and Rasheed farmers. However, as de Schlippe (see de Schlippe, 1956) also observes among the Zande of the Southern Sudan, the dates do not always correspond with the interval figures given biologically by the people (i.e. 13.3 days); the interval between start of the assa a'ina and the start of the jabha is in fact more than two weeks (it is four weeks); and the jabha itself lasts for two and half weeks before the makhareeg falls. Also the sahraa lasts for only one week. This divergence would also lead farmers' to adjust their planned agricultural operations in order to fit into the corresponding a'ina. The argument points to the fact that farmers' verbal statements (e.g. that the interval between two different ainas is

13.3 days) could be mere generalizations, since their farming decision-making is influenced by the actual knowledge rather than these verbal statements. This could be clarified with respect to the a'ssa aina which is actually 27 days. A farmer whose decision-making is governed by the sweeping generalization that an aina lasts for 13.3 days would on the fourteenth day (of the a'ssa aina) start adjusting his decisions such that they fit into the subsequent aina, i.e jabha. Consequently he might unwittingly end up making the wrong decisions. In contrast a farmer who is knowledgeable about the actual interval between the a'ssa and the jabha would elect not to change his agricultural decisions on the fourteenth day on the grounds that the a'ssa has not ended yet.

Farmers state that such a calendar enables them to undertake specific agricultural tasks more successfully than they undertake other operations. For instance, a Sabi farmer would opt to carry out the maggein (transplanting) while the diran a'ina was fully operative rather than do it during tiraeya. Since the diran is marked by rains heavier than those of the tiraeya the transplanted plants are said to make the best use of the available water with greater success for growth. Similarly the knowledge relating to suheil will enable the farmer to safely harvest the groundnuts and the millet crops since he knows for sure that during this period rains will never fall and the harvested crop will escape being damaged by rains while heaped on the threshing ground (jurun).

Farmers in the project area also have other signals for the khariff, some of which are dealt with in the following.

7.2.1 Bird Migration:

Local farmers know the inception and the end of the khariff through their observation of bird migration. The general understanding is that birds usually move from one place to another in search of areas where water sources are readily available. In addition these birds feed on local grass. Two main types of

birds are taken as signals of imminent khariff : the rahow (Iris) and simbir (Ar. ; also locally known as kiljow). The arrival of these birds announces the onfall of the khariff, after which it may take only a few weeks to start raining. Activities such as land preparation or even rameil (planting shortly before the rains) get started upon the arrival of these birds. Inversely, as the outmigration of these birds starts this marks the end of the khariff. The harvesting operations then start.

7.2.2 Caterpillars:

A caterpillar locally called nana (the larva of the butterfly) is also taken as a phenomenon that correlates with specific aspects of the rainy season. In its early development stages this caterpillar hangs on the local trees for some time before it finally crawls down to earth. Its appearance on the trees marks a a'ina which is associated with plenty of rains. Such rains lead to the reproduction of the leaves on which the caterpillar feeds. Thus throughout the rainy season the caterpillar deposits its excrement on the ground under the tree. As the caterpillar gradually comes down from the tree the rain is said to be getting to be in short supply. The final rains will wash away the stool from under the tree and this will mark the end of the rainy season, together with the disappearance of the caterpillar.

7.2.4 Rainbow :

Rainbow is locally referred to as hajjazel matar (lit. the break in the rains). As is clear from its name, when it appears the rainbow is believed to cause the rain to stop. However, this will not necessarily imply the end of the khariff but merely a temporary cessation in the rain.

Rain, however, is also believed to be caused to stop by ritual practices by a farmer's enemy. To these and other religious practices connected with agriculture in the project area we shall now turn.

7.3 Religious Beliefs and practices connected with agriculture:

This sub-section analyzes local ritual practices and contrasts them with those performed by other communities in different parts of Sudan. It should be made clear at this point that the arguments which follow from the analysis and contrasts are directly valid for the Hamar.

Inherent in orthodox Islamic beliefs are local peoples' traditional religious elements - a direct product of the process of assimilation (see e.g. Trimingham, 1949: 163). As Trimingham states there exists an inner nexus linking animism and Islam which facilitated its assimilation by African people. This linkage has arisen from a common belief in the supernatural powers, mediated through jinns, spirits and angels. This is explicit in the following Quranic verses:

Say, I seek for refuge in the Lord of the Daybreak,
from the evil in what he has created;
from the evil of the moon when it is eclipsed;
from the mischief of women blowing on knots [with
incantations];
from the evil of the envious when he envies (Quran, cxiii.).

"Mischief of women blowing on knots" (i.e. sorcery and black magic) and the belief in the evil practices by people (including belief in the evil eye), therefore, is shared by Islam and the traditional belief system. This sharing of common beliefs led some observers to argue that the introduction of Islam in Sudan in fact did not entirely overthrow the previous beliefs, but was correlated to them. And that "all old customs still persist : family life, for instance, is governed very definitely by Islamic Law, yet

every single practice connected with it is indigenous, even the marriage contract needs to have a propitious date and hour found for it by the Muslim faki [religious specialist] who has replaced the pagan kujur [ritual specialist]" (Trimingham, 1949: 165). This similarity between pagan kujur and Muslim fakis can be clarified by the following analogy. In his study of shamanism among the Nuba, Nadel describes a spirit of a kujur (called Layin) as powerful in several spheres: "it could make grain grow and cure illness; its most outstanding gift was the cure and prevention of barrenness (coupled with the faculty of causing it)..his intervention was sought at every marriage in the neighbourhood..and he could foretell the occurrence of drought]" (1946:28). Similarly faki has comparable powers since he is called to do similar things a kujur does. The main difference lies in that the faki undertakes his speciality in the context of an Islamic community, while a kujur acts in the context of paganism. Moreover, a kujur starts his career with consecration ceremonies as a prerequisite to the attainment of the full status of a spirit priest, a faki, on the other hand, might start 'practising' if he finds clients ready to consult him (see also Osman, 1983) (given that he has the ability to read and write). Another difference between a kujur and a faki lies in the act of 'seizure by spirits' (or trance) being a prerogative of the kujur. Again, while both the faki's and the kujur's position in the community are defined by the nature of their spiritual faculties the former concerns the contingent needs of individuals (such as warding off farm pests, prosperous trade etc.), the latter concerns the community at large (such as communal rain-making etc.). Unlike shamans, fakis are more concerned with the problems relating to individuals since this implies more income (fakis who lead communal prayers are not paid).

A final point of comparative analysis is made with reference to the Mandari people. Three main points are stressed by Buxton (1973: 335) when analyzing Mandari rain rituals: firstly, account is given to certain aspects, viz, that rain is associated with particular people (clans and ancestors) and is therefore vulnerable to "spoiling and loss" (Ibid, 1973: 335). The second point of emphasis is the distinction between 'owned

rain' and 'non-owned rain', or that of the Creator. The third point of focus is the acquisition of rain paraphernalia (rain drums, spears and stones) which have symbolic significance in the rain rites. A brief comment on the three points is in order, as they relate to rain rituals in the Ghubeish communities. Notwithstanding the recognition of the faki's influence on the amount of rainfall, local people believe that the faki does not 'own' the rain in the strict sense; he can only 'control' it for some time. This is mainly because one act by a faki to stimulate rainfall might be offset by a counter act by another, thereby 'withholding' it. This is how rain is believed to be 'spoiled' or 'lost'. Secondly, Ghubeish villagers distinguish between rain that is a direct result of human action (as by rain-making) and rain which is caused to fall by the will of the Creator. To both kinds of rain are attached some causational factors (justifying why rain has fallen, or not fallen at that particular moment) as we will see below. As far as symbolism is concerned rain drums are used in the context of the Ghubeish communities mainly to summon villagers for participation in the ritual, not to play any symbolic significance. Symbolism occurs only in the act of rearranging the clothes in which one is dressed so that the inner layer appears on the outside. This amounts to ritual purification which appeases the supernatural and influences His mercy. Unlike the Mandari, Ghubeish villagers consider such paraphernalia (rain drums stones and spears) as inanimate objects, having no influence on rains. On the contrary, if they were brought to play such symbolic roles they would rather lead to rain being withheld by the Creator, since in the final analysis He is the sole disposer of rains (i.e the Creator will be angered because believing in the power of such paraphernalia is tantamount to associating other powers with Him ; and Muslims are strongly prohibited from this). Thus it occurs to me that while some of the ritual practices connected with rain-making by the Mandari are largely similar to those of the Ghubeish communities, others are quite contradictory . Typical of Hamar religious rituals are those practised by their neighbours, the Berti, described by Holy (1991) and Osman (1983). This is more so since both share a similar culture and religion. In both contexts one is struck by the belief in the "power of words" (c.f.Tambiah, 1968), specifically of the Quranic text.

The overall speciality of the faki hinges on the derivation of Quranic words (in the form of formulae) believed to have the power to influence events. The dua' (invocation) itself, which is also described by Holy (1991) and Osman (1983), and which consists of verbal, as opposed to written 'words', can also be seen to have similar 'powers'. However since the ritual practices themselves are the product of the local environment it could be argued safely that such practices can differ in their importance from one environment to another. The Berti lived in a zone of erratic rainfall, compared to their neighbours, the Hamar. Thus the Berti are more likely to mobilize its villagers for rain-making rituals than are the Hamar who would instead embark into practicing other rituals such as those having to do with raising productivity, marketing, riches which are in much demand etc. As Holy forcibly argues elsewhere " even the most ardent critics of cultural materialism admit the determining role of nature in the relationship between the natural conditions in which a society lives and its culture" (Holy, 1988 :152).

From the various religious ritual practices among Hamar we are concerned here only with those which have direct bearing on the project (such as those related to farm productivity, farm management and marketing etc.).

Religious specialists (fakis) provide the major force that reinforces ritual practices and beliefs. It is commonly believed by Muslim farmers in the project area that crop failure and misfortunes in general are supernatural punishments sent to afflict those who committed wrong deeds. This is also supported by some Quranic verses which the rural people often recite; these verses read as follows:

God sets forth a parable: A city ¹ enjoying a security
 and quiet, abundantly supplied with sustenance from
 every place:
 Yet was it ungrateful for the favours of God:
 So God made it taste of hunger and terror
 (in extremes closing on to it)
 like a garment (from every side), because
 of the evil which its people wrought (Quran , x1.110 -112 :686). And,
 If the people of the towns
 Had but believed and feared
 God, we should indeed
 Have opened to them
 (all kinds of) blessings
 From heaven and earth ;
 But they rejected (the truth),
 And we brought them
 To book for their misdeed (Quran, V11, 96-99:370).

The verses make direct mention of the rural populations, who come to respond positively in a number of ways lest they be afflicted by the supernatural punishments. The village people's means of livelihood is said to be conditional upon their deeds. They believe that failure to observe the religious rituals will automatically result in baraka (blessing) being withheld from them. Baraka connotes all aspects of better life, rains, plenty of food and the absence of fatal diseases. With respect to present-day activities (in relation to agriculture , trade or any other form of activity in which the people are engaged), one's behavior must be adjusted to avert impending supernatural affliction. We note that the belief that

¹ The reference may be to any of the cities or populations in ancient or modern times, which were favoured with security or other blessings from God, but which rebelled from God's law and tasted the inevitable penalty, even in the midst of their inequities.

rain failure results from human misdeed is also common among the Mandari, as stated in the following:

Those acts which they [the Mandari] see to be harmful and destructive to their specific rain relate to their own unique predicament. One objective of rain rites is, therefore, to guard their 'owned' rain from actions which threaten it, from sin in the community, from sorcery, and from breaches of rules regarding rain-water or failures to observe symbolic oppositions in ritual in general. As most rain failure thus stems from human failure, it could be said in a very real sense that for the Mandari the rain is within the person (Buxton, 1973: 351).

In the case of ENSAP participating farmers potential crop failure is explained in terms of Islamic warnings against dealings with riba (interest, usury), which are traditionally forbidden in Islamic culture. Thus when in the 1990 agricultural season a lack of rains resulted in crop failure religious people not participating in the project accused the participating farmers of bringing about supernatural affliction. Thus the sheikh of Seranbi village believed that ENSAP interest on its loans was the major sin which such village farmers were committing. He argued that it is a direct affront to the warning that :

God will deprive usury of all blessing
But will give increase for deeds of charity
For He loveth not
creatures ungrateful and wicked, and ...
Those who devour usury
will not stand except
As stands one whom
The devil One by his touch
Hath driven to madness
That is because they say:
trade is like usury,

But God hath permitted trade

And forbidden usury... (Quran, S.11.275-279:111_ 112).

Accordingly the sheikh forecasts a concomitant decline in the number of farmers participating in the project in the following seasons. However, the participating farmers of ENSAP observe another set of rituals connected with agriculture which are believed to ward off an impending supernatural affliction. Among these rituals are the rain-making prayers, amulets (charms) and erasure (texts and symbols written on a wooden slate and washed off with water, or 'erased', and then prescribed to a client). Amulets and erasure are believed to work because of the 'miracles' of the Quranic verses, the 'blessed' names of angels and the magic of numbers used in the derivation of the formulae (this formulae is rectangular, circular or a square). But this justification is not plausible since amulets and erasure often include names of jinns (which local people consider as 'polluted', rather than 'blessed') and incomprehensible words.

As I have mentioned fakis are the religious specialists in Hamar society, leading and practising the religious rituals. They may practise their religious rituals with the support of other groups from the community (as in the case of rain-making rituals, in which case they assume the role of leaders), or individually when his "work" is said to require privacy (such as in the case of issuing amulets). A separate room in the faki's home is often reserved as an office where he keeps some of his ambitri (reference books on the derivation of certain ritual formula and charms), some loahs (wooden slates for writing texts and symbols), and also as a reception room for his clients. Unlike the priest a faki need not mobilize some people as his own disciples, nor is he required to deliver 'orations', on religious matters, to his community. Excepting his role as a leader of communal prayers and rain-making rituals the faki hardly practises in public - as his speciality is one which entails "privacy". However as a member in the community faki might engage in other forms of occupation to augment the income

derived from his religious speciality. Thus most of the fakis in Dar Hamar are themselves farmers (mostly smallholders), some others engage in petty trade. By and large fakis are more or less similar to other average farmers (economically speaking), given the meagre income generated from his religious speciality.

It is important to note at this juncture, that faki's clients are not of the opinion that it is actually the faki who brings about the desired result from the ritual performances. A fact which even the faki himself admits is that he can only "trigger-off a cause", so to speak, (or what is locally referred to as sabab i.e., cause). This means that the efficacy of the rituals is not the responsibility of the faki, rather, this, in the end lies in the hands of God. This notion draws validity from the Quranic text which stresses the "miracles of the Quranic verses", and the "blessedness of God's names". From here we can make the point that all ritual practices of the fakis revolve around this belief inherent in Muslim communities - hence the strong connection between action and belief. The belief that the ultimate 'power' rests on the hands of God can allow the faki to escape being criticised (when his rituals fail to produce the desired result) of failing in his speciality. However clients could still criticise a faki for not selecting the most 'effective', 'powerful' or 'blessed' words. A faki who fails persistently in his speciality is liable to have the number of his clients continuously diminishing. While a faki considers his speciality as a "business enterprise" from which to make money for one's livelihood, he is assumed not to receive any financial reward from leading communal rain-making prayers, or, generally, rituals performed for the common good of the whole community. With these communal ritual practices we now start our analysis.

7.3.1 Rain-making prayers:

Rain-making prayers are usually performed during a period of long subna. The ritual is announced two or three days in advance. Children's participation in the ritual is strongly recommended. This is mainly because children are 'innocent', not having committed bad deeds so as to be punished. Through them

(i.e, in their favour) the impending supernatural affliction will be removed. However the ritual prayer is generally led by the elders. The rain-making ritual may be performed several times during the rainy season until rain is released. The participants usually congregate at a specific place outside the village and the ritual is started with dua' (invocation of God) in which confessions of committed sins and accumulations of bad deeds are openly made. And the people ask forgiveness from one another. The collective prayer is then performed and a sacrificial animal may be slaughtered. The whole ritual practice is taken to connote a change of behavior for the better and for this reason we often observe some of the participants arranging their clothes in such a way that the inner layer appears on the outside . This is symbolic of a removal of ritual pollution by purification. Rain-making ritual performed during the 1990 agricultural season include four rituals performed in the district town, En Nahud, two in Rasheed village and two in Dirra village . There are yet other villages which are said to have performed the ritual . These included Widaa' Wad Fadol, Murabaat, Riteirit, Seranbi and El Halfaya . In the space below we indicate the number of rain-making rituals performed in these villages in both 1989 and 1990 seasons and the source of some of the participants since the ritual brings people in from the areet to be actively involved.

Season	village	No. of rituals	No. of participants (per ritual)	Some location of participants
1989	Dirra	1	27	village + the <u>areet</u>
1990	"	2	39	village + the <u>areet</u>
1989	Widaa'	1	12	village only
1989	Rasheed	1	21	village only
1990	"	2	29	village + the <u>areet</u>
1989	Wad Fadol	1	13	village only
1989	Riteirit	1	20	village only
1989	Seranbi	1	11	village only
1990	"	2	23	village only
1990	Murabaat	2	33	village + areet
1990	El Halfaya	2	16	village + areet
1990	En Nahud	4	145	town only

In the district town En Nahud, information about a rain-making ritual is communicated by the calls from the mosque but the ritual itself is not performed in the mosque. In the project villages such Dirra and Rasheed a congregation of people may decide that due to worry about the long subna it would be useful to arrange a rain-making ritual. Once decided then the information is passed through these people to the rest of village. Participation in the ritual is voluntary, and a ritual performed by just a group of village members would be considered satisfactory by the rest of the village. The number of rituals performed depends on the quality of the rainy season. The number falls as rain increases. The ritual could be performed at any phase of the agricultural season with the exception of harvesting since rainfall during this particular phase is destructive. The predominant context for a rain-making ritual in the project villages are social events (funeral , marriage and nafir). This is indicated

by people saying "we had a nafir on a neighbour's farm and upon concluding the weeding task we decided that it would be better to arrange a rain-making ritual since the farm we weeded was too dry". Such a suggestion will be fully backed when an elderly farmer describes the present state of affairs as one whose a'ina promises little rain. Temporal rain loss is a feature of the Northern Kordofan region. Yet apathy is religiously condemned when rain-making rituals fail to be followed by adequate rains. On the contrary people are advised to be 'confident' and continue with their rain rituals since apathy itself can further lead to rain being withheld by the creator. Contrary to the Mandari, the wider range of responsibility for rain leads to a correspondingly broader placing of responsibility for its failure (see e.g. Buxton, 1973:352). This is related to the belief that local rain failure can be caused by the sins of neighbouring territorial divisions within the country. Or it can be generally stated by local people that "rain is withheld because of the corruption of government authorities in the centre". Up to the present time some villagers in Ghubeish maintain that the drought of the 1984 year was partly attributed to the corruption of the then May regime.

7.3.2 Farm Amulets:

An amulet (hijab) consists of a square of paper containing Quranic verses, names of God, names of angels and jinns, numbers, and cabalistic signs arranged within squares called 'the seals'. Amulets are usually written by a faki to serve a particular function or functions (such as to prevent an illness, to protect against the evil eye or sorcery, to attain success in trade or other business, to gain someone's love, and to obtain a situation etc.). Some people write these amulets for themselves from Ambitri (books dealing with rituals) which are obtained from the towns or inherited from an ancestor who was once a faki. But the majority get them through the faki who is most knowledgeable about the rituals.

A farmer would approach a local faki to issue him an amulet for his farm depending on the specific agricultural stage. Thus during the pre-harvesting period a farmer needs to ensure a good yield and to ward off agricultural pests such as birds and locusts. The amulet prescribed for such particular purposes is called al harras (the guard) and serves the function of guarding the farm. This saves the farmer a great deal of time which before using the amulet he had to spend scaring birds by making sounds. Moreover he can now combat the locust which reduces the total farm productivity. However, bad occurrences in agriculture can be sent by enemies who have approached a faki to destroy one's farm. Local people state that such practices are performed by the non-Hamar tribes (such as the Berti, Manana and Gora'an) more often than by the Hamar themselves. Thus such practices are more often mentioned in villages such as Ibeid than in El Halfaya as the former is mostly inhabited by the Berti while the latter is almost entirely inhabited by Hamar.

There is yet another significant religious ritual, performed mostly by the farmer himself (though he may approach a faki to do it on his behalf in case he does not know the proper formulae to do it himself). This ritual has to do with decision-making in agriculture as well as in other forms of business. The ritual helps the individual arrive at a decision as to whether to engage in a particular activity (to invest in agriculture or not). It is, if you like, an alternative to the concept of the 'net present value' in project appraisal which is used to arrive at mathematical figures showing the worthwhileness of a project. This ritual, of course, does not show the result in terms of mathematical figures. Rather, it seeks to solve a farmer's decision-making problem by recourse to the supernatural being in a private ritual prayer of consultation, hence the prayer is called istikhara (consultation). The ritual consists of a prayer and a dua' (i.e. invocation). The dua' which is basic to the ritual can be translated as follows:

O God I refer to You with your Knowledge,
and invoke You with your power,
I beg your mercy (fadl), the omnipotent,
for, You predestine, and I predestine not,
and you know and I know not, and
You are the cognizant of the uncognizable,
O God if you know that this (stated objective; e.g. joining ENSAP)
is of value to me in terms of my religion, secular life,
means of livelihood and that following as a consequence
and that which is concomitant to it (i.e, to the objective),
and that which is delayed for a later period, then God
predestine it , make it easy and bless it for me.
And if You know that this will do me mischief,
in terms of my religion, secular life, means of livelihood,
and that which follows as a consequence, and that which
is concomitant to it, and that which is delayed for a later period
then God, turn it away from me and turn me away from it,
and predestine to me all that is good (kheir) wherever it is
and let me be satisfied with it.

At the end of the ritual the farmer praises the prophet (Mohammed) and then goes to bed. It is believed that the answer comes in his dream and in the morning the decision about whether to join the project is made. Otherwise the ritual may be repeated.

This religious ritual indicates how people's religion acts as a means of control whereby their behavior is influenced. It also tells us how religion comes to be relevant in situations of economic opportunity. Thus the decision to participate in the ENSAP project is predominantly dependent upon and sought with reference

to existing religious institution and the belief system. For some scholars this amounts to 'fatalism' (see, e.g. Foster, 1962) but for me it is not explicable in that light since the farmer himself has stated his decision-making problem in such a way as to take account of both alternatives (i.e, either in expectation of a positive answer in which case he will join the project, or in the negative, which implies not to participate). This is supported by the fact that the farmer is already keen about the economic opportunity at his reach but the seizure of this opportunity should find validation from the existing religion. Thus the economic sphere is quite interrelated with religion and any social or economic act should be explained in terms of whether it finds religious justification.

This istikhara ritual, in particular, came to bear on ENSAP project. It had been performed by at least two farmers in the project area in order to arrive at a decision as to whether to participate in the project or not. One farmer was from Murabaat village and the other is the sheikh of Seranbi. Both had arrived at the decision not to participate. This was the major factor behind the sheikh's opting out from the project in the second year of project implementation. This religious ritual, therefore, had serious implications for ENSAP project, especially as concerns its goal of sustainability. If the other farmers were to perform this ritual with similar results then the project would ultimately be doomed to fail. This ritual practice, however, is not readily observable due to its privacy, and it could only be known from the informant's verbal statement. There are, however, other rituals which can be observed, to do with amulets which are often hung around the farm for particular purposes (including rain-making, pest control, breaking a subna, ease of crop marketing, invalidation of sorcery or even sending mischief to an adversary). Below we provide some of the currently used and performed rituals.

Most of the amulets were directly collected from the local fakis in the project villages. The following amulets, however, pertain mainly to farmers of Ibeid, Dirra and Rasheed villages and to a smaller group of non-Hamar tribes in Murabaat. Even when these amulets were hung on the farm trees or bushes they were difficult to observe since an amulet is written on a small piece of paper and often one observes other pieces of cloth also hung on the bush or trees. Often these amulets were fixed to the Dummy (hawada) which the farmer hangs up to ward off the birds. In other cases, for reasons of security and privacy, the amulet itself was buried under ground. These amulets were sold by the faki at a price of LS 20 in 1990 season, but generally the price varies from one village to another and according to the type of amulet. Those amulets which serve the function of invalidating sorcery were said to be more expensive and can claim a price of up to LS 200.

A general comment on the contents of the various amulets described below is in order (as relates to the Arabic script, Quranic verses, names, numbers and figures). Common to most of these amulets is that they start with the mentioning of the name of God (especially the names referred to as hosna, i.e. beautiful names as كبير in amulet 2 for loan repayment (see below), and are concluded with the name of prophet Mohammed (by writing the phrase 'peace be upon him'). They are said to be the 'key' to acceptance by God of any ritual observance. Often a so-called khatim suleiman (i.e. Solomon's ring, which is a five-pointed star) is drawn in the bottom of the amulet and is also considered to be of similar importance. Khatim Suleiman is also considered as an alternative to the name of prophet Mohammed and it is clear that when it is drawn the name of the prophet does not appear (see e.g. amulet for marketing and amulet for riches). The Arabic script can be grouped into four forms as they appear in the amulets. In some amulets they are Quranic verses directly quoted (as exemplified by amulets 1 against the evil eye, amulet against bird attack, amulet against rats and locust, amulet 2 for rain-making, amulet against a destructive wind, amulet for stopping

the rain, amulet for impaired marketing, and amulet for loan repayment). A faki would select those verses or words which bear similar meaning and consider them as relevant for a particular purpose. For example, in the amulet against the evil eye the relevant or 'key' word is حفظهما (keeping in guard by God); Similarly other 'key words' appear as فارجعوا (go back) in the amulet against bird attack; and

ولو على ادبارهم (ran backwards) in the amulet against rats and locust; and ان يشاء يسكن الريح (if He wills He can stop the wind), in the amulet against a destructive wind; in the amulet for riches the key word is الكنوز which refer to the treasuries owned by Qarun who rose in opposition to prophet Moses (he was known to be the richest man in his time).

The second form of Arabic script is the mixture of Quranic verse with letters, numbers, and non-Quranic phrases which are often incomprehensible to the ordinary man. These are exemplified by amulets for inducing storms, amulet for raising farm productivity, amulet for marketing, amulet 1 for riches and amulet for storage of farm crops. In these amulets both the words or phrases quoted from the Quran and the other scripts are held as 'key' to the functioning of the amulet. The third form of Arabic script contained in the amulets involves the combination of Arabic letters (alphabets) and numbers (from 1 to 9) to the exclusion of Quranic verses (the interpretation of these scripts is shown below). The fourth form of Arabic script is dua' (incantation), this time written and used because the user does not commit the dua' to memory (as is generally the case). This is exemplified by the amulet 2 for loan repayment. Amulets also vary in the way they are used. As stated by Trimingham amulets are worn if preventive or curative, and destroyed or put in a special place if they are used for witchcraft (1949 : 169). For a detailed description of amulets and their various contents the reader is referred to Osman (1983) since my concern here is mainly with the various functions and implications of amulets as they relate to the ENSAP's participating farmers. However a brief mention of the significance of Arabic numbers and letters is in order, since they appear in a number of amulets presented below (e.g. amulet for breaking a subna, amulet for rain-

making, amulet for farm management, amulet for raising farm productivity, and amulet 2 for marketing).

The table below shows the values assigned to the Arabic letters used in some amulets.

Table (30) The Numerical Values of The Arabic Letters:

No.	Arabic letters	Corresponding values
1	ا	1
2	ب	2
3	ج	400
4	د	500
5	هـ	3
6	و	8
7	ز	600
8	ح	4
9	ط	700
10	ي	200
11	ك	7
12	خ	60
13	ع	300
14	ف	90
15	ق	800
16	س	9
17	ص	900
18	ض	70
19	ظ	1000
20	ث	80
21	جـ	100
22	چ	20
23	حـ	30
24	خـ	40
25	دـ	50
26	ر	5
27	ز	6
28	س	10

All the Arabic letters are assigned corresponding numerical values. These letters appear in the amulet either each occupying a particular square in a khatim (as appears in the amulet for rain-making, below; see the bottom khatim), or may be connected to form words (as in line 2 in the amulet 1 for farm management, and the Arabic script inside amulet 1 for riches). Inversely, the numbers in the amulets, such as in amulet for rain-making (above square), and amulet 2 for marketing, stand for words which the faki might not be interested to write down mainly for privacy.

The Arabic letters are often written each in a square in the khatim to stand as proxies for a whole word or a meaningful phrase (often meaningful only to the faki). This is exemplified by amulet 2 for farm management (see the khatim, i.e square). This particular khatim is commonly known as khatim batad (as the first three letters in the first line in the square read بطر (i.e. batad). Each of these letters corresponds to a meaningful word (often a name) or phrase (often Quranic), as is shown below.

Table (31) Significance of Some of The Arabic Letters (mostly as appear in khatim batad)

Arabic letter	Signifies	Translation
ب	بديع السموات والارض	To Him is due the Primal origin of the heavens and earth: when He decreeth a matter, He saith to it : "Be", and it is (Quran, ii, 117-118: 49-50).
ط	طه	TAHA: a name of the Prophet Mohamed (Quran, xx:788).
د	داود	Prophet David (Quran, xxxviii, 22:1221).
ز	زين للناس حب الشهوات	"Fair in the eyes of men is the love of things they covet" (Quran, iii:125).
هـ	حمسق	Ha Mim A'in Sein Qaf: Non-translateable Quranic verse (Quran, xlii, 2: 1305).
و	وأذن في الناس بالحج	"And proclaim the pilgrimage among men" (Quran, xxii, 32:857).
أ	الله لطيف بعباده	"Gracious is God to His servants: He gives Sustenance to whom He pleases" (Quran, xlii, 19: 1130).
ح	حم غافر الذنب	"Ha Mim: Who forgives sin, accepts repentances" (Quran, xi, 2:1262).
ج	جاهد الكفار	"Strive hard against the unbelievers" (Quran, xv, 9: 1572).

7.3.3 Productivity-Raising Amulet:

Quite often farmers who observe a decline in farm productivity resort to ritual practices in order to restore the expected standard. The background to this is that throughout the project area fertilizers are not available, and the farmers rarely apply animal manure to their farms as an alternative to chemical fertilizers. Under-production usually means that the household will be unable to subsist on farm produce right through until the onfall of the next agricultural season. The alternative off-farm employment results in some of the household members being dislocated for a considerable period of time searching for wage labour in the neighbouring towns or big villages. Therefore an easy way of ensuring increased farm productivity is by using the following amulet. The ritual connected with this amulet consists of a khatim (square) and a verse. The farmer writes the formulae twice and throws the soil in which it was written. This is done in the early period of land preparation.

زيارة حكيم الذريح بسم الله الرحمن الرحيم
 (قل من رب السموات والارض قل الله
 يتولى اخذ نفق من دون الله اولياء لا يملكون
 لانفسهم نفعا ولا ضررا)
 تكتب مرتين وتنتهي وتترش في بدايه
 حوث الذريح مع الحانتق

٢	١٩	١
١٨	١١	٨
١	١	١

زيارة البطر بسم الله الرحمن الرحيم
 وعلى الله وعلى النبي وعلى آله وصحبه
 (فكشفتنا لك غطا محج نبيك بيوم يبر
 تنبأ به نبيك تدعى بهذه الابه

7.3.4 Amulet Against Misfortune in The Farm :

This amulet consists of letters (from 1 to 16) and its significance (and of course its function) is known only to the faki and the farmer who uses it. This amulet should either be carried in the pocket or be hanged on a tree in the farm to ward off pests. It also works against sorcery.

1	11	12	1
13	2		14
3	17	9	7
10	0	4	10

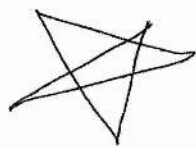
7.3.5 Amulet Against the Evil Eye:

This amulet functions for a wide number of purposes and spheres of business. It can be used to ensure reliable and prosperous trade, or in case of farming as a guard against the evil eye cast by other farmers envious of relatively well growing crops. This amulet was used by a farmer in Murabaat village in 1990 season in his millet field which was obviously promising a more prosperous yield than neighbouring farms. It contains a Quranic word, i.e. 'a key word', which reads *لَا يَأْتِي* (from the verb to keep in guard) and this renders the amulet efficacious.

بسم الله الرحمن الرحيم

وصلى الله على سيدنا محمد وعلى آله وصحبه وسلم

الله لا اله الا هو الحى القيوم لا تأخذه
سنة ولا نوم له ما فى السموات وما فى الارض
من ذا الذى يشفع عنده الى بارئه يعلم ما بين
ايديهم وما خلفهم ولا يحيطون بشئ من
علمه الا بما شاء وسع كرسيه السموات
والارض ولا يؤدّه حفظهما وهو العلى العظيم
قل هو الله احد الله الصمد لم يلد ولم
يولد ولم يكن له كفواً أحد. الله لا اله الا هو
الحى القيوم لا تأخذه سنة ولا نوم من ذا الذى
يشفع عنده الى بارئه يعلم ما بين ايديهم وما
خلفهم ولا يحيطون بشئ من علمه الا بما شاء
وسع كرسيه السموات والارض ولا يؤدّه حفظهما
وهو العلى العظيم



7.3.6 Amulets Against Bird Attack:

Birds cause a lot damage to crops and farmers have limited means of controlling them. Relative to the other farm pests, birds are difficult to control and the farmer spends considerable time in trying to control these pests. A faki provides one means of controlling birds against attacking local farms. An alternative to the hawada (dummy) is the following amulet. The farmer catches a bird attacking his farm and slaughters it. The blood is then used to write the following formula on four pieces of paper each hidden in one corner of the farm:

بسم الله الرحمن الرحيم
وَإِذْ قَالَتْ طَائِفَةٌ مِنْهُمْ يَا أَهْلَ يَثْرِبَ لَا مَقَامَ
لَكُمْ فَارْجِعُوا
☆

This particular amulet is easy to translate :

In the name of God

Peace be upon the prophet Mohammed And his companions

Behold ! A party among them said:

Ye men of Yathrib!

Ye cannot stand (the attack) !

Therefore go back ! "

And a band of them

Ask for leave of the Prophet,

Saying, " Truly our houses are bare and exposed:

They intended nothing but to run away (Quran, xxxiii:13).

It is clear from this amulet that the local fakis relies on existing phrase, or phrases fitting appropriately to the present circumstances if he is to derive the

appropriate formulae for the amulet. This phrase is then quoted and used to address human beings, birds, animals or inanimate things. The amulet thus derived applies even if the situation which the Quran is describing or addressing actually refers to different things or people. The faki has his own justification for this. It is the contention of almost all Muslims (both those who believe in the legitimacy of using amulets and those who do not) that the "Quran is suitable for all times and places". This provides strong ground on which the faki can justify both the legitimacy and the efficacy of the amulets. According to the faki, disbelieving the validity of amulets is tantamount to disbelieving the 'miracles of the Quran' (a contention by almost all Muslims).

Thus, the amulet above uses the Quranic verse which tells the people of Yathrib (i.e Mecca) to 'go back' **فارجعوا** (reference was actually made to those hypocrats during the period of the Prophet Mohamed, who pretend to withdraw from the battle for the defence of their homes, though their homes were not exposed). So the attacking birds were scared to go back. The papers were placed in the four corners of the farm so that the directions are closed to the attacking birds which will find no way but to 'go back'.

7.3.7 Amulet Special Against Locusts and Rats:

Locust is the most widespread crop pest in the project area and clearly adversely affects farm productivity. The Plant Protection Department is often handicapped in controlling these pests due to its limited resources as well as to logistical problems which render getting access to the widely scattered project villages a difficult task. Farmers have therefore to do the task of pest control themselves. The following is the form of the amulet prescribed for the control of locust and rats. The locust usually attacks the millet and the sorghum crops while the rat attacks mostly the groundnuts crops.

The amulet consists of Quranic verses and stresses a 'key word', viz, **حجابا** (a screen) to retard pests from intrusion into the farm, and a phrase **ولو على ادبارهم** (ran back, and hence the pests are scared and run away); both work to render it efficacious.

بسم الله الرحمن الرحيم

وإذا قرأت القرآن جعلنا بينك وبين
الذين لا يؤمنون بالآخرة حجاباً مستوراً
وإذا ذكرت ربك في القرآن وحده ولو على
ادبارهم نقورا. فإن تولوا فقل حسبي الله
لا إله إلا هو عليه توكلت وهو رب العرش
العظيم. والله من وراءهم محيط بدو
قرآن مجيد من لعمري محفوظ إنك على
كبر شيء قدير وإذا قتلتهم نفساً
فادارتهم فيها والله خبير بما كنتم
تكتُمون

وصل على الله على نبيونا محمد
وعلى آله وصحبه وسلم

7.3.8 Amulet For Breaking a Subna :

When a farmer starts to worry about a long lasting (subna) he may approach a faki for 'breaking this subna'. The amulet is made to rescue the farm from an impending crop failure. Usually it is used after weeding has been concluded and the farmer is awaiting rains to enhance plant growth. This amulet is used without relying on the other rain-making ritual collectively performed by the village people. Thus it is considered as an alternative to the rain-making prayer ritual. It is written on a black stone which is then hidden under the ground in the middle of his farm. This amulet consists of Arabic letters and numbers, but it also contains multiplication signs (X) not commonly used in the derivation of amulets. This amulet has no specific 'key word'.

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

۱۳۷۶ تا ۱۳۹۱ و ۱۳۹۲ تا ۱۴۰۱ فروردین ۱۳۹۲

$\frac{09}{b}$

وصلی اللہ علی سیدنا
محمد وعلی آلہ وصحبہ وسلم

7.3.9 Amulet For Rain-making:

In case the farmer needs plenty of rains he uses the following amulet. The formulae is to be written on a piece of paper and then fixed to the back of a tortoise and then hidden inside a hole in the middle of the village. This amulet consists of Arabic numbers (from 2 to 62, the upper square) and Arabic alphabets (bottom square), between which is written the name of God **الباسط** (meaning He who secures man's fortune). This name is one of the names referred to as hosna (i.e. beautiful, see above) and it therefore stands as the 'key' for the efficacy of the amulet.

١	٥٦	٥٩	٥	٤	٦٤	٦٤	١٠
٤٩	١٥	١٤	٥٤	٥٣	١١	١٠	٥٦
٤١	٣٣	٤٤	٤٤	٤٥	١٩	١٧	٥١
٣٤	٣٤	٣٥	٤٩	٤١	٣١	٣٩	٤٥
٤٠	٤٦	٤٧	٣٣	٣٦	٣٠	٣١	٣٣
١٧	٤٧	٤٦	٤٩	٤١	٤٤	٤٤	٤٤
٩	٥٥	٥٤	١٤	١٣	٥١	٥٠	١٦
٤٤	٤	٣	٦١	٦٠	٦	٧	٥٧

اسماء الباسط

ب	س	ا	ب
ب	ا	س	ب
س	ب	ب	ا
ا	ب	ب	س

7.3.10 Amulet for stopping the Rain:

A farmer can resort to amulets for 'holding' or stopping the rains which he thinks could enhance the productivity of an enemy's farm. This is usually done in the early stages after the crop has been planted and is at its peak need of rains. Due to the lack of alternative means of irrigation, 'holding' the rains would ultimately lead to crop failure and loss. This amulet does not make direct reference to rain but refers to a planted seed which gives prosperous yield (exemplifying those who spend their money as alms). The amulet is used mainly by farmers who do not memorize this verse. Each time the farmer puts a small stone inside a paper in which this verse is written three times ; then he throws the paper towards the clouds. This is repeated forty one times.

لِيُفَادَ الصَّغِيرَ مِنَ الدَّرَجِ

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

مَثَلُ حَبِّ زَيْتُونَةٍ سَبْعُ سَنَابِلٍ فِي كُلِّ سَنَةٍ

عِنْدَ رَبِّهِ وَاللَّهُ يَفْعَلُ لِمَنْ يَشَاءُ

وَاللَّهُ وَاسِعٌ عَلِيمٌ

بَرِيقُهُ زَيْتُونٌ سَحَابٌ الْمَطَرُ تَحْمِلُهُ حَجَرٌ

كُلُّ حَرْنَقَةٍ إِحْيَا ١٢ مَرَّةً وَتَرْحَمِي

بِهَا عَلَى السَّحَابِ يَوْقِفُ الْمَطَرُ انْشَاءً

وَيَنْتَفِشُ الْمَطَرُ هُنَا الزَّرْعُ

تَنْفِشُ زَيْتُونَتُهُ لَهَا آخِرُهَا ١٧ مَرَّةً فِي عَوْدِ

نَفْسِهِ بِرَبِّهِ إِلَى الزَّرْعِ الْمُنْتَفِشِ بِحَبْسِ

7.3.11 Amulet For Inducing Storms :

A person may resort to an amulet to induce heavy storms which could lead to crop damage on an enemy's farm. The storm is meant to break the stalks of the millet and sorghum crops as well as to completely ruin the sesame crop during the harvesting season. This amulet includes incomprehensible words (the second line) followed by Quranic verses which do not include any readily known 'key words' or 'beautiful names'.

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

حَسْبُكَ حِفْظُهُ فَلَسْجَمُهُ فَحَصْبُهُ
وَإِوَحَى رَيْكَ إِلَى الْبُخْلِ أَنَّ الْخُرْبَى مِنْ
الْجِبَالِ بَيُوتًا وَمِنْ الشَّجَرِ وَهَمًا
يَعْرِشُونَ ثُمَّ كَلَّمَ مِنْ كُلِّ الثَّمَرَاتِ
فَاسْأَلْنِ سَبِي رَيْكَ ذَلَّ لَا يَخْرُجُ مِنْ
بُطُونِهَا شَرَابٌ مُخْتَلَفٌ لَلْأَلْوَانِ
فِيهِ شِفَاءٌ لِلنَّاسِ إِنْ فَرَّادَكَ
لَا يَأْتِ لِقَوْمٍ يَتَفَكَّرُونَ

وَصَلَّى عَلَى سَيِّدِنَا مُحَمَّدٍ
وَعَلَى آلِهِ وَصَلِّهِ وَسَلَّمَ

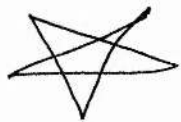
7.3.12 Amulet Against a Destructive Wind :

A wind which is suspected of having been sent by an adversary should also be controlled by the appropriate rituals and amulets lest it damages the whole farm either by breaking the stalks of crops or blowing away the harvested crop on the jurun (the ground where the harvested crop is usually heaped). The amulet stresses the Quranic verse **إِنْ يَشَأْ يُسْكِنِ الرِّيحَ** (if He wills He can stop the wind) which signifies God's ability to control the wind.


بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

وله الجوار المنشآت في البحر كالإعلام
يشأ يسكن الريح فيظللن واكر على
ظاهره ان في ذلك لآيات لكل صبا - شكوا
اسكن باذن الله تعالى عز وجل اسكن
بقدره الله عز وجل اسكن بقوة الله عز وجل
اسكن بقدره الله عز وجل اسكن بحق

وله ما سكن في الليل والنهار وهو السميع
العليم ولقد كناهم فيما ان كناكم فيه وجعلنا
هم سموا واصارا وافئده فما أغنى عنهم سمهم
ولا اصاهم ولا افئدتهم من شئ اذا كانوا يحدون
آيات الله وحاق بهم ما كانوا به يستهزون



7.3.13 Amulet For Farm management :

Farm management is a time-consuming task which costs the farmer in terms of both labour and money. For the general management of the farm, for example to keep it clear of pests, free from malpractices and well watered by rains the farmer uses the following amulet. It resembles the amulet for breaking a subna in that it consists of Arabic numbers and incomprehensible words such as . As the case is with the amulet for breaking subna the contents of this amulet are difficult to interpret since they lack the familiar 'key words'.

7.3.14 Amulet For Sending Locust And Rats:

The farmer who purports to afflict an adversary's farm with damage through sending rats and locust would use the following amulet which consists of dua' and some formulae. The ritual is performed as follows: The square (which is called khatim, i.e. ring) is drawn in the earth in an enemy's farm, and in the blank space one writes the purpose (i.e to destroy the farm through sending locust rats and agricultural pests). Then the dua' (which is written above the khatim) is recited and repeated four thousands and forty four times.

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

اللهم صل على سيرة محمد صلى الله عليه وسلم
 من جميع الاعمال والافعال وتفضل لنا بها
 جميع الحاجات وتفضلنا بها من جميع
 السبلات وتفضلنا بها عنك اعدا
 الدرجات وتفضلنا بها اقصى الفيات
 من جميع الخيرات في الحياة وبعد
 الممات وصل الله على سيرة محمد وعلى
 اله وصحبه وسلم

١١٨٥	٢٩٦٥	٣٠٠
١٩٣		٢٥٥٣
٣٢٦٨	١٤٨٤	٥٩٣

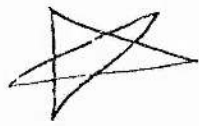
7.3.15 Amulet for marketing:

Farmers in the project area are considerably handicapped in marketing their farm produce. Poor infrastructure is the main constraint and the remoteness of the villages render marketing by the farmers themselves too cumbersome a task. Middlemen who come to the villages in the post-harvesting period to purchase the farmers' crops offer 'non-incentive' prices on the grounds that it is they who will bear the heavy costs of transporting the produce to the town markets as well as the payment of crop taxes to the government officials. A farmer who is not satisfied with the offer made by the middleman may use the following amulet to facilitate the marketing of his produce, for example to secure better prices and easier access to markets. This ritual consists of a dua'(the first phrase) followed by a Quranic verse and is then concluded with khatim Suleiman (Solomon's ring, or, a star). With the exception of khatim Suleiman, this ritual derives from the prophetic tradition (sunna). It contains the verb يرزق (to endow, by God) as the 'key' for securing prosperity in the market. Amulet 2 consists of some verses which make direct reference to تجارة (trade), to signify that the purpose of the amulet is to facilitate marketing, and is followed by a khatim (the square). The amulet is written on a root of a local specie of a tree (called usher) which is then hid under the soil in the market place.

بسم الله الرحمن الرحيم
وصلى الله على سيدنا محمد وعلى آله وصحبه وسلم

أشهد أن لا إله إلا الله وحده لا شريك
له له الملك وله الحمد وهو على كل شيء
قدير

يرزق من يشاء بغير حساب
أشهد أن لا إله إلا الله وحده لا شريك له له
الملك وله الحمد بيده الخير وهو على كل
شيء قدير



« ومن اراد ان يبد الرزق والتجارة والبيع
والشراء - يجمع مع عتق عشر مع
كل ورقة كذا يكتب الله البيع والشراء
هو حجة الدنيا (واستغفر الله مع
من بين ثلث ثلث من الخصال والنز
حبيب الله) مع غفرله تعالى: واذا رأوا
ثأره ينادون: انفضوا اليها وتركوا
فأما من ما شاء الله خير من الخاف
والله خير ان يفتت - مع الخاف
تدفن حماره بخاره

الطبعة

اعني عنه صالحة وما تسمى

882	382	882	382
882	382	882	382
882	382	882	382
882	382	882	382

3. 4. 5. 6. 7. 8. 9. 10.

7.3.16 Impaired marketing Amulet:

A farmer may also need to ritually impair the marketing of an adversary's produce thereby causing him and his household to suffer from a lack of disposable income during the critical period of money shortage which characterizes the post-harvesting period. Or, as it often happens, a farmer who repeatedly suffers the undervaluation of the price of his produce but finds no alternative but to sell at that undervalued price would voice his grievance by arguing that the middleman had manipulated him through ritual practices. Typical of the amulet form used to impair a farmer's produce or any form of trade is the following: the ritual consists of a verse which stresses the inevitable 'running out' of what man possesses, in contrast to God (referring to wealth), as is clear from the 'key word' **يَتَفَد** (meaning to run out). The written verses are then erased with water and thrown in the market place. The outcome is believed to be a drastic reduction in the number of buyers.

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

مَا عَنذَكُمْ يَتَّقُ وَمَا عِنْدَ اللَّهِ بَاقٍ

مَا عَنذَكُمْ يَتَّقُ وَمَا عِنْدَ اللَّهِ بَاقٍ

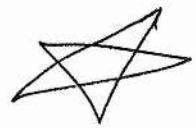
مَا عَنذَكُمْ يَتَّقُ وَمَا عِنْدَ اللَّهِ بَاقٍ

مَا عَنذَكُمْ يَتَّقُ وَمَا عِنْدَ اللَّهِ بَاقٍ

مَا عَنذَكُمْ يَتَّقُ وَمَا عِنْدَ اللَّهِ بَاقٍ

مَا عَنذَكُمْ يَتَّقُ وَمَا عِنْدَ اللَّهِ بَاقٍ

مَا عَنذَكُمْ يَتَّقُ وَمَا عِنْدَ اللَّهِ بَاقٍ



7.3.17 Amulet For Loan Repayment:

Farmers generally consider loans as undesirable, which should be sought only as a last resort when subsistence is impossible without borrowing. This is mainly because loans are believed to imply additional financial burdens which should never have arisen had the farmer properly mobilized the labour and land resources at his disposal. Farmers who complain of such financial burdens argue that the bad aspect of debt is in its causing the borrower some psychological unease until the debt is repaid. When traditionally a farmer who borrows from a sheil money lender starts to worry about repayment he eventually resorts to some ritual practices which could reduce such financial burdens and therefore secure psychological relief. Today in the context of the ENSAP project a number of farmers resort to practising these rituals to ensure that they repay on time thereby contribute to the sustainability of the project. Repayment on time also saves the farmer the cost of additional financial levies stipulated by the ENSAP loan agents. The following are some forms of amulets currently used by the participating farmers of the project. Amulet 1 is a Quranic verse which stresses

الخَيْر (benevolence) as being in the hand of God. The repeated recitation of this verse is believed to be 'key' to securing such a benevolence, represented by the agency's loans. Those who can not recite it obtain it in the form of an amulet. Amulet 2 is a repetition of the God's name كَبِير (Great) which is among the names referred to as hosna (and is therefore effective in influencing God's reaction).

بسم الله الرحمن الرحيم

قل اللهم مالك الملك تؤتي الملك
من تشاء وتنزع الملك ممن
تشاء وتقهر من تشاء وتذل
من تشاء بيدك الخير اذك على
كل شيء قدير تخرج الليل من النهار
وتخرج النهار من الليل وتخرج الصد من
الصد وتخرج الصد من الصد وترزق
من تشاء بغير حساب

وصلى الله على سيدنا محمد وعلى
آله وصحبه وسلم

بسم الله الرحمن الرحيم

وصلّى الله على سائرنا محمد وعلى
آله وصحبه وسلم

يا كبير انت الذى لا يهترى الواصفون لوصف عظمتك

يا كبير انت الذى لا يهترى الواصفون لوصف عظمتك

يا كبير انت الذى لا يهترى الواصفون لوصف عظمتك

يا كبير انت الذى لا يهترى الواصفون لوصف عظمتك

يا كبير انت الذى لا يهترى الواصفون لوصف عظمتك

يا كبير انت الذى لا يهترى الواصفون لوصف عظمتك

يا كبير انت الذى لا يهترى الواصفون لوصف عظمتك

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يا كبير انت الذى لا يهترى الواصفون لوصف عظمتك

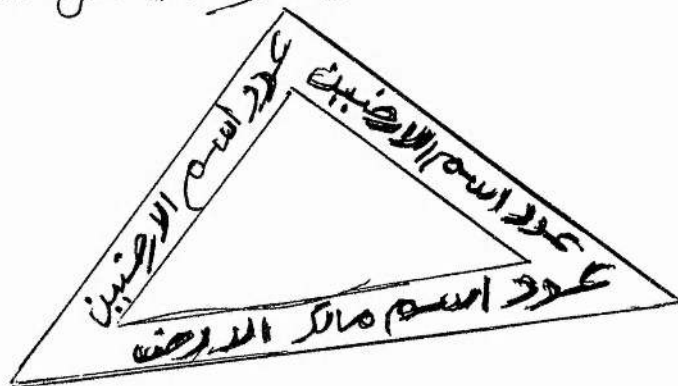
يا كبير انت الذى لا يهترى الواصفون لوصف عظمتك

7.3.18 Amulet For Storage of Farm Crops:

Crop damage due to improper storage results in the reduction of the total crop reserves upon which the smallholder farmers lean during the hungry months just before the onfall of the next agricultural season. We have mentioned that the most appropriate form of crop storage in the project villages, given the poor infrastructure, is the traditional underground pit (matmura) which may keep up to forty kantars of millet or sorghum. But still some losses do occur which reduce the amount of crop stored. Thus farmers practise the following rituals to support the matmura storage of their crops.

The amulet makes use of the same verse used in the amulet against the evil eye (see above) but is followed by a drawing in the bottom which include **الارض** (earth) as a 'key word '. Farm production is best stored under the ground, viz, in the underground pit. Therefore 'earth' is believed to be the most secure place for storage.

يسبح الله الرحمن الرحيم
 وصل الله على سيدنا محمد وعلى
 اله وصحبه وسلم
 اللهم لا اله الا هو الحي القيوم لا
 تأخذه سنة ولا نوم له ما في السموات
 والارض من ذا الذع يشفع عنده
 الا باذنه يعلم ما بين ايديهم وما
 خلفهم ولا يحيطون بشئ من علمه
 الا بما شاء وسع كرسيه السموات والارض
 ولا يؤوده حوزها وهو العزيز الحكيم



7.3 19 Amulet For Riches:

The use of amulets for riches indicates that smallholder farmers aspire to wealth and devise means of attaining it. Thus it could be argued that irrespective of the means by which farmers seize economic opportunities this supports the view that such farmers' economic behavior should not be seen as non-economic. Economic opportunity is clearly evident in the farmer who decides to seize it within the means at his disposal, whether through the practice of rituals or through other means.

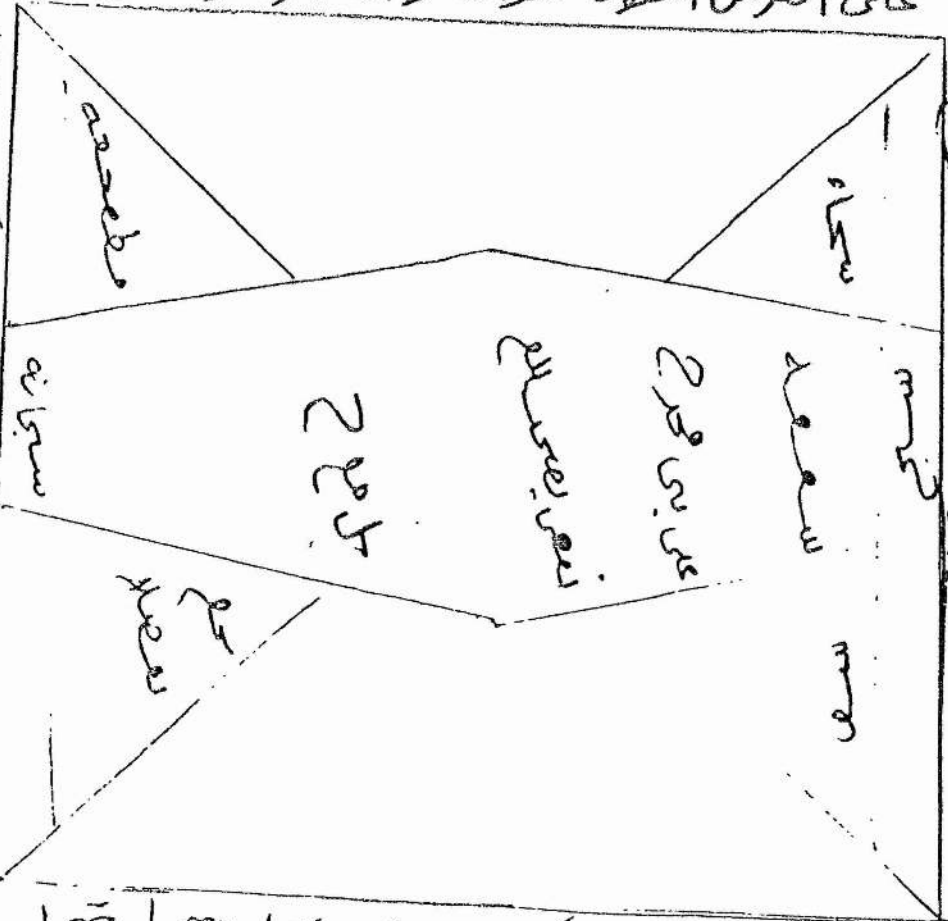
In this respect the farmers were observed to use the following amulets which also include Dua' (invocation of God). Amulet 1 consists of Quranic verses (whose wording is slightly changed in order) written on four sides of a khatim (square) which includes incomprehensible Arabic script. All the Quranic verses in the four sides of the khatim include names described as hosna, such as الله الملك القيوم

Amulet 2 is a repetition of one Quranic verse describing the richness of Qarun (as we mentioned above). The 'key word' is الكنوز (treasuries). Unlike other amulets this one is concluded by a couple of khatim Suleiman (five-pointed stars).

The discussion of the rituals such as amulets for afflicting others, (e.g.stopping the rains, sending locusts and rats to others' farms, inducing storms, impaired marketing etc.) implies the existence in the Ghubeish communities (which seem to enjoy a relatively harmonious life) of so-called 'economic enemies'. As we are moving towards a conclusion some clarification and elaboration on this are in order. While it is true that such ritual practices are meant to destroy a farmer's 'economic enterprise' the main intention should not be taken to connote the rise of 'economic rivalry', since they might not actually be enacted to achieve 'economic ends'. Excepting rituals directed by middlemen against smallholder farmer (such as to 'impair' a farmer's marketing), the intention behind most of these acts could be to "retaliate" on behalf of one's grievances

القديم أنا الله لا اله الا أنا الرحمن الرحيم

على العرش استوى هو الله لا اله الا هو الحي



هو الله لا اله الا هو الحي

أنا الله لا اله الا أنا فاعلموني طين الملاء

which are brought about by minor disputes in the village community. Such disputes arise due to animal trespassing on others farms, or due to homicide etc. The context for this is that the resolution of such disputes is more normally sought with reference to a local traditional session referred to as a joudiya (see introduction). The joudiya brings about local people who are known to be far sighted in dispute resolution. These people are called the ajaweed and the disputants are required to comply with the verdict of the ajaweed. The ajaweed's approach to dispute resolution involves, among other things, "getting the miscreant to confess to his crime, promise not to repeat it again, and pay a specified fine (financial) to the aggrieved". Those who do not comply with the ajaweed's resolution will be denied the opportunity to summon these ajaweed for their own cases in the future. A joudiya is looked at as an ideal way of resolving local disputes away from court. However, some people might still be not happy with the ajaweed's verdict (though these might be a minority). It is these people who resort to 'retaliate' through other hidden practices, i.e., rituals. This supports the notion that these rituals do not give rise to "economic enemies" in the strict sense.

However, as I alluded before, the notion of "economic enemies" does apply when a middleman approaches a faki to perform a ritual with the intention to impair another farmer's marketing of his crop. Marketing is done with reference either to the local middlemen, local village, or away in the district town. Thus the performance of this ritual could entail denying such a farmer (the one targeted by the ritual) to fetch the best price from marketing his crop. The middleman could now divert the farmer from selling to 'others' (i.e. other merchants), and thereby secure the farmer's crop at a relatively low price. Though in this context the middleman might consider 'other' merchants as his main "economic enemies", the farmer himself could label this middleman as his "economic enemy", as this (ritual practice) directly interferes with his economic decision-making.

The question which forces itself here is why should the rise, albeit minimal, of these "economic enemies" not lead to local disputes and thereby adversely affect local people's 'harmonious life' ? The answer to this question lies in the fact that in the majority of cases what "causes affliction through ritual acts against others" is mere verbal accusations, mostly circulated through gossip. This point finds further support from our recognition that these ritual practices are performed with full privacy.

7.4 Conclusion:

Now we may conclude with reference to relevant literature on rituals and economic development. In this analysis of rituals we elaborated the commonly held notion that ritual practices generally consist of words (such as in amulets and dua) and deeds (actions by a faki or his client) - a point which has been stressed by Tambiah (1968: 175). It is recognized by both faki and his clients that though necessary for the efficacy of the ritual, words could not work effectively without the appropriate deed. For this reason ordinary people would hardly try to perform a ritual on their own even if they knew the 'powerful , or miraculous words'. Not only that, but ordinary villagers often argue that the handling of the ritual practices by a non-specialist could lead to negative results (such as madness, epilepsy etc.).

We have also made the point that even under the auspices of the ENSAP project some of these rituals continue to be practiced. Farmers used these religious rituals as 'instruments' to achieve particular ends. Two main points have been made in this connection. One finds support from Mary Douglas in her analysis of the relationship between technical advancement and religion, the other amounts to a critique to Douglas.

The argument which I have stressed here is that Hamar farmers resort to ritual performances when confronted with a problem to which they could not find a ready solution, given the constraints of the environment , technology and culture. They are confronted with a problem, have exhausted all their skills and means available, but they

still think they "have to do something about it". We have argued in the beginning, in line with Schultz (1964), that our Ghubeish farmers are very skilled and are efficient cultivators. Yet despite that skill they resort to the practice of religious rituals. Sense for this is provided by Douglas who argues that "in simple societies, people use gods as instruments primarily in situations where they feel they are at the mercy of the environment or other outside forces", [and that] often the result of any given activity of a small-scale society remains uncertain even when people's skills have been used to the utmost" (Douglas, 1964: 123).

However, Douglas' argument that "in the event of diseases, famine, or drought, a simple community is quite powerless to affect the outcome....But with the growth of technology comes an ability to control at least some of the natural forces; and so religion becomes concerned with other, less worldly matters" (Ibid: 123), seems implausible in the case of Hamar Muslim communities. Her argument is clearly along the lines of evolutionary theory which thinks of a unilineal transformation of traditional societies from simple to complex and that in the course of this event religion becomes overshadowed by scientific and 'rational' calculations. This point is not substantiated with respect to the farmers participating in the project and who are subjected to an intensive extension education. It also fails to find support in this context if we bring to the surface local people's conceptions about religion (which western anthropologists, such as Douglas, too often do not refer to, or even neglect, in their analysis). This neglect of local people's views and perceptions (to which this dissertation wishes to attract attention), is the primary reason behind the one-sidedness through which foreign anthropologists come to study other cultures. This issue will be clarified with respect to Hamar communities views about religion and economic change.

Common among the majority of western anthropologists who study Muslim communities is the tendency to "separate" religion (as seen by local people) and economic change and science. This is a total misreading of local people's views. Now

only that, they also impute their thoughts on local people. For local people, it is the centrality of religion (Islamic), with reference to the Supreme God, that lies at the heart of any economic change. In other words the major cause of economic change (whether positive or negative) is the Supreme being. It is also held that even in non-Muslim communities it "God who is behind their affluence or backwardness". This is explicit (in the verse which I quoted above), when I argued that misfortunes in Hamar communities are believed to have been sent to afflict those who committed wrong deeds. But, this should not be taken to imply that the more religious the community is, the more affluent it is. On the contrary it is believed that Muslim communities could be subjected to atrocities, as my informants say, "as a test by God, to see whether they observe Him during calamities of failure". Claiming support for such beliefs, Hamar Muslim communities are of the view that the present prosperity of the non-Muslim developed communities is ultimately "caused by God, in the form of test, rather than from their own advanced skills". Thus when during the 1984-85 famine American relief was sent to the affected Hamar communities local people had their own views on the source of this relief. Being one of the distributors of food relief in En Nahud town, and being able to read the information written on the sacks of food, I told a group of local people that " the source of this food is U.S.A., where economic advancement has resulted in affluence". The major synonymous reaction of the group was that " rather this relief is sent by God, America is but a means".

As for science, local people do not either separate science from religion and its relatedness to the concept of the Supreme being. Validation of their argument is also sought with reference the Quranic text, or, to Islamic knowledge in general. Thus it is commonly argued (by Hamar) that "knowledge (scientific or otherwise) can be bestowed by God onto Muslims who fear Him most". From what we have said it appears that not only can religion advance, or persist, in the face of rapid scientific and economic development, it can also be invoked as the primary engine of economic change and advancement. What can evolutionary theorists say about this?. Whatever

their answer might be, it is the case that Hamar Muslim farmers 'negate' evolutionary forecasts that the introduction of modern techniques can ultimately lead to the dissolution of religious establishments, and to their relegation to a so-called "less worldly matters", as Douglas (wrongly) wished to argue (Ibid: 123).

Chapter 8

Local Government

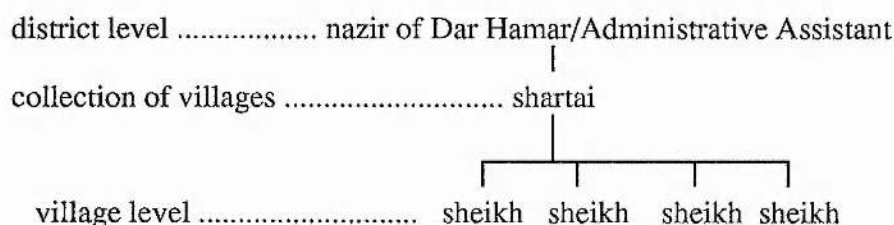
In chapter 5 we dealt with the goals and conceptions held by farmer-clients relating to development in their communities. We considered the way these goals and conceptions partly squared with the agency's goals and perceptions and partly diverged. In this chapter we will be dealing with local government and its past and present attempts at community development, enabling us to come to grips with further major factors (internal to the village community as well as external to it) that bear on community development. Also in chapter 5 I stated that I will be dealing here with local governments' representations of clients' perceptions. It is important to deal with local government for two main reasons. In the first place it is the local government which assumes the basic function of responding to needs for village development through effective planning for the rural people. Secondly it is important to see whether such planning for the rural people is acceptable to the people at the grass-roots.

Local government throughout northern Kordofan region in very recent times has seen minor adjustment to the system which resulted from the upheavals of independence and post-independence governments. The most pragmatic change in the administrative system has been the decentralization policy of the 1970's that resulted in the devolution of power to the provincial government system and at the same time, overhauled the traditional system. Thus throughout the project area the fundamental administrative units (the larger towns and villages) within the district have remained largely the same throughout history. The changes have concerned the power of the local level chiefs and the administrative offices which they fill due to changes in the whole government machinery in the centre. For instance, the current central government's policy which designates elected local level 'Salvation

Committees' implies the interference with the traditional power structure, relegating it to a less important position.

8.1 The Traditional System of Local Government :

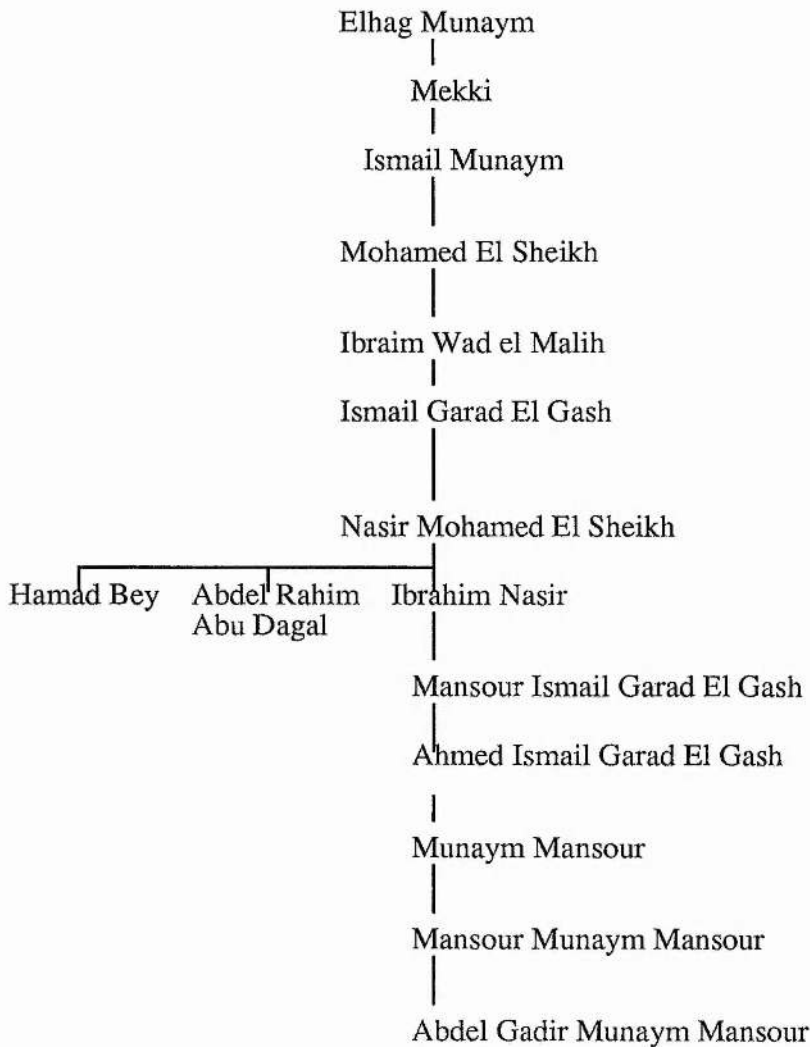
The traditional system of local government runs through the nazir (which can be translated as 'tribal boss'), the shartai at the lower level, and the village sheikhs. The nazir officiates on administrative affairs related to the villages at the district level. The shartai supervises a collection of villages (his main responsibility is to act as a link between the sheikh and the nazir concerning matters beyond the capacity of the sheikh), and the sheikhs administer a single or a couple of villages, together with the village areet. This hierarchical local government system can be represented by the following diagram:



The nazir at the district level is locally referred to as the nazir of Dar Hamar (since the area is mainly inhabited by the Hamar) and he is also the administrative assistant (assisting the administrative officers through advice on matters related to Dar Hamar) at the district council.

Sound coordination exists between the nazir's office and the other the local government departments. Tasks are coordinated with the police office, security office, the cooperative department, the administrative office at the district level and even the NGO's currently launching their community development projects in the area, including IFAD (International Fund for Agricultural Development), The RFPP (i.e Regional Finance and Planning Project: another project run by CARE in En Nahud),

ENSAP and the DPP (Displaced Persons Project run by CARE organization). The office of nazir is held through inheritance and since the British rule up to the present time it has lain with the single family of Elhag Munaym (see chapter 1). Among the well known nazirs from times past were Sheikh Munaym, Mekki Munaym, the latter's brother Ismail, and Mohamed El Sheikh around the time of Mahdist rule (towards the end of the last century). Subsequently the British assumed power and designated Ibrahim Wad el Malih (see leadership system below) in 1920 as the recognized chief. Subsequently, as the Hamar became sedentarized and grew in number this authority was inherited through members of the Hamar elites including Ismail Garad el Gash, Abu Dagal, Ahmed Ismail and then Munaym Mansour the father of the presently ruling family. The present nazir is known for his decisive word in the major administrative affairs and enjoys a respected social status among the villagers as well as at the district level. He is lauded for his talented approach to the settlement of disputes and the coordination of tribal conferences. Thus the locally known leaders through whom the office has been inherited include the following, down to the present holder, Abdel Gadir Munaym.



A local ancient story concerning the traditional leadership's coming to power runs as follows: [Elhag Munaym came to Dar Hamar as a pastoral nomad and later settled in the area. The then chief of the tribes in this area (a non-Hamar) , the Sultan Hussein, came into conflict with Elhag Munaym and the chief ordered Elhag Munaym to leave the area. Elhag Munaym turned the order down and the chief's followers arrested him and kept him inside a well known as Um Dor which was then covered with a strong skin. Later on, Ismail, his son, assisted by the chief's slave was able to pull his father from the well . Elhag Munaym was still alive. He was taken by Ismail and the slave on a bed, like a dead man , into the village. Elhag Munaym then explained



nazir of Dar Hamar (middle) with the sheikh of Dirra (to his right) and the ENSAP Credit Officer.



nazir of Dar Hamar (middle) with the sheikh of Dirra (to his right) and other Salvation Committee members.

his survival in the well to the chief who was surprised. Elhag Munaym told the chief that he was assisted by 'an act of God' according to which he was able to feed on watermelons throughout his time inside the well. Then the chief ordered Elhag Munaym to be the leader of the tribe and he was given the nahas (chiefly drums).

During the rule of Nasir Mohamed El Sheikh in the second half of the last century conflicts over tribal leadership arose and sub-divisions of tribal chieftainship emerged representing the three main sub-divisions of the Hamar tribe. Thus Hamad Bey emerged as nazir for the Dagageem; Abdel Rahim Abu Dagal for the Gharaysia, and Ibrahim Nasir for the 'Asakira section. After the office was assumed succeeded by the family of Garad El Gash, represented by Mansour Ismail and his brother Ahmed Ismail, the British government stepped in and appointed Munaym Mansour as nazir of all Dar Hamar in order to resolve the tribal conflict. This is how the nazir's office came to be conferred on the presently ruling family, represented by Abdel Gadir Munaym].

In the past a local omda was assigned the responsibility of settling minor issues coming to the district court. The omda ranked next to the nazir, but today the omda's office in the civil court is independent of the traditional administrative system; thus if the omda fails to settle minor disputes at the district level the case is raised to the judge. ENSAP's loan defaulters were expected to be prosecuted mainly through these channels.

Most of the villages in the project area are similar in terms of political structure; they each constitute what can be described as a natural community. Power in the community is vested in the sheikh; it therefore follows that only powerful sheikhs are able to mobilize community action for village improvement. The villages' remoteness from the main towns and government offices at the district level has meant that the government authorities, being weak financially, are not well placed to render social

welfare services to the village communities. The table below furnishes some data on the social services in the seven district councils of En Nahud:

Comparison of the social services in the seven councils of En Nahud district.

Table (32): Social services in En Nahud District council:

rural

council	doctors	clinics	first aid	health assistant unit	health officer	schools	water-yard	wells	markets
Ghubeish	2	2	3	16	-	51	54	69	4
Odaya	-	2	1	6	-	31	23	36	7
En Nahud	5	8	3	14	1	57	12	17	1
Wad Banda	N.a	6	2	5	-	34	20	31	2
Sug'al Jamal	-	-	2	3	-	20	24	34	2
El Khwei	-	2	6	5	-	37	14	23	3
Abu Zabad	1	4	2	7	-	53	26	31	2

Source: District council, En Nahud, 1990.

Given the population in each district council (see chapter 4, Ghubeish rural council currently has a total population of 110,000 persons), and given the remoteness of villages from the sites of the services, it is crystal clear that the social services for the whole district are meagre. All the same, farmers expect the local government authority to provide their communities with basic infrastructural facilities in return for their financial contributions to the local government in the form of taxation on agricultural producers.

8.2 Effect of Government Taxation on the Farmers:

The village farmers are obliged to pay marketing taxes to the local government on a per kantar basis. They have two alternatives if directly marketing their crops. They may transport the crop to the market in the towns, sell it at the fixed price (the

government fixes the prices for the groundnuts and gum Arabic crops) and then pay the taxes. Or, they may pay the taxes to government officials, receive a document showing the payment of the taxes, and then go to the crop market to sell his crop at the fixed price. But the farmers opt to sell their crops to local merchants at reduced prices and let the merchants pay the taxes. The latter policy stipulates that the producers pay the ushur (crop taxes) which was estimated at 15% of the crop value.

8.3 Zakat (alms):

Zakat is the Islamic tax which the producers pay out of the proceeds from agricultural production. According to the prophetic tradition the zakat becomes due a year hence on present investment or liquid money being saved over that period of time if it has reached a nisab (lit. a specific minimum level on which zakat becomes a must). It is usually paid to the poor (whom the donor chooses).

The zakat usually amounts to one quarter of a tenth of the total income. This differs from zakat on agricultural production which is usually one tenth of total production (given out immediately after harvesting). In the project communities the percentage of farmers who are reported to have paid zakat on crops for the 1988 season was 29%, and the average amount for all the farmers was LS 27.2, total each (Base Line Survey, 1989:25).

Zakat is also collected by the Zakat Office at the district council located at En Nahud. The office (also referred to as Diwan El Zakat) for its part allocates zakat to the poor according to Islamic law. Diwan El Zakat in En Nahud town had made an enormous contribution in respect of collecting zakat and redistributing it to the poor. This is one of the pragmatic steps made by local government authorities in their attempt to assist the needy and to bridge income inequality. However, the zakat is mainly contributed by the producers and, therefore, it partially reflects

the contribution which the producers make in respect of the national economy since the zakat is paid out of the total revenue of the crop marketed through the official channels at the district town. The table below provides estimates for the zakat collected in En Nahud by Diwan El Zakat for the past four years.

Table (33)

Estimates of the zakat over the past four years:

Year	1986/87	1987/88	1988/89	1989/90
Zakat (LS)	23845.47	50808.81	120207.03	833493.64

Source: District council, En Nahud, 1990.

The table shows that the producers' contribution to the zakat as continuously rising throughout the period 1986-1989/90. However, during the drought period of 1990/91 the contribution of producers to the zakat office dramatically dropped to less than that of the 1986 level, though figures were not, then (1991), ready to report at this stage.

8.4 Transportation And The Farmer:

The poor transportation system of the area has resulted in only sporadic contact between the village producers and the large town markets located at Ghubeish and En Nahud. The remote and isolated villages such as El Halfaya tend to be most handicapped as regards accessibility to these markets. In transportation from El Halfaya to En Nahud a farmer would spend a period of three to four days away from home. The remoter the village from the main market towns , the more the dependence on middlemen for the marketing of smallholders' crops and the more the under-valuation in farmers' selling prices.

Inter-village transportation is very difficult and is largely through donkey and camel transport. The sandy topography renders travelling by lorry a difficult

task. This had led to the development of minor markets located at a handful of large villages attended on a weekly basis by the majority of the neighbouring villages. Such markets, located at Sharfa, Kileijow, Abu Rai and El Sug'a have become a nuclei for middlemen who regularly come there to collect the crops cheaply supplied by smallholder producers. These middlemen are mercantile channels for a series of wholesale merchants based at the larger market towns of En Nahud and Ghubeish.

Despite the poor infrastructure and the transport system the contribution of farmers to the local economy is appreciable. The table below provides estimates of the total amount of the main cash crop (groundnuts) marketed at En Nahud market, and the sales revenues.

Table (34)

Amount of the groundnuts crop supplied at En Nahud market and the sales prices for the period 1981-1990.

Year	amount (per kantar)	Sales price (per kantar)	Revenues (LS)
1981	246000	13	3,198,000
1982	131000	17.5	2,292,500
1983	104000	23	2,392,000
1984	69000	26	1,794,000
1985	194000	47	9,118,000
1986	261000	55	14,355,000
1987	284000	55	15,620,000
1988	664000	72	47,808,000
1989	286806	131.25	37,643,287
1990	26 396	N.a	

Source: En Nahud crop market, 1990.

The table shows an increasing trend of farmers' production for the market despite the bottle-necks of transport. However, the bulk of the crop supplied at En Nahud market is collected by the middlemen from the weekly village markets at reduced prices and is transported by these middlemen to the town market. Thus, the table does not reveal the amount of income for the producer as a considerable part of this agricultural revenue flows to the middlemen in the form of under-estimated sales prices. It has been argued that the total percentage of profit accruing to middlemen upon the purchase and resale of the smallholders' crops during the 1978 period was equivalent to 40% (conference paper, 1978).

Overall, this under-valuation of the producers' crop prices is partly attributable to the poor transportation system and partly to the government's taxation policy. A small amount is also levied by the government authority on the farmer which

was meant to finance aljuhda sha'abi projects (also referred to as al a'wn el thati). However, the farmers are of the opinion that their financial contributions to the local government are destined to subsidize projects aimed at the improvement of the main towns rather than being directly spent on local projects for village improvement.

In the table below we provide estimates for the other cash crop, the gum Arabic which is also supplied to En Nahud market. Gum Arabic provides additional income surplus necessary for the household's realisation of the extra household cash needs.

Table (35)

Total amount of the gum Arabic crop supplied at En Nahud market and the sales prices over the period 1985- 1990:

Year	amount (per kantar)	sales price (LS per kantar)	annual revenues (LS)
1985	64956	111	7,210,116
1986	83591	360	30,092,760
1987	45771	449	20,551,179
1988	155786	420	65,430,120
1989	88665	445	39,455,925
1990	166741	450 (estimated)	75,033,450

Source: En Nahud crop market, 1990.

Production of the gum Arabic crop has resulted in the diversification of the traditional farming system; in this a cash crop is harvested after the sale of the principal farm crops (millet, groundnuts, sesame, sorghum), around December. As such practice has not conflicted with the traditional farming practices ENSAP had also encouraged it as it partially contributes to the repayment of project loans from the sales revenues.

8.5 Local Government's Contribution To Community Improvement:

Efforts on the part of the local government to improve the well-being of the local communities have been sporadic and most of its plans remain largely as paper prescriptions. One of the most important efforts was the First Conference For the Development of the Western Area of Northern Kordofan (FCDWANK) launched in 1978. As this particular conference represented local government's goals and aims in planning for the interests of the local people we should try to establish the major issues to see whether the conference represented the goals and aims of the local people at the grass-roots and whether it was acceptable to them.

In anticipation of the conference local officials and scholars were called to conduct local surveys touching on various development aspects in the area and to provide their conclusions which should ultimately be addressed by the local government in its main development plans for the 1980's and 1990's. The major issues covered by the conference, and which provided the basic planning target aims of local government, were the following:

- a) The role of cooperatives in resolving credit problems.
- b) Agricultural industrialisation in the western area.
- c) The role of marketing in the development of the western area.
- d) Grazing belts around the towns.
- e) Agricultural crops and their effects on the development of the natural resources.
- f) Consumption goods and the western area.
- g) Banks and their effects on the development of the western area.
- h) marketing the animal resources in the western area.
- i) Education and culture.

In the space below I will touch only on the main conclusions and recommendations of the conference as these were intended to reflect the views of the people at the grass-roots.

The conference papers viewed the major problem facing the agricultural producers to be that of marketing farm crops - a situation which had resulted in farmers' failing to realize the value of their crop and the development of the middlemen and the sheil system. The solution was said to lie with the encouragement of production and marketing cooperatives which would empower the local producer to market his crop at reasonably lucrative prices.

Another recommendation viewed the fixing of a minimum price payable by the purchasing agent to lead to greater income accruing to the producer; this should be supported by proper official supervision of the village markets against illegal exploitative practices by middlemen. Improvement of roads was also viewed to lead to the partial solution of the farmers' marketing problem.

A third recommendation saw the encouragement of an Agricultural Bank to supply credit to the small farmer as the most effective solution of the problem of low productivity and also to lead to the eradication of the sheil system.

The fourth point emphasized by the conference was the creation of grazing belts with seedings of the crops already produced by the farmers, such as the gum Arabic tree. This was especially recommended as it squared with the objectives of the six year plan of the central government (1977/1983) which put a lot of weight on the creation of grazing belts in the western area of Kordofan region. The need to create such grazing belts was to correct the fact that a large part of the area stayed ungrazed due to the lack of water resources, and this had aggravated

competition from the nomadic population on the limited grazing areas that were available.

The fifth point recommended the encouragement of the marketing of the livestock production in order to boost income inflow through the exportation of animals outside the district thereby attracting lucrative 'foreign' finance. It has been argued by local veterinaries that the Hamar sheep is the best type of sheep in the world in its high resistance to diseases and in its patience during migration from the grazing sources to the towns and water sources. It was also observed (without, however, understanding the reasons) that the total number of animals supplied at the market town was small in relation to the total number owned by the rural households. The figures below are believed by local government authorities to be less than the total animal ownership (this is, however, a rough estimate, since no figures are given which confirm this statement; local officials say it is difficult to provide accurate figures on the animal population due to movement while grazing and because owners underestimate the number for fear of being taxed).

Table (36) Number of animals supplied at En Nahud livestock market , 1976/77.

Type	1976/77	Total number of animals (estimated)
sheep	32000	458,233
camels	5000	152,450
cattle	16000	242,260
goats	8000	379,042
Total value of animal wealth		LS 36,113,402

Source: conference papers, 1978, En Nahud district council.

Mis-identification of the causes of the under-supply of animals in the market town had resulted in the pin-pointing of two factors as being behind such under-supply.

These included:

a) the lack of veterinary services and b) the lack of adequate salt for animal consumption and of water sources. However, in chapter 6 we have argued that the main reason animals are kept by local farmers is to store their wealth at least so long as the amount of income at the producer's disposal is deemed inadequate to cover the basic cash needs of the household. This means that any attempt at inducing the local farmer to sell his animals is doomed to fail unless it accounts for the real reasons underlying the predilection to withhold animals from the merchant.

A few remarks on the conference's recommendations are attempted here which would enable us link the analysis with chapter 5, concerned with the perceptions and goals of the people at the grass-roots. Given the conference's agenda the recommendations amounted to the local government's representations of the local peoples' interests; and we should see whether such planning is acceptable to them and the extent to which it diverges from their own conceptions of community development.

Towards the end of 1980's the local district witnessed the establishment of the Cooperative department and the branch bank of the Agricultural Bank of Sudan (ABS), both of which were meant to attend to local producers' problems concerning economic development, as stated in the recommendations of the 1978 conference. The ABS established in 1987, focuses its activities on rain-fed traditional agriculture and provides its loans through three basic channels. These include a) loans directly disbursed to individual farmers; b) loans provided through the farmers' union; and c) loans disbursed through cooperative societies.

Currently, the ABS disburses three types of loans: short term, medium term and long term loans. The short term loans are meant to meet the costs of agricultural

inputs and operations such as weeding and harvesting. The medium term loans are meant to cover medium term costs arising in respect of agricultural technology, weighing balances and trucks for transportation. The ABS stipulates that repayment of the short term loans be made within the same season immediately after the harvesting of the crops, i.e. within the 'crop mortgage period' of three to four months. Medium term loans should be repaid over three to four years in three to four equal instalments with a grace period of one further year. Long-term loans, on the other hand, extend over more than four years, and are mainly accessible to large-scale landowners and merchants who are able to offer collaterals to the bank as security on their loans.

In terms of loan charges the ABS claims an annual interest rate of 19% and accepts various types of properties as security. Among these are a) fixed assets and properties including buildings, land etc. , b) cash deposited in banks, c) cheques, e) saving premium bonds, f) movable assets including machinery, equipment and cars, g) security of the Ministry of Cooperation and h) security arising from the existence of a formal institution (e.g. cooperatives). However, due to weakness in the farmers' union and the risks of lending to individual farmers, the ABS stresses lending through cooperatives.

The ABS started its lending activities in 1987 with an emphasis on eight agricultural cooperatives in En Nahud rural council. The ABS did not follow the crop mortgaging policy for loan disbursement. This policy requires that the ABS guarantees to take only 30% of the crop's market value, leaving the remaining 70% at the farmer's disposal. This policy was considered by policy-makers as protection for the farmer against crop loss due to sales at reduced prices. Due to the ABS's neglect of this policy farmers marketed their groundnuts crops at a price of LS 30 per kantar while later the merchants resold the same crop at LS 80

for each kantar. However, in this first year the cooperative achieved 98% repayment on behalf of participating farmers.

The following year, 1988, the ABS followed the same policy which resulted in loan repayment rate declining to 80%. In the 1989 season IFAD project stepped in and started lending to smallholder farmers through the ABS. IFAD, however, did not inject any adjustment into the ABS policy and followed the latter's suit. The same decline in loan repayment was recorded with IFAD in its first year of operation. Note that IFAD works with smallholder farmers of Abu Zabad and En Nahud rural council, leaving ENSAP to work with Ghubeish smallholders.

In the main we find that the interests of smallholder producers are not correctly represented. The first criticism to be directed at the ABS stems from the bank's policy which inherently tends to favour the rich farmers, which relates to the ABS' policy of loan disbursement through farmers' agricultural cooperatives and farmers' trade union. Throughout the whole area such institutions draw membership largely from the most commercially-minded farmers who started production for the market long ago, especially through the sharaka system which draws a large number of labourers from Dinka migrants. Moreover, such institutions as cooperative agricultural societies were never fully appreciated by or developed in a significant section of smallholder producers which might potentially be targeted by lending projects - a fact well understood by local government machinery as the conference papers also indicated (e.g. conference paper on cooperatives). This applies equally for the farmers' trade union. The majority of Ghubeish smallholder farmers presently participating in ENSAP project are non-members in the farmers trade union whose office is based at Ghubeish town.

Smallholder farmers tend to see the farmers' trade union as favoring mainly those rich farmers based at the town of Ghubeish whom they considered to be

exploitative. Thus the farmers of Rasheed village remarked: "the trade union farmers of Ghubeish town tend to monopolize every opportunity which arises and would happily leave the mass of the small producers entirely dependent on the limited resources of the village community".

Another point which needs to be stressed relates to the ABS's 19% interest rate on the loans disbursed to individual farmers. As the majority of smallholder farmers residing in the remote rural villages are disposed by their Islamic beliefs to oppose the notion of interest, the ABS clearly failed to account for local culture.

ENSAP has successfully resolved this problem nonconfrontationally within the parameters of the local culture. Persuasion on the part of ENSAP credit staff had assured the reluctant smallholder producer that the CAS was meant to pay for transportation and the administration of project loans and are not intended as interest per se. This has resulted in a relatively great participation by the smallholder farmers targeted by ENSAP project.

With respect to the local government's recommendation encouraging local cooperatives in the village communities the smallholder farmers' own experience tends to negate the realism of such contention. While a large number of Ghubeish village communities still lacked cooperative consciousness (as the conference papers themselves were able to recognize) the majority of those villages which did approach the Cooperative Department office at the district town, En Nahud, failed in their genuine attempts at getting an officially registered cooperative society. Among these villages were Rasheed, Barnawi and Seranbi.

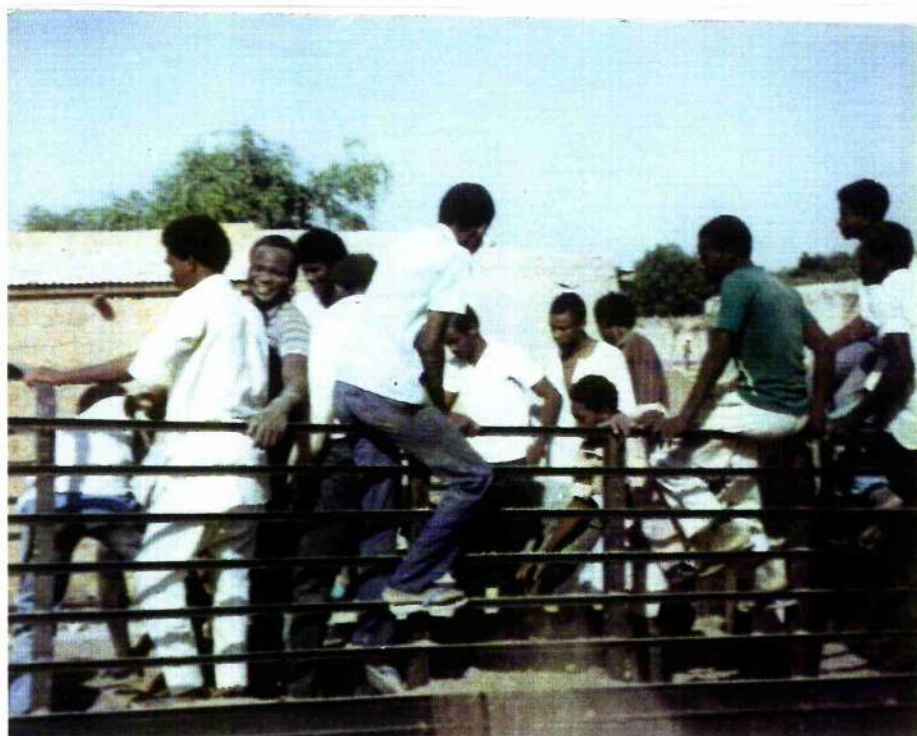
With respect to local government's efforts in the sphere of 'education and culture', as stated in the recommendations of the conference, local villages have not seen any

appreciable development apart from the staffing of the village elementary schools initiated through aljuhda sha'bi. Elementary school education was first introduced between 1911-1938 and reached its peak development after 1969 with the then government mobilized self-help (referred to as al a'wn althati) for the construction of schools. The western area of Northern Kordofan has about 95 elementary schools of which 65 were for boys and 30 for girls with a total of 25,000 pupils.

The effect of aljuhda sha'bi on boosting the educational system in the western area can be seen from the fact that all schools of secondary level were built through aljuhda sha'bi, with the exception of one secondary school built in 1949 and other secondary schools subsequently built around the past few decades.

Local villagers view the initiative to build elementary schools through aljuhda sha'bi as a practical attempt at getting the local government involved later on, for the practice indicates that the villagers have genuine concern for community development. We have presented the total number of schools in the area in table (31) above. This small number of schools tallies with the fact that about 90% of the Ghubeish communities targeted by ENSAP project today remain illiterate. Most of the village schools are faced with the problem of water shortage, especially during the summer which often forced them to temporarily close down.

The conclusion to be drawn from this account of local government efforts at community development is that despite the huge contribution which flows from the village to the district and, of course, to the centre, in terms of agricultural production and taxes, the inflow of government services is gravely insignificant. This experience with local government has resulted in the development of a negative attitude on the part of smallholder producers towards local government



A scene of aljuhdal sha'abi in En Nahud
(collection of soil for fencing an elementary school)



aljuhdal sha'abi groups in action: fencing an elementary school
in En Nahud: 1990.

officials and to projects initiated by local government departments such as the Cooperative Department. This negative attitude is, in turn, expressed in respect of local elites who achieved higher levels of education and occupy privileged positions in the main towns. Local people at the grass-roots remark that these elites, who join local government offices, tend to sever their links with the rural society and establish their own intellectual culture.

Most of these group work in the judiciary, executive, politics, universities and as administrative officers. But this gloomy prognosis on community development, as viewed on the part of the rural producer, has started to be over shadowed by the new paradise made available by an NGO (i.e. CARE) touted for its huge wealth with interests quite dissimilar to those of local government, and which purports to lift the most needy households from the vagaries of dire poverty.

In this chapter we have stressed matters which relate local government rather than the central government basically for three reasons. In the first place 'rural man' remains in much closer contact with local government machinery than he does with the central government. He needs it for the enrolment of his children in schools, for medication, for water supply for providing sanitary services to his village, for staffs to man the elementary schools built through aljuhda sha'abi, for trade licenses, and the like. Secondly, the local government also has greater knowledge than the central government of local needs and problems. The central government often has little interest in local communities.

Third, local government is viewed as being useful in adapting central government policy to meet local needs and in influencing future policy by keeping central government in touch with the interests of the local people (c.f Batten, 1954:132).

We have seen that the educated elite (who represented the panel of the conference) were able to express their views on community development, which

the local government ultimately adopted in its plans for the people at the grass-roots. However, as we have seen such views often conflicted with the views of the local people and were guided by the so-called "conventional wisdom which puts forward a particular view on the rural economy" (King, 1981:276). This conventional wisdom, as stated by King (1981:276) and which also squared with our analysis of local government goals prescribed by the educated elite in Sudan, include 1) agricultural investment does not take place because farmers are poor; 2) credit is necessary to help farmers to make investment; 3) informal credit is inadequate and grossly exploitative to farmers; 4) cooperatives provide a fair and democratic method of providing farmers with the formal credit which they need.

These views, which the educated elite held about local conditions surrounding the rural man did not reflect the reality as seen, and expressed by the people themselves. In chapter 6 we stated that even those farmers who were convinced by ENSAP staff to form cooperative societies were still indifferent about their choice. The example of Rasheed village tells this fact.

Lack of understanding on the part of these educated elite of the realities of the rural communities partly explains this misplaced judgement concerning the fitness of cooperatives for the local environment a vague belief that the cooperative ideology is correct in spite of the reality of its impact (1981:277).

A related factor which explains the educated elite's predilection for cooperative societies is the tendency of such a class to serve the interests of the government. Linking the concept of 'secure credit' with the creation of cooperatives points to this fact. 'Secure credit' in the sense of guaranteed repayment, is believed by this elite to be achieved through a cooperative society which is both financially and institutionally empowered to get its cooperative members to repay their outstanding loans. This, in turn, will ensure the sustainability of the credit

institution which is supposedly a government institution. However, even this belief of the educated elite did not find empirical justification in respect of the present-day lending institutions currently delivering credit services in the area. The table in page (285) shows the repayment performance of the lending institutions in En Nahud town. Suffice it to mention here that cooperatives do not necessarily lead to better loan repayment compared to lending to individual producers.

Contention on the part of the educated elite that the encouragement of agricultural cooperatives will also facilitate the marketing of the producers' crops through the cooperative channels further reflects this tendency to side with the interests of the government. Since the final destination of the crops marketed through farmers cooperatives is the government's Cooperative Department or the Cooperative Union, then this will ultimately imply that the government can evade offering incentive prices within its fixed price scheme (see above). The incentive price policy is usually meant to encourage farmers who produce for the market but who are handicapped by marketing bottle-necks which will lead to reduced income. But with cooperative marketing, precisely because such bottle-necks can be avoided the government need not offer such lucrative prices to the producer. Therefore, it partly follows that cooperatives are encouraged by these educated elite to serve exactly this purpose of increasing government revenue through the purchase of the producers' crop at the low prices fixed by the government. In the final analysis, then, this policy will conflict with the interests of the producer since it does not increase farmers income (see also, 1981: 278).

Finally, the cooperatives suggested by the educated elite, and also, by the local government conflict with local producers' ideology (which we referred to in chapter 5) of food self-sufficiency. This is mainly because cooperatives tend to encourage

the producer to increase production for the market at the expense of the food crops.

The case of the traditional native authorities, meanwhile, looks very different. These were recognized in the early days of the colonial rule because they were both acceptable to the people and reasonably representative of them (see also, Batten, 1954:137). And they still justify their continued recognition since they were able to retain these qualities. In chapter 2 we have seen that the village sheikhs played significant roles in respect of getting their villages to secure their local needs. Throughout the project area there was no single village which had not mobilized aljuhda sha'abi through its own local labour, financial and material resources for the realization of 'collective goods' for the community. The contribution of the traditional village leadership is quite appreciated by the rural masses who come to recognize the sheikh's representation of the local people independently of the local government system of which this traditional leadership is a part.

Conclusion

This dissertation is primarily concerned with discussing and exposing as full a range as possible of economic, social and cultural dimensions, both micro- and macro-, which have had a direct bearing on how a major development project - the ENSAP project - has unfolded. Within this context I have attempted to deploy a wide range of analytical ideas, extending over the disciplines of rural sociology, social anthropology and, to a degree, economics. Reference to these various disciplines has, indeed, been dictated by the nature of the rural development process itself: it is a multi-dimensional process (involving both qualitative and quantitative aspects) which should be grasped at a number of different levels and from several different perspectives.

In Sudan, the ENSAP project represents one of the most ambitious attempts at improving traditional rain-fed agriculture in Northern Kordofan region, and in En Nahud district in particular. This attempt was intended as a gradual breakthrough rather than as an abrupt, revolutionary break from the existing agricultural pattern. With the ambitious objective of raising agricultural productivity for smallholder farmers through the optimum use of land, labour and technological resources, the project implied an appropriate intervention with traditional agriculture. The programme envisaged an expenditure of \$ 2.8 million to go in the form of loans to poor smallholder farmers for consumption and agricultural production, the ultimate aim being to increase incomes from the cultivation of cash crops as well as to augment subsistence surplus from the production of food and jubraka crops.

The Ghubeish rural environment, as opposed to that in other rural councils of the district, was upheld for its better soil fertility conducive to agricultural development, and was viewed to pose no insurmountable technical problems. This provided the first

advantage for the agency to launch its programmes. The other advantage was the possibility of growing high-value food and cash crops (millet and groundnuts) which constituted, and indeed squared with, the major traditional crops in the area. Furthermore, the village communities themselves, having being left out of the development process on the part of the government, expressed an enthusiastic desire for improvement and welcome to the innovation. The approaches deployed in the analysis of the ENSAP project and which we summarized via the notion of 'eclecticism', included actor-centered and hermeneutic positions. This, besides its theoretical vigour, has allowed us to rid ourselves of accusations of value judgement and ethnocentrism that are common in social research. We have also resorted to ethnoscience when dealing with oral tradition, which could only be meaningfully accounted for with reference to records and the knowledge retained by the elderly generation (see chapter one).

The principles of hermeneutics are clearly reflected in the chapter dealing with the relation between the views, goals and conceptions of, respectively, agents and clients (chapter 5). We have illustrated this with reference to the agents' active attempts to come to grips with local customs and ideas concerning interest on loans, and the bases of the traditional leadership system. Also in the same chapter we have shown how the agents have made use of such pre-understanding by intensifying communication with the people at the grass-roots. This has enabled the agents to bridge some of the divergences in cultural values vis-a-vis the clients. In chapter 7, we also incorporated the hermeneutic approach, in discussion of rituals, religious beliefs and practices, to show that despite the introduction of new and seemingly better practices (as viewed by the agents) such as chemicals and pesticides and science-based agricultural production, the clients can yet continue their traditional practices (such as rameil) often with reference to ritual practices or 'local ways of reckoning' (as shown in the case of a'ina).

The project, however, despite a successful start, which was to a large extent the result of cooperation from the local community leadership who were brought in to assume the leadership roles in the project, is in too early a stage to be described as a blue-print for an agrarian breakthrough in the area. Smallholder farmers have expanded the area of land put into cultivation of the food and cash crops. Expansion in the area cultivated, however, has often gone hand in hand with an inadequacy of loans as well as with poor income gains from agricultural production. The latter deteriorated in the 1990 season due to severe rain shortage which led to crop failure. Some farmers also expressed their discontent, though it was not that serious, in the early periods of project implementation, relating to negative attitudes towards the notion of interest rate on loans. This was largely from the influence of religious people, and it affected not only the ordinary villagers but also some of the village leadership (as with the case of the sheikh of Seranbi). This, however, was in the main later eliminated due to the cooperation of the village leadership with the project agency.

Among the positive results smallholders remarked on as having being achieved from participating in the project were the stabilization of household personnel in their villages (rather than some members taking off on seasonal migration); the abandonment of the traditional sheil system, and the ability of a significant number of households to keep their animal herds from being sold to finance agricultural production. Despite the full crop failure of the 1990 season village farmers remarked that the project loans worked at least as a stop-gap (relief) against an impending famine which could have claimed a good number of their animals through sales to provide for subsistence. There are also some farmers who reported having been able to realize some surplus income which was spent on the purchase of animals. Interestingly, agency intervention has

come to be looked on by such farmers as an occasion which (since it will not last for ever in the village) needs to be "recorded as a memory". Symbols for the remembrance of the agency include the keeping of precious gold (the act of keeping gold being viewed as a prerogative of women married to rich men) on the part of a women who succeeded in realizing sizeable income gains from her jubra farm; and by one farmer naming one of his goats 'ENSAP' (i.e. after the project).

The adoption of the extension techniques is proceeding at a slow rate, the problem being mostly technical and relating to accessibility rather than farmer resilience. The relatively low agent/farmer ratio in the 1990 season easily explains the poor coverage of the extension component of the ENSAP project. ENSAP's approach to smallholder farming is of an exploratory nature and is strongly in favour of providing opportunities to the poor farmer to enlarge his investment capacity in agriculture with the assistance of loans and pest control inputs. Since labour was considered to be relatively abundant, attention was paid to labour intensive devices rather than interfering in traditional methods with capital intensive innovations. With respect to the expansion of the area cultivated the project has been largely successful in providing environmental control against the possibility of land degradation.

The most salient features of the ENSAP project are the close administration and supervision of project activities and the deployment of local human and material resources for project sustainability. Loan repayment, to ensure a secure project finance, was brought about through the jamaa approach which capitalized on 'peer pressure' and led to the avoidance of default. Another feature is the incorporation of village sheikhs in leadership positions with the project. The selection of PFs is careful and is accomplished with the assistance of the sheikhs. Information on the reputation of the candidates is also secured by reference to local government officials and the nazir

of tribe.

With regard to the number of the PFs and PVs covered the project has not been as successful as was originally planned. A major problem has been with fuel shortage which has affected the accessibility of project sites to project agents.

According to the project's approach, which stresses the goal of 'sustainability', the amount of supervision delivered by the AFEs to the PFs is assumed to be going to diminish every year as the project proceeds since PFs must have acquired the knowledge necessary for the adoption of good crop husbandry practices. Observation, however, shows that few farmers have actually improved their farm husbandry practices. Some farmers were either awkward, or else lacked interest, in following the recommended techniques. This was partly accentuated by the low yields from following the recommended techniques and which implied increased production costs to the farmer. Some farmers were disillusioned given their expectation that once they participated in the project they would become rich farmers in a short a period of time. These farmers relied on hired labour for the accomplishment of the agricultural operations and assumed the character of a landlord. Another group of farmers relied on the sharaka, despite the relative discontent with this partnership system. Ironically, the evaluation teams which the agency procures as consultants failed to observe the inefficiency of the sharaka system and hastened to recommend the encouragement and incorporation of the sharaka system into the project. My warning against such unconstructive recommendations is that the encouragement and incorporation of this system into the project will ultimately conflict with the objective of "significantly increasing the levels of income for the PFs of the project". The agency, however, recognizes the partial soundness of the traditional agricultural practices in smallholder farming and the approach it undertakes is largely one of rationalizing rather than

radically changing the traditional system.

A few remarks, selected from different chapters, are in order to sum up the work.

The outstanding feature of the Hamar is the individual's strong identification with the tribe (ahal). The gabila (lit. tribe), theoretically consisted of a group of families related by blood relationships of varying degrees (see Trimingham, 1949: 26). However, the tribe was sub-divided during the past century into various sub-divisions which resulted in its partial disintegration. Some of the sub-tribes (or khasim buyut) are grouped together under one name, such as the Dagageem and the Gharaysia, but in general the dominant element is the clan. Despite the multiplicity of the ethnic groups in the whole area the structure of the villages is simply based in the amicable social relations that the Hamar have developed with their co-residents such as the Berti, Zaghawa, Bidayria, Manana'a and Riyash. The absence of conflict between these tribal groups over tribal leadership has resulted, among other things, in a unity of interest and community cohesion. This later on facilitated the incorporation of the village leadership into the ENSAP project and contributed to the mass mobilization of village farmers for participation in the project.

What is also conducive to community development with regard to the project villages is that, despite the interlacing of ethnic groups, these did not come into conflict over land resources. The equality of access to land (distributed indiscriminately by the village sheikhs) implied that a large number of the poor families would have equal access to project loans and services. Other factors conducive to project success included the role village teachers came to play in respect of assisting village farmers to cooperate with the agency, which led to the labling of the teachers as "key persons" who spurred the process of village improvement.

In chapter 2 we also saw how the right to use land in another village contributed to unity and social cohesiveness. Meanwhile, the importance of 'social structure' as an aspect of community development was well illustrated. It was shown that membership in particular groups (domestic, neighbourhood, subdivision, ahal etc.) enabled the active recruitment of these members on behalf of the realization of economic goals. This applied whether at the level of the individual or at the level of the society at large. However, the existence of these common goals and interests are by themselves insufficient to enable project communities to adapt to the process of planned change. This is mainly because "as the goals of local communities change, so must they be able adapt their inherited structure" (Batten, 1953 :85), and the development of the community will be hindered if there is failure to encourage the development of suitable community structure. In the case of the ENSAP communities this adaptation has been well achieved through the institutionalization of the jamaa system which is an elevated form of the traditional 'group'.

The treatment of social structure is also designed to take account of notions of solidarity, which are too often equated with the concept of 'community' (see also, Batten, 1953:85). Thus my concern to come to grips with recruitment is a purposeful attempt to delineate the relationships which shape human interaction within the domestic unit, as well as within the community at large. Recruitment, which is a form of solidarity, presupposes the existence of common goals, interests and values (which we covered in chapter 5). But as development involves the creation of relationships over wider areas the analysis was also raised to take account of the intra-village relations outside the confines of the closed (household) corporate groups. It is this relationship between such corporate groups that is vital in the study of development since it becomes invoked during project implementation for participation in the project. We have seen that the larger social groups (jamaa) which meet at the sheikh's house

made use of these relationships for the recruitment of damins (guarantors) for the project loans, thereby ensuring participation in the project. Failure to account for the social relationships inhering in the process of community development has been utterly criticized by scholars of community development. Thus Batten (1953:86) argues that "in fact, a study of many community plans and progress reports indicates that community development is more often seen primarily as a problem of promoting material interests and goals than a problem of values and human relations".

A final remark, relating to chapter 7, dealing with ritual, religious beliefs and practices is appropriate to sum up. Ghubeish rural communities are influenced in their attachment to the land by the natural environment which has as its chief manifestations the type of soil fertility and the distribution of rainfall. The type of soil fertility and the amount of rainfall and its distribution set the upper limit to the time available for, and the crops that need be put into, cultivation (cf. De Wilde vol. 1: 26). These areas have been adapted to crop cultivation over a very limited planting and harvesting period and farmers have to make the best utilization of the limited amount and distribution of rainfall, as well as the prevailing soil fertility. The farmers, through inherited experience (which they argue they have acquired by "instinct") have come to terms with the frequent paucity of the rainfall. This has been built into their local repertoire of knowledge which is expressed in terms of assigning probabilities to the amount of rainfall as well as to its timing. This helped us grasp the strategies the farmers adopt by manipulating their knowledge of the surrounding ecology and the measures they take to make the best use of this knowledge. We have established, however, that much of this knowledge is not readily available to the young PFs since the bulk of it is retained by the elders and may in the present time be considered as merely "survivals" of the past. Thus when asked about the khariff signals on which farmers often depended for the start of their agricultural operation, only aged people were able to tell what these signals meant and

when they occur. However, despite being understood by an insignificant proportion of the PFs they have some implications for the ENSAP extension component since the elderly generation is able to pass on this knowledge to the younger generation. The implication of acting upon this knowledge when applying it to one's farms may be that some practices are, to borrow phrases (de Wilde: 27), pertinent to the types of crops one has been growing,...they may not be relevant to the new crops, improved varieties [particularly the ugandi millet variety] ..which may be [and indeed are] different in their requirements, for nutrient and water". Lack of knowledge on the part of the project agents about this local knowledge on which farmers based their agricultural decisions made their evaluations of the proper planting dates result in recommendations (such as the abandonment of rameil) which farmers often failed to apply. The implications also apply to the other ritual practices connected with agriculture which included the use of amulets , karama rituals and rain-making rituals.

By and large the 'eclectic' approach is clearly manifest throughout the different parts of the thesis. But it is mostly stressed in chapter 5, in the comprehensive discussion of the different subjectivities of the development agents and the actors. We have seen how these subjectivities arise from empirical events in the nation-state at large that have a bearing on what has prevailed in the local community. Aspects of these perceptions derive partly from the clients' previous and recent experiences with external agencies (including government representatives), and partly from stereotypes (and ideologies and values) held by both the development agents and their clients. We have also seen that such subjectivities ultimately constrain misunderstandings of the 'other side', but attempts to understand and communicate (both personally and through the newsletter, Daleel ENSAP, and by directly involving the clients in the project evaluation) have greatly reduced such misunderstandings. At the macro-level we have been able to come to grips with the subjectivities of local government agents only by dealing with the latter's plans in the

interests of local people (hence the shift in the analysis to deal with 'macro-processes'). In chapter five we showed that these plans are largely 'top-down' plans which diverge greatly from those of the people at the grass-roots. The government's neglect of local people has paradoxically stimulated the active involvement by local people in the process of community development through 'self-help' movements. This 'community vitality' feature (i.e 'self-help') has, in turn attracted the development agency's intervention in the interests of local people.

Appendix

Questionnaire

1. Name:
2. Age:
3. Marital status and family size?
4. Enumerate what you own from the following?
(i) cows (ii) sheep (iii) goats (iv) camels (v) donkeys
No.
5. The number of makhamasat devoted to cultivating the following crops?
(i) groundnuts (ii) millet (iii) sorghum (iv) sesame (v) watermelons
6. The No. of gum arabic makhamasat you hold?
7. Occupation other than farming?
8. What are the main problems which face you as a farmer?
9. What do you think the ENSAP agency is here for?
10. What changes has the agency introduced in your village?
11. Does the loan you receive from the ENSAP agency meet your needs?
12. If the loan is inadequate, to which of the following alternatives do you opt?
i. sale of animals ii. borrow from sheil merchants iii. borrow from
relatives iv. off-farm work v. hire-out your labour in others' farms
vi. other sources specify).
13. Do you practise skaraka? if yes how many labourers do you recruit
yearly?
14. How long have you been practising sharaka?
15. Why do you prefer sharaka to the hired labour system?
16. How and where do you store your crops?

17. What chemicals do you use to combat farm pests? who supplies these?
18. What can you say about the jamaa system?
19. who are the members of these jamaa? are they related by kinship?
or by neighbourhood? or ethnically related? or other, specify?
20. what is your relation with your damin? a) a relative b) neighbour
c) other (specify)?
21. What did the village people accomplish through aljuhda sha'abi?
e.g. building schools, mosques, health units etc. ?
22. Does the village have a cooperative or an association? why opt for one rather than the other?
23. How many nafirs did you summon this year? and how many nafirs did you attend?
24. what is your opinion about the village sheikh? is he really concerned about community development?
25. Give an overall view of the ENSAP project, its goals and aims, and compare these with the goals and aims of the villagers? again, compare these with those held by local government officials?

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