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Rukwa Ruka

The attempt of a foreign donor to uplift a neglected region:
A study of the impact of Norwegian aid to Rukwa Region, Tanzania

Alf Morten Jerve
E.J.K. Ntemi

R 2009: 12



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Photos by study team, RECODA or Sumbawanga District Community Development Department.
Old photos provided by Stanley Mshana.

Front page based on photo by Ingrid Ramsøy showing irrigated fields in Msanzi village,
Sumbawanga District, where RUDEP supported agricultural development for several years.

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Contents

FOREWORD.....	V
LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS, ACRONYMS AND NON-ENGLISH TERMS.....	VII
1. INTRODUCTION.....	1
1.1 PURPOSE OF THE STUDY AND MAIN QUESTIONS TO BE ANSWERED.....	1
1.2 RUKWA RUKA – A PROMISE NOT YET FULFILLED.....	4
2. DEVELOPMENT TRENDS OF RUKWA REGION.....	9
2.1 FREQUENT CHANGES IN POLICY.....	9
2.1.1 <i>Regionalisation</i>	9
2.1.2 <i>Villagisation</i>	10
2.1.3 <i>Economic policy failure</i>	11
2.1.4 <i>Public sector in crisis</i>	11
2.1.5 <i>Dramatic policy shifts from mid 1980s</i>	12
2.2 ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT.....	13
2.3 POVERTY NOT DECLINING.....	18
2.4 PUBLIC SECTOR FINANCES IMPROVING BUT LOCAL TAXATION DOWN.....	21
2.5 SUMMARY.....	23
3. THE RUDEP APPROACH.....	24
3.1 THE IDEAS.....	24
3.2 PRINCIPLES FACING THE REALITY.....	25
3.3 A LESS THAN HONOURABLE EXIT.....	38
4. THE OUTPUTS OF RUDEP AND THE SITUATION TODAY – MAIN AREAS OF INTERVENTION.....	43
4.1 IMPROVEMENT OF HEALTH THROUGH PREVENTIVE MEASURES.....	44
4.1.1 <i>Water supply: the most tangible outcomes</i>	44
4.1.2 <i>Primary health care: changes in health seeking behaviour</i>	50
4.1.3 <i>Education: only a modest start</i>	54
4.2 IMPROVEMENT OF LAND USE.....	55
4.2.1 <i>Agriculture: small but significant efforts</i>	55
4.2.2 <i>Forestry: an uphill battle</i>	61
4.3 IMPROVEMENT OF INFRASTRUCTURE.....	67
4.3.1 <i>Rural roads: creating immediate benefits</i>	67
4.3.2 <i>Kasanga port: today a major success</i>	69
4.4 AREA DEVELOPMENT THROUGH PARTICIPATORY PLANNING AND SELF-HELP: EFFECTIVE BUT RESOURCE DEMANDING.....	70
4.5 ECONOMIC PRODUCTION AND SMALL-SCALE INDUSTRY: A NON-STARTER.....	74
5. IMPACTS OF RUDEP: WHAT IS THE RUDEP LEGACY TODAY?.....	75
5.1 IMPACTS ON THE ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL CONDITIONS OF THE POOR.....	76
5.2 IMPACTS ON GENDER RELATIONS.....	79
5.3 IMPACT ON THE ECONOMY OF THE REGION – THE GDP.....	81
5.4 IMPACTS ON THE ENVIRONMENT.....	82
5.5 IMPACTS ON PUBLIC INSTITUTIONS.....	84
5.6 IMPACTS ON PRIVATE SECTOR.....	86
5.7 IMPACTS ON CIVIL SOCIETY.....	87
5.8 IMPACTS ON POLICY OF LESSONS LEARNED.....	88
5.9 IMPACTS AT THE INDIVIDUAL LEVEL – HUMAN RESOURCES DEVELOPMENT.....	90
6. LESSONS FOR THE FUTURE.....	92
6.1 WHAT SURVIVED THE ABSENCE OF AID AND WHY?.....	92
6.2 CAN RUDEP CLAIM ANY ‘BEST PRACTICES’?.....	93
6.3 HOW TO EXIT AID?.....	95
7. REFERENCES.....	97

Maps

Map 1	Tanzania	6
Map 2	Rukwa Region	7
Map 3	Ecological zones in Rukwa Region	8

Tables

2.1	Human Development Index – regional comparison (2000)	19
2.2	Health status and health service indicators, Rukwa vs. national	19
2.3	Percentage of households with piped or protected drinking water Rukwa Region, 1974-2005	20
2.4	Local government authorities: budget figures 1998/99-2006/07	22
2.5	Development levy and other revenue collected, Rukwa Region	22
4.1	RUDEP expenditures by programme areas	43
4.2	Rukwa Region water supply coverage – 1995	48
4.3	Changes in primary health indicators during RUDEP	54

Figures

1.1	Analytical framework	3
2.1	Agricultural production, Rukwa Region, 1989/90 to 2005/06	13
2.2	Production of rice, potato and sunflower 1989/90 to 2005/06	14
2.3	Crop diversity 1989/90 versus 2005/06	15
2.4	Population growth, Rukwa Region	18
2.5	Net enrolment in primary school	21
2.6	Sumbawanga District Council budget trends	23
3.1	Diverging orientations in aid relationships	35

Foreword

The then incoming Norwegian ambassador to Tanzania – Mr. Jon Lomøy – approached Mr. Alf Morten Jerve in 2007 about his wish to have a study made of Norway’s involvement in Rukwa Region. To Jerve, this was an exciting opportunity to reflect on the achievements and failures of a development aid intervention to which he was intimately familiar. In 1986, Jerve assumed the position as the first Coordinator of the Rukwa Integrated Rural Development Programme, better known as RUDEP. In April that year he started sharing an office with five planning officers of the Regional Planning Office – *Mipango* – with the mandate to assist the Regional Development Director build a new multi-sectoral programme financed by NORAD. Mr. E.J.K. Ntemi was among the planning officers, having selected Rukwa as his first posting when he graduated as regional planner in 1980.

However, Jerve was not at all the first Norwegian to the Region. A project for securing safe drinking water to villages in the Region was in full swing, and he joined a sizeable community of Norwegians living in the “NORAD Compound” in Sumbawanga. By the time he left Rukwa, in 1989, the expatriate community in Rukwa had further increased. It consisted not only of Norwegians and numbered close to fifty with family members. There was even a Norwegian primary school.

Lomøy himself has also been part of this history, first as a member of the planning mission that in 1984 outlined the first concept of a multi-sectoral aid programme, and subsequently as Programme Officer with the Norwegian Embassy in Dar es Salaam having RUDEP as one of his responsibilities. When Jerve raised the issue of whether his personal involvement with the programme would disqualify him from doing this study, Lomøy responded that he regarded prior knowledge of the Region and RUDEP as invaluable to be able to assess the longer-term impacts of a programme that ceased in 1996. In the same vein, it was suggested that Jerve teamed up with Ntemi since he had been closely involved with RUDEP from the start, including as Coordinator (from 1993 to 1995).

Hence, this is not an independent study in the conventional sense, but with the time that has past we believe it has been possible to have a rather unbiased view of what we were once part of. In addition, to have also an outsider’s view on the RUDEP legacy, an Arusha-based NGO experienced in participatory research – RECODA, with no prior involvement in the Region, was contracted. The RECODA team carried out its own field work prior to Jerve and Ntemi, and have submitted an independent report which is a major source for what is presented below.

This Study commenced with a planning visit to Dar es Salaam in June 2007 by Jerve, involving archival search at the Norwegian Embassy, and a reconnaissance visit to Rukwa in September by Ntemi and RECODA. November 16-17, 2007 a ‘RUDEP Impact Assessment Workshop’ was held at Kibaha with 25 participants of whom 20 came from Rukwa representing government departments, NGOs and the private sector. The rest were former RUDEP project officers now working elsewhere. RECODA did its fieldwork in January 2008 and a follow-up visit in June 2008. Besides interviewing people with knowledge of RUDEP, the team visited four rural areas where RUDEP was active, namely Mwimbi and Muze Divisions in Sumbawanga District, Namanyere Division in Nkasi District, and Mpimbwe Division in Mpanda District. In each area attempts were made to compare a village with a concentration of RUDEP activities to a village that had not received similar benefits. Did people recognise differences in impact and how did they relate the development situation today to past interventions of RUDEP? In the absence of any statistical baseline information at household level, and with limited resources, it was decided to not to carry out a formal survey and to rely on personal and group interviews only.

Jerve and Ntemi visited Rukwa three weeks in April-May 2008 and partly covered the same ground as RECODA. They interviewed key informants in Sumbawanga, Nkasi and Mpanda districts, and visited villages in Mwimbi, Mpimbwe, Kirando and along the roads rehabilitated by RUDEP – Sumbawanga-Mwimbi-Ulumi, Mwimbi-Kate, Ntendo-Muze, and Chala-Namanyere. They also visited Msanzi village (regarding an irrigation project), the Mbizi forest reserve (which is the catchment area for the water supply to Sumbawanga) and potato growing villages close to the former Nkundi agricultural research station.



The authors at the Regional Block in Sumbawanga – once the location of the RUDEP Office

We want to acknowledge the assistance extended to both teams by the Regional Administrative Secretariat, through Mr. Mwembezi, Assistant Regional Administrative Secretary, and Ms. N. Kalimang'asi, Planning Officer. Thanks also to

Mr. B. Onesmo, Community Development Department, Sumbawanga District Council, for organising the Rukwa delegation to the Kibaha workshop. Special thanks go to Ms. W. Swai for her company and assistance when visiting Mwimbi, Nkasi and Mpanda. Thanks also to Ms. Ingrid Jerve Ramsøy, master student, who provided valuable research assistance, besides revoking childhood memories from the Region. Finally, our appreciation goes to the Norwegian Embassy for a challenging assignment which we believe gives the reader a fair account of what was achieved under the circumstances prevailing during and after the RUDEP era. What imperfections this assessment still retains are, of course, entirely our responsibility.

We dedicate this study to the people of Rukwa in the hope that the slogan '*Rukwa Ruka* (Make Rukwa Fly)' one day will become a reality.

Bergen and Dar es Salaam
August 2009
Alf Morten Jerve and E.J.K. Ntemi

List of abbreviations, acronyms and non-English terms

<i>Afya</i>	health (Health Department)
AMREF	health development organisation headquartered in Nairobi
CCM	<i>Chama Cha Mapinduzi</i> (Party of the Revolution)
CPHE	Community Participation and Health Education
DRC	Democratic Republic of Congo
<i>Elimu</i>	education (Education Department)
ESRF	Economic and Social Research Foundation
<i>fait accompli</i>	something already done and hence cannot be changed
GDP	Gross Domestic Production
GOT	Government of Tanzania
GTZ	German agency for technical cooperation (<i>Gesellschaft für Technische Zusammenarbeit</i>)
HQ	headquarters
ILO	International Labour Organisation
IMF	International Monetary Fund
IRDP	Integrated Rural Development Project
KIDEP	Kigoma Integrated Rural Development Programme
<i>Kilimo</i>	agriculture (Agriculture Department)
LGSP	Local Government Support Programme
MAD	Mwimbi Area Development project
<i>Maendeleo</i>	development (Community Development Department)
<i>Maji</i>	water (Water Department)
<i>Maliasili</i>	natural resources (Natural Resources Department)
<i>Miombo</i>	Swahili word for <i>Brachystegia</i> , a tree species family common in certain woodland savanna eco-regions
<i>Mipango</i>	planning (Planning Office)
MP	Member of Parliament
NCA	Norwegian Church Aid
NGO	Non Governmental Organisation
NMC	National Milling Corporation
NOK	Norwegian <i>kroner</i>
NORAD	Norwegian Agency for International Development
Norad	Norwegian Agency for Development Cooperation (from 2004)
RAAWO	Rukwa Association for the Advancement of Women
RANGO	Rukwa Association of Non Governmental Organisations
READ	Regional Economic Affairs Department
RECODA	Research, Community and Organisational Development Associates
RUDEP	Rukwa Integrated Rural Development Programme
RURECU	Rukwa Regional Cooperative Union
SIDO	Small Industries Development Organization
TShs	Tanzania Shilling
TBA	Traditional Birth Attendant
<i>Ujenzi</i>	Construction (Works Department)
UN	United Nations
UNHCR	United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees
USD	US dollar
VIP	Ventilated Improved Pit-latrine
VHW	Village Health Workers
VSO	Voluntary Service Overseas (UK-based)
WHO	World Health Organisation

1. Introduction

1.1 Purpose of the study and main questions to be answered

From 1978 to 1996 – a period of 18 years – a close link existed between one of Tanzania’s least developed regions and Norway. This unlikely relationship, backed by a development aid policy to reach “the poorest of the poor”, resulted in a total of 400 million Norwegian *kroner* (NOK), or about 70 million US dollar (USD), being invested in Rukwa Region directly or through equipment and foreign experts.¹ A large number of Norwegians, and other foreigners paid by Norway, worked and lived in the region and an even larger number came by road or plane to see what was going on. What became known as the Rukwa Integrated Rural Development Programme, or RUDEP in short, was for a period a Norwegian showcase attracting high level visits, until the tide turned against the programme and the aid concepts upon which it had been founded. In 1994, NORAD² announced its decision to terminate its engagement in Rukwa as from July 1996, long before what had been envisioned at the start. Twelve years have passed since, but it is still not too late to reflect on what the Norwegian involvement achieved. Has anything passed the test of time?



A group of Norwegian parliamentarians visited RUDEP in 1990

In the wake of any planned development intervention, by government or private initiative, follows the unavoidable question: did it work? Politicians and sponsors want to know, and so would the intended beneficiaries as well as the people

entrusted with the implementation. But the answer is never straightforward. One may disagree on what results to look for, and in any event there is rarely a direct causal relationship between a particular intervention and social and economic change at large since many other factors will also play a role. The easiest part is to look at the immediate outputs. Did the project achieve its targets in terms of kilometres of roads or water supply schemes constructed, people trained or trees planted? The next question is whether these achievements were sustainable. Are the roads maintained and generate traffic today? Do people continue to benefit from clean water? Was the training put into good use? Are the trees maturing?

¹ For easy reading we use the term aid rather than the more official term ‘development assistance’.

² At the time of RUDEP the Norwegian Agency for International Development, later called Norwegian Agency for Development Cooperation, was responsible for managing Norwegian bilateral aid. The official acronym was ‘NORAD’, and we use this form in our report. This role was changed in 2004, when the agency, with its new acronym ‘Norad’, was turned into a technical advisory body for the Ministry of Foreign Affairs now managing bilateral aid.

In this study we attempt to answer such questions, but we also want to address the overall question: *did Norwegian development aid to Rukwa contribute to long-term improvement in people's living standard?* This was the overall goal. Our answer is not a simple yes or no, and we are not in the position to quantify any such impacts. What we do in this study is to trace links between what Norway supported and development outcomes as they are observable today. An important part of this analysis has been to inform ourselves about the context within which Norwegian aid operated, the way it was designed and managed and what has happened in the region after RUDEP ended.

The broad goal of Norwegian aid to Rukwa Region was to improve the material well-being of the people. It started in 1978 with the planning of a programme to secure safe drinking water to all villages, which led to a Water Supply and Sanitation project from 1982. RUDEP started on a small scale in 1986 as a multi-sectoral programme, and became the umbrella for all Norwegian aid to Rukwa from 1988 to 1996. In its peak years from 1990 to 1994 the annual budget hovered around NOK 25 million – or almost USD 4 million³, excluding costs of expatriate personnel.

What were the results? To what extent was this successful? Are current livelihood conditions in Rukwa in some way related to the investments of RUDEP, more than 10 years after the end of the programme?

To answer these questions we have to distinguish between what happened when RUDEP was active and what took place in the years that followed. We also have to select relevant indicators of well-being. We make the analysis by combining two perspectives:

Firstly, in Chapter 2, we look at how the region has changed from the 1970s, when NORAD came in as a donor, until today. This gives us an understanding of the circumstances that influenced strategies and the content of RUDEP, and the conditions under which the programme was implemented. We will dwell in particular on the situation in the early 1990s when the programme was at its peak, and see what has happened since then. Although there is no well developed database for the Region, by combining information from different statistical sources, coupled with peoples' own statements, we have been able to assemble a picture of change, or lack thereof.

Secondly, in Chapter 3 we move the focus to the RUDEP approach – i.e. the principles guiding the programme and challenges faced in implementation. In Chapter 4 we look at the outputs created in the main areas of RUDEP and what the situation is today with respect to these outputs. Have they been sustainable, or did the sudden withdrawal of Norwegian aid in 1996 make certain activities grind to a halt?

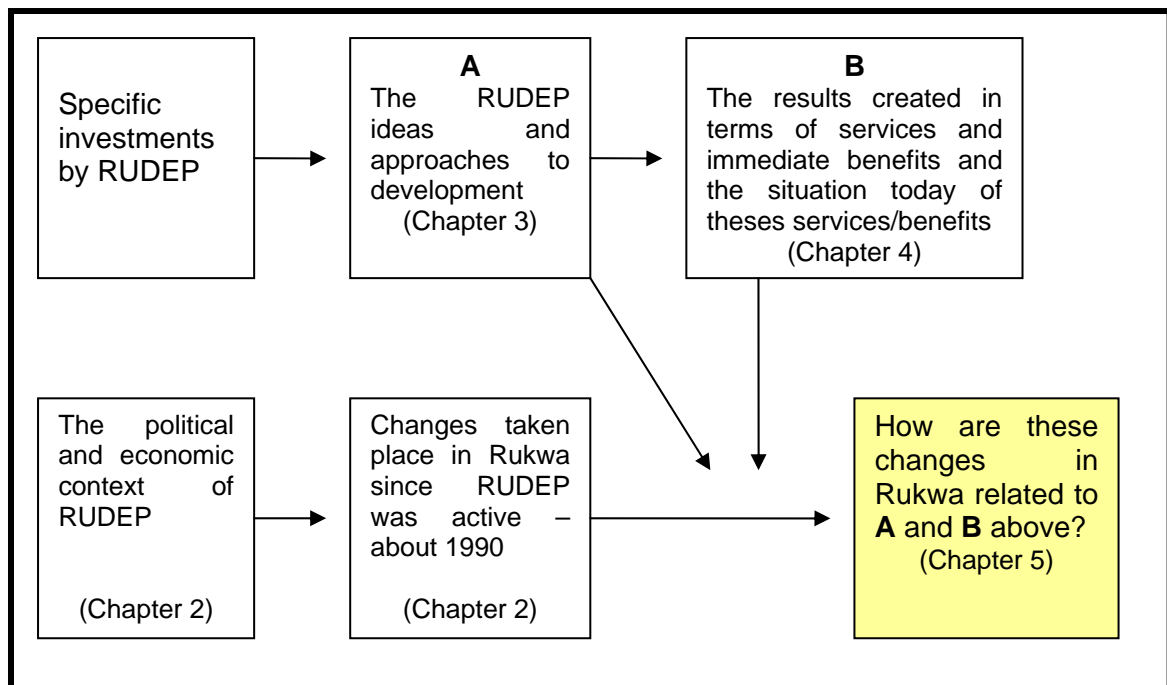
With this information at hand we discuss in Chapter 5 the question of impact. The figure below (Figure 1.1) illustrates our analytical approach. It must be noted that this is not an evaluation in the sense that we judge the extent to which RUDEP achieved stated objectives and planning targets, nor is it an attempt to measure cost-effectiveness – or whether the same results could have been achieved at lesser costs. Our aim is to analyse impacts more broadly, including aspects not emphasised in planning documents at the time. We have looked at the following types of impacts:

³ The average exchange rate for the period 1986-1995 was 1 USD= 6.70 NOK. For the period 1990-1994 the average rate was 6.60.

- *Social and economic impacts at household level:* Did RUDEP contribute to improving living standards, health condition and income opportunities of villagers, especially the poorest? In which areas? In what way?
- *Impacts on gender relations:* Did RUDEP succeed in promoting the role of women in the development process, which emerged as a key objective of Norwegian aid at the time?
- *Impacts on the economic growth of the Region:* Did RUDEP stimulate growth in the agriculture sector, trade and manufacturing?
- *Impacts on the environment:* Did RUDEP succeed in arresting the process of deforestation and environmental degradation?
- *Impacts on public institutions:* Did RUDEP increase capacity, competence, and quality of work of government institutions? Where these improvements sustainable?
- *Impacts on private sector:* To what extent did RUDEP or, more generally, the injection of Norwegian funds in the region, stimulate private sector development?
- *Impacts on private organisations/NGOs:* This increasingly became a priority for NORAD. To what extent was RUDEP able to stimulate sustainable NGO activities and involve NGOs in the programme?
- *Impacts on policy in terms of lessons learned:* Did lessons from RUDEP or Rukwa in this period in any way contribute to development planning and policy making in Tanzania? Or with Norway as a donor?
- *Impacts at the individual level in terms of human resources development:* Many received valuable work experience and training through RUDEP. How were these skills used in peoples' individual careers?

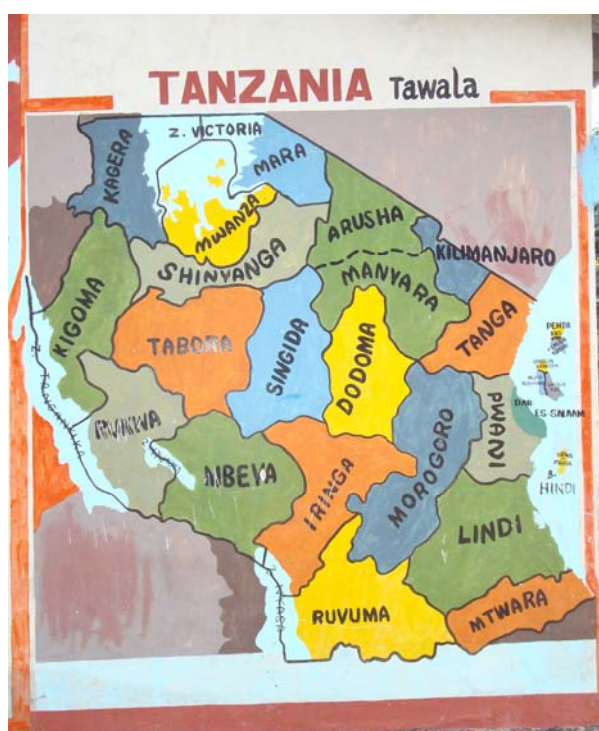
The figure below illustrates how we have organised the analytical approach.

Figure 1.1: Analytical framework



1.2 Rukwa Ruka – a promise not yet fulfilled

Rukwa Region has been and remains one of the least developed areas of Tanzania, located in the western part of the country (see Map 1). The area, administratively formed as a region in 1974, is today made up of four local government administrations: Sumbawanga District, Sumbawanga Municipality, Nkasi District⁴ and Mpanda District (see Map 2). The area is about 70,000 km² (i.e. the size of Sri Lanka or nearly twice as big as Denmark). The total population is about 1.4 million, which makes it among the least populated regions in Tanzania. It borders Kigoma Region in the north, Tabora in the east and Mbeya in the east and south. To the southwest is Zambia, and there is close contact between *Mambwe* speaking people on both sides of the border. Lake Tanganyika forms the remaining of the western border with the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) only a short boat trip away.



Learning geography from the walls of Chala Primary School

The Region composes five rather distinct ecological zones (see Map 3). There are the narrow shores of the Lake Tanganyika with little cultivable land, the Katumba plain and the Lake Rukwa valley. The latter two are characterised by vast acacia and *miombo* forests, historically with a low population density partly due to the tsetse fly. But in recent decades there has been a major influx of not least *Sukuma* pastoralist. The rugged Mwezi highlands bordering Kigoma Region is a fourth zone, also with a small population. The Ufipa plateau at an altitude of about 2000 metres above sea

level between the two lakes is the zone with the highest population density, mainly inhabited by *Fipa* speaking people. It is largely deforested due to centuries of human activity in the form of slash and burn cultivation and iron making. All of these zones have natural riches which potentially can support enhanced economic development.

The much touted remoteness of the region is a product of recent history and not of geography or topography per se. The region is in fact located on ancient trading routes linking the East coast and central Africa (the Congo), and the Southern African highlands and the Lake Region. The *Fipa* has a long history of making and trading in iron tools. According to Willis, “the *Fipa* built up a society based on domestic industry and the progressive development of exchange relations within and without”. An English missionary in 1880 described Ufipa as “the land of plenty”.⁵ A mere glance at the map would find that Rukwa in fact is quite centrally located.

⁴ During the time of RUDEP the official name was *Nkansi* District.

⁵ Willis, Roy (1978), p.3.

Nevertheless, historical developments placed Rukwa in the backwaters. Whereas the German colonial rulers invested in a transport network, involving the Tabora-Mpanda railroad and ports along Lake Tanganyika – including Kasanga where the Germans had its military and administrative stronghold in Rukwa called Fort Bismarck, during the British colonial rule the area was seen primarily as a labour reserve for commercial plantations in other parts of the country. Further investment in transport infrastructure was neglected, and Sumbawanga received its fame as a punishment station for colonial as well as local civil servants. In 1952, the British even deported members of the *Maumau* uprising in Kenya to Rukwa.

In the 1970s, in the wake of the Arusha Declaration of 1967 and the Villagisation policy, the government, encouraged by the donors, saw the need to address the country's regional imbalances. Regional Development Directorates were installed to spearhead this policy and Norway signalled its commitment to target aid to Rukwa and Kigoma regions.

The Norwegian involvement was rooted in a combination of Tanzanian and international policy trends. Domestically, the Tanzanian Government raised the slogan "*Ruka Rukwa*" (which literally means "Make Rukwa Fly") and declared its intent to build a strong regional administration capable of stimulating economic and social development. Internationally, rural development was the focus of attention fostering ideas such as the "basic needs approach", "integrated development" and "bottom-up". These trends took their toll in the 1990s with the shift towards liberal economic policies and democratic decentralization. Regional programmes were no longer the solution. Popularly elected local governments (i.e. district and municipal councils) and the private sector and the market mechanism were envisaged as the new drivers of rural development. The results of these new policies – after 1995 – are mixed, as were the results from the approach prior to this, with Norway as the main development partner of the Region. By and large, citizens of the Region are still waiting for the "flying" to begin, and feel they have not been heard by the Government in their call for special support to make the take-off a reality.

This study is about the achievements during the RUDEP-period as well as the lack of results, and it is about what happened to these achievements in the period that unfolded after Norway's pull-out. In other words, we seek to identify any lasting impacts of the programme and to better understand why some investments by RUDEP turned out more sustainable than others.

Writing 2009, the international development community has again raised the concern for revisiting rural development policies. The liberal policies of the 1990s have not delivered as hoped for. Rural poverty has continued unabated and Tanzania, Rukwa in particular, is no exception. The pendulum has again started swinging towards government interventions and area focused approaches. Looking at lessons of the past would be a good way to start reforming current policies. There is no shortcut to development progress and the search for quick-fix approaches has mostly proven a failure.

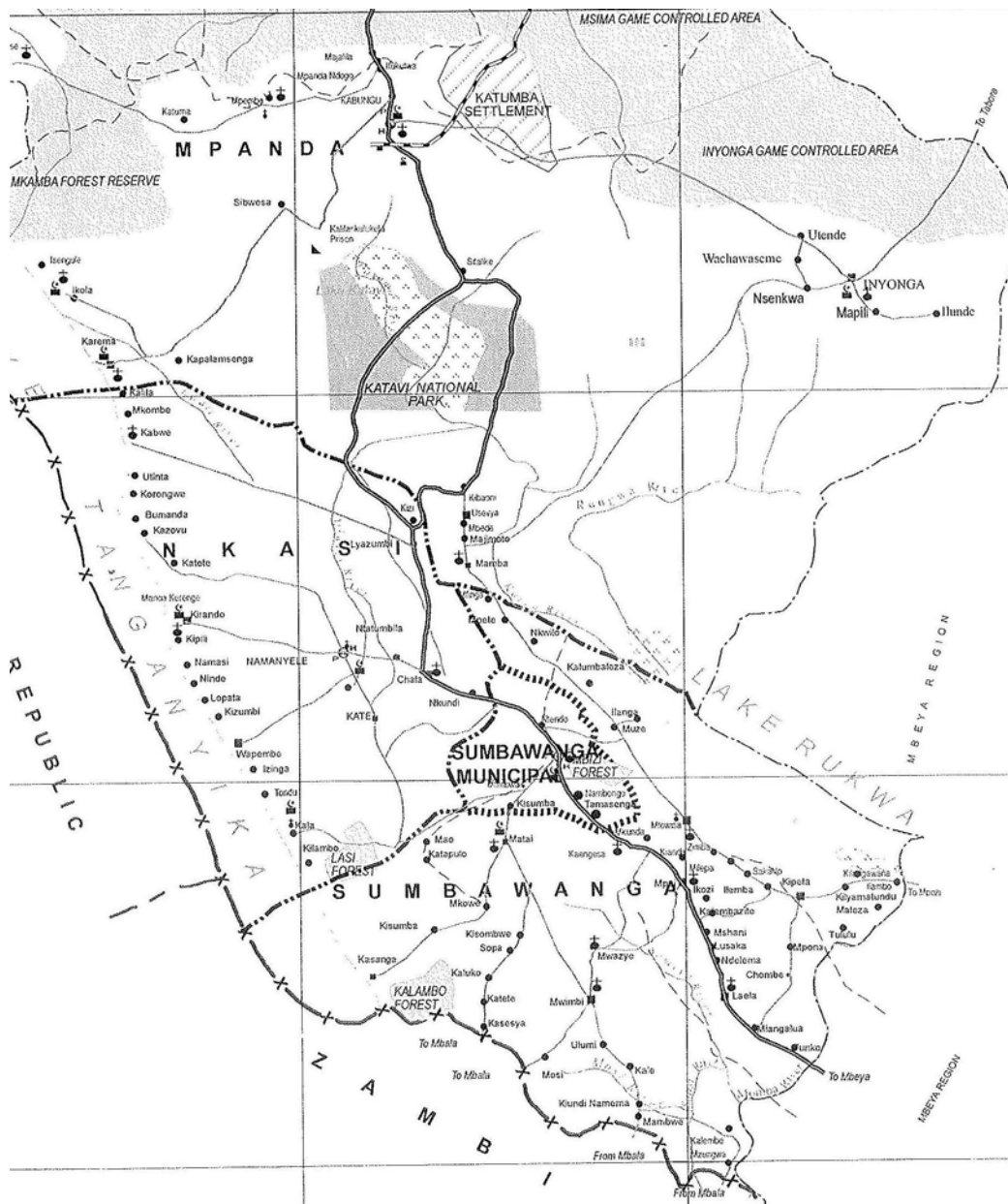
Map 1: Tanzania



Base 802932AI (C00485) 3-03

Source: <http://geography.about.com/>

Map 2: Rukwa Region (main RUDEP areas)



Source: Regional Administrative Secretariat

Map 3: Ecological zones in Rukwa Region

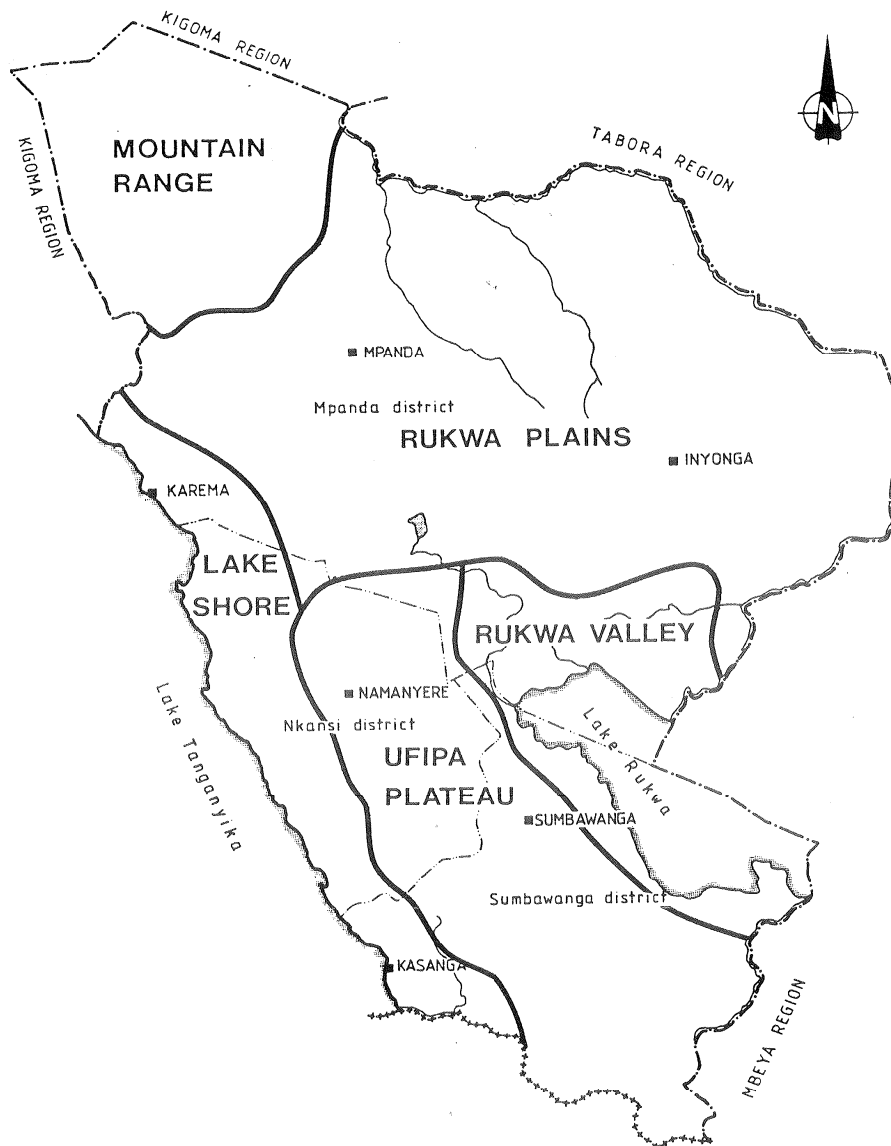


FIGURE 1.1
LOCATION OF RUKWA REGION

Source: German Development Institute (1989)

2. Development trends of Rukwa Region

2.1 Frequent changes in policy

Norway's involvement in Rukwa was not incidental, as described in more detail in Chapter 3, and it came at a very difficult time in the country in response to political visions at the time. Marked by the Arusha Declaration in 1967, Tanzania had decided to consolidate its political and economic system along the lines of the then socialist states under the labels of 'African socialism' and 'self-reliance'. Ambitious goals were set for bringing developmental benefits to all Tanzanians, and many donors, Norway included, responded positively to the development rhetoric of the Nyerere regime. Optimism and confidence in planned development prevailed, but by 1970 it was becoming clear that formal statements and programmes were not enough to promote what was called a socialist transformation. "To achieve socialist development the development machinery had to move physically closer to the people".⁶ In a matter of only five years Tanzania embarked on two drastic and ambitious reforms, which in a major way set the stage for RUDEP to come.

2.1.1 Regionalisation

The first reform was to make regions the centres of development management. Ironically, the philosophical and professional stimuli to this process did not only come from Soviet Union and China. The World Bank contracted a US consulting firm, McKinsey, to assist the government in reforming the public sector with the aim to strengthen the regional planning machinery. Its recommendations profoundly influenced the 1972 reform. Local governments ceased to operate and were replaced by a two-tier system of regional and district administrations, where the latter received its budget and instructions from the region. Senior and skilled personnel were moved from central ministries to man the new decentralised administrations, with the correspondent ambition of genuinely transferring powers down the system. The number of civil servants in the regions more than doubled during 1972-83, without shrinking the central bureaucracy however.⁷

Furthermore, the intension was to instate a system of development planning that should start from the village and move upwards within the party structure. Not only was this reorganisation met with a lot opposition from those who were affected, but numerous practical problems unfolded delaying the process. Budgetary allocations only marginally shifted in favour of the regions. Three years into the reform all regions combined (districts included) still received only 14 percent of the development expenditures, up from 8 percent in the first year. Resnick in his analysis of the reform states that "to a large extent decentralization was ... the embodiment of McKinsey's version of moving decisions from powerful to small bureaucrats, from the centre to the regions. They did not see, or perhaps were not interested in, the fact that decisions made by minor bureaucrats are not choices made by peasants and workers; and that development projects *in* the regions do not constitute regional development".⁸

Although hailed as a decentralisation reform, critiques argued that the relationship between common people and the government and Party in fact deteriorated. Yeager argued that the reform created regional cadres of self-seeking elites. Not only were the powers of the Regional Commissioner far reaching, being a presidential appointee combining both Party

⁶ Resnick (1981), p. 236.

⁷ The number increased from 75,000 to 175,000 according to Semboja and Therkildsen (1994).

⁸ Resnick (1981), p. 246.

and central government powers, but both he⁹ and most of the senior staff of his administrative apparatus – the Regional Development Directorate – came from outside the region where they served and had only temporary assignments. Hence, allegiance and loyalty to the local population were weak. Critiques also accused the policy “of having turned the central government ministries into operationally meaningless organizations whose essential function is merely to attract donor funds”.¹⁰ It is important to understand that RUDEP was conceived within the framework of the 1972 reform, with the aim to make the Regional Development Directorate more people oriented and more effective as a development agency. It goes without saying that the challenges in a remote and newly created region like Rukwa were formidable.

2.1.2 Villagisation

The second reform was the so-called *villagisation* implemented from 1968 to 1976, based on the *ujamaa* doctrine arguing the need to resettle people in villages to provide better access to educational and health services, water supply and government extension services, and to institute collective farming systems. The initial approach based on voluntarism, political agitation and economic incentives did not have much effect in many areas, including Rukwa. Hence, in 1973 Nyerere announced the Great Move: “to live in villages is an order”. In Rukwa, the effects were devastating. Officially, close to 346,800 had been relocated by 1975, which constituted about 77 percent of the population.¹¹ The villagisation programme was not only poorly planned, but also implemented with force. People were uprooted from ancient family lands and moved into settlements where no public amenities had yet been provided, or existing settlements were expanded. In Rukwa, new villages were often located near existing roads, water supplies and mission stations on lands that were less fertile than the areas people had to vacate. People tried to continue farming their traditional farms, but many had to give up because of the distance. The government’s attempt to redistribute land and introduce block farming was by and large resisted by the *Fipa*. As a result, agricultural production fell.

But gradually social services improved. The most visible, and successful, symbol of the *ujamaa* villages was the primary schools. Tanzania received international acclaim for its crash programme, Universalisation of Primary Education, which started in 1974. The efforts to expand primary education brought fruits. Enrolment rates soared. Between 1974 and 1979 the number of students in Sumbawanga District as well as teachers tripled.¹² The quality of teaching however was generally poor. With donor assistance investments in primary health care and water supply also started picking up, but in Rukwa it took until mid 1980s before results of Norwegian aid started showing off.

However, the psychological effects of this dramatic experiment in social engineering were not mitigated by these improvements in social services. The effects are still felt today, and probably more so in Rukwa than the more advanced regions at the time. The forced resettlement, combined with the abolition of local governments and cooperatives, led to apathy and a dependency syndrome in people’s psyche: development was the responsibility of the central government. A widespread distrust in bureaucrats and politicians had sunk into people’s mind. Private and communal initiatives were stifled. A study of land use in Mwasye village (Mwimbi Division, Sumbawanga District) from 1988 describes a ‘tug-of-war’ between the peasants and the state and silent opposition: “I found a society ridden with conflict and tension. There were incidences of fighting, threats and sorcery accusations. There was a tug of war between groups of peasants and between the peasants and the authorities.... Land and land use was what the tug of war was all about”.¹³

⁹ Only a few women have been appointed Regional Commissioner, and never for Rukwa Region.

¹⁰ Yeager (1982), p. 110.

¹¹ Official figures from the Prime Minister’s Office reproduced in Mascarenhas (1979).

¹² Maro (1990).

¹³ Johnson, H.F. (1991), p. 4.

2.1.3 Economic policy failure

At the same time the economy gradually moved into a downward spiral, fuelled by a global economic recession and an oil crisis, but amplified by unrealistic domestic policies. Priority was given to basic industries at the expense of agriculture. Focus was on import substitution – self-reliance – and most public investments went into inefficient state-owned industries producing well below capacity (some estimates say at only 10-20% of capacity). Paradoxically, smallholder agriculture, the lynchpin of Nyerere's ideology about African socialism, was neglected. Most of the public investments went into a few parastatals. One example is the National Milling Corporation (NMC). In 1981/82 the official retail price of maize (TShs 2.50 per kilo) was only about half of what NMC needed to break even, while farmers were paid only TShs 1.50 per kilo.¹⁴ In fact, agricultural prices were held low to offset demands for higher salaries and political unrest in urban areas. Declining export earnings and growing food imports led to a foreign exchange deficit that caused critical shortages of fuel and spare parts. For instance, much of the fertilizer to Rukwa in 1984 arrived too late.¹⁵

Another policy doctrine surfacing was regional specialisation. Within the planned economy framework Rukwa was designated a role as national food basket. In 1976, the National Maize Project, with support from USAID and the World Bank, was launched. Rukwa was central in this programme and farmers on the Ufipa plateau received highly subsidized seeds, fertilisers and pesticides. The performance of the programme was quite tremendous in terms of tonnage of the crop, earning the four regions Iringa, Mbeya, Ruvuma and Rukwa the name of the "Big Four". In line with this, the only major aid programme besides NORAD's in the early and mid 1980s was the Food Security Project financed by West Germany (GTZ) supporting maize export from the Region (through transport and building of warehouses).

Although this maize drive enabled households to increase their harvest which they sold and reserved some for food, the sold crop did not earn them enough money. So with an aim of getting more money some farmers sold even their food reserves resulting in food insecurity and malnutrition. With these problems, the Region continued to lag behind other regions despite its high agricultural potential. The aim of RUDEP was to address this problem by promoting crop diversification and food security, and reduce the reliance on exporting maize.

2.1.4 Public sector in crisis

Public sector employment continued to grow; at a rate of 10-15 % annually by the end of the 1970s. The wages, however, did not keep pace with raising prices and civil servants were not able to live from their incomes. The result was growing absenteeism, deteriorating working morale and outright theft and corruption. In this climate of declining public sector efficiency, donors increasingly responded by creating by-passing arrangements. Aid projects became directly managed by the donor agencies or consultants hired by them. The regional development administration, officially entrusted to manage foreign aid, did neither have the capacity nor the political clout to coordinate development aid. Government had virtually no domestic resources for the development budget, as most went into recurrent costs – mainly salaries. To Rukwa, it made matters even worse that most qualified civil servants would try their best to prevent a transfer to the Region. The Region itself had produced very few graduates, and people from other parts of the country were also scared by the image of the *Fipa* as masters of witchcraft.

¹⁴ World Bank (1982).

¹⁵ Eriksen, J., J. Lomøy and T. Refsdal, (1984). Prefeasibility study for a rural development programme in Rukwa, p.14.

It is in this context that NORAD first agrees to finance water supply as a typical donor managed project, and then subsequently turns the argument around and decides to make RUDEP part and parcel of the government system anchored in the Regional Development Directorate as the implementing agency. “The Project must not be allowed to live a life on its own in isolation from the Government and the Party”, the planning group reiterated.¹⁶

Prior to RUDEP, plans for a regional development programme had been made in the 1970s but funding had not been forthcoming; dissimilar to several other regions that were supported by donors that had agreed with Government on a regional division of work.¹⁷ The pressure was upon Norway, but NORAD was advised against embarking on an ambitious investment programme based on a blueprint plan, and decided to adopt a gradual approach focusing on learning by doing. As this approach started, again major policy changes emerged in Tanzania.

2.1.5 Dramatic policy shifts from mid 1980s

From 1986, the decision to liberalise the economy was effected. Tanzania had for several years resisted pressure from IMF to devalue the Shilling and undertake other reforms, and from 1982 IMF and World Bank had frozen their relations with Tanzania. The Nordic donors continued their support, however, but in 1985 they also decided to fall in line with IMF’s pressure for reform. Nyerere willingly stepped down the same year leaving it to his successor – Ali Hassan Mwinyi – to bring the country into the free market era. He even in his farewell speech candidly said: “I failed. Let’s admit it”. The reforms soon improved the availability of imported commodities. After a few years the private sector started picking up also in Rukwa, and private traders were allowed to buy directly from farmers.

In 1984, a Local Government Act reinstated local authorities. District and municipal councils were no longer puppets-on-a-string with budgets controlled by the region, which now was supposed to assume an advisory role, and they were empowered to collect taxes. The implementation of this reform was slow, however, and RUDEP was caught in the middle of a tug-of-war between regional departments struggling to retain resources and influence and local government agencies building their new autonomy.

The political reforms of the early 1990s also radically changed the political context within which RUDEP operated, culminating in the first multiparty elections in 1995. Although the former ruling party, *Chama Cha Mapinduzi* (CCM), still has all Members of Parliament from Rukwa, the new political system seems to have had the effect of boosting the role and influence of politicians in general. Bureaucrats can no longer manage development programmes largely undisturbed by local politicians, whether district councillors or MPs. The reform also stimulated the formation of NGOs. A new spirit of mobilisation is emerging gradually replacing the dependency syndrome, but RUDEP did not live long enough to benefit from such trends; although not for want of trying, as we shall see below.

The 1990s also brought changes in the relationship between Tanzania and its major donors. From being branded a poor performer with bad economic policies and governance, by end of the decade she had emerged as one of the so-called ‘donor darlings’. This transformation was intimately linked to the attempts to reform the international aid system, spearheaded not least by the World Bank. Two important elements were (a) the channelling of aid through nationally managed sector reform programmes and (b) the pooling of aid from several donors to ensure better coordination. Part of the reason NORAD in 1994 decided to cancel its funding of RUDEP had to do with these new international trends in aid policy. Although Norway reiterated its support for rural development, poverty reduction and decentralisation, it argued that this had to be accomplished through national reform programmes – such as the

¹⁶ Eriksen, J., J. Lomøy and T. Refsdal, (1984). p.44.

¹⁷ BRALUP (1977).

Civil Service Reform Programme. To Rukwa Region, and other regions accustomed to receiving targeted support from a particular donor, it meant a dramatic decline in development funds. It is important to notice that for Rukwa, development investments have not yet, in 2008, recovered to the 1995 level despite an increasing flow of aid to the country as a whole.

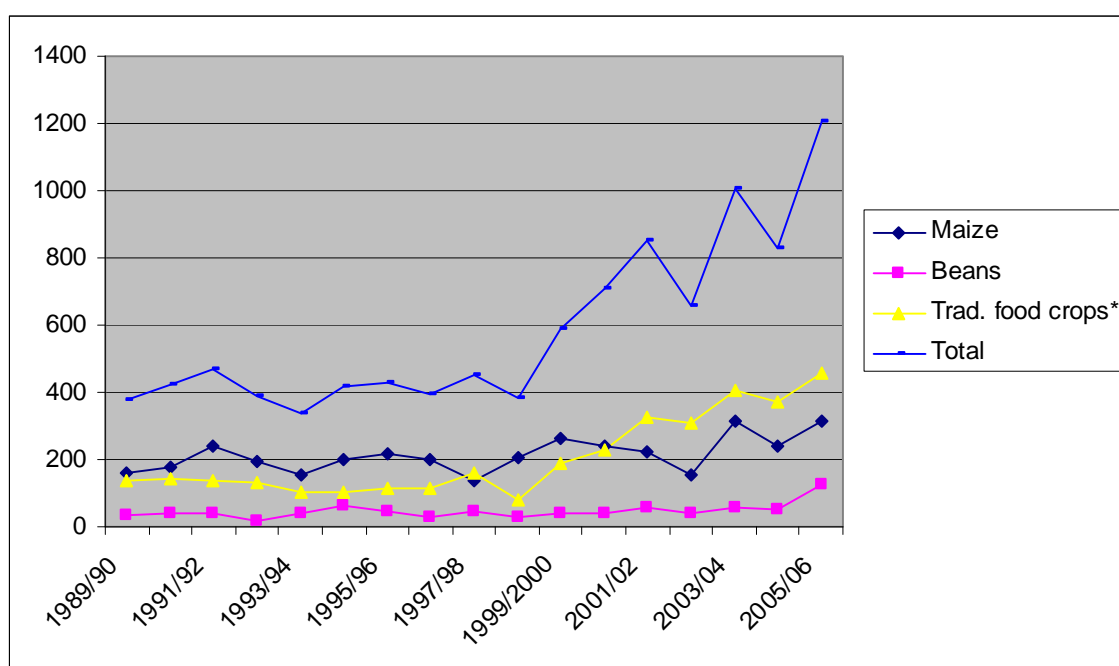
2.2 Economic development

The injection of Norwegian aid money had a major effect on the economy at the time. One study estimated that RUDEP constituted 10-15% of the cash economy in the region.¹⁸ All of the investments were channelled through public institutions, but the economic spin-off effects were wide ranging. Informants vividly recollected the enhanced “money circulation” during RUDEP, benefiting not only the civil servants involved but also the private sector supplying goods and services. In rural areas where the programme was particularly active visible changes took place. When one of the authors of this study returned to the Mwimbi Division of the Sumbawanga District in 1993 he saw numerous houses with shining corrugated iron roofs where in 1989 there had been only thatched roofs. What has happened to the economy since then? What were the effects of the sudden tightening of the money circulation and contraction of public sector activities?

Agricultural growth and diversification

As can be seen from Figure 2.1, the Region is today producing three times more than in 1990, but agricultural production started picking up only from about 2000 – five years after RUDEP.

Figure 2.1: Agricultural production, Rukwa Region, 1989/90 to 2005/06



*Traditional food crops include finger millet, cassava, sweet potato and sorghum

Source: Regional Administrative Secretariat

This statistical evidence was corroborated by many informants referring to the late 1990s as difficult times. The stagnation of public sector activities following the closure of RUDEP was part of the problem.

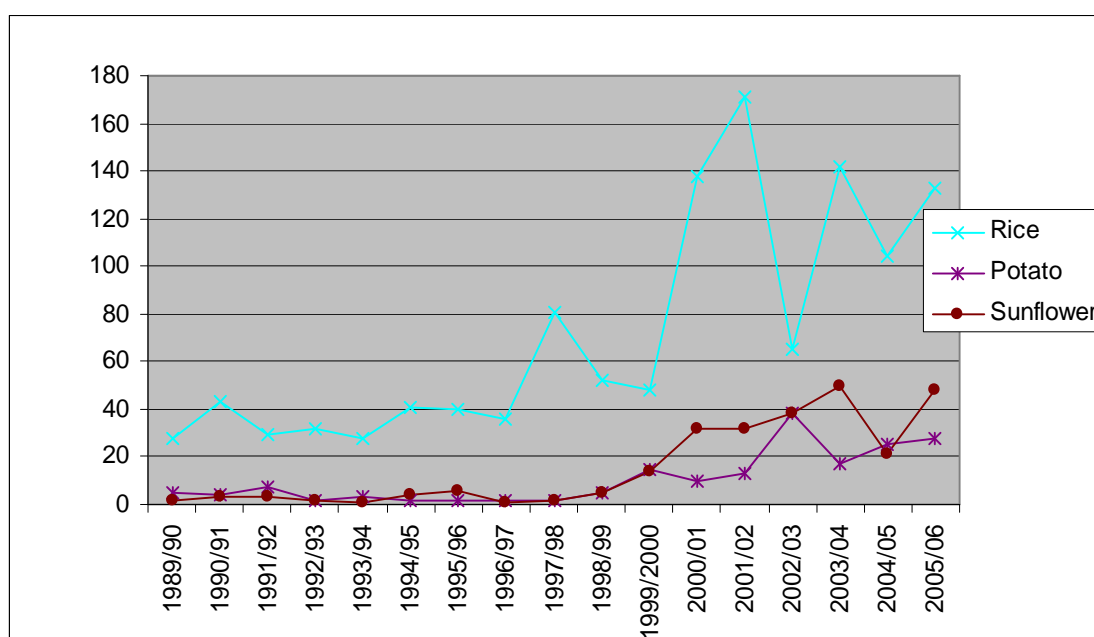
¹⁸ 3E Economics (1993), p.ii.



Children in Kate village, Sumbawanga District, showing a healthy stock of sunflower

It must be noted that the recent agricultural growth has been achieved without a similar growth in maize production.¹⁹ The production of beans, the other dominant food and cash crop on the Ufipa plateau, has also remained fairly stable, while other traditional crops (esp. finger millet, cassava and sweet potatoes) have increased in recent years. A possible explanation of the latter trend can be the new migrants settling in areas less suitable to maize and beans.

Figure 2.2: Production of rice, potato and sunflower 1989/90 to 2005/06

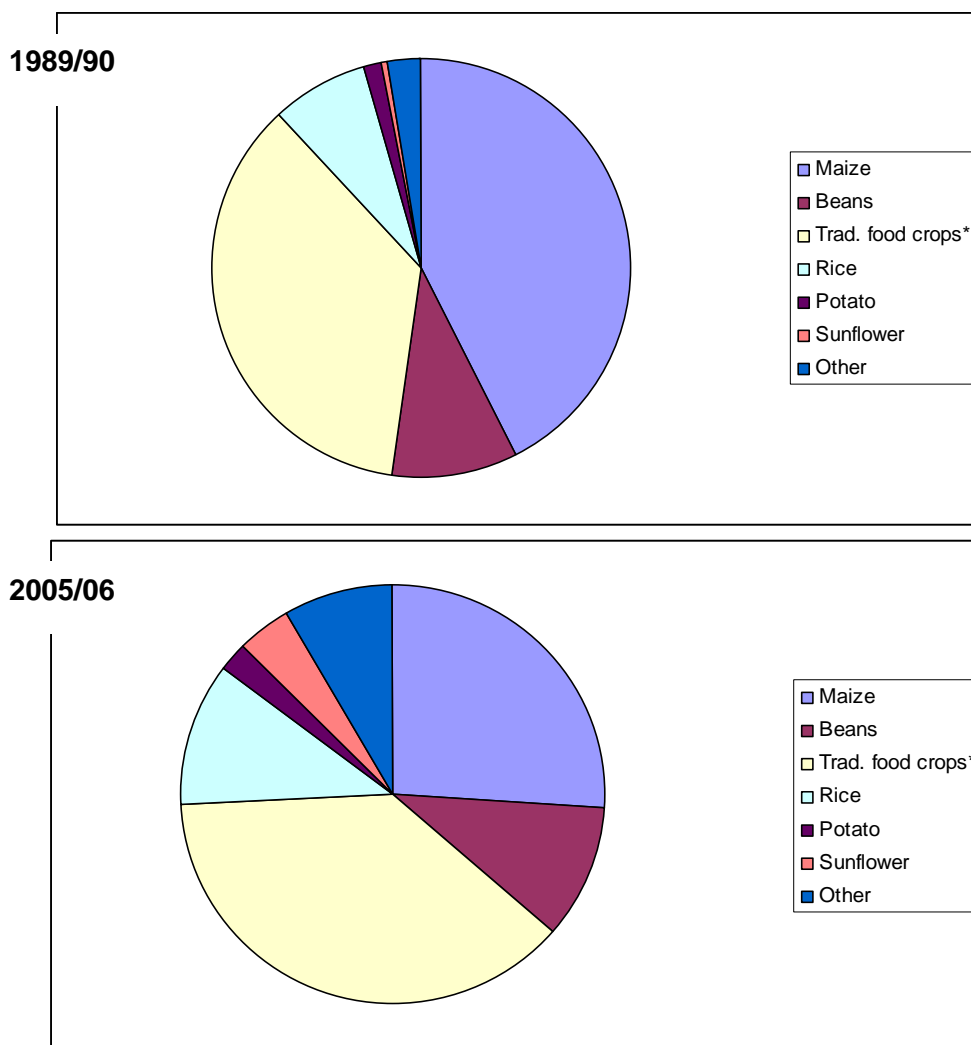


Source: Regional Administrative Secretariat

¹⁹ It must be noted that agricultural statistics do not capture all production for the simple reason that there is no reliable reporting system. And figures are possibly even less reliable after the liberalisation of crop purchase from farmers. Also, the methods of computing production estimates vary over the years.

Another important development which has significantly contributed to the overall agricultural growth has been the introduction of new cash crops, especially rice, potato and sunflower. In Figure 2.2 we see that the production of all three crops starts picking up towards the end of the 1990s. As a result, the cropping pattern today is significantly more diversified compared to 15 years ago (see Figure 2.3). Today we can see healthy stocks of sunflower all over the Ufipa plateau. It is worth noting that RUDEP played an active role in promoting both sunflower and potatoes. However, the most important factors behind crop diversification and increased production are improved market access and population growth.

Figure 2.3: Crop diversity 1989/90 versus 2005/2006



Traditional food crops include finger millet, cassava, sweet potato and sorghum
 Source Figure 2.1-2.3: Regional Administrative Secretariat, Rukwa

Private sector is picking up

Another evidence of economic growth is trade in agricultural produce and agro-processing. Crops are exported to other parts of Tanzania and increasingly also to neighbouring countries. Significantly, is the increasing trade with the DRC using the Kasanga port. Prosperous businesses have developed based on retail trade, crop purchase and transport services, as evidenced by the more recent contributions to Sumbawanga’s “skyline” (see photo). Growth

in agricultural processing has been significant, and diesel powered flourmills and oil pressing machines are now found in many villages.



The new office building of Malila's Enterprise, also called Mipango, named after the owner's background as planning officer (working with RUDEP)

The former Regional Commissioner and current MP from Rukwa, Mr. Mzindakaya, has invested in a modern abattoir aiming at selling beef on the international market. The economic viability of the venture is however questioned by many. Interestingly, expatriate advisors working for this company now rent the staff houses once built for RUDEP expatriates.

From the "NORAD Compound" today

Small scale mining is the second largest contributor to Rukwa's economy, after agriculture. It is still all based on labour intensive methods, mostly digging shafts by hand. Gemstones are found in areas near Sumbawanga, and Mpanda has long been a centre of gold digging. The effects on the economy of the region are difficult to assess, since much of the incomes generated are not registered. One emerging local businessman – Mr. Kasiano – has



cast his eyes on the coal deposits on the Rukwa valley escarpment. From the Namwele coal fields he has sold coal to Mbeya-based industries, and hopes to establish a coal-fired power plant in the future relieving the Region from its acute shortage of power.

Finally, the most striking change in recent years is the communication revolution created by the rapid extension of the mobile phone network. In the 1980s, often unreliable telephone

landlines extended only to Sumbawanga and Mpanda towns and only very few had the privilege of access. Even in remote villages people today are connected to the mobile phone network and several companies compete for customers. The economic effects are not known, but the benefits to trade and transport are obvious. And obviously it reduces the sense of remoteness in Rukwa.

Village phone card vendor in Mwimbi



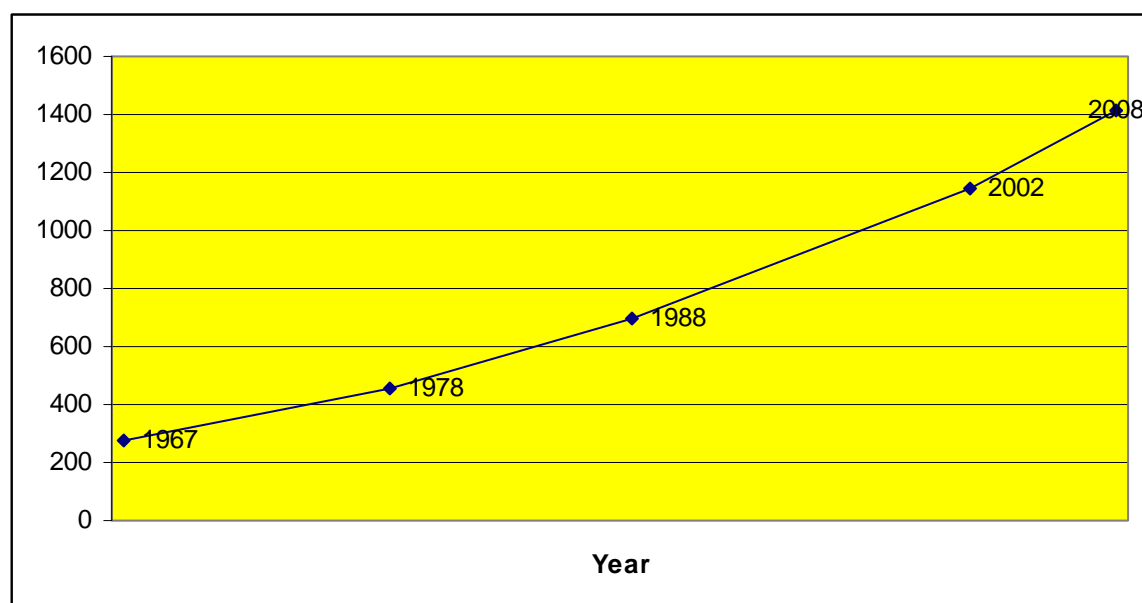
Rapid population growth

Over the last 15 years, Rukwa Region has experienced a population growth exceeding the national average due to immigration (see Figure 2.4). The growth rate from 1988 to 2002 was 3.6% annually compared to a national average of 2.9%. In 2008, the population is estimated to reach 1.4 million. Especially *Sukuma* pastoralists have moved into to the Katumba plains and Rukwa valley and are now also many on the Ufipa plateau.



Namanyere hairdresser shop

Rukwa is considered one of the few areas in Tanzania where agricultural land is still available. The population density was for a long time the lowest in Tanzania, but Lindi Region is now less densely populated. This growth is accompanied by an even higher urban growth, especially for Sumbawanga, straining public amenities such as drinking water, sewerage and electricity. Namanyere, the administrative centre of Nkasi District which was hardly more than a road crossing in the early 1980s, is now becoming town-like.

Figure 2.4: Population growth, Rukwa Region ('000)

Source: Tanzania Bureau of Statistics

Climatic change

There is a perception of the weather getting drier. Whether this is a lasting trend is yet difficult to determine, but over the last decade there has been a drop in the ground water table in many areas, dry-land farming has shown declining yields per acre, and deforestation in low-land areas has escalated.

2.3 Poverty not declining

Poverty without food deficit

Reliable measurements of poverty and the incidence of poverty are not available for the Region, since no extensive household and income expenditure surveys have been carried out.²⁰ However, based on the 2002 Population and Housing Census and the 2001 Household Budget Survey it has been estimated that the percentage of households below a poverty line defined in terms of basic needs is somewhere in between 32 and 40% for Rukwa (taking account of standard errors in the statistical calculation). Rukwa is ranked 11 of 22 regions, where Dar es Salaam is at the top and Mara at the bottom.²¹ Other income based indices linked to food consumption confirm a picture that Rukwa in terms of income poverty today falls in the middle range among regions in Tanzania. The situation appears to be better in Sumbawanga District compared to Mpanda and Nkasi, with the latter as the worst.

It is commonly agreed that living standard – or poverty – not only is a reflection of income. One also has to figure in factors such as health conditions and access to education. This was done when computing the so-called Human Development Index. In doing so, the Dar es Salaam based research institute ESRF found in 2000 that the situation in Rukwa was the worst in the country (see Table 2.1).²²

²⁰ The incidence of poverty (or poverty rate) is defined as the percentage of people with incomes and consumption levels that fall under a level defined as the basic needs poverty line. In 2000/01 this was set to be TShs 262 per adult equivalent per day.

²¹ United Republic of Tanzania (2005).

²² Taken from a presentation made in connection with presentation of the Poverty and Human Development Report 2005, by the Director of ESRF, Prof. Amani.

Table 2.1: Human Development Index – regional comparison (2000)

HDI rank		Life expectancy at birth (years) 1988	Adult literacy rate (% age 15 and above) 2000	Combined primary, secondary and tertiary gross enrolment ratio (%) 2000	Mean monthly consumption expenditure per capita (000 Tsh) 2000
	TANZANIA	50	71	84.9	10.1
1	Dar es Salaam	50	91	98.7	21.9
2	Kilimanjaro	59	85	104.4	11.2
10	Morogoro	46	72	87.2	10.0
18	Lindi	47	58	67.6	9.5
19	Shinyanga	50	55	68.0	8.0
20	Rukwa	45	68	83.2	6.7

Source: ESRF

From the figures we see that Rukwa scores particularly low on the income variable (consumption per capita). If we reconcile this with the finding above on income poverty the picture that emerges from Rukwa is a region with fewer better-off people than most regions, but also fewer that are very poor compared to many regions. In other words, Rukwa is still a poorly developed economy, but food is generally available.

Although there is no basis for drawing firm conclusions three trends over the last decade are evident: the economy has been growing in GDP terms although from a low level; poverty levels remain high; while extreme poverty linked to food deficit is low. There is evidence that access to social services improved remarkably for some time, but is showing a declining or stagnant trend over the last ten years, with the exception of education. Let us look at the latter a bit more in detail.

Health situation improved but signs of stagnation

Maternal and child care is generally considered a good indicator of the quality of a health care system. It is also an indication of the status and role of women in the society. In 1978, the region was recorded with the highest infant mortality rate in the country (170/100 compared to 137/100), but since then the gap to the national average has narrowed.

Table 2.2: Health status and health service indicators, Rukwa vs. national (percentages)

		1991	1996	2004
Delivery at health facility	Rukwa	46	46	37
	National	53	47	53
Delivery assisted by nurse/trained midwife	Rukwa		35	29
	National		33	37
Delivery assisted by TBA	Rukwa	32	30	39
	National	13	18	19
Children with vaccination card	Rukwa	81	60	83
	National	78	77	79

Source: Tanzania Demographic and Health Surveys

Tanzania has carried out three Demographic and Health Surveys that provide information at the regional level over time – from 1991 to 2004. The sample size from Rukwa is small and one should allow for a wide error margin when interpreting any trends. In Table 2.2 we have compared the figures for Rukwa with national averages. Certain features are worth mentioning.

Firstly, there seems to have been no improvement in the access to health facilities over the last 15 years, which corresponds with observations in the field. In fact, the surveys suggest a declining trend from 1996 in the use of hospitals and health centres. Secondly, the coverage of health facilities in Rukwa is lower than the national average, which shows up in the important role played by traditional birth attendants (TBAs) in assisting deliveries.²³ And thirdly, other reports indicate a major decline in infant mortality up until the mid-1990s²⁴, and that the rate has stabilised at that level (or some informants suggested that it even has been rising).

Deterioration in safe drinking water supply

Available statistics show a marked improvement of water supply until 1995, when the situation gradually started to worsen (see Table 2.3). Since there is no systematic collection of data at the household level and record keeping when it comes to individual schemes is quite uneven, figures from different years may not be strictly comparable. But interviewees confirmed the same trend, and a water coverage of about 40% of households sounds like a realistic estimate today, as indicated by the Regional administration.

Table 2.3: Percentage of households with piped or protected drinking water, Rukwa Region, 1974-2005

	1974	1987	1994	2001	2005
Rukwa	5	18	73 ²⁵	63 ²⁶	40 ²⁷
National				55	

Major increase in school enrolment

In 1978, the literacy rate in Rukwa was 49% and below the national average, with male literacy (66%) being above the national average, and female literacy (31%) below, which reflected a tradition where mainly boys were sent to schools (including several mission schools) and men engaged in labour migration which also contributed to literacy. Girls and women were much less exposed to the modern society.

In Rukwa, similar to Tanzania as a whole, there was a positive effect of the abolition of school fees on primary school enrolment, with a peak in 2004 (see Figure 2.5). We do not have up to date enrolment rate estimates, but it has probably exceeded 90% of the school age population. However, there is an acute problem in that the councils are not able to provide enough qualified teachers or to upgrade the physical infrastructure. This contributes to an alarmingly high drop-out rate, especially in the many remote villages of the Region.

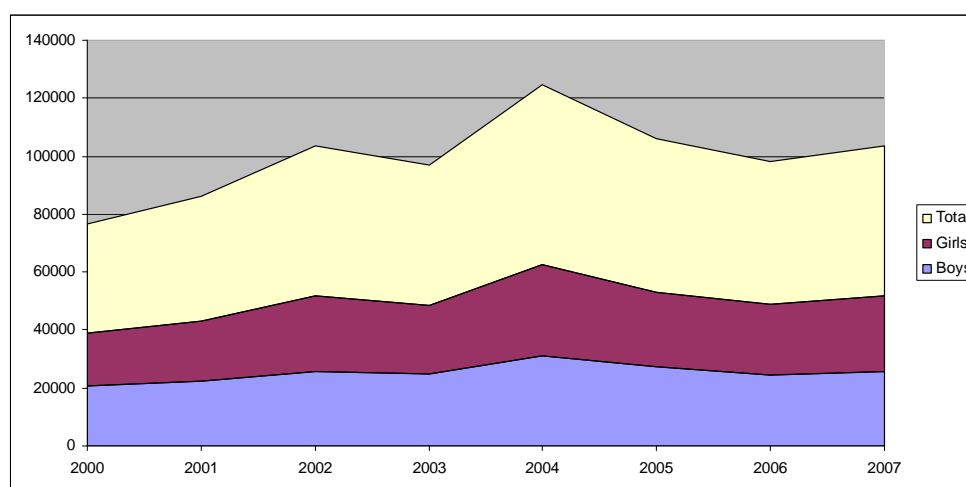
²³ The main difference between Rukwa and the national average is that in Rukwa more traditional birth attendants (TBAs) assist in deliveries rather than only relatives. Rukwa has fewer deliveries assisted by a doctor.

²⁴ Mattle, E. Report prepared for RUDEP Impact Assessment Workshop, Kibaha, 16-17.11.2007.

²⁵ Figures for 1974, 1987 and 1994 are taken from Rukwa Region Socioeconomic Profile 1998.

²⁶ Figures for 2001 have been taken from the 2001 Household Budget Survey. Rukwa ranks 5 of 20 regions.

²⁷ Information provided to the Team.

Figure 2.5: Net enrolment in primary school

Source: Regional Administrative Secretariat

2.4 Public sector finances improving but local taxation down

As we shall discuss below, NORAD did raise fundamental concerns about the Region's aid dependency, and at a national level donors called for more attention to revenue generation. There was a suspicion that aid had the negative effect of reducing the incentive of Government to collect tax, and even for central Government not to prioritise a backward region like Rukwa – since Norway was there. What happened after NORAD pulled out?

In Table 2.4 we present the budgets of the four local authorities in the Region from 1998/99 onwards.²⁸ Unfortunately, the figures for revenue collection and the development budgets in recent years are missing. There are three marked tendencies in these figures. Firstly, the recurrent expenditures – for personnel and administration – have steadily increased, financed through central government transfers. Secondly, the funds set aside for development investments are significantly less and have not increased. Finally, there has been no improvement in revenue collection. In fact, after the abolishment of the development levy in 2003, being labelled a 'nuisance tax', local tax collection plummeted. Hence, the local authorities are less financially self-reliant than during the time of RUDEP. This is further illustrated by the figures for revenue collection in 1989 and 1990 (Table 2.5), which in real value by far exceed what was collected more than a decade later.

Taking Sumbawanga District Council as an example, Figure 2.6 graphically presents the trend towards increasing dependency on central government transfers and inability to set aside funds for development investments.

²⁸ Data from earlier years are not available.

Table 2.4: Local government authorities: budget figures 1998/99-2006/07 (in million TShs)²⁹

		1998 /99	1999 /00	2000 /01	2001 /02	2002 /03	2003 /04	2004 /05	2005 /06	2006 /07
Sumbawanga M.C	CG	729	751	1,092	1,153	1,475	1,680	2,031	2,178	3,261
	R	135	153	221	201	164	2	4	N/A	N/A
	DB	23	27	42	45	45	45	21	N/A	N/A
Sumbawanga D.C	CG	1,077	1,130	1,792	2,009	2,292	2,773	3,812	4,559	7,205
	R	227	207	239	227	152	3	7	N/A	N/A
	DB	16	22	42	50	60	60	61	N/A	N/A
Nkasi D.C	CG	579	621	1,034	1,206	1,389	1,716	2,484	2,684	4,105
	R	144	185	202	301	326	1	4	N/A	N/A
	DB	5	27	42	36	37	6	36	N/A	N/A
Mpanda D.C	CG	1,032	1,005	1,672	1,901	2,568	3,157	4,446	5,228	8,117
	R	278	356	400	778	380	3	9	N/A	N/A
	DB	19	24	50	54	49	62	74	N/A	N/A

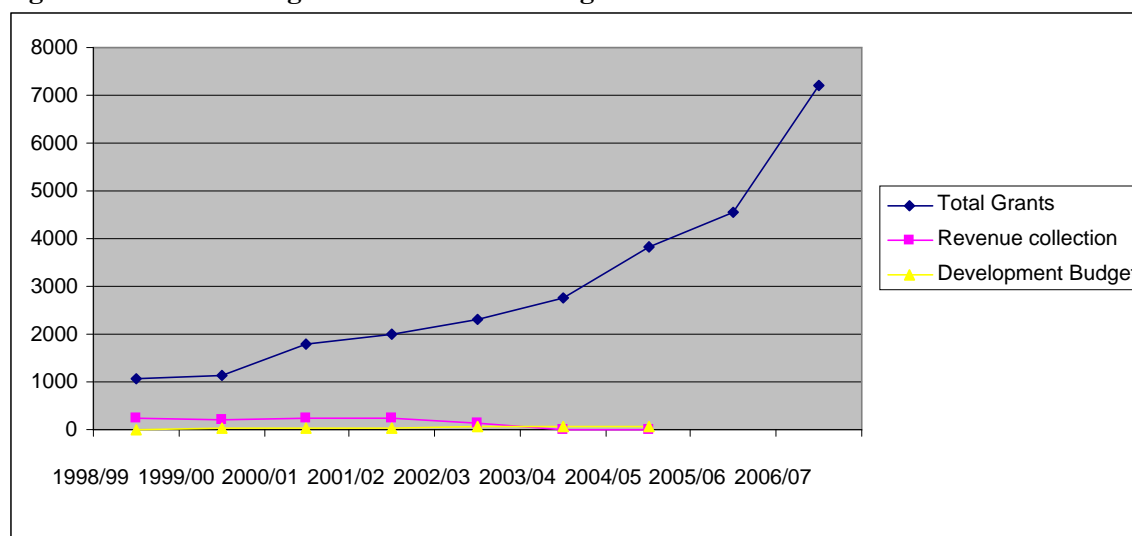
Legend: CG = Central Government grants; R = revenue collection; DB = development budget

Table 2.5: Development levy and other revenue collected, Rukwa Region (in million TShs)³⁰

	1989	1990
Sumbawanga Urban	22.4	12.9
Sumbawanga Rural	21.4	26.0
Nkansi	17.8	34.7
Mpanda	32.7	30.9
Total	94.3	104.5

²⁹ Data obtained from Government Notice Board at www.repoa.go.tz.

³⁰ Manger et al (1990).

Figure 2.6: Sumbawanga District Council budget trends

Although there has been significant improvement in central government transfers in recent years, still it remains a long way to go to get back to a level comparable to what NORAD provided through RUDEP. During the latter years of the programme an increasing share of RUDEP was channelled to the local authorities and was reported to be about 70% at the end – amounting to about USD 3 million annually. In comparison, total central government transfers (for recurrent as well as development costs) to the 4 local authorities in Rukwa in 2006/07 amounted to about USD 17 million, of which only 1.5% (based on the 2004/5 budget) was allocated to the development budget – or USD 260,000. This is one-tenth of the RUDEP contribution.

2.5 Summary

RUDEP was an episode in the history of the Region. It was borne as a product of development policy thinking of the Nyerere era in Tanzania; a strong state aiming at mobilising the grassroots. It was thrown into a whirlwind of drastic policy reversals, downplaying the role of the regional administration and the public sector more generally. This made NORAD reassess its role in Tanzania which led to RUDEP's demise. Since then the regional economy has continued to grow, though not making a dent in the poverty situation, while public sector investments have declined.

In the next two chapters we shall look in some more detail at the way RUDEP was managed and the experiences gained with respect to the various principles and ideas influencing the approach (Chapter 3). And we shall briefly present what the programme did in key sectors and how the status is today (Chapter 4).

3. The RUDEP approach

3.1 The ideas

The concept of 'basic needs' strongly influenced development aid policies during the 1970s. The idea that all citizens, irrespective of economic status, socio-cultural background and location, should be entitled to a minimum level of basic services in health, education and drinking water, prompted Norway's decision to select some of the most backward regions in Tanzania – Rukwa and Kigoma – as priority areas for development assistance. In 1979, a 3-year study of drinking water resources in Rukwa and Kigoma commenced with funding from NORAD, resulting in comprehensive Regional Water Master Plans. This led to the start, in 1983, of a Water Supply and Sanitation Project (labelled TAN055 in NORAD's budgets) in the two regions aiming at supplying all villages with safe potable water according to standards set by WHO (i.e. within a distance of 400 metres for every household).

The concept of integrated projects became an important element in the policy of NORAD shortly thereafter. It was generally believed that integrated, multi-sectoral projects had a greater ability to meet popular demands and to stimulate people's own development efforts. Furthermore, positive experiences in Sri Lanka convinced key policy makers in NORAD of the virtues of a flexible learning-by-doing approach working from within the existing public sector, refraining from setting up so-called 'aid islands'. While Tanzania was working on a model of teaming up its regions with main donors, each sponsoring a regional programme, Norway responded positively in favour of Rukwa and Kigoma. However, there was much scepticism in NORAD to embark on an ambitious regional investment plan along the lines of World Bank and others following typical five-year blue prints.

The planning mission engaged by NORAD in 1984 supported the idea of a regional programme, but emphasised the need for a gradual building-up, reflected in the following recommendations:³¹

- that Norway should be prepared for a long-term involvement;
- that the programme should start small and gradually build up with a strong personnel component;
- that the programme be integrated in the regional administration;
- that it should be flexible in terms of implementing partners (public and NGOs) and sectors; and
- that it should be based on a model of revolving planning as opposed to a comprehensive development plan for the area.

It took until September 1985 to sign the agreement on what became RUDEP – Rukwa Integrated Rural Development Programme (TAN060 in NORAD's budgets). RUDEP formally commenced operations on 1st July 1986. The objectives outlined in the agreement were fairly general, emphasising capacity building, raising of living standards, people's involvement and sustainability of investments. The basic concepts outlined in the planning study were reiterated. There was a particular reference to improving the conditions for women and children, reflecting that the Norwegian government had just approved a strategy for women in development. The Regional Development Director's Office would be responsible for managing the programme through the Regional Economic Affairs Department (READ).³²

³¹ Eriksen J. et al (1984).

³² This office was called the Regional Planning Office (and referred to as *Mipango*) at the time of signing the agreement.

We see that the two NORAD projects in the region were modelled on rather distinct approaches. The water project was based on a 'blue-print' – a water master plan – and implemented by an independent project organisation managed by a Norwegian consultancy firm (Norconsult), while RUDEP emphasised process planning and integration in the Tanzanian public administration. This was soon considered to be unsustainable and a decision was made to incorporate the water project in RUDEP as from July 1988.

3.2 Principles facing the reality

The decision memo prepared by NORAD in December 1984 summarises the principles of RUDEP in the following main points:³³

- A *multi-sectoral* programme aiming to enhance the living standard through increased food production.
- A *process planning* approach with a flexibility to initiate activities in response to bottlenecks identified on the way, based on work plans to be approved by NORAD on an annual basis, formalised in minutes of Annual Meetings.
- The programme shall to the extent possible be integrated *within the local administration*.
- Enhanced *popular participation* in planning and implementation is a goal.
- Start modest, with a 5-year commitment totalling NOK 45 million, with the understanding that the programme *will continue much longer* and that additional resources can be added if capacity allows.

Multi-sectoral: but where to draw the line?

The programme was organised into projects and activities. A *project* was conceived of as a set of activities with a specific common goal and often without a specific duration, while an *activity* was the budgeting unit. The start of RUDEP was characterised by seeking engagement in several sectors at the same time, to gain experience from working with different government institutions and to build a platform for a multi-sectoral approach. It was deliberately spreading widely and thinly.

But already at the first Annual Meeting in 1987 the following constraints were reported: the implementation capacity of key departments was limited, and there was an inclination to view donor financed projects as somewhat independent from the rest of the departmental work.

From a modest beginning in 1986 with activities in forestry, agriculture and regional development planning RUDEP soon expanded into most sectors, and a concept of five *programme areas* was developed. At the time of signing the Phase II agreement in 1991 these were labelled: Improvement of Health by Preventive Measures, Natural Resources Development, Infrastructure, Local Level Development through Participatory Planning, and Economic Production and Small-Scale Industry. The annual budget had reached approximately NOK 20 million. It was made up of a wide ranging set of projects; in 1994/95 RUDEP had 24 projects involving 93 separate activities. For some the budgets were rather small, but the sheer number indicates the complexity of the programme.

The fact that RUDEP had no clearly defined boundaries in terms of sectors, development themes and geographical focus soon led to a pressure for incorporating more and more. This pressure did not only come from the recipient end, also constituencies within NORAD exerted their influence. One of the most vocal was the 'women in development' lobby. The RUDEP managers were constantly reminded, and rightfully so, of the need to more effectively involve women and address women's needs.

³³ Project Document (in Norwegian) dated 13.12.1984.

Within the region, the first pressure was to ensure more equal spreading of the benefits on all districts. The second was to include new sectors, in particular the education sector that had been ruled out at the beginning. Initially, RUDEP concentrated on Sumbawanga District to maximize impact, but this was not politically acceptable in the long run. The Area Development approach (see below), concentrating resources in one Division, was also criticised from this perspective. But in hindsight, we see that this approach made sense in terms of impact. It also facilitated better sectoral cooperation.

There was a need to draw a practical boundary around RUDEP and its activities. “Someone must be able to say what is included and what is not part of RUDEP.” The programme was perceived of as having a special role “being able to bridge the gap between the Regional, the Districts, and villages, thereby reaching the rural poor in a direct and coordinated way”³⁴. How to reconcile the quest for a special role with the never ending demands from the government sector for what was tantamount to general budget support? There is no doubt that RUDEP represented a catalyst of new types of activities and not merely responded to requests from within the system. But it is fair to say that riding both horses simultaneously proved difficult. It neither satisfied those on the Norwegian side who wanted to see more of the special role, nor those who dreamt of a strengthened government system in general.

Process: an end in itself or at the expense of results?

The organisational structure and mode of operation of RUDEP became a major issue during the initial years. It was indeed learning by doing, but characterised by little engagement from regional authorities. This illustrated a common problem in Tanzania’s aid dependent public sector: reluctance among senior officers to assume ownership and the responsibility for using aid that goes with it, while donor representatives were reluctant to let go of their control not really trusting the recipient institutions. To overcome this double hindrance would at best take time, but it turned out that time was not on RUDEP’s side.

Two years into the programme NORAD underscored the need to be patient, and to accept that it will be a slow process to build up the required capacity in key departments to expand activities. NORAD reluctantly accepted that Tanzanian staff could be paid by the programme, but “subject to the conditions that the number is small, that the personnel is not available from GOT, that the contract period does not exceed 1-2 years, and that GOT seeks solutions to take over the responsibilities after the contract period expires”³⁵. To attract qualified staff and provide incentives to officers in key departments RUDEP financed housing for key Tanzanian personnel, and substantial resources were spent on various forms of staff training, including studies outside Tanzania. Offices of key departments (READ, Natural Resources, Health, and Water³⁶) were rehabilitated and equipped.

In a report from the 1988 Annual Meeting NORAD observed that expenditures during the first 1.5 years were under one-fifth of the approved amount for the Phase I period of four years, that 70 percent had been used for administration, transport and support infrastructure, and that there were few tangible impacts of the programme. Nevertheless, NORAD warned against exerting pressure for higher expenditure and more visible outputs, and stated that the start-up of RUDEP was on the right track and was promising.³⁷

At the end of the first phase the Region reiterated that the thrust of RUDEP’s philosophy was institutional strengthening:

³⁴ READ. RUDEP Annual Report 1990/91. Sumbawanga October 1991, p. 20.

³⁵ Agreed Minutes from 1st Annual Meeting on RUDEP, 27.3.1987.

³⁶ We sometimes refer to departments by their colloquial Kiswahili name: *Maliasili* (Natural Resources), *Afya* (Health), *Maji* (Water), *Kilimo* (Agriculture), *Ujenzi* (Works), *Elimu* (Education) and *Maendeleo* (Community Development).

³⁷ Draft memo from Annual Meeting, dated 25.2.1988.

“the purpose being to establish an enabling framework for support and assistance to Regional and District Administration in order to enable them to be more effective in planning, implementing and managing development activities. At its heart RUDEP was process oriented rather than output oriented. The aim was to influence complex institutional processes “rather than mainly achievements of physical targets within fixed financial allocations”³⁸.

What matters most: getting results fast or getting there at the local pace? What is more sustainable? There is no simple answer to this dilemma. The dilemma is equally present in the aid debate of today, with an increasing number of vertical crash programmes being promoted – e.g. for vaccination. As we will argue below, the water supplies installed by the Water Project (before and during RUDEP) have been remarkably resilient in a situation where Government failed to follow-up on maintenance. It shows that quality of implementation in the long run matters more than merely adhering to bureaucratic procedures.

Within the local administration: but hard to get in

The first RUDEP Coordinator aired his frustrations with the integration process in a memo to the 1987 Review Mission. Attitudes both on the donor and the recipient side made integration an uphill battle, he argued:³⁹

- The accounts had been kept separate, although disbursement and payment procedures resembled the government ones.
- Procurement had been outside the government system.
- NORAD had employed a RUDEP Coordinator working within the Regional Economic Affairs Department, but he had no formal position in the government system. Still, he was entrusted with a lot of informal powers, being some sort of NORAD-representative in the Region. “The position is an artefact”.
- There was a tendency that expatriates, primarily recruited as advisors, in reality functioned as managers and main decision makers.
- Experience had shown that many senior government officers clearly distinguished between government projects and RUDEP-projects, and that they felt less responsible for the latter: “what RUDEP is funding, RUDEP should also be responsible for”.
- The RUDEP Annual Plans had not received the attention envisaged in higher government and political fora when the agreement with NORAD was signed.

The challenges of making RUDEP an integral part of the Tanzanian government system were clearly demonstrated with the decision to incorporate the Water Project. It meant redirecting an excessively ‘import dependent’ project from procurement in Norway through a private company – Norconsult – to using government regulations and more procurement in-country. It meant removal of allowances in excess of Government rates. And understandably it caused resentment and declining morale.

In 1991, RUDEP reflected on its achievements as an integrated programme, not in the sense of working across sectors, but in being operated as a genuine Government programme. “RUDEP has in many ways taken on an existence of its own and is perceived as an institution in its own right”, it was admitted.⁴⁰ In certain sensible areas RUDEP had deliberately been set up with parallel structures: for financial control and accounting, for procurement and stores, and for management and maintenance of vehicles. But RUDEP projects were part of the Regional budget, approved by Parliament; implementation was done using only government departments; the Regional Development Director was in overall control; and all allowances, salaries etc. followed those of the Government.

³⁸ READ, RUDEP Annual Report 1991/92.

³⁹ Taken from a memo dated 15.11.1987, signed by the RUDEP Coordinator.

⁴⁰ READ. RUDEP Annual Report 1990/91. Sumbawanga October 1991.

An independent study of the RUDEP-approach in 1994 concluded that “regional heads [of departments] felt strongly that integration was a fact on the regional level whereas district heads [of departments] denied that RUDEP was integrated at the district level.”⁴¹

Within the local administration: but who pulled the strings?

The objective of making RUDEP an integral part of the regional development plan and budget posed several challenges. One was synchronising NORAD’s approval process with that of the Tanzanian budget process. It was decided that NORAD first gave its approval in principle to proposals put forward by the Region, which were then later tabled for the approval of the Regional Development Committee. This was later criticised as weakening the influence of politicians on RUDEP, since they discussed RUDEP projects only at a time when the regional planners and NORAD had struck a deal, so to speak.

Another dilemma concerned the line of authority between RUDEP project officers in various departments and the RUDEP administration. It was agreed (in the first Annual Meeting, 1987) that project officers were to be directly responsible to READ for matters relating to physical and financial management. For personnel issues the Project Officer was to report to the Head of Department. This implied bypassing heads of departments, which obviously created resentment, but was then seen as a necessary measure to strengthen implementation and accountability. Many heads of departments, rightly or wrongly, were initially perceived as stumbling blocks and there was a fear of undue interference in project activities especially concerning use of vehicles. In the later years of RUDEP, department heads were more formally made responsible for RUDEP funds.

This serves to illustrate how RUDEP had to compromise between the objectives of working entirely within the government system, on the one hand, and establish more effective control mechanisms and lines of command to achieve results on the ground, on the other hand. This led to much power being held at the Regional Economic Affairs Department.

With the local administration: though not without Norwegian influence

Based on Norway’s experiences in Sri Lanka the rural development stalwarts in NORAD envisaged a role of Norway in influencing RUDEP based primarily on close informal dialogue and formal response to initiatives coming from the Region. The dynamics in Tanzania turned out differently. First of all, the Regional authorities were rather passive, and much was left to the expatriates in the programme to give it shape and direction. The capacity of NORAD’s office in Dar es Salaam to follow events in remote Rukwa was also limited.

Increasingly, NORAD made use of *review missions* as a means to push its various agendas. In principle, these were joint missions in the sense that representatives from Tanzanian government institutions participated. Some reviews looked at RUDEP as a whole, while others had a sector view. Common to all, was that the Region did not participate and often complained about the lack of involvement. The teams spent little time in the Region, and often had members not familiar to the Region. Conclusions were greatly influenced by signals delivered by NORAD or certain preconceived ideas about problems in the Region or Tanzania in general. Several of the reviews were criticized for poor quality. The 1991 “Roads Review”, for instance, received the assessment from the Region as “‘lightweight’ containing no detailed argument or discussion on any subject”.⁴² This extensive use of short-term missions to inform the dialogue with the recipient has been a common feature in development aid. In the case of RUDEP it rarely added quality to the planning process. To NORAD, however, these missions were useful carriers of policy messages.

⁴¹ Shio, L., O. Smukkestad and B. Mrina (1994), p.67.

⁴² Clapham, M.R. ‘Comments re Roads Review Mission Dec 1991. 24.6.1992.

Another means whereby NORAD sought to engage in a policy dialogue was through requesting the Region to prepare *sector policy documents*. Although RUDEP started on a platform of ‘learning by doing’, NORAD justifiably felt a need for clearer policy direction and distillation of lessons in key sectors, such as agriculture, community development, women in development, water, roads, education, and health. In an internal memo NORAD complimented the Region for these ‘policy papers’, and reminded itself that NORAD ought to continue the practice “not to demand that the documents are being submitted for NORAD’s approval”⁴³. Still, there were frequent disappointments with the quality. Commenting on the draft “Water Policy” NORAD, in an internal memo, states that: “the document is a big disappointment, not only because it does not provide a framework for decisions, but most of all because it seems to reflect a work process without consultation and cooperation”⁴⁴.

However, two fundamental realities in Tanzania made this dialogue approach not having a real impact: a long tradition of top-down centralised policy-making had left the regions with no clout or identity as policy makers; and in general there was a widespread apathy when it came to policies – as nice to have on paper but not something one needed to follow. From the Region, the inclination was to see these documents as fulfilling aid conditionality and did not reflect locally embedded political processes. Besides, the political role of the Region, after the local government reform of 1984, had been substantially weakened. NORAD wanted to elevate its dialogue with Rukwa Region from particularities of small RUDEP activities to strategies for development but did not achieve much. This experience, amplified by the new aid paradigms of the 1990s emphasising policy dialogue at central level, was another nail in the RUDEP coffin.

Within the local administration: but was RUDEP perceived as a Norwegian or a Tanzanian programme?

Officially, RUDEP was of course Tanzanian, but it was an issue whether it would be regarded only as a mechanism to handle Norwegian aid to the Region, a particular development programme aiming at seeking funding from all possible sources, or even more ambitiously a regional mechanism for handling aid to the region in a broad sense. In 1987, the RUDEP management put forward the latter argument. “By its development philosophy and its position within the government set-up, it should be a natural responsibility for RUDEP ... to assist the READ to properly coordinate and monitor donor funded projects, in addition to the locally funded”⁴⁵. By virtue of being part and parcel of the Regional Development Directorate this was viewed as an appropriate role.

Several other aid agencies showed an interest in Rukwa at the time. In 1991, close to 20 other donors provided funding to projects in the Region mostly managed from Dar es Salaam with little cooperation with regional or district administrations.⁴⁶ Only German GTZ and UNHCR operated project offices in Rukwa – the latter at the refugee settlements in Mpanda for Burundian refugees (i.e. Katumba and Mishamo). The expatriate RUDEP Coordinators, probably more than their Tanzanian bosses and colleagues, argued the need for aid harmonisation and coordination at the regional level. Heads of sector departments, however, for most part did not share this view and preferred the opportunity to handle potential donors separately. There was an instance where the Regional Agricultural Department tried to get funding from three different donors (one being NORAD through RUDEP) for basically the same activity – production of ox-carts – without any attempt to coordinate the three.

The Region had some success in making RUDEP more than aid from Norway, through for instance the involvement of ILO in the road projects and the use of American (US Peace

⁴³ Memo from NORAD HQ to NORAD-Dar es Salaam re Annual Meeting 1993, 18.2.1993 (in Norwegian).

⁴⁴ Memo form Health Section, NORAD HQ, 26.2.1993 (in Norwegian).

⁴⁵ RUDEP Annual Report 1987-1988, Preface.

⁴⁶ Naustdalslid, J. and B. Aasen (1995), p.37.

Corps) and British (VSO) volunteers. In the RUDEP Annual Report 1988-89 it is stated in no uncertain terms “that RUDEP is not an entity in its own right, nor is it an organisation for the disbursement of NORAD funds. It is a development programme for Rukwa Region”.⁴⁷ Still, when Norway pulled out in 1996, this became immediately also the end of RUDEP. The attempts to establish RUDEP as a programme or mechanism that could survive a Norwegian withdrawal had failed.

Former RUDEP expatriate remembering old days by the swimming pool



Within the local administration: and the struggle for qualified manpower

Capacity building was a major challenge from the start: “It is very important in the time ahead not to let the programme’s activities grow faster than the development of local capacity to manage the work tasks.”⁴⁸ However, as it had been for the Water Project, it turned out to be difficult to wait for the government to bring the required qualified manpower to the region. It was in short supply nationally, and Sumbawanga was not at all an attractive posting. As RUDEP expanded, it had to bring in qualified manpower through expatriates or Tanzanians on project contracts, especially in engineering and financial management.

In 1987, the RUDEP Coordinator and the Regional Planning Officer requested NORAD to approve direct employment by RUDEP. “We are constantly facing a dilemma, having to choose between direct employment or not getting any competent staff”⁴⁹.

At the end of Phase I there were 14 expatriates working with RUDEP, recruited through five different organisations, including Norwegian Volunteers and US Peace Corps (three positions in total). The costs amounted to about 30% of NORAD’s allocation to RUDEP (1990). This was considered too high by NORAD and it was arguing for a reduction. This argument, however, was not linked to careful assessment of the effectiveness of the technical assistance or whether the availability of qualified Tanzanians made expatriates superfluous. It was a combination of a cost issue and the desire to see a natural evolution towards “tanzanizing” the programme.

In line with the capacity building philosophy of RUDEP major efforts were taken to get qualified Tanzanians to work in the region, as well as to invest in training. Although a number of key project officers decided to stay on and worked for RUDEP to its end (in planning, forestry, health and community development), the problems were acute especially with engineers. They were in high demand and did not stay for long in the programme.

⁴⁷ READ, RUDEP Annual Report 1988-1989, November 1989.

⁴⁸ From Memo (in Norwegian) prepared by NORAD, 9.10.1986.

⁴⁹ Letter from RUDEP to the Norwegian Embassy, 27.2.1987.

Within the local administration: financial accountability a constant problem

It was clearly stated in the 1987 Annual Report that “one shall avoid creating new institutions solely for the purpose of implementing RUDEP activities, even where this in the short run may prove to be more efficient”. Nevertheless, within the Regional Economic Affairs Department a separate RUDEP Finance Unit was established with personnel seconded from the Regional Accounts Office. And soon NORAD saw the need for an expatriate as the head of the unit. The RUDEP Finance Controller was the last expatriate position to be terminated when RUDEP was closing. In 1988, NORAD asked for an external audit of the programme, since the Government Audit was unable to meet the 18 months deadline set by Norway for audited accounts, and several followed later.

The Tanzanian public sector suffered, and still suffers today, from a well established culture accepting misuse of funds and vehicles and poor monitoring of results. There is a general perception that this is unavoidable and excusable in a system where people are paid salaries that do not keep pace with rising living costs. RUDEP was a honey pot that many wanted to taste. The initial response of RUDEP was to control all payments centrally through the Finance Unit. With the growth of the programme, not least after the incorporation of the Water Project, the Unit handled more transactions than the rest of the Regional Accounts Office, and it soon became a bottleneck. The Region therefore proposed at the end of 1988 to strengthen the Unit with personnel hired from a private auditing company (Coopers & Lybrand) admitting that “RUDEP is facing severe constraints in its administrative capacity to handle accounts, financial monitoring, procurement and transport. Constraints in these areas are already causing delays to project implementation. Besides, there is inadequate monitoring of expenditures and physical progress”⁵⁰.

There was a perception that leakages in the programme were growing, and NORAD had the following complaint minuted in 1989: “Physical progress is not in accordance with financial expenditures. The Water Projects appear to be the worst performers in this regard”⁵¹. Inadequate financial control remained a problem throughout and in one instance NORAD decided to hold back funding (see more below).

Participation: did the bottom come up or only the top come down?

The kind of development approach that was promoted for RUDEP reflected new thinking internationally about rural development, advocating a bottom-up and participatory approach in contrast to large schemes planned from above. One of the most influential writers during 1980s was Robert Chambers with the book *Rural Development: Putting the Last First*.⁵² The quest for grassroots-type planning was further strengthened by critiques of blueprint planning, advocating that rural development programmes had to adopt a flexible learning-by-doing approach, using the term process planning, and design programmes like experiments where ideas are tested and modified through practical implementation.⁵³

To institute this way of thinking in Tanzania at the time, and not least in Rukwa, was a formidable challenge. The so-called grassroots were not at all prepared, having the top-down villagisation process fresh in their memory. The government planning system, likewise, had become a ritual where plans were written up by civil servants and forwarded to central government without any involvement of beneficiaries or their representatives. Many projects appearing in the Regions development plan did not even exist. It was merely an exercise to secure some central government funds that were subsequently diverted to cover administrative costs, especially travels.

⁵⁰ Letter from RUDEP to NORAD Dar es Salaam, 17.12.1988.

⁵¹ Agreed Minutes from 3rd Annual Meeting on RUDEP, 1.3.1989.

⁵² Chambers (1984).

⁵³ Korten (1980) and Rondinelli (1984).

The bottom-up approach of RUDEP became linked to the Community Development Department (*Maendeleo ya Jamii*). This was probably the obvious connection, but one problem emerged. The role of *Maendeleo* in the government departmental structure was far from settled. One would assume that it was to become a facilitator assisting conventional line departments in their relations with local communities. In stead, *Maendeleo* tried to build their own portfolio of small scale projects for which they controlled the implementation.

RUDEP pushed for the facilitator role of *Maendeleo*. There were frequent reiterations of the need to make community participation an integral part of all RUDEP activities, being it water supply, roads, tree planting or primary health care. It started with water supply, but it was soon evident that inter-departmental cooperation was looked upon with suspicion. *Maendeleo* officers were assigned to *Maji* (Water Department) and *Afya* (Health Department), but complained about not being properly included.

However, cooperation became easier when there was genuine interaction in the field. This was one important reason behind the idea of Area Development Projects with a focus on one division only. *Maendeleo* was given the key role in managing this approach, and received considerable capacity development support through RUDEP including expatriate advisors. Could sector integration and people's participation be better achieved at a lower level, removed from the segmented bureaucracy in Sumbawanga? The answer is yes, but the price tag was high. In Section 4.4 the Mwimbi Area Development programme is discussed in more detail.

A complete turnaround in the approach to community involvement took place during the time of RUDEP, partly based on experiences on the ground but mainly facilitated by the wave of democratisation hitting the continent following the end of the Cold War. The supply driven approach from the heydays of "African socialism" had lost its credibility, and the answer was democratic decentralisation. 'Let people decide themselves what they need and place their demands to government'. This shift in mindset represented a formidable challenge to government workers who had been trained to teach people what to do. This applied to *Maendeleo* staff as well. Gradually, application-based approaches were introduced – in the Mwimbi project itself, with a new mechanism labelled District Development Funds, and also in village water supply. Once people realised that their applications actually triggered a response by government (i.e. RUDEP) community and group mobilisation were greatly encouraged.

Within the local administration: Is rural development conditioned on 4-wheel drive vehicles?

Seeing expensive vehicles parked next to a village meeting engaged in participatory planning is to most a contradiction in terms. Is it not possible to kick start community development efforts without the heavy costs of bringing in government officers from afar, not to speak of advisors from Norway?

Transport was a major issue in RUDEP, and the requests for vehicles were virtually unlimited. The Water Project had been well equipped with vehicles from the start, which was unavoidable given the aim to cover the whole region – twice the size of Denmark. Furthermore, the expansion into new sectors had to be matched with increasing the pool of cars, which reached about 80 vehicles at its peak. Costs of transport constituted a major component of the RUDEP budget, not least because of high running and maintenance costs due to bad road conditions and a major problem of unauthorised use of vehicles for non-RUDEP departmental work or for personal benefit. At the 1989 Annual Meeting NORAD stated that "the proportion of the budget absorbed by transport had risen to unacceptable

heights”⁵⁴. In 1991, the Region argued against the claim that transport cost had become too high, and that it warranted a freeze in purchase of new vehicles. It was reported that the proportion of the budget allocated to transport fell from 33% in 1988-89 to 18% in 1991-92, and the Region maintained that the conditions in Rukwa more than justified this level of transport costs in the Programme.⁵⁵



The truck once used by RUDEP to ferry goods from Dar es Salaam – now used by Tanroads

It is not a surprise that transport was a major consumer of funds given the remoteness of the region, its size and the lack of private transport services, but the RUDEP administration never succeeded in effectively curbing the misuse of vehicles for private

gain despite elaborate transport management procedures and strict regulations. And this problem became a major factor explaining NORAD’s growing disenchantment with RUDEP.

One study speculated that the sizeable car pool and impact of subsidised transport in the private market made it “practically impossible for any private initiative to establish a commercial transportation company”⁵⁶. The same concern was raised by RUDEP in a meeting with NORAD in 1989 – “private companies are scarce in Rukwa because the numerous RUDEP cars seem to cover much of the transport needs and at a much lower price than what private companies can operate at”⁵⁷. Whereas this might have been a possible effect, it was probably off-set by overall growth in the economy stimulated by RUDEP. A number of transport related companies – bus services, contractors and small traders – started growing during RUDEP.

In retrospect, one needs to ask whether it would have been possible to develop a programme with the objective of RUDEP with less reliance on motorized transport. This would have required more decentralised operations and capacity at district and lower levels to independently manage project implementation. The capacity was indeed weak, but also the resistance towards delegation and devolution of powers was a major obstacle. Once established as a programme managed by the regional administration, regional departments tended to cling on to RUDEP resources. It would have required strong political will among leaders to minimise the use of transport. To the contrary, all leaders craved for more transport, and for valid reasons. Reducing the RUDEP car pool would have required more use of private sector contractors. Such companies, however, with the required capacity, were not available during most of the RUDEP period.

The RUDEP managers tried to shift as much of the procurement as possible to Tanzanian suppliers and Rukwa based suppliers. This is illustrated by the share of so-called C-funds in the budget. C-funds constituted expenditures in Tanzanian Shillings and was channelled

⁵⁴ Agreed Minutes 3rd Annual Meeting, 1.3.1989.

⁵⁵ 5th Annual Meeting, 3 March 1991. Agreed Minutes.

⁵⁶ 3-E (1993), p. 5-12.

⁵⁷ NORAD, Dar es Salaam, Travel report from visit to Rukwa 1-25 November 1989.

through the state budget, while D-funds involved payments for goods and services made in foreign currency directly paid by NORAD. In 1986/87, C-funds constituted 30 percent. This share increased considerably and reached 70 percent in 1992/93 and as much as 87 percent in 1994/95 (see Table 4.1).

Today, the context is different. A RUDEP-type programme can now rely more on contracting out services on a competitive basis. But the most important change since the time of RUDEP is the mobile telephone network. Supervision of and communication with project sites were only possible through physical travelling during the days of RUDEP, while today much can be done by mobile phone.

Learning by doing: Drawing lessons from Phase I in search for an amended approach

The discussions prior to signing of a second phase agreement illustrate well the mood within NORAD and the Region. At the end of 1989, the message from NORAD is to stay on course, but to consolidate. “The size and scope of the programme should not be much expanded in the next phase”.⁵⁸ No further expansion, but a slight opening for the education sector was indicated. But when getting into specifics, NORAD’s ambitions sum up to a lot more than consolidation: more equal distribution of activities to all districts; women’s participation to be increased; activities within agriculture and forestry to receive continued attention; health sector activities to be strengthened; and ways of supporting economic activities to be explored. While consolidation probably was the most sensible approach, the discussion shows how difficult this is in an aid relationship, and how difficult it is to be patient when both sides want to achieve a lot in a short term. The Region wanted as much aid as possible, and various quarters within NORAD all wanted a little say in what RUDEP did. Frequent rotation of staff further contributed to this pressure.

Nevertheless, NORAD HQs asked for an overall review of the approach of RUDEP before it was ready to approve a second phase, necessitating postponing the decision one year. This was probably the first sign of mounting scepticism. Hence, the main objective of the 1990 RUDEP Review Team was “to carry out a review of the strategy followed by RUDEP”.

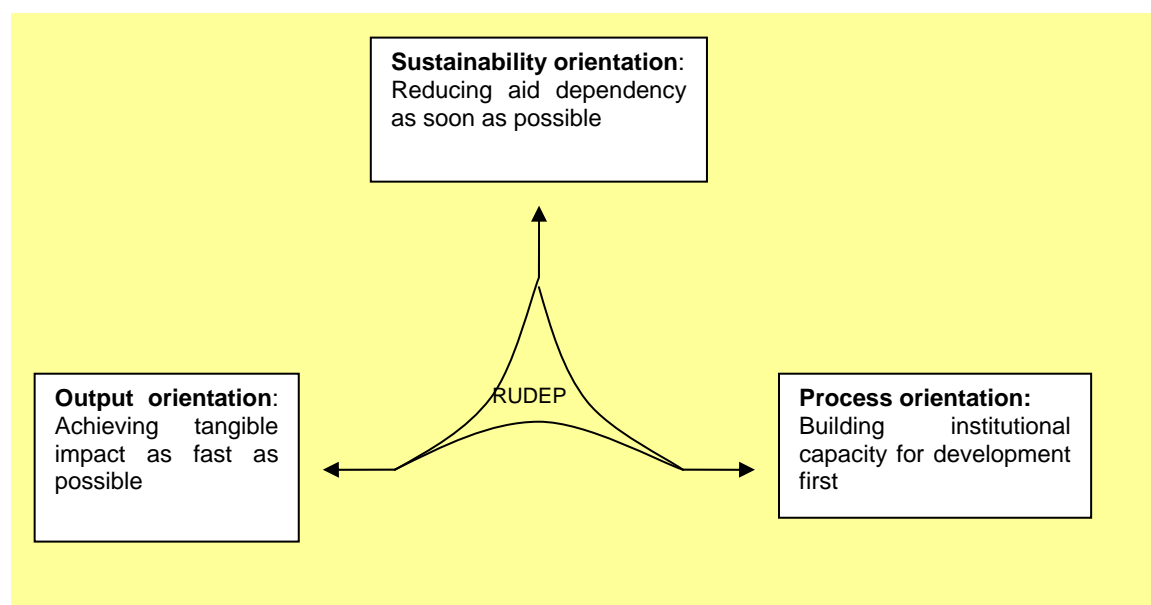
The 1990 Review concluded that “given the constraints facing RUDEP in its present form the mission calls for starting a process that over time may loosen ties with the regional administration and which will provide NORAD with more than one channel through which development funds can be forwarded”.⁵⁹ In its response, the Region challenged the inclination to introduce change “for its own sake”. Is there any evidence, it argued, that the new channels proposed (i.e. local governments, NGOs and private sector) represented more effective alternatives. “In terms of penetration, distribution and participation the Government offers the only possibility of access to services for the bulk of the Region’s population”. Furthermore, it dismissed the argument in the report that what NORAD financed through RUDEP was likely not to be sustainable in the long-run. If sustainability is interpreted financially, “the question cannot be solved in Rukwa”. “It should be stressed that the Region endorses the Report’s call for greater impact. Where the Region would express doubt is over sustainability. The Report does not make it clear what is meant by this”.⁶⁰

This disagreement amply illustrates fundamental dilemmas in any aid relationship; how the ideas of sustainability vs. process vs. output pull in different directions. RUDEP was clearly caught in the middle of these forces of ideas (see Figure 3.1 below).

⁵⁸ Letter from NORAD to RUDEP Coordinator, 25.10.89.

⁵⁹ Manger et al (1990). p. x.

⁶⁰ Letter to NORAD from Regional Development Director and RUDEP Coordinator, 26.1.1990.

Figure 3.1: Diverging orientation in aid relationships

The Water Project was clearly output oriented. With RUDEP this was replaced by process orientation. Coming 1990, however, concerns were raised whether RUDEP investments could be maintained without continued infusion of Norwegian aid. NORAD acknowledged that the Region's planning and implementation capacity had increased significantly during the initial years of RUDEP, but the 1990 Review Mission articulated a view increasingly shared by many: "Government officers appear to have been the primary beneficiaries from the assistance and the time when Tanzanians can take over seems remote"⁶¹.



From the 1991 Annual Meeting held in Sumbawanga

At the 1991 Annual Meeting NORAD affirmed its call for "more emphasis to be given to the District level". This would have to be a guiding principle in a second phase of the programme. The Phase II Document prepared by the Region distanced RUDEP even further from the Regional Administration: "It is learned that Government through the regional administration cannot effectively implement the program...The private sector and Non Governmental organizations are going to be the main implementers of the program".⁶² This represented a major shift in emphasis, probably also facilitated by the change of Coordinator at the same time. Furthermore, the document introduced another donor-fashion at the time, namely Logical Framework Analysis, as a means to improve project planning. RUDEP was told to bias its investments towards agriculture and the small-scale industrial production, at the expense of social services, but little was said in the Document about how to make this turn-around.

⁶¹ Manger et al (1990), p.vii.

⁶² READ. The RUDEP Document for Phase II. Sumbawanga, April 1991

NORAD approved at the end of 1991 NOK 100 million to a second phase (4 years). According to the agreement, “the Regional Development Directors Office, Rukwa, shall together with the respective District authorities be responsible for the planning and implementation of the programme on the local level”.⁶³ The reference to District authorities was the only difference introduced compared to the Phase I agreement, but there is no reference to how RUDEP would relate to these two mutually independent levels in the government structure. The formidable challenge of transforming a regionally managed programme to a local government support programme remained unresolved.

Learning by doing: searching for new partners

On *decentralisation*, progress was recorded. By 1992, 30% of RUDEP funds were managed by the District councils, and in the 1994/95 budget 50% was allocated to the districts and in the last RUDEP year the districts’ share rose to 70%. In 1993, RUDEP reported that the capacity of districts is too weak to assume the expected role. This implied that RUDEP had to invest in training programmes, it was argued from NORAD HQs. At the 1993 Annual Meeting the Regional Development Director said this about the capacity at district level: “funds cannot just be dished out to the Districts. Any disbursement will have to take into accounts the Districts’ operational capacities, availability of necessary resources, lack of which could lead to implementation deadlocks”⁶⁴. The districts on their side were not pleased with the dominant role of the Region, and wanted more autonomy within RUDEP, even including separate annual meetings with NORAD.

The idea of using RUDEP as a promoter of *private sector* development never took off. This is partly understandable given the absence of experiences with public-private partnerships shortly after liberalisation. The private sector in Rukwa was small and mostly involved crop marketing, retail trade and transport related businesses. Capital was also accumulated in more shady and less controlled activities – gem stone mining, poaching, timber and charcoal, and through corruption. The trading and retail business was mostly controlled by families of Indian and Arab descent. Slowly one has seen the advent of business people originating from the Region, but immigrants to the Region still dominate. The sector was at the time ill-prepared for constructive cooperation with Government. An agreement was reached with SIDO (Small Industries Development Organisation) to establish a revolving fund for subsidised loans. The initial response from private entrepreneurs was encouraging. It turned out later that loan recovery was too low to make the fund revolve, and there was no follow up with the closure of RUDEP.

Support to *civil society* development was high on the agenda, and NORAD commissioned a study of NGOs in Rukwa. Its main recommendation – to establish an association of NGOs to facilitate external support and capacity building – was soon followed up with RUDEP support.⁶⁵

Long-term commitment: but the ship starts taking in water

The story of RUDEP can be presented through the image of taking an old boat that had stranded and been left unattended, mending it, putting it back on the water, and gradually improving it with new fittings and equipment. This was much the story of Phase I. The boat was the regional development apparatus in Rukwa. By 1991, the boat was afloat and delivered improved services, but it was the same old hull, and some of the holes and structural weaknesses had not been permanently fixed. New leakages appeared and at the end of Phase II the boat was again drifting ashore. What happened and why?

⁶³ Agreement between Norway and Tanzania regarding RUDEP Phase II, 18 December 1991.

⁶⁴ Seventh RUDEP Annual Meeting, Agreed Minutes, 16.3.1993.

⁶⁵ Nilssen, E.S.W. and P.A.K. Muchungusi. ‘Study of the development of non-governmental organizations in Rukwa Region. Dar es Salaam. April 1992.

The RUDEP management had been given the following marching orders for Phase II: integration of RUDEP in the government system had to go deeper in response to sustainability concerns; more funds were to be managed by district councils; and more emphasis should be given to productive sectors and roads. These strategic objectives, however, could not be achieved in a coherent manner. There was a contradiction between making RUDEP part and parcel of the government system, while at the same time demanding more tangible outputs. In Phase I, it had been accepted that a slow process of building capacity was the only way to go. That kind of patience was now withering – on the Norwegian side, but also among politicians in Rukwa. The role of the Regional administration in developing new financing modalities directed at local government, private sector and NGOs was at best ambiguous.

In 1992, the RUDEP Annual Report reported on progress towards further integration. The number of staff directly paid by RUDEP had been reduced to 125 (down by close to one-third); the RUDEP general store had been closed, RUDEP vehicles (74 in all) had been re-registered on government number plates, and there had been a cut back on personal benefits not part of government staff regulations.⁶⁶

The consequences were not surprising. The same year, the RUDEP Coordinator wrote to NORAD:

“The staff are now finding less opportunities within RUDEP, and with less real earnings, the already difficult situation is quickly deteriorating. I have been asked to forward you the “outcry” from our staff. Personally, I sympathize with the staff, but also approve of the policy of avoiding special treatment of staff working within RUDEP activities.”⁶⁷

At the Annual Meeting in 1992 NORAD complained about declining quality of planning documents. They noted growing frustrations within *Maji* as a result of reduced budgets and adaptation to government regulations. *Kilimo* (Agriculture Department) was not capable of responding constructively to NORAD’s desire to focus more on the agricultural sector. For instance, in the Annual Report, the Kifinga Irrigation project was presented in positive terms – allegedly boasting a high completion rate and strong involvement of beneficiaries, whereas a visit to the site led NORAD representatives to conclude that it ought to be stopped. This case illustrated a general problem in RUDEP, namely to achieve monitoring of acceptable quality.

The problem of controlling expenditures worsened in subsequent years. At the 1994 Annual Meeting NORAD noted with concern that some projects during first half of the 1993/94 financial year had spent more than 100 percent of their yearly budget. “It leaves the impression of inadequate planning and budgeting or lack of proper financial management”.⁶⁸ The minutes of the meeting reflected NORAD’s concerns with major cost overruns (“the Region having spent over 70% of the administrative budget in the first half of the year”) and inadequate financial reporting, and NORAD was reluctant in endorsing several new proposals from the Region “because of the uncertainty of RUDEP continuation after 1994/95”⁶⁹.

What were the reasons behind this deteriorating performance? Only a couple of years earlier RUDEP had been congratulated for its improvements on financial management. One decisive factor, according to informants, was the very integration process itself, culminating in the decision to localise the position as RUDEP Coordinator. Since the start of RUDEP until 1993

⁶⁶ READ. RUDEP Annual Report 1991/1992, November 1992, p.3.

⁶⁷ Letter from RUDEP Coordinator to NORAD dated 3.9.1992.

⁶⁸ Instruction to NORAD’s delegation to the RUDEP Annual Meeting 1994, 27.2.1994 (in Norwegian).

⁶⁹ 1994 Annual Meeting. Minutes, p.9.

the Coordinator had been recruited by NORAD. From mid 1993 until the end the position was held by staff of the Regional Economic Affairs Department, who did not have the advantage of being outside the rank and file of the Tanzanian bureaucracy.⁷⁰ Consequently, the programme became more vulnerable to pressures from regional and departmental heads. The integration process also resulted in weakening the position of RUDEP Project Officers vis-à-vis their superiors, or so-called warrant holders. The latter could approve payments without the consent of the project-in-charge. A RUDEP Community Development Advisor aired her concerns directly to NORAD: “an unscrupulous or desperate Warrant Holder might be tempted to borrow some of the money for non RUDEP activities”⁷¹. Hence, the decision to push for full integration, while ideologically well-intended, was obviously premature given the way RUDEP had been set up. It seemed to have pulled the rug beneath the programme, but other factors also mattered.

While the Regional authorities wanted as much aid as possible from NORAD, at the donor’s side there were excruciating discussions about how to set the limit. How much? For what? And of course – for how long? In a travel report prepared by an officer at the Norwegian HQ visiting RUDEP in 1994 there are frequent reference to these overall questions. “There is a need to find the right principles of limitation [of funding]”.⁷² He flagged concerns for financial sustainability arguing that RUDEP should not take over Government’s responsibilities. Transport and general office expenditures had become too high. He argued for more use of co-funding or matching funding between Government (or communities) and RUDEP. These thoughts were all indications of a mental shift in the “RUDEP philosophy” from being part of Government to some kind of external body cooperating with Government, and hence more like an extended arm of NORAD.

This merely illustrates the ambivalence of the RUDEP identity, which existed throughout. Although verbally regional leaders referred to RUDEP as “ours”, their actions often did not demonstrate a sense of ownership. Or, as some would argue, the problems faced by RUDEP in terms of cost overruns, misuse of vehicles and interdepartmental rivalries were endemic to the Government system, and only proved that RUDEP was part of the system – with its deficiencies and challenges. One can only speculate, if it would have been a better strategy to establish an institution in Rukwa that more explicitly played the donor’s role as a partner to recipient institutions in Rukwa – being Regional departments, District councils, village governments, NGOs or private companies.

3.3 A less than honourable exit

The justification: hard to grasp the logic

In 1993, development thinking in Dar es Salaam and at NORAD HQs started turning against the RUDEP-concept. Questions were being raised against the sustainability of such targeted investments and the slogan was sector-based multi-donor programme support and aid sponsored national reforms rather than single donor project aid. At the 1993 Annual Meeting NORAD announced that a financial and economic review of RUDEP will be undertaken⁷³. The terms of reference clearly reflected the views of the RUDEP-sceptics, and the report was later used as a reference for justifying reconsideration of NORAD’s support. In 1995, a study of the experiences with RUDEP and KIDEP commissioned by the Norwegian Ministry of Foreign Affairs noted that: “(T)he demand for a reconsideration of the programmes on the

⁷⁰ The RUDEP Coordinators were: Alf Morten Jerve (1986-1989), Graham Teskey (1989-1991), Oddvar Espegren (1991-1993), E.J.K. Ntemi (1993-1995) and N.A. Mwingira (1995-1996).

⁷¹ Letter for RUDEP Community Development Advisor to NORAD, 29.5.95.

⁷² NORAD (NATUR). Summary memo following visit to RUDEP 28.2 – 17.3. 1994 (in Norwegian).

⁷³ 3E Economics (1993).

basis of a financial and economic review was for many people seen as contradicting the very design and policy of the programme, as well as NORAD's long term commitment"⁷⁴.

Henceforth, the Country Strategy document for Tanzania prepared in 1994 stated that studies had confirmed that the programme did not meet requirements for economic and financial sustainability: "The Head of the Norwegian delegation referred to a recent evaluation raising serious questioning regarding the sustainability of the Kigoma and Rukwa programmes"⁷⁵. The size and complexity of the programme "surpasses the capacity of local authorities to carry it forward, which has resulted in high aid dependency"⁷⁶. While this conclusion was irrefutable, the logical consequence could have been different.

The same argument was equally valid for Tanzania as a country. At that level, the conclusion was not to exit aid but to seek new modalities for strengthening Tanzania's capacity to receive and manage aid. Why was this approach not taken at the regional level? The answer was probably threefold: project aid was in discredit; rural development was losing out to other thematic priorities such as governance reform and infrastructure; and there was a sense that the complexity of RUDEP also had surpassed the capacity of the Norwegian embassy to handle it. The problems of financial control furthered contributed to the unilateral decision by Norway in 1994 to terminate its support by end of Phase II – June 1996 – 13 years after the start of the water project and only 10 years after initiation of RUDEP.

Reform or exit?

The prevailing view early 1994, however, was not one of complete exit but "the need to revise the project concept", placing more emphasis on the district level and local resource mobilisation. "The district focus is pre-eminent and activities should, as far as possible, be planned and implemented by the local authorities"⁷⁷. The Region was informed at the Annual Meeting that final approval of the 1994/95 budget had to await the outcome of bilateral country level negotiations later that year.

In preparation for the bilateral consultations between Tanzania and Norway in October 1994 the Norwegian Ministry of Foreign Affairs wrote: "It is proposed that the rural development programmes be terminated in their present form. A District programme taking into account the ongoing reform process in public administration and incorporating relevant experience from KIDEP and RUDEP instead be developed"⁷⁸. However, in November 1994 NORAD had decided to go for a complete exit and officially agreed with the Prime Minister's Office to terminate funding by end June 1996.⁷⁹ The idea was to replace designated regional support with support to a national civil service reform programme involving local authorities. However, in 1994 this idea was still at the drawing table, and it was highly uncertain what was in it for the districts in Rukwa.

Nevertheless, NORAD was adamant to wind up quickly. Ironically, the 1 ½ years for the phasing-out was communicated as "NORAD realizes that it will not make sense to terminate rather abruptly", adding that "the level of funding will have to be tapered off during the winding-up period". Although NORAD acknowledged that "the two programmes are entering into a most difficult phase", there was no political will to make the exit more gradual.⁸⁰ In a matter of only few years the perception of RUDEP had changed from being 'the right thing to do' – a country study of Norwegian aid to Tanzania in 1988 had called RUDEP a positive and novel experiment well worth trying – to 'a dying horse no longer worth feeding'. It is telling

⁷⁴ Naustdalslid, J. and B. Aasen (1995), p. 69.

⁷⁵ Agreed Minutes Country Programme Review between Tanzania and Norway, 23-25 March 1994.

⁷⁶ Taken from NORAD Appropriation Document for additional support to RUDEP, November 1995.

⁷⁷ Annual Meeting 16 March 1994, Agreed minutes, p.3.

⁷⁸ Quote taken from Lunøe, B. et al., 1996. Review Report on RUDEP 1995/96 Implementation, NORAD/PMO.

⁷⁹ Letter from the Norwegian Embassy/NORAD to Principal Secretary, Prime Minister's Office, 8.11.1994.

⁸⁰ Ibid.

of this u-turn that the Norwegian embassy rejected the suggestion to evaluate the RUDEP experience. The time for learning by doing was over.

A turbulent phase-out

The Region agreed with NORAD to prepare a phasing out plan, but it is quite evident that the regional administration only paid lip service to this challenge. Understandably, NORAD's pull out was as major blow and some felt it as a betrayal. The relations were also quite strained during the last year because of audit queries and the decision by NORAD to suspend payments for a period until appropriate actions had been taken. At the 1995 Annual Meeting the ambiance was tense. "We are holding this meeting under very difficult circumstances", was the opening statement by the head of the Tanzanian delegation, adding that all queries in the audit report "should be addressed and answered to"⁸¹. Apparently, the answers were not satisfactory and a new meeting was convened two months later.

At this meeting, NORAD accepted to resume the release of funds, the Regional Development Director appealed for NORAD to reconsider its exit decision, and Prime Minister's Office argued that the period for phasing out was too short. But NORAD had reached a point of no return. The Region was merely advised to "prepare an environment in which the region will be able to run the activities left after the end of financial assistance from NORAD"⁸². As it turned out, this wish was nothing but 'a pie in the sky'.

The Phasing Out Report, demanded by NORAD and submitted in early 1996, which reads as a long complaint about the negative effects of the exit, depicts the gravity of the situation but also reveals the lethargy of the Regional administration in mitigating the consequences.

"The withdrawal is surely going to leave a gap between the capacity created and the level of activities within the local development budget. Projects started by RUDEP on a long-term perspective are being stopped prematurely. The District Development Fund spirit which has taken about three years to implant in the hearts of the local people is being frustrated. All in all the untimely and abrupt ending of financial assistance to RUDEP will disrupt the region's development reached with RUDEP support."⁸³

Without prospects for continued funding many of the best qualified local staff soon looked for other jobs, but due to the RUDEP strategy of working within the government system quite many with RUDEP experience continued as civil servants in the Region. During fieldwork for this study we met several former RUDEP officers working with the district councils. Others resigned from public service and went into private sector activities.

No phasing out strategy

A NORAD recruited technical adviser at district level complained bitterly in a letter to the Embassy about "endless lack of budgetary discipline" especially at the regional level, and that by mid-1995 he was not aware of any plans for the projects after RUDEP. He suggested to the RUDEP Coordinator that emphasis should be on sustaining investments already made. For the water projects this would imply "to speed up handing over of schemes and to stock revolving stores". If RUDEP would leave behind a stock of essential spares he professed that "the schemes should be able to run 10-20 years after RUDEP"⁸⁴. As we shall see below, his projection was not totally off the mark.

⁸¹ 9th Annual Meeting. Agreed minutes, 4.5.1995.

⁸² 9th Extended Annual Meeting. Agreed Minutes. 10.7.1995.

⁸³ RUDEP Phasing Out Report, January 1996.

⁸⁴ Letter to RUDEP Coordinator from Technical Advisor, Nkansi District, 7.3.1995.

The challenge to the Region was formidable; 80% of development investments in the Region were financed through RUDEP at the time. Still, the 1996 Review Team concluded that “the Phasing Out document does not give the analyses which are required to ensure the best possible planning and implementation of future activities to ensure sustainability of the RUDEP investments to the extent possible”. The Team also observed that the 1996/97 budget for the Region showed that “no plans have been made to make a conscious effort to sustain the RUDEP investments in the next financial year”.⁸⁵ The question remains unanswered whether this inertia was caused by aid dependency or a failed government system. Irrespectively, it was a telling illustration that, at best, there was a need to revamp the RUDEP approach.

Why did the Region not resist more forcefully?

It is disconcerting to observe that RUDEP, once proclaimed to have at least a 20 years perspective, suddenly came to an abrupt halt half way in what appears as acts of irresponsibility on both the donor and the recipient side. Unfortunately, this is a legacy that RUDEP shares with many aid projects. The donor changed its mind and was in a hurry to get out, whereas the recipient took little ownership and responsibility for salvaging and carry forward as much as possible. In fact, the problems of financial management only increased during the final count down.

In retrospect, one needs to ask why the political and administrative leaders of Rukwa did not exert stronger pressure on central government and NORAD to agree on a more gradual phasing-out. It is worth noting, that NORAD about the same time (in 1992) agreed to an eight year phasing-out strategy for RUDEP’s sister programme in Sri Lanka (Hambantota Integrated Rural Development Programme – HIRDEP).⁸⁶ The answer we got from talking to people who were close to events at the time can be summarised as two main factors. One factor was that the regional set-up to which RUDEP had belonged was in a state of flux and was losing much of its former role due to the local government reform. It was already a “sinking ship”. Key civil servants did not care or have the incentives to mobilise. It is also generally believed that one is powerless if a donor decides to stop giving: “He who pays the piper calls the tune”. A second factor mentioned was rivalry among local politicians typical of the Region. The districts had a lot to loose from the closure of RUDEP. They had gradually been receiving a greater share of the budget and the District Development Fund mechanism (see Chapter 4) was yielding positive results. Nevertheless, Members of Parliament and councillors did not mobilise to challenge the decision. It is also reported that the Regional Commissioner at the time, for reasons known to him, had no interest in RUDEP.

Exits: always a one-sided affair

NORAD’s exit from RUDEP was unilateral and without any genuine consultation of the recipient side, which is the common feature of most aid exits. The exit of the Norwegian Church Aid from RUDEP in 1991 only serves to prove the point. It was also dictated by changes in HQ policies and delivered to the Region more or less as a *fait accompli*. In a meeting with NORAD the RUDEP Coordinator complained that “the needs and opinions of the region were being neglected”.⁸⁷ The Regional authorities acted in a similar way, when the Area Development Programme in Mpimpwe Division (Mpanda District) suddenly was slashed from the budget (1995/96) without even informing the District department concerned.

Post-RUDEP: NORAD did not close the door completely

NORAD indicated at the last Annual Meeting, April 1996, that it would consider supporting an initiative aimed at strengthen operation and maintenance of water supply schemes. NGOs in the region could also be supported, as well as specific investment projects based on

⁸⁵ Lunøe et al 1996, p. vi.

⁸⁶ See Jerve A.M. et al (2003) for an evaluation of this process.

⁸⁷ NORAD Dar es Salaam, Travel report from visit to Rukwa 18-25 November 1989.

national priorities – such as the proposed Mbala (Zambia) -Sumbawanga high voltage transmission line.

Norway continued supporting the regional association of NGOs (RANGO) until 2002 through a Norwegian NGO – Norwegian Peoples Aid. The hope still remains that Norway may again bestow the Region, as vividly demonstrated with the VIP reception given to a Norwegian delegation visiting in 2006. The regional authorities interpreted the purpose of the visit to explore prospects for a renewal of cooperation, while the real aim was only one of surveying the NGO scene. In his welcome address the Regional Commissioner said:

“Ever since the departure and end of contract between NORAD and RUDEP things have not been so well in a number of areas particularly those started by RUDEP... for reasons of underfunding through normal budgetary resources ... Unlike other regions in the country where there are direct development partnerships with foreign agencies Rukwa does not have anyone to date ever since the Norway/RUDEP project ... we wish the Norwegian Government foreign funding package were to reconsider Rukwa for a second time.”

4. The outputs of RUDEP and the situation today – main areas of intervention

In Phase I of RUDEP a decision was made to organise activities in sub-programmes aimed at solving specific development problems identified by the region and its districts as having highest priority. Each sub-programme consisted of various projects each with a Project Officer in charge linked to a responsible department at regional or district level. All programmes were of a kind that called for integration and coordination between different sectors and departments. Below we see the share of investments received by the sub-programmes at the end of Phase I (1990/91) and towards the end of Phase II (1994/95) prior to the phasing out decision.

Table 4.1: RUDEP expenditures by programme areas

Programme areas	1990/91 expenditures		1994/95 expenditures	
	TShs 1000	%	TShs 1000	%
1. Improvement of health by preventive measures	302,700	40	346,900	35
2. Land use development	46,300	6	119,800	12
3. Infrastructure	172,700	23	209,200	21
4. Local level development through participatory planning	83,800	11	165,900	17
5. Economic production and small-scale industry	200	0	0	0
Management and operations	156,300	20	144,900	15
<i>Total</i>	<i>762,000</i>	<i>100</i>	<i>986,700</i>	<i>100</i>
Of which local expenditures (C-funds)	341,200	45	857,500	87
Of which procurement in foreign currency (D-funds)	420,800	55	129,200	13

This shows that Area 1 – *Improvement of Health by Preventive Measures* – consistently received the highest share of funding throughout, which reflected the initial investments made in the Water Project prior to RUDEP and the commitments implied by the Water Master Plan. Furthermore, we see more than a doubling of investments in Area 2 – *Land Use Development* – in the second phase. This came as a direct response to the critique raised in the 1990 review of RUDEP that it had neglected its original mandate to support agricultural development. We also see that Area 5 – *Economic production and Small-scale Industry* – never really took off.

An important observation is the decline in the share of the budget that was used for direct procurement abroad (through RUDEP's procurement agent in Dar es Salaam). This of course reflected the increased availability of commodities in Tanzania, but also a deliberate attempt

to reduce import dependency. Consequently, the flow of capital entering the Rukwa economy increased substantially.

It must be noted that these expenditure figures do not include costs of expatriate manpower. In 1990/91 there were 14 expatriates working in the programme, recruited through NORAD (7), Norwegian Church Aid (3), Norwegian Volunteer Service (1), ILO (1), and US Peace Corps (2). In 1994/95 this had dropped to 7, and the last year of the programme only three expatriates followed the ship to the shore – the RUDEP Finance Controller, the RUDEP Workshop Manager and the adviser to the Rural Roads Engineer.

4.1 Improvement of health through preventive measures

This area basically consisted of the extension of the Water Project (TAN055) combined with support to primary health care. The latter grew out of the sanitation component linked to the Water Project. The water sector received 70 to 80 percent of funds going into this area.

4.1.1 Water supply: the most tangible outcomes

The approach

For rural water supply, the objective was to ensure safe and adequate water supply to all people in the Region within a distance of 400 meters through the use of appropriate technologies and involvement of the beneficiaries. For urban water supply, the objective was to increase the supply of water in Sumbawanga, Namanyere and Mpanda towns. The way to do this was spelled out in an elaborate Water Master Plan, identifying water sources and technical solutions. The planning work was done between 1979 and 1982, by a Norwegian consultancy firm – Norconsult – covering both Rukwa and Kigoma regions, at a total cost of NOK 36 million. NORAD then approved another NOK 45 million for a two year mobilisation phase leading into full scale implementation from 1983. NOK 90 million was allocated to Rukwa for a third phase ending 1987.

In 1985, a separate community participation and health education component was added, under the management of a Norwegian NGO – Norwegian Church Aid (NCA). The aim was to improve community sanitation and cleanliness in relation to water use and promote user participation in maintenance of water supplies. This involved also promotion of improved latrines – so-called ventilated improved pit (VIP) latrines, but with limited success.

TAN055 can best be described as a crash programme. It was well funded and had a major input of foreign consultants, a separate set-up for procurement (mainly imports from Norway) and a project organisation in the region – the Implementation Unit – largely working outside the government system. In 1985, a total of 15 expatriates worked in the project, some employed by Norconsult and NCA, and others recruited by NORAD directly and financed over and above the programme budget. The physical progress had been “remarkable”, according to a 1985 review mission, but concerns were raised about the lack of institution building within the Water Departments at regional and district level. “There had hardly been progress on planned and organised training”.⁸⁸ The need for stronger integration with the normal operations of the Regional Water Engineer was advocated, and training and maintenance ought to be priority issues in a subsequent fourth phase, according to the review mission. With the arrival of RUDEP in 1986, plans for better integration had to be seen in a new perspective.

⁸⁸ TAN 055 Review Mission, 1985.



Celebrating a new village water supply scheme (1991)



The legacy of the Water Project continued after it was incorporated in RUDEP as from July 1988, with a large budget (relative to other sectors) and many expatriate consultants. But some expatriate positions inherited from the Water Project were assigned to other departments, such as Health, Community Development and as more general engineering advisors to the district administrations.

Increasingly, more and more emphasis was placed on preparing for operation and maintenance by the users, symbolised in the “handing over” of the schemes. Government was in charge during planning and construction, and until the village was prepared for receiving the scheme. Then, a handing over ceremony was held. But did villagers really feel ownership and responsibility for the gift they had received? Many did not. Not because they did not appreciate the benefits, but the forming of effective and accountable village committees is a timely process. In the words of one of the former expatriate advisers: “*Water* was closed just when it was about to start functioning”⁸⁹.

⁸⁹ Interview, Bjørn Smith, Dar es Salaam, June 2007.



The sedimentation tank for Sumbawanga town water supply started as a “joint venture” with RUDEP in 1995 but was not officially opened until 2006

In the beginning the top-down approach was deeply ingrained. It was officially stated that “the Water Master Plan should form the basis for the project activities” and any deviations had to

be approved by NORAD.⁹⁰ This was later softened, but the Master Plan remained the guide throughout. This of course deviated from a genuine bottom-up approach based on user contributions. However, it is interesting to note that in the latter years RUDEP tried to change its role vis-à-vis the ultimate “owners” allowing villages to apply for water supply under the District Development Fund. This implied that there would be no handing over since “the owner” would be more in charge from the outset.

RUDEP also entered into a cost-sharing arrangement (50-50) with the Sumbawanga Municipal Council for construction of a sedimentation tank for the urban water supply. The project was eventually completed (see photo), although NORAD complained that the Council never added its share to the project budget. Regrettably, this revised role of the programme, more as a partner and facilitator rather than deliverer of services, was not given enough time to be tested out.

The achievements

A Review Mission in February 1987 reiterated the physical achievements of the TAN055: “An impressive number of villages (57) and people (126 000) have benefited from improved water supplies”⁹¹. The Mission found costs per village or per capita to have been high, but that the difficult setting of Rukwa and its low initial starting point justified the cost level. The report complained, however, that the Region and Districts had diverted Central Government funds initially earmarked for the water sector to other uses. This exemplifies a fundamental dilemma of aid and programmes of this nature. On the one hand it is a perfectly valid argument to say that local funds should be directed to sectors not benefiting from aid, while on the other hand, in the name of future sustainability, the donor is legitimately worried that its funding to a sector dilutes, so to speak, the government’s own sense of responsibility for the sector. This dilemma remained a thorny issue throughout RUDEP, also with some sectors (e.g. education) complaining they had been left out.

A total of 2,062 water supply schemes had been constructed under RUDEP by 1993 using various technologies; deep boreholes (40%), gravity supply (28%), tube wells (shallow), motorised pumps, ring wells and spring protection. Most boreholes and all shallow tube wells

⁹⁰ Minutes of Annual Meeting 1985 (TAN055).

⁹¹ Joint Review Mission of TAN055 and TAN060, February 1987.

were installed with hand pumps, using both an Indian type (India Mark 2) and a Dutch type (SWN). 73 percent of the schemes were reported in working condition with the remaining not working or yielding little water.

In 1986, an expatriate adviser in the project rang the alarm bell, noting that almost every motorised pumping scheme could not be operated and maintained properly by villages. He ranked the technical solutions in this order of appropriateness: hand pumps – protected springs – gravity schemes – hydraulic ram pumps – motorized pumping. What we know today confirms this priority. What has been most sustainable are boreholes equipped with durable hand pumps.



Meeting in the village water committee (painting in the office of the Mpanda District Water Department)

By the end of RUDEP (1995 figures) it was reported that close to 600,000 people were served with clean and adequate water through various types of water schemes. This corresponded to a regional water coverage of 76%, and ranked Rukwa

among the best regions in Tanzania. From Table 4.2 we see that the coverage in the vicinity of Sumbawanga town approached 100 percent. It is estimated that the regional coverage was 20% before 1980. The official 1995 figures apparently did not adequately reflect the operational status of all schemes, and the water department reported that the actual service level probably would be closer to 50% due to inadequate maintenance, problems with running costs of motorised pumping schemes and falling groundwater table in certain areas. 104 of 255 villages had established Water Committees, and of these 68 had opened a bank account and had started collecting water fees. The amount collected, however, would cover only 15% of maintenance costs.⁹²

There are frequent references to estimates of water coverage in the literature, but all have to be taken with a pinch of salt. These are based on village and not household counts, and do not capture variations within a village with respect to access. The quality of individual water points in terms of yield and service time is also not recorded. There are even inconsistencies in the reporting of number of villages served. By end of RUDEP about 140 villages or close to 40% were reported without water schemes, relying on traditional non-improved sources – the majority being within Sumbawanga District Council. Although RUDEP could report major achievements the job remained half finished.

⁹² RUDEP Phasing Out Report, 1996, p.8.

Table 4.2: Rukwa Region water supply coverage – 1995

District	No. of villages	No. of villages served	Population 1995*	Population served	% of pop. served
Sumbawanga Town Council Villages	28	27	55,812	54,650	97
Sumbawanga District	161	82	298,315	174,250	58
Nkansi District	71	48	139,069	103,900	75
Mpanda District	116	73	288,887	262,150	91
Rukwa Region	376	230	782,143	594,950	76

Source: RUDEP Phasing Out Report, January 1996

The situation today

The 1996 review of RUDEP raised serious concerns about the sustainability of the investments in water supply: “the sector which will require the most substantial involvement to ensure sustainability is the Rural Water Supply sector”⁹³. In a recent (2007) study of the water supply component of RUDEP the author disapproves these arguments. Despite the absence of any “substantial involvement” after RUDEP “the water programmes did function and has turned out more sustainable than could be expected”⁹⁴. It is claimed that 65% of the installed schemes are still supplying water, which is quite remarkable after a lifespan of about twenty years. The report relates this to some important observations regarding choice of technology:

- Gravity schemes have been the most durable (76% working), but surprisingly deep boreholes follow closely (70%). This is a testimony to the quality of work and appropriateness of the technology.
- The type of technology requiring less maintenance and less procurement of spare parts has been the longest lasting. This applies to the Indian hand pumps compared to the Dutch.
- It is also evident that villages with diesel powered water pumps have had great difficulties with maintenance and operations.

Our own observations reveal that many villages have functioning Village Water Committees and also deposit water fees collected in a bank account. Great emphasis was placed on promoting village level management of water schemes during RUDEP, through training of technicians and water committee members. The problem today is the cost of spares, which by far exceeds what villages collect in fees. Since many schemes are quite old there is also an imminent need for reinvestments which is beyond what villages can manage on their own.

⁹³ Lunøe, B. et al (1996), p.6.

⁹⁴ Skaiaa, O. 2007. Fiction, facts and future. Norads’ assistance to water supply and sanitation development in Tanzania and Kenya during the 70s, 80s and 90s. Study commissioned by Norad. Tranor International Ltd., p.36.



People in Mpanda municipality collecting water from the taps supported by RUDEP

Silting of boreholes and drop in the groundwater table are major problems. The District Water Engineer of Mpanda claimed that half of the shallow wells have dried up due to lower rains. In Karema (Mpanda district), 10 out of 11 shallow wells drilled by

RUDEP were working until 2005. Only 4 are working today. In Inyonga village (a remote area of Mpanda District), on the contrary, out of sixteen deep boreholes, all are working except two and one of these has not functioned since it was installed. In this village, water is about 200 – 300m from the houses, with the exception of a newly occupied area which is 12 km from the village centre and has no borehole. The rapid population growth, not least due to immigration of *Sukuma*, has worsened the situation. Besides, the *Sukuma* prefer to settle at a distance from established villages.

The situation in Mpanda District, as explained by Mr. E.S. Msengi, Principal Technician, is telling of the situation.⁹⁵ He reported that the water coverage today is 38% (while in 1995 it was said to be 91%). Still, 85% of 156 boreholes and 35% of 76 shallow wells funded by RUDEP are working. In 1995, the district had 13 diesel pumping schemes; all stopped because villages could not afford the costs after RUDEP pulled out.

Today, 80% of the 72 villages in Mpanda District have water funds. According to the 2002 Government Water Policy a village can get a borehole if it contributes 5% of costs. The Government will cover the rest. More than 20 villages have requested new schemes, but the problem is that the Council has no money to match village contributions. The standard cost estimates today are: TShs 2.8 million for a deep borehole and TShs 1.7 million for a shallow well. In Paramawe village, for instance, the Village Chairman told that the Water Committee had TShs 270,000 in the bank, which is almost twice what they need to get a new borehole – in theory.

The water coverage has improved somewhat since 2002, with the arrival of TASAF (Tanzania Social Action Fund), we were told by Mr. G.M. Shao, Principal Technician at the Sumbawanga District Council – an old RUDEP hand. “The period after RUDEP was very difficult. In 1997 the whole District Water Department received only TShs 60,000 for expenditures not related to staff costs. RUDEP developed 137 boreholes in 17 villages. Unfortunately only 25 percent function today”. Nevertheless, as we were told in Nkasi: “We still rely on RUDEP water”. In Namanyere town the main source is a water kiosk supplied by a RUDEP borehole.

⁹⁵ Based on interview and paper submitted to RUDEP Impact Assessment Workshop, Kibaha 16-17.11.2007.



The chairman of Ntatumbila village at a borehole outside the village (the pump is the India Mark 2 type)

District water engineers confirmed that RUDEP purchased a lot of equipment and spares which were left after the project and helped maintain and repair the pumps. Besides, RUDEP used quality pumps. Mr. A. Shirima, currently Managing Director of the

Sumbawanga Urban Water Supply Authority, was involved with the Water Project almost from the beginning. He confirmed that most boreholes still are working, but the problem is the falling water table and population increase, including several new villages. And not to forget, the difficulty of collecting water fees – even in town. “I have too few meters, and when I install meters people collect water from communal stand pipes where fees are not charged”.

In Ntatumbila Village (Nkasi District) the chairman, Edes Helandogo (see photo), reiterated the same message: “We have problems with raising money for repairs. Last year was a bad harvest and people had no money. The water fee is TShs 2000 per year per household. The Village Water Committee has no bank account”. The village has 5 water points, but they yield no water during the dry season, and people have had to go back to traditional wells.

4.1.2 Primary health care: changes in health seeking behaviour

The health sector was not part of the initial scope for RUDEP involvement, but was brought in through the Water Project, and in 1987 NORAD formally approved the sector as eligible for RUDEP support. The Community Participation and Health Education (CPHE) component of the Water Project was transformed into a broader support for primary health care. RUDEP adopted a three-pronged approach to primary health care – training village level health workers, revitalizing or improving existing public facilities and influencing people’s health seeking behaviour.

Training of village health workers

The concept of village level health workers had entered official Tanzanian policy prior to RUDEP. Educated, mostly young, people were to be selected for training in preventive health care. By 1995, 150 villages had trained Village Health Workers (VHW), 360 in total, all trained with support from RUDEP. They were also given bicycles. The VHW programme collapsed after RUDEP. A few years later government tried to reengage the VHWs as contraceptive distributors.

In Mirumba village, the VHW once trained under RUDEP said:

“Sisi tuliweza kuhamashisha jamii kuhusu vyoo, kufyeka mazingira, kufukia madimbwi ili kupunguza malaria na kujenga uelewa wa jamii, sasa wanajua. Pia tulisimamia ujenzi wa zahanati na usafi wake mpaka daktari alipokuja.”
(We were able to create awareness in the community on the importance of toilets, proper environmental sanitation to control malaria, and people became

knowledgeable. In addition, we supervised construction of the dispensary and ensured cleanness until the arrival of the medical staff.)⁹⁶



Award ceremony after completion of TBA training course (1989)

Another important effort was training of Traditional Birth Attendants (TBAs) – 1265 in all. They received a total of 6 weeks training in intervals. In a region where transport is a major problem due to long distances and poor roads, it made sense to enhance the capability of TBAs. There is strong evidence that this reduced complications and deaths during delivery. Many of the TBAs trained during RUDEP are still active, but the support from Government ceased with RUDEP. The delivery kits that they were given are worn out today and they have received no replacement. Official policy of the Ministry of Health now discourages the use of TBAs to assist delivery, but due to long distances to health facilities and customs the majority of village women in Rukwa still go to the TBAs for delivery services. Besides, the quality of service and the costs involved also deter many from using public health centres.

⁹⁶ RECODA 2008.

Improving existing public health facilities

The Regional hospital in Sumbawanga received support to upgrade several wards and the operational theatre. A production unit for intravenous infusions was established, not to be dependent on irregular supplies from Dar es Salaam or Mbyea. This proved to be of critical importance in combating cholera outbreaks in the Lake Tanganyika area – last in 2005.



The infusion unit at Sumbawanga Regional hospital which was financed by RUDEP

The Infusion unit is still operating, but currently under maintenance (see photo). It is today the only plant of its kind in a government hospital. Today, the Regional hospital has great difficulties in recruiting doctors, according to the hospital management; the main reason being that in Sumbawanga there is no market for private practice which is a major source of income to most public doctors.

RUDEP also assisted Mpanda District hospital and financed training of several hospital staff. Mr. Alfons Shitindi, today Clinic Officer at the Mpanda hospital, has been working there since 1987 and was among the “RUDEP beneficiaries”. “I have really benefited a lot from RUDEP training”, which including a course in the UK. Besides training of trainers, RUDEP supported the district health office in terms running costs and transport, and the system started functioning better. “After RUDEP things went very slowly, but we still have PHC committees at Ward level – introduced by RUDEP. Now they are called *Hudumu za kijamii* [Social services committee].”

The ‘boat ambulance’ stationed at Kirando

Four divisional Health Centres (out of 18 in the Region) were improved (Kirando, Karema, Inyonga and Mwimbi), and four dispensaries (out of 105 in the Region) were renovated. Kirando represents a centre located far from the nearest hospital. It caters for 35 villages along the Lake Tanganyika shore. Transport was, and still is, extremely difficult with few roads and many villages depend on open boats as “ambulances”.



Contrary to standard government regulations, it was decided to equip the Kirando Centre to undertake emergency obstetric care, including caesarean section. This reportedly saved many lives. “Ministry of Health came to Kirando and has since adopted this approach” according to a key informant.

Dr. Willinard Mwisinjili (Assistant Medical Officer) complained about big problems in financing a “rural hospital” like Kirando. There has been a shortage of staff in recent years and the number of operations performed is declining – from 106 in 2003 to 57 in 2007. “Water supply is a big problem since the water tank pumping from the lake, installed by RUDEP, no longer is working because the pump was stolen. We have an electric generator but no money for diesel.”

Kirando Health Centre 2008: struggles to make ends meet



Influencing health seeking behaviour

The main goal was to reduce the spread of HIV and Aids. It was a key period of spreading due to ignorance, and RUDEP unwittingly contributed to this with improvements of transport and increased movement of people. It is said that many RUDEP drivers have died of Aids. Health education campaigns were conducted; addressing the general public as well as high risk groups, and RUDEP supported distribution of condoms and supplied HIV screening equipment.



Alternative use of VIP-latrines slabs in the *Maji*yard, Sumbawanga

The introduction of the ventilated improved pit (VIP) latrine was not successful, and few use this technology today. According to the PHC Project Officer, at the time, Mr. R. Mnyenyelwa, people accepted to try it as long as it was subsidised. But several factors prevented people from adopting it. The latrines were too costly. People were reluctant to remove the compost due to cultural beliefs – “although we never came to that point”. Traditional pit latrines are just covered when full and a new pit is dug. But the message about the importance of improved sanitation had an impact. Now people are buying concrete slabs for their latrines, but they were reluctant 10 years ago.

According to informants, during the ten years of RUDEP in primary health care there were noticeable improvements in health seeking behaviour as well as health conditions (see Table 4.3 based on a report prepared by Ms. E. Mattle who was active in the RUDEP PHC project).

The District Medical Office in Nkasi informed that, after RUDEP, there had been a trend towards increasing use of medical services and also general improvement in some important health indicators. 60 percent of deliveries today take place at a health facility, the HIV prevalence has declined and maternal mortality has gone down. The statistical validity of these trends are however uncertain, since figures are not based on representative surveys. At the same time the Office complained about a serious shortage of health staff with 270 positions currently vacant (spring 2008), and acute problems with transport.

Table 4.3: Changes in primary health indicators during RUDEP⁹⁷

	1985	1995
Maternal mortality rate	660	450
Infant mortality rate	185/1000	145/1000
Severe malnutrition	15%	8%
Pregnant women attending antenatal care	15%	35%
Contraceptive prevalence rate	1%	6%
Immunization cover	23%	80%
Households with acceptable latrines	15%	50%

4.1.3 Education: only a modest start

We present the education sector here although it never surfaced as a priority of RUDEP and was not covered by any of the programme areas. This can probably be explained by reluctance in NORAD to take on yet another large social service sector – after water supply and primary health care. The emphasis of RUDEP was supposed to be the productive sectors – agriculture in particular, however regional and district authorities kept pushing for education to be included. It did not make sense, it was argued, to keep education as the only major sector or department excluded from RUDEP.

Gradually, the door was opened to some extent. In 1993, the government requested support from NORAD to a Rukwa Education Policy. The only major project which was initiated was

⁹⁷ Mattle, E. Report prepared to RUDEP Impact Assessment Workshop, Kibaha, 16-17.11.2007.

support to Kantalamba Teachers Training College in Sumbawanga for the construction of one dormitory for female students and classrooms, and supply of training materials. The main objective was to increase the number of female teachers. The school administration reported that the quality of teaching improved at the time, and that “the overhead projector is still in use”⁹⁸.

Some construction work was left unfinished by RUDEP (e.g. a dormitory for male students), and was later completed by funds from the Ministry. The capacity of the college is about 350 students but as many as 550 students are currently admitted. This is an effect of the secondary school improvement programme which has significantly increased the number of students seeking higher education. Still, there is a huge demand for new teachers to match the increase enrolment in recent years (see Chapter 2.3).

4.2 Improvement of land use

4.2.1 Agriculture: small but significant efforts

It is estimated that 90 percent of the working population in Rukwa is engaged in subsistence agriculture. At the same time the region is believed to have a large untapped potential for agricultural growth. Two thirds of the Region’s land area is suitable for agriculture but in 1980 only 3 percent was under cultivation. This was the central theme of the planners of RUDEP. There was a need to address problems such as declining soil fertility due to leaching and lack of crop rotation, limited diversification and too much focus on maize, reliance on hand hoes rather than draft power, poor extension services and lack of market access.

At the same time RUDEP evolved during a period when agricultural policies were in a state of flux with a shift from central planning to market liberalisation. The means and ways to stimulate agricultural growth were far from obvious. How much to rely on inefficient state institutions – such as the National Milling Corporation and RURECU (the government managed cooperative), and how to reach out to the farmers? There was a call for participatory approaches, whereas the agricultural extension workers – the *bwana shamba* – clung to the top-down approach they were used to.

Two major studies undertaken in 1989 report of an agricultural system in distress. The introduction of maize as the main crop in rotation with finger millet and beans “will ultimately lead to soil degradation and a decrease in fertility unless nutrient supplements are added in the form of fertiliser or manure”.⁹⁹ Protein-deficient malnutrition, particularly among children and pregnant women was endemic.¹⁰⁰ Both reports pointed at the malfunctioning of the crop marketing system, partly due to the institutional set-up and partly because of a genuine transport crisis.

RUDEP adopted direct and indirect measures to stimulate agriculture. The indirect measures were road improvement and nutrition education. The direct measures were land use planning, improvement of small-scale irrigation, horticulture and crop diversification, and oxenisation.

Land-use planning but with no effect

This was not a successful approach to agricultural development. The regional land-use planning unit was not in the position to cooperate with Agriculture, Forestry and Livestock departments, and the policy ambitions dictating its approach – to demarcate all village lands and make village land use plans, were at the time completely unrealistic.

⁹⁸ RECODA (2008).

⁹⁹ Uyole Agricultural Centre (1989), p. 50.

¹⁰⁰ German Development Institute (1989).

In general, RUDEP found it difficult to respond meaningfully to requests for strengthening the agriculture extension system. Each village (338 in total) was supposed to have a *bwana shamba*, but only 40 % had one (1989) and the lack of training and supervision was formidable. It seemed like a bottomless pit to try boosting this system.



The intake for the Msanzi irrigation scheme: the gates for diverting water no longer function

The approach adopted was to establish discrete projects that hopefully would have a demonstration effect through informal dissemination of knowledge. One example was the making of village land use plans for a couple of villages in the Rukwa valley facing conflicts over land between pastoralists and local farmers. In the absence of close follow-up by the District and weak community involvement this had no lasting impact.

Irrigation facing problems of management

The objective was to improve traditional irrigation systems in cooperation with the farmers, initially at Msanzi (Ufipa plateau) and Muze (Rukwa valley). It had a difficult start due to lack of qualified engineers. Subsequently, the schemes met with operational problems due to problems of organising joint maintenance of the schemes.

A visit to Msanzi in 2008 confirmed that the scheme continues to supply waters to some 85 farmers and the water catchment is protected by the village. There is, however, a problem with organizing maintenance since the irrigation committee is not functioning. As a result, during the last four years tail end farmers have been lacking water. The attempt to introduce coffee was not successful, but there is a good market for vegetables with buyers coming from Sumbawanga and Kasanga.

Horticulture promotion bearing fruits

Horticulture is an area where RUDEP can claim some success, not because the fruit tree nurseries once established in places like Msanzi, Kate, Kantalamba (near Sumbawanga town) and Kifinga (near Muze in Rukwa valley) still remain, but the dissemination effect. It also mattered that GTZ continued promoting horticulture when RUDEP closed down – from 1995 to 2001. The establishment of nurseries got off to a good start, in no large part due to the efforts of a Norwegian volunteer. About 100,000 seedlings were distributed. The fruit tree production nurseries were handed over to the district councils when RUDEP phased out. The councils did not continue maintaining the nurseries, however, and the production of tree seedlings ceased. The survival rate of fruit trees has been low, and there have been problems with diseases especially on citrus fruits, but the programme promoted a shift in farmers' perceptions.



Fresh juice for sale in Sumbawanga, but the supply of raw material is now less reliable

In Muze village, there are several farmers selling oranges, pawpaw and mangoes. Mr. Leonsi is a retired agricultural extension worker who was in-charge of the Muze orchard. He has several orange, mango and papaya trees and he said the income from fruits

per year amounts to about TShs 200,000. How much of this development is due to RUDEP's effort is hard to say, but the rehabilitation of the road up the escarpment to Sumbawanga, by RUDEP, was definitely a major impetus to cash crop farming in the Rukwa valley.

Promotion of vegetables, such as onions, leaf vegetables and tomatoes, was done through conducting seminars for extension workers. Homestead gardens of fruits and vegetables are commonly found today. In Nkasi District there are three well-known farmers in Isale, Masolo and King'ombe villages who are doing well in oranges and onions. Below is the story of one of them – John Sadale.

In Mwimbi village, Mr. and Ms. Malifimbo have grown vegetables for several years and have been able to purchase a vehicle through the sale of vegetables; the vehicle has been named “*Mchicha*” - meaning African spinach (*Amaranthus*). The income has also contributed to increase the acreage of maize cultivated by the family. Other families in the same village said they grow vegetables for local sale; “*Huwa ninauza hela ndogo, mia mbili, hamsini.... Lakini tunalima kwa ajili ya matumizi ya nyumbani* (I usually sell for small money, two hundred shillings, fifty shillings but we grow basically for household consumption)”¹⁰¹.

But also in the agriculture sector there are alarming signs, and indications that private initiative alone is not enough; a capable extension service is also needed. The supply of fruits in the market has actually declined compared to ten years ago, according to a business woman in Sumbawanga (see photo). Farmers throughout the region complained that yields – especially of maize – are going down. Soil fertility is declining and due to escalating prices farmers cannot afford the fertilizer required to compensate for this.

¹⁰¹ RECODA (2008).

John Sadale from Isale village, Nkasi District

I started training as a farmer under RUDEP. I attended seminars on budding and grafting of orange and lemon. We were given working tools such as watering can, sprayer pump, rake, fork and hand hoe – *jembe*. I started to do some gardening and grafting oranges. I decided to specialize in onion production. I started by planting 25 g of onion seed and the harvest I got earned me TShs 80,000 in 1996. With this money, I bought about 100g of seeds and the onions performed well and earned TShs 440,000. I used this income to build a house and moved from my previous house. At the same time, I continued with grafting of oranges. I planted onions again and harvested 36 bags and I sold them at TShs 18,000 – 24,000 per bag. For the money I got I purchased two milling machines which I later sold and continued to advance my agriculture and I started a food crop business. After sometime, I built another house and started lending other community members money. For every TShs 3,000 I was lending I was paid a sack of maize, and then I could sell the maize for TShs 15,000 – 20,000. I have 8 cows and 4 oxen. I'm selling milk and the oxen are used for ploughing and weeding. I still sell orange seedlings, pineapples and bananas. Now, I have no problems paying school fees for my children in secondary school and vocational centre.

Today I have two houses. One has 7 residential rooms and 2 business rooms which I am renting out at TShs 5,000 and 15,000 respectively per room per month. The other house is where we are living. I am planning to open a shop soon and I am still growing onions (see photo below).



I am sharing my knowledge with the youth in my village and many are now growing onions. Some of them started by being casual labourers in my farm and I later gave them sugarcane seedlings which they planted. From there, they have prospered in agriculture. The reason people are poor here is because they only work during the wet season but I work throughout the year.

Successful diversification

In a bid to move away from mono-crop agriculture, the Regional Authorities wanted to introduce new crops that could earn farmers money. So, the authorities asked RUDEP to start piloting cultivation of sunflower, round (Irish) potatoes and beans. High yielding varieties were introduced. The districts through the RUDEP District Development Funds (DDFs)



promoted the growing of sunflower while the Uyolet Agricultural Research Institute through its Nkundi sub-station propagated the growing of potatoes in Nkundi, Kipande and Kantawa villages. Ten years hence, it appears these crops have been widely adopted.

Women selling potatoes in Kantawa village on the Sumbawanga-Mpanda road

Sunflower in particular is giving a stiff competition to maize as farmers are increasingly expanding sunflower acreages. This motivation comes from the fact that the market for sunflower is readily available, oil pressing machines are found in large numbers and thirdly

that the sunflower oil is good for cooking as it is not highly refined as industrial cooking oils. It took off from the mid-1990s with the assistance of RUDEP and GTZ. Seeds were distributed to farmers and also manual oil pressing machines were given to villages (e.g. in Mwimbi Division). Today, these hand pressure machines have been replaced by diesel powered ones. In Sumbawanga there are 20 small-scale businesses with oil expeller machines. Many women are involved in the cooking oil business, and the association of oil producers is headed by a woman.

In Kantawa village, close to Nkundi, farmers explained that they experienced a three-fold increase in the yield with new potato varieties introduced to them. They rotate maize and potato, and $\frac{3}{4}$ of the farmers grow potatoes and it is the most important cash crop, followed by beans and maize.

Intensifying agriculture and more use of oxen

Surveys in the late 1980s indicated that over 60% of farms in the region had access to trained oxen that were used for ploughing. The use of oxen for transport, weeding, harrowing and planting however was quite limited. The implements required were not available, and the technology partly not known. Through its various community participation projects RUDEP promoted the use of new agricultural implements and farming methods. Groups of farmers in Mwimbi were given improved seeds (maize, beans and groundnuts) and were trained on improved farming. In Kantawa, farmer groups were given ploughs, weeders and planters, enabling them to extend the acreage farmed.



Testing a new "RUDEP" oxcart

was a general experience that farmer groups often were dissolved because the members could not agree on how to contribute. In that sense, RUDEP failed as much as the ideology of "African socialism" – *ujamaa na kujitegemea* – did. However, the knowledge and the equipment passed on to farmers were actively used on family farms.



Double ploughing in Mwimbi division through the use of oxen

most villages, and in Sumbawanga and Namanyere there are private oxcart makers. One farmer explained the benefits in this way: "We have benefited a lot from this technology; oxcarts have eased transportation of building materials, such as sand, brick and stones, and crop produce from the fields to the market. Moreover, we can now transport farmyard manure to the field".

One district agricultural official confirmed the increased use of manure which to a great extent can be attributed to the availability of oxcarts. The effect of using manure is considerable; the difference between manured and non-manured fields can range up to 5-7 bags per acre. A villager from Mwimbi said: "*Tunaweza tukatoa mfano wa Mzee Malifimbo ambaye alikuwa akipata gunia arobaini kutoka ekari kumi lakini sasa anapata gunia 300 – 400 kutoka ekari ishirini* (We can give an example of Mr. Malifimbo who used to harvest 40 bags from ten acres but now harvests between 300-400 bags from 20 acres)".

Mr. Peter Sasala of Namanyere is an oxcart maker and earns his living from making carts. The demand for oxcarts has increased to the extent that there is a shortage of supply. “You see, I cannot make enough oxcarts to fulfil the needs of my customers. Getting a loan is cumbersome and I don’t have any support to purchase enough equipments which would enabled me to make more oxcarts; at least 10 per month. Right now I am making only three per month”. Mr. Sasala was not trained by RUDEP but has benefited from the market for ox carts stimulated by the programme.



Oxcarts made in Nkansi District – the ones to the left by Mr. Sasala

It is notable that oxenisation is for the better-off farmers only. Poor households do not have the financial resources to invest in the implements, not to speak of having trained oxen in the first place. This applies to many small and female headed households. In the absence of other opportunities for cash income, they also have limited ability to pay for ploughing or transport by oxen. A process of creating grater economic inequality in rural areas is well advanced.

4.4.2 Forestry: an uphill battle

The process of deforestation on the Ufipa plateau is not a recent phenomenon. The Fipa have for centuries practiced sedentary farming based on slash-and-burn (*ntemele*), but the villagisation combined with population growth and also the abandonment of a traditional farming system aiming at retaining soil fertility (based on compost-mounding and tree-year crop rotation and fallow periods – called *intumba*) have accelerated the process. The British colonial masters banned *ntemele* already in 1938 in an attempt to arrest deforestation and protect water catchments.



Rules are posted but enforcement remains weak

RUDEP developed a twin strategy of both protection and tree planting. Both turned out to be an uphill battle, having to fight deeply ingrained beliefs making people set bush fires every dry season, people reluctant to invest in tree planting when they had good reasons to doubt whether they would be able to hold on to the land until trees had matured, and an escalating demand for firewood not least because more and more people wanted houses constructed from burned bricks.

Protection of forest reserves

The first project was protection of the water catchments supplying drinking water to Sumbawanga town – the Mbizi Forest Reserve covering an area of 24000 ha, gazetted in 1958. Thirty years later, half of this area was open grassland. The situation was the same in the Chala Forest Reserve also taken up by RUDEP. RUDEP financed firebreaks and watchmen, and replanted denuded areas, mainly with indigenous species. Attempts were made to enlist the support of surrounding villages by offering employment as well as free seedlings for their own use. The main challenge was to limit forest fires and protect planted areas.

In total, RUDEP planted 1600 hectares in Mbizi from 1986 to 1992, of which there is little remaining today. There were at the time noticeable improvements in forest cover, reduction of fire incidents and illegal felling, although bush fires took place every year. With the closure of RUDEP Mbizi was again left to its own destiny and the situation has since deteriorated (see photos).

)
A village nursery supported by RUDEP (1990

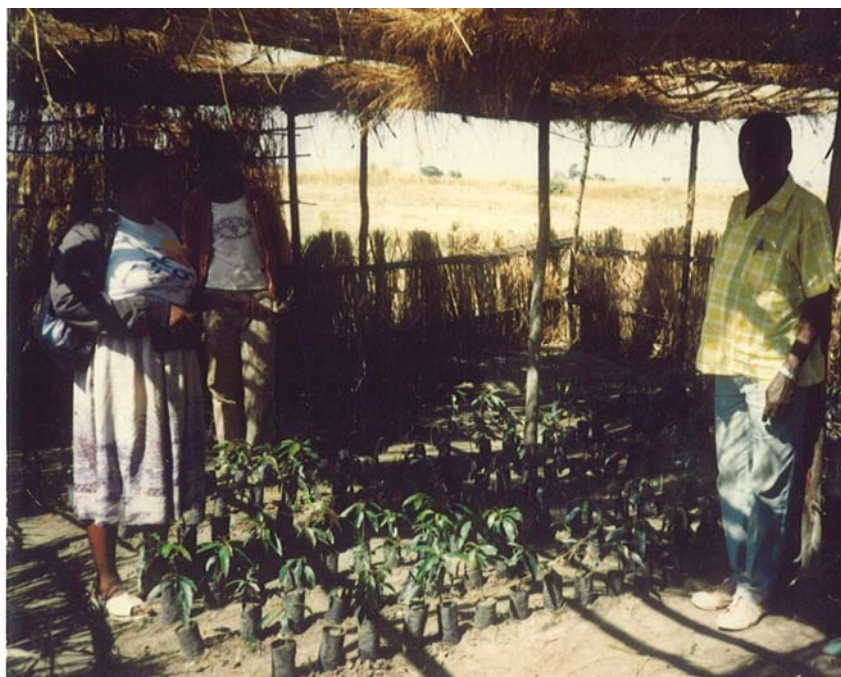


The forest reserve turns into open grassland (April 2008). The area was once planted by RUDEP and later destroyed by fires. Some indigenous species planted have survived but do not grow big

While the justification for protecting these reserves was never put in question, concerns were raised about the approach. Did it work? Was planting worth the money, or should natural regeneration only be promoted through prevention of fires and encroachment? Was the right species selected? Whatever the approach, it depended on strong government commitment. There are positive signs that this is coming back after the inertia that set in with the closure of RUDEP, but funding remains severely limited.

Village afforestation

These projects took place in Sumbawanga Municipality and the Sumbawanga and Nkasi districts. The approach included sensitisation through village meetings, forming of village committees, assistance in setting up small nurseries, provision of essential equipment and training of nursery attendants. The targets involved both the establishment of woodlots and conservation of existing forested areas. The outputs have been mixed, and there is no clear evidence that deforestation on the Ufipa plateaus has been arrested. The root causes to this problem, by and large, have not diminished – i.e. ambiguity with respect to land rights and open access to forest resources on what is perceived as public lands, population growth and increased demand for firewood and timber, bush fires, and problems of protecting young trees from grazing animals.



Ernest Mkondiya: A passionate forester

Mzee Mkondiya (see photo) is famous in the area for his passion for tree planting – for timber as well as fruits. After completing four years of primary school at the newly established catholic mission at Ulumi he went to Mbeya in 1950 where he picked up the knowledge of planting pine and eucalyptus. A few years later a foreign company came to the area to explore possibilities for establishing tree estates, and Mkondiya was offered a one-year course in tree planting at Sumbawanga. He established a nursery and distributed to villages, but most trees died for lack of proper care. He later continued distributing seedlings free to the new *ujamaa* villages – especially schools. Today, he has twenty small nurseries on his land, which stands out with its lush vegetation, orchards of oranges and banana and stands of tall eucalyptus (see photo).

He was never forced to resettle during *ujamaa*, and have developed his property without interruption. Why is Mkondiya such an exception in an area of escalating deforestation? He explained that people faced problems protecting seedlings against termites, but a change in attitude seems to take place. More people are coming to ask for seedlings. Maybe, people again gradually see the benefits in long-term investments.

Mkondiya have benefited from his investments in trees, but his investments could have yielded so much more if there had been a better market for timber and fruits.



However, the story of Mr. Mkondiya (above) amply illustrates that with commitment, knowledge and security of tenure – the essential preconditions in afforestation – environmental degradation can be stopped.

Another evidence of change is the greening of Sumbawanga town. Today, seedlings are sold commercially as exemplified by the life story of by Mr. Martin – known as the Gardener.



A view of a greener Sumbawanga seen from the road to Mbizi Forest Reserve

Mr Martin – the Gardener

Mr. Martin (see photo with his wife) was born in 1940 in Sumbawanga District. After leaving school at Grade 6, he was employed by the Government in 1979 as a Ward Executive Officer but later became a Branch Secretary of CCM and later a Village Chairperson.



In the execution of his duties, he happened to visit one farmer who had fruit trees that were doing very well. Since in those years it was almost a belief that fruit trees could not grow on the Ufipa Plateau, he did not believe his eyes. So he asked that farmer where he got the fruit seedlings and if he could also get them. He was directed to a RUDEP Horticultural Garden that was in Kantalamba area, and returned home full of zeal of owning his own garden and immediately he started preparing one.



He says that he regularly visited the RUDEP Garden and bought more and more seedlings. Among them were avocado, oranges, lime, guavas and lemons that he planted in his garden and tended them according to the extension education given to him. The more the fruit trees

blossomed, the more he increased his attention in looking after them and expanding the garden till it reached three acres (almost 1.5 ha). After some years, he started testing fruits of his sweat. Some fruits were eaten by his family and the surplus was sold.

He started selling the fruits and ever since he has been earning not less than TShs 1,000,000/= per year. He used the money for paying school fees for his children, for buying garden inputs, for other domestic expenditures and also bought 2 dairy cows.

He narrates that when people saw that the fruits could be grown on the Plateau, they also wanted to try to raise them. So, he shared with them the basics of starting a fruit garden but directed them to the RUDEP Garden for the seedlings and also for the extension education as he himself was still dependent upon RUDEP for more expert training.

When RUDEP phased out its activities in 1995, Martin started raising fruit seedlings himself just to fill in the gap. He started a nursery of 10,000 seedlings of various grafted fruit trees among which were mangoes, passion fruits, oranges and even coffee. He sold the seedlings at a flat rate of TShs 100/= per piece just to motivate as many farmers as possible to adopt fruit and other tree growing husbandry.

His involvement in orchard business made him famous as many individuals and Non-Governmental Organisations went to learn from him and buy fruits and seedlings. As a result of this, in 2006, he was offered a Study Tour to Uganda by the Heifer International Project as he was also a beneficiary of this project.

In Uganda, he learnt many things not only in animal husbandry but also in horticulture. He learnt how a farmer can make a "kitchen garden" even if he has an area of land as small as 1 square meter. On returning home, Martin started his Kitchen Garden where he planted vegetables. He also started teaching others how to integrate the livestock and the fruit growing as they complement each other. He narrates that so far about 20 of his trainee farmers are almost becoming his competitors on fruits and have adopted zero grazing of animals.

Martin has a long term goal of being a focal point in fruit growing as he intends to start fruit processing just to add on value to the products he is selling. He will also buy fruits from other gardeners.

He winds up his story by saying that although RUDEP ended some 12 years ago, it left them with the fruit and vegetable farming knowledge that they are now using to eradicate poverty. He continues to say that farmers now know that nearly all fruits can be grown on the Plateau. So he thinks that in a couple of years, the Region will be self sufficient in fruits and hence stop importation of fruits from other regions.

4.3 Improvement of infrastructure

4.3.1 Rural roads: creating immediate benefits

Improvement of rural roads was highest on the priority list of the regional authorities, and NORAD soon realised that this had to become a major element of the programme. Already in 1986 efforts started to plan the first two projects, namely improving the roads connecting the Mwimbi Division, selected as the first focus area of community development, to the trunks roads, and the road from the Ufipa plateau down the escarpment to the Rukwa valley – the Ntendo-Muze road.

In view of the need to maximize employment creation and the major difficulties associated with operating and maintaining heavy road construction equipment it was decided to try labour-based techniques. The problems with machine-based road works were amply demonstrated by the bulldozers, tractors and graders rusting in the yard of the Regional Engineering Department (*Ujenzi*) stranded for lack of simple spare parts and qualified mechanics after only limited use. RUDEP did provide funds in an attempt to get some of these equipments back into service.



Road works on Ntendo-Muze road (1990)

Cooperation was established with ILO which had extensive experience with labour-based road works in Africa. Under the supervision of an engineer seconded from ILO, the initial aim was to establish technical

procedures and training guidelines appropriate for the local circumstances by working on the road from Sumbawanga to Mwimbi. Several issues had to be addressed: the feasibility of mobilising community participation as an alternative to paid labourers; the seasonal availability of labour; and prospects of engaging women. There was clearly a need to upgrade technical skills. Work initiated on the Mwimbi road under the supervision of the Regional Engineer received the following judgement by ILO: "... while being pursued with enthusiasm; [it] was almost entirely counterproductive. In many places the condition of the road was actually becoming worse"¹⁰². There was initially a lot of scepticism against labour-based technology in the Region, but it turned out successfully.

In her third half-yearly report the ILO Project Engineer reported of difficulties of mobilising self-help participation on the feeder road where this approach was to be tested. "The attendance of labourers is very erratic and small in number, also the quality of work on some sections is well below standard"¹⁰³.

When the road sector activities of RUDEP were reviewed in 1989, the team concluded that the pilot project for labour based road rehabilitation had "proved the viability of extending

¹⁰² Mission Report from ILO Regional Adviser, April 1988.

¹⁰³ Ritchie, Jane M (1989). Third bi-annual progress report, January-June 1989, RUDEP.

this method in the region”, but the standard adopted was considered too low to be sustainable.¹⁰⁴ The importance of the quality and quantity of professional engineering supervision was strikingly evident when comparing two road projects in Mwimbi Division implemented simultaneously – one supervised by an expatriate engineer and the other by a Tanzanian engineer.¹⁰⁵ This case amply illustrated how critically dependent programmes like RUDEP are on qualified and motivated staff.

The review team furthermore noted that one had to be more careful in encouraging women to work on the roads “until the nutrition of mothers and young children is improved” (in section 5.3 we further analyse the impact of RUDEP on women). The team also commented on the relationship between RUDEP and the Regional Engineer’s Office (*Ujenzi*), and advised against the established RUDEP model where Project Officers (in this case appointed by the Ministry of Communications and Works) reported directly to READ/RUDEP. This made RUDEP assuming a responsibility for implementation which it ought not to have, it was argued. The justification for this set-up had been the need, for valid reasons, to strengthen accountability. The team recommended that RUDEP should engage more in institutional support to the sector, especially the improvement of regional transport planning and the capacity of *Ujenzi* for maintenance of prioritised roads.

It is also interesting to note the change of approach with respect to the road down to the Rukwa valley (Ntendo-Muze). In the initial planning, all parties agreed that the only feasible option was to tender the project because of the weak capacity of *Ujenzi*. However, the work of the Tanzanian company that did the detailed design and prepared tender documents was later discarded, and a decision made to do the project “locally” as a mainly labour based operation. This is one of many examples of learning by doing, in the true spirit of RUDEP, but not everybody looked at it in such a positive light.



Maintenance on the Sumbawanga-Mwimbi road April 2008

¹⁰⁴ Project Review TAN-060, RUDEP – the Road Sector Activities, October 1989.

¹⁰⁵ READ, 'Status Report on the Implementation of Recommendations from the 1988 RUDEP Joint Annual Review, November 1989.

At the termination of the programme, the status of the “RUDEP roads” was as follows:

Kaengesa-Mwimbi	Maintenance had been handed over to Ministry of Works
Laela-Mwimbi	- same -
Ntendo-Muze	Under RUDEP maintenance
Paramawe-Namanyere-Chala	- same -
Mwimbi-Kizombwe	Under construction

It was reported that 200 km of regional roads out of a network of 1200 km had been rehabilitated by RUDEP, in addition to 70 km of district roads. About 2500 workers had received training in labour based road construction techniques. While this technology had been proven appropriate to the Region and people greatly appreciated the income earning opportunity, it had been evident that road works faced labour shortages during the main farming season.

For some years RUDEP established a lengthman system for road maintenance, using workers who had been involved in labour-based road rehabilitation each covering about 3 km. Without continued funding the system soon collapsed and after RUDEP there were no funds for maintenance for several years.



Ntendo-Muze Base Camp -
Now cows grazing

The Ntendo-Muze base construction depot on the edge of the escarpment is an example of facilities not being used today and gradually is falling into disrepair. It was built to maximise efficiency during the construction period, and to function as a depot for road maintenance in the future. The latter was never established.

4.3.2 Kasanga port: today a major success

The idea of improving the facilities for berthing cargo and passenger ships at the Kasanga port by Lake Tanganyika had been launched by the Region already in the late 1980s, but NORAD did question the economic feasibility. However, NORAD finally gave in and the construction of new berthing facilities at Kasanga was the last major RUDEP project approved, even necessitating a special arrangement for channelling funds after the closure of RUDEP using Norwegian Peoples Aid and RANGO (a newly established NGO umbrella organisation).



Kasanga port under construction

There has since been a growing demand for food and consumer goods in Eastern DRC and today Kasanga has also become an export outlet for cement to Burundi. Thus, the port has created business opportunities for transporters who ferry cement and other commodities from

Mbeya. At the port there are today some 30 – 40 men engaged in loading and unloading ships (see photo).



2008 - workers busy loading and offloading luggage from a passenger ship

4.4 Area development through participatory planning and self-help: effective but resource demanding

Concentrate efforts on one Division

To bring development closer to the people, RUDEP-managers proposed a radical experiment: one had to bring the planning process physically closer to villagers. It was decided to concentrate resources initially in one division of Sumbawanga District – Mwimbi Division – and bring qualified manpower to the division on a permanent basis. RUDEP constructed staff houses, an office and a small guest house in Mwimbi. An experienced Community Development Officer moved there to manage the Mwimbi Area Development Programme - MAD. He summarised the approach as follows:¹⁰⁶

- Communication, awareness creation and mobilisation at village level.
- Involvement of and cooperation with local political structures in project identification and implementation.
- Improvement of existing government extension services.

¹⁰⁶ Kapinga, N.B.(1989). 'Support to local self-help efforts – the approach of RUDEP'.

The concept had two main thrusts. One thrust was to stimulate the formation of self-help groups through Social Mobilisers, and assist village and group projects on a cost-sharing basis. Social Mobilisers, one woman and one man in each village, were selected among villagers and given training and supervision. RUDEP would provide 40 to 70% of the project value, depending on the nature of the project (with less given to income generating projects), while the group would provide the rest, mostly in-kind. The second thrust was to bring in various other public sector activities. This included road rehabilitation, water supply and health facilities. RUDEP also supported a Catholic mission to build a training centre on the agreement that it would be available for RUDEP-sponsored training.

MAD was initially reporting directly to the RUDEP-office, although through the District Executive Director. In the longer term the idea was that the District would take over the full responsibility. The project also deliberately bypassed the Ward Development Committee and the District Council to reduce bureaucratic red-tape normally associated with projects to be included in the annual regional budget.

The decision to build staff quarters and to bring qualified project staff closer to the area of operation applied first and foremost to staff of *Maendeleo* responsible for community participation and overall management of the project. But also a road engineer was housed at Mwimbi. This approach was later criticised as too expensive and not replicable.



One of the staff houses in the Mwimbi Camp today

It was argued that the housing standard was too high, and the design not suited for “African family life”. The issue of housing design had been debated with the regional authorities at an early stage, and they had insisted on applying standard

government regulations for staff quarters. The houses are being used today by government officers, but maintenance has been poor. A study of the project from 2005 draws the lesson that low cost offices and houses should have been built.¹⁰⁷ However, one cannot dismiss the counter argument that in a context where future maintenance is likely to be a major problem, investing in high quality is cost effective. But this was not raised as a justification when the decision was made to build the Mwimbi Base Camp. The planners had no reason to believe that the project would last only until 1995.

The Fund for village level projects under MAD proved to be a success. Applications soon exceeded the funds available. After about one year 56 applications had come in, and in the box below we present the list of projects supported by end of 1989. The Project Officer

¹⁰⁷ Mshana, S., W. Swai and G. Bugeraha (2005). ‘Learning from the past. A 10 year after assessment of Mwimbi Area Development Project in Rukwa Region, Tanzania.

commented: “As can be seen, the peoples’ needs call for inter-departmental involvement and cooperation”.¹⁰⁸

MAD was subject to an internal evaluation in 1993, when activities were at its peak. Two main messages were delivered. The project had succeeded in stimulating community

Mwimbi – village level projects

- 8 agricultural projects
- 2 carpentry groups
- Bridge construction (Msoma)
- Godown (Kafakula)
- Dispensary (Kalemba)
- 2 vegetable gardens
- 2 water supply projects
- Repair of milling machine
- Restaurant

participation: “it has shown, despite all the difficulties, this form of grass roots participation is effective”¹⁰⁹. But more efforts were needed to increase the involvement of women, with only 15% of the groups supported being women groups. The second message was one of concern about the high costs applied to construction activities arguing that this would not be sustainable if left to local communities for operation and maintenance.

In 2005, a team from Sumbawanga was asked by Norad to assess the longer-term impacts of MAD. They visited 8 out of 43 villages, randomly selected, and concluded based on peoples’ responses:¹¹⁰

- *Economic impact.* The project had “contributed significantly to the revamping of Mwimbi division”. This was evident through increased agricultural production and trade. After RUDEP, there was a marked deterioration of the economy: “agriculture has deteriorated year by year”. According to the report, the yield per acre of maize in 2005 was only one-third of the 1993 figures. “During the MAD years Mwimbi Village became a commercial centre where traders from nearby villages came to purchase their merchandise for their shops. There was a guesthouse and a decent tearoom, which are not operating any more.”
- *Education.* MAD had little impact on primary education. The enrolment rate in 2005 was high, but this was explained by the removal of school fees as from 2002. MAD had financed a secondary school, and the team noted with concern that attendance in 2005 was almost the same as in 1995. They related this to the inability of parents to afford school expenses, and the mere physical deterioration of school buildings.
- *Health.* The input of MAD to health institutions had not been sustainable – Mwimbi Health Centre and village dispensaries were in a poor condition and often medicines were not available. “As a result traditional healers and traditional birth attendants have again resumed a greater role in health services.” However, the non-tangible impact of health education had been quite strong – on sanitation and nutrition. “Today all women are aware of the importance of a varied diet and most households have vegetable gardens.”
- *Water supply:* The situation since 1995 had worsened significantly. During the dry period “most people have no access to safe water”. The main reason appears to be that the water table has been gradually sinking.
- *Community participation.* The introduction of Social Mobilisers originating from the villages “seems to be the single most important achievement”. These became

¹⁰⁸ Kapinga (1989).

¹⁰⁹ A second Evaluation of Mwimbi Area Development (MAD), August 23 – September 10, 1993.

¹¹⁰ Mshana, S. et al. Op.cit.

appreciated and acknowledged for their role, and today there are Social Mobilisers in all villages of Sumbawanga District, as part of the current government policy of village-based participatory planning. But there were also a growing sense of apathy among village leaders since there had been no response from government for years to their proposals. Gender awareness seemed to have increased. And on a positive note, the team concluded that “empowered with skills that originate back to the time of the MAD project, more people have confidence and capacity to take part in their own development process than ever before”.

A second MAD

Although concerns had been raised about the replicability of MAD as model to be extended throughout all divisions, it definitely had a positive effect in giving a marginalised area a developmental boost. Hence, RUDEP offered in 1992 to start a similar programme in Mpanda District. The District selected Mpimbwe Division in the Rukwa valley because of its transport problems, being cut off during the rainy season, and escalating land degradation and conflicts over land use between resident farmers (*Pimbwe*) and immigrant pastoralists (*Sukuma*). Agricultural yields were decreasing year by year, especially affecting the *Pimbwe*. The *Sukuma*, with their large herds of cattle and trained oxen for ploughing fared much better, but their extensive farming system greatly contributed to deforestation and drying up of the area.

A participatory rural appraisal exercise was carried out recommending greater involvement of the *Sukuma*, tree planting and support to primary health care. *Maendeleo* posted a project officer to the area, a staff house and project office was built, and people were encouraged to form development groups. The project lasted effectively only two years, and the results were meagre; apparently also due to poor staff performance and lack of supervision by the District and RUDEP. Visiting Usevya in 2008, the most tangible impact according to some informants was the “RUDEP Store”, as people called it, operated by the RUDEP Project Officer. People benefited from the reduced prices offered, as the owner used the RUDEP vehicle for transport of his merchandise.

At the closure of RUDEP, *Maendeleo* reported that more than 200 groups had been supported and 197 village projects implemented in Mwimbi and Mpimbwe.

District Development Fund (DDF)

This approach became an important part of RUDEP in the second phase, “and is probably the part of the programme which has had most success with the bottom-up approach”¹¹¹.

The DDF-concept was an attempt to move ownership entirely to the village requesting support. The guidelines were very similar to the once later adopted by the World Bank financed Tanzania Social Action Fund (TASAF). DDF only contained infrastructure grants, and each district had a DDF controlled by the District administration. 80% of the Fund had to be earmarked for village initiated projects; the remaining could be used for projects initiated by the Council. The guidelines said:

- The projects are at all stages the village property and the village responsibility. Under no circumstances can the DDF take over responsibility or any liability for the project and its performance.
- The self-help/co-funding component must have a value of at least 20% of total project cost, and must be rendered as cash. In addition, contributions in kind may be accepted. This cash is to be entered into a bank account before grant money is made available. The village contribution will be utilized first, thereafter the DDF money.

¹¹¹ Lunøe, B. R. Tembele and M. Bilia. Review Report on RUDEP 1995/96 Implementation, NORAD/PMO, February 1996.

4.5 Economic production and small-scale industry: a non-starter

It is evident from RUDEP's budgets that this programme area never took off. RUDEP was not successful in getting the local banks to cooperate on a credit scheme. The alternative became a revolving fund managed by SIDO. Support was extended to exploitation of the coal fields at Namwele, training of grinding mill owners, and tile and charcoal oven production. Regrettably, SIDO was not able to ensure loan recovery, and none of the loans were repaid.

Although direct support to private sector development proved difficult, the indirect effects of RUDEP on the regional economy were substantial, as further elaborated in the next chapter.

5. Impacts of RUDEP: what is the RUDEP legacy today?

This is a question that cannot be answered in a definite way. To do so scientifically entails analysis of the so-called ‘counterfactual’ – i.e. determining what would likely have happened in the absence of RUDEP and compare with what is observable today. Similar regions or districts without aid programmes of this kind could have been used as a counterfactual. One could also have compared Rukwa with regions or districts where area-based aid programmes have remained active until today. However, these kinds of analyses would have required time and resources not available for this study. Our approach has been confined to collecting data on Rukwa.

In so doing, we looked at processes of change from when RUDEP entered the scene until it closed, and from then on until today. We have also visited villages with or without RUDEP involvement, to see whether people themselves today recognise any difference in their post-RUDEP development.¹¹² This is the closest we come to a counterfactual analysis. Although this does not give us the means to clearly differentiate between the impacts of RUDEP versus other factors, we know that from 1982 to 1996 Norwegian aid by a wide margin was the dominant player on the field, and after RUDEP no similar player took its place. As one long-time officer in the regional administration said:

“RUDEP has contributed a lot to the development of Rukwa Region and we do not know if there were no RUDEP how backward the Region would have been today! Since it phased out we have been struggling to get donors who would support the Region but we have not been able to get any! We are really missing RUDEP as the gap is vivid.”¹¹³

Although similar views were expressed by many, there is little evidence to be found in the great number of reports that were produced on RUDEP and KIDEP: “The documentation is weak ... as a basis for analysing the impact from the programmes ... no baseline exists for any of the programmes”¹¹⁴.

It needs to be emphasised that RUDEP impacted on the region in two ways; both in the way it entered into various development investments and in the way it exited from them. The rapid withdrawal of what constituted 80 percent of the combined public development budgets of the Region obviously created ripple effects on the economy, organisational cultures and people’s attitudes. While the economic and financial evaluation of RUDEP in 1993 produced arguments for those wanting to close the programme, it did also warn against a rapid withdrawal of aid:

“The donor dependence thus created by RUDEP and KIDEP makes it critically important that the phasing out of the programmes is carefully planned and designed to avoid unintended economic contractions. And the phasing out of the programme should be planned well in advance of implementation.”¹¹⁵

¹¹² The control villages are: Madibira and Kiundinamema in Mwimbi Division, Sumbawanga District; and Kakoma and Mbwendi in Namanyere Division, Nkasi District.

¹¹³ Quote from RECODA (2008), p. 39.

¹¹⁴ Naustdalslid, J. and B. Aaasen (1995), p. 77.

¹¹⁵ 3E Economics (1993), p. 5-12.

It is evident that the regional cash economy contracted with the closure of RUDEP, and since no replacement funding came in projects just grounded to a halt. With this in mind, we present our assessments of impacts in relation to nine different dimensions of development that all have appeared as goals set by RUDEP:

- Poverty reduction – i.e. the improvement of the economic and social conditions of poor households
- Gender equality
- Economic growth
- Environmental protection
- Capacity development of public institutions
- Private sector development
- Strengthening of the civil society
- Policy development
- Human resources development

5.1 Impacts on the economic and social conditions of the poor

The situation today

Available information (see Chapter 2) suggests that there has not been a noticeable reduction in poverty despite growth in agricultural production. Rukwa still ranks low among regions in Tanzania if we combine indices of consumption, education and health. The situation in rural areas seems to be comparable to what it was 10 years ago although some farmers have succeeded in further expanding incomes. Market access improved during the time of RUDEP, but has since stagnated. This was confirmed in interviews.

Farmers have experienced that farm level crop prices, especially for maize, have declined relative to the costs of agricultural inputs and essential commodities. The absence of functioning cooperatives, at village as well as regional level, makes it difficult for farmers to store produce and sell when prices are better.

Informants reported that the purchasing power of maize sold by a farmer compared to the price of sugar in the shop has declined over the last ten years.

	Sugar (price per kg in TShs)	Maize (price per tin in TShs)	Ratio
1998	200	600	1 tin maize bought 3 kilo of sugar
2008	1200	2400	1 tin maize bought 2 kilo of sugar

At the time of our study farmers were buying a kilo of maize flour at the price of TShs 500, or TShs 50,000 for a bag of 100kg. The same quantity was sold by the same farmers during time of harvesting at the price of TShs 10,000-15,000. This serves to illustrate the considerable profit margin benefiting the middle-men – traders and owners of food processing businesses. Buyers have often no competition and can dictate the price, especially where the roads are bad. For instance, comparing crop prices in Madibira (a control village) with Ulumi (benefiting from RUDEP road rehabilitation) it was reported that the price offered to farmers in Madibira was 25% less. Hence, the situation for poor and marginal households has not improved commensurate with growth in the overall regional economy.

However, no up-to-date study of change in Rukwa over time exists. A socio-economic profile of Rukwa Region presents a picture of rapid GDP growth between 1984 and 1994 – increasing thirty times in current value.¹¹⁶ However, this was a period when the annual inflation rate hovered around 30%, which means that the GDP in real value about doubled in the 10 year period which coincided with RUDEP.¹¹⁷ We have no reliable data from the last decade, but the 2005 Poverty and Human Development Report confirms that for the country as whole “it is in the rural economy where growth has been weakest”¹¹⁸. Between 1991 and 2000 the estimated percentage of households living below the poverty line did not change (the figure dropped from 39 to 36%, which is within the statistical error margin). Where regional comparisons are made Rukwa falls in the lower middle range.



An old type house from Ulumi, Sumbawanga District

The social conditions have changed, however. There is a marked difference in peoples’ awareness and aspirations. This started during RUDEP, described by many as an eye-opener to the Region, and has continued

since. This is observable in health seeking behaviour, in changing and more nutritional food habits, improved housing standards and the attitude towards education. Communication is easier, including by mobile phones, and people are motivated for change. Above we see a photo of the type of house common before the 1990s – built by dried mud-bricks, with grass roofing and having merely small openings in the wall as windows. Below is a photo of a new house – built in burned bricks, with cemented floor, iron sheets on the roof and proper windows. Informants claimed that at least two-thirds now live in houses of the modern type.

However, looking at health statistics there is no real improvement over the last 15 years, and key informants argued that the situation has gradually worsened because public health facilities have deteriorated. Government policy is to discourage the use of Traditional Birth Attendants during delivery, but still half of all pregnant mothers go to them. In addition, one informant argued that today there are likely many more unreported deaths since “we do not have someone collecting data at village level. The TBAs did this, but today they are afraid of reporting”.

Impacts of RUDEP

There is substantial evidence that RUDEP contributed in a major way to improving living conditions. First and foremost, the improved access to clean drinking water had an impact on

¹¹⁶ United Republic of Tanzania (1998), p.20.

¹¹⁷ Laryea and Sumaila (2001).

¹¹⁸ United Republic of Tanzania (2005), p.94.

the health situation – for instance in reduced infant mortality. The Water Project worked in all areas of the Region, and reached about 60% of the villages by the time RUDEP closed. Health indicators improved significantly from 1985 to 1995. Training and posting of Village Health Workers contributed considerably – e.g. the immunization cover tripled during the RUDEP period. Likewise, the training and equipping of Traditional Birth Attendants reduced maternal deaths.



A new type house from Ulumi village

A second area of major impact was transport. Where roads were rehabilitated by RUDEP it immediately unleashed increased economic activity. Crop marketing was stimulated and prices to the farmers improved, and the ease of communication

itself, through busses, private trucks and not to forget all the RUDEP vehicles plying the roads “helping” with transport, as it was often phrased, stimulated retail trade and lowered the prices on commodities. On our visit to Mwimbi Division, where three road projects radically improved transport, people repeatedly referred to this effect.

Furthermore, RUDEP directly transferred assets and incomes to rural people. The labour based road construction approach provided seasonal employment, and the stories are many about how people used this cash to invest in agriculture and housing. The groups supported through community development approaches benefited mostly in kind. Although the groups were rarely viable, and often formed opportunistically just to access benefits, resource transfers nevertheless improved peoples’ economy.

Finally, we have to mention the attitudinal change referred to above. Of course, RUDEP was not at all the only force of influence, but many informants referred to the physiological effects of the presence of development workers and activities in areas that for long had been accustomed to be marginalised from modern Tanzania. It created expectations and changed mindsets. In a focus group discussion with women in Mwimbi village the following changes were mentioned:

- “We now understand the importance of planting trees.”
- “We now practice farming throughout the year, which has improved income.”
- “Our group mentality has improved. From the former RUDEP women’s group new ones have sprung, and some groups practice saving and credit – called ROSCAs.”
- “Our awareness about women’s and children’s rights has changed. “

Where RUDEP did not create a lasting impact

It follows from the above, that when RUDEP left there was not yet a foundation in place for continued reduction in poverty. The development benefits of the physical infrastructure financed by RUDEP (especially water supplies and roads) were sustainable only as long as maintenance was ensured. The RUDEP roads were the first hit by the public finance crunch in the wake of RUDEP. There was virtually no maintenance for 5-6 years, until aid-funded national road funds found their way to Rukwa more recently. The water coverage has slowly deteriorated, and there is no imminent sign of an improvement. The way RUDEP was phased out there was no attempt to mitigate this situation. The flow of funds merely stopped, and virtually all RUDEP activities dependent on public financing similarly ceased.

RUDEP was a brainchild of the community development ideology of the 1970s and 1980s, where great hopes were placed on the ability of rural farmers to form new types of collectives for both income generation as well as public services. Nyerere's "African socialism" was a more extreme variant of this thinking, which overlooked the facts that villagers generally distrusted the government and internally were divided along tribal and social lines in a way that undermined the trust necessary for collective action. Hence, RUDEP's efforts in group and community mobilisation in most cases were not viable. It is reported, though, that the current operations of TASAF do benefit from the experiences people had gained during RUDEP. But also that it took time to convince villagers disillusioned by the abrupt departure of RUDEP and half-finished activities, that TASAF is a reliable partner and is there to stay – hopefully so.

It is our impression that people today stand more ready to mobilise own efforts, and that the dependency syndrome of the past has been weakened. This can be interpreted as a positive but not-intended effect of the decline of government interventions after RUDEP. We also observed that non-governmental initiatives have become more widespread, by religious organisations, people with money, and even through remittances from Tanzanians abroad – like the school called "Manchester" in one of the villages of Sumbawanga District.

In retrospect, we see that RUDEP did not get far in setting up demand-driven support mechanisms. This was piloted in the Mwimbi Area Development project with some success, but was never institutionalised. The District Development Fund was another attempt in the same direction, but had a short lifespan and was never evaluated. Generally, RUDEP failed to address farming households or small-scale entrepreneurs at an individual level, through extension, subsidies or credit. Neither the politics of the time nor the institutional set-up of RUDEP was conducive.

The introduction of VIP latrines was another area where little impact can be recorded. The technology was just not appropriate for the socio-cultural environment of Rukwa. But awareness about sanitation increased and people improved their traditional pit latrines. Still, in some areas the number of cases of cholera, dysentery, malaria etc. is relatively high due to unclean water and poor environmental sanitation.

5.2 Impacts on gender relations

The situation today

Over the last twenty years there has been a marked change in the role of women among the *Fipa*. In urban areas with a much more mixed population we find women in quite influential positions within government, politics, the private sector, and the civil society. In the Mwimbi area, women said they are allowed to inherit property from both their husbands and parents, something that was not there earlier, and girls are sent to school. According to the chairperson

of a woman-NGO and community development officer, the *Fipa* women are now coming up; they can speak in public and the divorce rate is going down.¹¹⁹

Women are much more active in village government today. Typically, in Ulumi village the composition of the Village Development Committee was as follows, with almost one-third being women:

	Women	Men	Total
Health Committee	2	3	5
Finance and Planning Committee	2	3	5
Security Committee	1	4	5
Environment Committee	1	4	5
Community Development Committee	1	4	5
Total Village Development Committee	7	18	25

Impacts of RUDEP

'Women in development' emerged as a priority concern among many development agencies during the 1980s, and so also in Norway. In the programme agreement of 1986 this is reflected in the statement: "stress will be laid on the integration of women and children in the various projects". NORAD kept on pushing the Region to develop a "plan for the full involvement of women in the planning and development", and noted with concern that this had not been accomplished by mid 1989.¹²⁰ Later, special studies on the situation of women were commissioned, several study tours arranged, and in 1992 a large seminar in Sumbawanga was devoted to the issue.

The regional and district civil service consisted mainly of men, and NORAD often raised its dissatisfaction with the level of women participation in the programme, both at the level of planning and implementation and among villagers. Efforts were made to recruit women in new expatriate positions, and in 1989 three out of five positions (the Water Project excluded) – linked to roads, health and community development – were women. The fact that ILO, in cooperation with RUDEP, recruited a female engineer to pilot labour based road works no doubt had a demonstration effect, which was further amplified when a Tanzanian female engineer also joined the project. They both made efforts to include women as labourers on road works. Notably, women did only participate as paid labourers. Only men worked on the road on self-help basis. It is evident that this opportunity of earning cash loosened traditional gender relations.

Studies from about 1990 raised the nutritional status of women and problems of child care as a concern; the change from production of finger millet to maize had worsened the situation, with maize having a much lower nutritional value. Hence, the road projects started providing a nutritional meal and also child care at the work site. In 1990, it was still not common to grow vegetables and use vegetables in the diet, which is not the situation any longer.

A senior officer of Nkasi District claimed that women participation started with RUDEP. He gave an example of the change that has happened: "When I recently needed gravel for my house in Namanyere it was women that turned up. They had gained experience from working on RUDEP roads". RUDEP in the early 1990s supported women groups in every village in Nkasi District (87 in all), and a female community development adviser (a VSO volunteer) was stationed in the district.

¹¹⁹ Interview, Ms. W. Swai.

¹²⁰ Agreed Minutes, 3rd Annual Meeting 1.3.1989.

The Area Development concept, first initiated in the Mwimbi Division, involved women in the following ways:

- Efforts were made to employ women on roads works.
- Two ‘social immobilisers’ were recruited and trained in every village where the programme operated – one woman and one man.
- Two village health workers were identified and trained – of both sexes.
- Women groups were promoted and supported and all of them were focusing on income generation mostly through farming.
- Traditional birth attendants received recognition and training.

Where RUDEP did not have a lasting impact

Although informants reported that RUDEP contributed towards changes in gender relations, most clearly in areas where there had been a concentration in community development efforts, the situation of many women and girls remains a matter of concern. The Aids pandemic is a case in point. It has resulted in an increasing number of female headed households that are economically more vulnerable, and more orphans, among them the girls being particularly vulnerable. RUDEP supported Aids prevention campaigns, but indirectly it also contributed to the spreading of HIV.

5.3 Impact on the economy of the region – the GDP

The situation today

According to the Uyole Agriculture Centre two-thirds of the land in Rukwa Region is suitable for crop farming or animal husbandry, whereas in 1980 only about 3% was cultivated yearly. About 90% of the population, living in the 336 registered villages, was then dependent on farming. In Rukwa, the National Maize programme from 1974 had some success in raising a tradable surplus of maize, but crop production remained constrained by low prices to the farmers, inefficient state procurement agencies, transport problems and peasants giving priority to subsistence farming using traditional cultivation practices.

The situation today is much the same when it comes to the role of agriculture in the economy, and still farming for own consumption is essential in the rural economy. In aggregate, however, the tradable surplus has increased, and most importantly, there is a greater diversification of crops. Still, there has been a trend towards declining take home value to the farmer from crop sales. There was not yet any evidence in 2008 of farmers benefiting from the global rise in food prices.

In addition, farmers reported declining productivity per acre and that high prices on fertilizers made it uneconomical and unaffordable. Use of inorganic fertilizers has declined because of the higher prices compared to the price of maize, as one farmer reported: *‘the price of maize most of the time is at the average of 10,000 Shilling per bag and one acre can produce about 15-20 bags per acre if you apply 3-4 bags of fertilizers. When the cost of each bag and transportation is about 25,000 Shilling it becomes very difficult to raise the cash needed and in addition there are the costs for seeds, ploughing and weeding’*. In the Ufipa highland, when cultivating maize without fertilizers yields drops up to 5-8 bags per acre. However, in the Rukwa valley (Usevya) it was reported that yields can go up to 20 bags per acre without applying any fertilizer.¹²¹

Impacts of RUDEP

Although only a small share of RUDEP funds directly went to productive sectors the impacts were significant, and can summarised in four points.

¹²¹ RECODA 2008.

Firstly, RUDEP contributed to increased diversification of crops with the promotion of sunflower, potatoes, fruit growing and vegetable cultivation. Statistics presented in Chapter 2 clearly show a major improvement and reduced dependency on maize. This has been beneficial from a nutritional and food security perspective as well as for income generation.

Secondly, RUDEP influenced agricultural productivity through improved cultivation practices, improved seeds and more use of animal draft power. The latter enabled households to expand the cultivated areas, and benefited better off farmers in particular.

Thirdly, the most direct impact was created when rural roads were rehabilitated and made passable throughout the year. In Mwimbi Division, crop export and retail trade rose immediately. Many trucks preferred taking the detour via Mwimbi on their trips between Sumbawanga and Mbeya, partly because of the poor condition of the trunk road and partly to engage in trading.

Finally, the indirect stimulation of the cash economy was substantial, as explained by Mr. A. Shirima, currently Executive Director of the water supply agency for Sumbawanga town (SUWASA):

“In fact the economy of Rukwa grew during RUDEP era. That time there was high circulation of money to different levels of people. People who worked directly with RUDEP got good salaries and allowances, government staff were given allowance, business people got money through selling various goods, villagers engaged in rural road maintenance were paid, building contractors and local masons got jobs and money, improvement of roads enabled farmers to access markets and at least sell their crops at relative good prices, and transporters were busy as well; so everyone felt the presence of RUDEP even through multiplier effects. Staff used to refrain from working in Rukwa but right now they are ready to stay and even make their home in the Region. Even if there were some few cases of misusing the funds still the money circulated here and not in Dar es Salaam or somewhere else”.¹²²

Where RUDEP did not have a lasting impact

RUDEP did not succeed in linking the agricultural producers to the market, to credit facilities and input suppliers in an organised way. The end of the 1980s was the demise of the state-controlled cooperative unions and marketing corporations, and farmers to a large extent were left to deal with private traders on an individual basis. Despite its effort to support farmers' groups RUDEP never got to a position where it could support the genesis of a genuine cooperative movement.

5.4 Impacts on the environment

The situation today

The environmental condition on the Ufipa highland has further deteriorated during the last decade. The number one reason is population growth resulting in increased cultivation pressure and further deforestation of common property or state lands.

Impacts of RUDEP

The efforts of RUDEP at the time clearly contributed towards greater awareness about tree planting and environmental conservation, but the outcome was mixed. Where one sees a visible change is in the greening of Sumbawanga town, which RUDEP alone cannot take credit for, but RUDEP-financed nurseries and extension workers made it easier for

¹²² RECODA 2008.

individuals and NGOs to engage in tree planting. The “green belt” outside town, supported by RUDEP, has survived and matured.

At the village level, the impact is less, but there are today several villages maintaining community woodlots as a source of firewood and timber – e.g. the Tamasenga village forest which was established under the facilitation of RUDEP (see photo).



Mature eucalyptus trees in the Tamasenga village woodlot

There is also evidence of villages that have improved the maintenance of catchment areas (e.g. Msanzi, Mwasye and Kaengesa). RUDEP did play a role, but probably more important has been the engagement of the Catholic Church and its various missions.

Where RUDEP did not have a lasting impact

The protection of forest reserves continues to be an uphill struggle. Every year the Mbizi and Chala reserves are affected by fires, and there is no longer any capacity in place to limit the damage.



A section of Mbizi forest reserve which had been burnt in September 2007

One official from the District office had this to say: “The forester from Chala was shifted just after the project phased out and the house which he used to stay in was allocated to somebody else; we do not visit the catchment as it used to be”. There seem still to be unresolved conflicts with

some families that lost access to land when the reserves were established, although RUDEP tried help settling such grievances. Nevertheless, the Mbizi catchment has remained the main source of water to a rapidly growing urban population, but its protection is far from adequate.

It needs also be mentioned that RUDEP’s attempt to promote fuel efficient stoves never took off. It was experimented with using coal from the Namwele coal fields, making bricklets from powdered coal – a technology which is widespread in Asia, but the sulphuric content of the coal yielded an unpleasant smell when burning.

5.5 Impacts on public institutions

The situation today

Capacity development was by several seen as the prime objective of RUDEP, without which little else could be achieved. This was articulated in the *RUDEP Handbook* as follows:

“The broad goal is to provide an enabling framework of support and assistance to existing government institutions and mechanisms in order to more effectively plan, implement and manage development activities. At its core therefore, RUDEP is process-oriented, not output-oriented. Development is understood to be the outcome of complex social, economic and institutional processes, rather than merely achieving quantifiable physical targets within fixed budgetary allocations.”¹²³

Since the mid-1990s two major trends impacted on the government system in Rukwa. Firstly, there has been the furthering of the local government reform programme involving strengthening of districts administrations at the expense of the regional level, and secondly, the recurrent budgets remained very low for several years until 2001/02 when central government grants started picking up. In this situation, what happened to the *capacity development* investments of RUDEP?

Impacts of RUDEP

Looking at impacts of RUDEP on public institutions today we have to go to the local governments. The impacts are indirect and not related to a continuation of RUDEP activities after NORAD pulled out. Many middle and junior level civil servants working in RUDEP are now working in the local governments of the region. They bring experiences and attitudes developed during RUDEP into their current jobs, and in interviews people mentioned popular participation, cross-sectoral cooperation and result focus as a kind of ‘RUDEP legacy’ that remains.



A trace of RUDEP at the Region's planning office

Several informants stated that TASAF currently benefits from this, since in all districts TASAF coordinators previously worked with RUDEP as staff of the Community Development Department. The TASAF approach is quite similar to what was developed for the District Development Fund established under RUDEP. In the water and roads departments there are also many with experience from RUDEP and technical training funded by RUDEP. It is impossible in any way to measure this kind of impact, but RUDEP clearly remains the key professional reference point for many in the district administrations of today.

¹²³ READ 1989. *RUDEP Handbook*.

Where RUDEP did not have a lasting impact

An economic and financial evaluation of RUDEP from 1993 concluded that “given the estimated present size of recurring expenditure of RUDEP ... current levels of resource allocation from the government have to be raised significantly in order to operate and maintain RUDEP ... activities at their present level”¹²⁴. The analysis shows two important features, one that the recurrent cost element in the programme itself was relatively high – at about one-third. This included payment of salaries to contracted staff, various allowances, wages to casual labourers and transport. And secondly, that the share of donor funding relative to central government contributions was high, estimated at about 80% of the region’s total development budget for the period 1987/88 to 1992/93. The total expenditure by RUDEP was around three times the total expenditure by the government from domestic sources.



The drill rig financed by NORAD: still in working condition but not much used

Such figures gave rise to concerns for the sustainability of the programme and what kind of aid exit strategy can be devised. NORAD opted for a rapid closure of the programme, and

from reports and interviews we observed that the Region did not, or was not able to, prepare a sound phasing out strategy for RUDEP. The budget for 1996/97 and subsequent years did not reflect a concern for extending as much as possible of RUDEP activities using domestic funding. The main reason was that the central government had very little to offer. Regional and district departments that had been closely involved in RUDEP experienced a dramatic drop in their budgets. As an example, in 1994/95 the Water Department of Sumbawanga District received about TShs 35,000,000 under RUDEP for local expenditures, which basically funded all its activities. In 1996/97 the department received only TShs 60,000 for expenditures not related to staff costs.¹²⁵ With this level of funding, development activities just stopped over night.

The financial position of the central government was extremely difficult in the second half of the 1990s before a debt relief agreement with the donors was signed end of 2001. Regions and districts suffered even more than central government, which not only reflected the low degree of decentralization of public resources in Tanzania in general, but was amplified by a centralization of aid. Several donors, not only Norway, at the time wound up district and regional projects and moved their support to national sector programmes. Evidently, NORAD and RUDEP failed to devise a transition from aid dependence to domestic funding at least safeguarding the best functioning elements of the programme.

¹²⁴ 3E Economics (1993), p. v.

¹²⁵ Interview Mr. Shao, April 2008.

5.6 Impacts on private sector

The situation today

We do not have information on growth of the private sector over time. Clearly there has been a considerable development since the early 1990s in the number and range of enterprises, but the Region remains among the economically least developed and crop-related businesses continue to dominate. Problems of energy supplies and the poor state of the Mpanda-Sumwanga-Tunduma trunk road are the main deterrents to investors.

Impacts of RUDEP

We have already mentioned the overall impacts of RUDEP on the regional economy. In the following are some examples of private sector entrepreneurship stimulated by RUDEP.

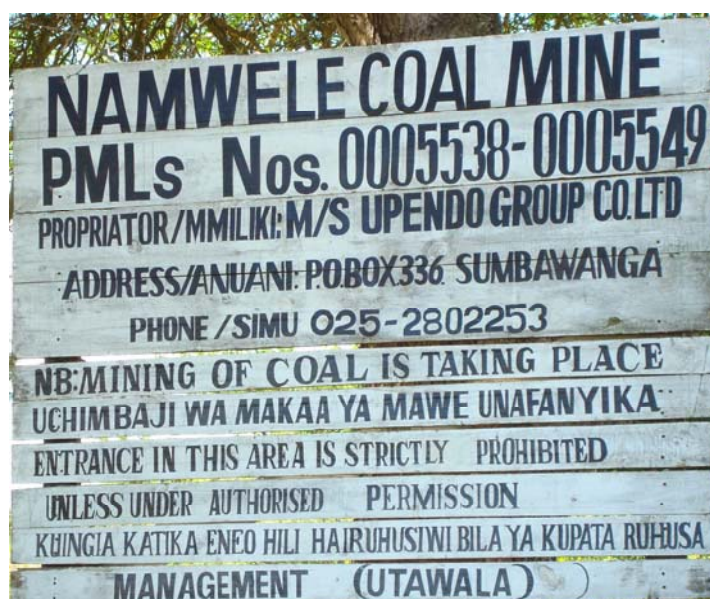
Delta Engineering Works is a small mechanical workshop run by a former RUDEP staff. He is manufacturing manual water pumps and ox-carts, but he complained that the current demand is low; he sold less than 10 carts in 2007. "Farmers were better off during RUDEP", he argued. There are several other mechanics who worked in RUDEP workshops that have their own garages today.



A former RUDEP worker at his private workshop

The coal deposits in Rukwa have been known for a long time, but a Norwegian geologist linked to RUDEP actively pushed the idea of commercial mining.

With financing from RUDEP 2000 tons were first excavated in 1993 and mainly used for brick burning in Sumbawanga. 300 brick-makers were trained.



Coal prepared for transport to Mbeya

In 2004, the mining concession was taken over by a local businessman – Mr. Kasiano, owner of the *Upendo Group* – and he is now selling coal to Mbeya Cement and Mbeya Textile. His long term goal is to start production of electricity using coal. Recently, he used own funds for a study trip to China and India to look at small-scale thermal power plants. Kasiano started his business in 1986, supplying construction materials, and from 1987 RUDEP for several years was his biggest customer. In his assessment, RUDEP did too many small projects: “it should have concentrated on a few big ones in relation to roads, power supply, railways or higher education, to stimulate the economy – the small projects we can do ourselves”.

Mr. Kafulusu, another local businessman, also came up thanks to RUDEP. He started supplying construction materials to RUDEP. “RUDEP was paying promptly which was very important for my business”, he said. “RUDEP gave a boost to the economy – the circulation of money touched every person. Many businesses came up as a result of RUDEP: bars and hotels, small traders, and many bought vehicles”. He explained that 1996 had been a very difficult year and many businesses stalled. RUDEP had generated a lot of activity in the construction sector since people were investing in new houses. Crop processing also went down because of fewer buyers. It took about 3 years before business picked up again. “Now the situation is better, and I am getting contracts for road maintenance from TANROADS”.



The office of one of Rukwa's largest contractors who built himself up at the time of RUDEP

Where RUDEP did not have a lasting impact

By and large, RUDEP had limited success in its attempts at transferring appropriate low cost technology. One example is compressed bricks for house construction using a 6:1 sand-cement ratio. Several small demonstration houses were built and manual compressing machines given to people who wanted to try it commercially. For villagers, it turned out more expensive than burnt bricks, and the bricks were not accepted for government buildings. This example, and others, illustrates the problem of creating effective public-private partnerships at the time.

5.7 Impacts on civil society

With the political liberalisation taking place during the 1990s, NORAD repeatedly signalled its preparedness to finance NGO-activities in Rukwa. It was also argued that RUDEP should start involving civil society organisations to a greater extent.

Impacts of RUDEP

Except for religious organisations, however, the NGO-sector was rudimentary up until the closure of RUDEP. RUDEP made cooperative arrangements with Catholic missions in a few projects (i.e. constructing a training centre in Mwimbi Division and in promoting village afforestation and catchment forest protection). However, the most significant initiative was the formation of Rukwa Association of Non-Governmental Organizations (RANGO). It started in 1992 by 12 NGO founding members. Today, there are 62 member organisations. The role of RANGO is to assist member organisations preparing project proposals and accessing external funding. RANGO was supported by NORAD until 2004 through

institutional cooperation with Norwegian NGOs active in Tanzania (i.e. Strømme Foundation during the initial years and for the longest period Norwegian People's Aid).

Several small environmental NGOs were established in the wake of RUDEP's afforestation efforts, but the Rukwa Association for the Advancement of Women (RAAWO) is probably the most successful of the local NGOs with a RUDEP legacy. It was started 1995 by a group of women Community Development workers who had participated in a RUDEP-sponsored study tour to Zambia looking at women organisations. RAAWO has 60 core members today, who are women in various professional and business related jobs. The organisation offers small-scale credit to poor women in Sumbawanga town and has been successful in mobilising grants from other foreign donors.

Where RUDEP did not have a lasting impact

International NGOs are prominent in Tanzania, and with the gradual withdrawal of bilateral donors from local level projects, such as RUDEP, they remained the only significant donors to many remote regions and districts especially in the social sectors. Faith-based organisations are particularly active. While this support is appreciated locally, the capacity of the public departments at district level to oversee and coordinate the various initiatives remains weak. The development planning capacity built up during RUDEP soon withered.

5.8 Impacts on policy of lessons learned

While Tanzania has been a testing ground for a variety of aid sponsored development approaches it has suffered throughout from weak linkages between operational experiences and national policy making. Regrettably, few of the results from the various experiments, RUDEP included, found their way into policy development in a systematic way. Policy change was primarily dictated by shifts in development paradigms largely imposed from the outside, rather than learning from positive lessons in ongoing projects. This was made no easier when in donor circles in Dar es Salaam a perception evolved during the 1990s that there was a need to make a fundamental break with past aid practices when embracing the "new aid architecture" emphasising policy dialogue at central level and funding through national programmes. Hence, neither central government nor donors like NORAD were keen on distilling lessons from the many rural development programmes that had virtually covered every corner of the country.

Negative lessons

Hence, we cannot trace any direct impacts of RUDEP on policy making. Only some implicit negative lessons were formulated. The main argument of relevance to policy was the concern for financial sustainability, or in other words, that the Region had become too aid dependent and there was a fear that aid substituted for local resource mobilisation and taxation as well as central government transfers. It was also argued that direct funding of a particular region or district by a donor introduced inequalities and unwarranted biases in the national distribution of public resources. These concerns justified shifting the funding to a national civil service or local government reform programme.

Missed lessons

In retrospect, informants did argue that RUDEP represented lessons of direct relevance to the Government's development strategy of today, as articulated in the National Strategy for Growth and Reduction of Poverty (NSGRP) or better known as MKUKUTA (the Kiswahili acronym for *Mkakati wa Kukuza Uchumi na Kuondoa Umaskini Taifa*). "The strategy identifies three major clusters of outcomes for poverty reduction, namely: (i) growth and reduction of income poverty; (ii) improved quality of life and social well being; and, (iii) good governance and accountability."¹²⁶

¹²⁶ http://www.tzdp.org/tz/uploads/media/MKUKUTA_20FINAL-June.pdf, p.27.

“RUDEP did MKUKUTA”, as one interviewee expressed it. By this she referred to all three outcome indicators above, and frequently informants emphasized the RUDEP approach as something that is still relevant. The programme developed approaches to participatory planning and implementation, which were later resuscitated under new labels – TASAF, O&OD (Opportunities and Obstacles to Development) and CDD (Community Driven Development), all stemming from the enhanced involvement of the World Bank. “Bottom-up today is all what RUDEP used” and “TASAF just using what RUDEP did” are other statements pointing at the same. RUDEP was among several rural development programmes that in the 1980s and early 1990s actively promoted participation and beneficiary ownership, the concrete lessons from which seem to have been put in the waste bin of history.

Similarly, RUDEP demonstrated considerable success in improving health conditions through preventive health care and drinking water supply. With the current problems facing Tanzania in meeting the health related Millennium Development Goals lessons from earlier programmes are worth studying.¹²⁷

Lessons on policy influence during implementation of RUDEP

No success in strengthening regional policy making. On the issue of policy influence NORAD was fumbling in terms of ambitions and approach. On the one hand, RUDEP was envisaged as a mechanism for slowly building capacity of the public sector. This meant a focus on implementation by-and-large taking current policies as a given. On the other hand, however, NORAD over time started voicing more and more concerns with the inadequacy or lack of policy directives. In several Annual Meetings and Review Missions, the Region was urged to develop regional policies in areas such as agriculture, the role of women, afforestation, health and roads. Policy drafts were prepared by READ, such as a “Rukwa Forest Policy” in 1989, but they had limited effect. The mandate of the Region to formulate policies was unclear, and the capacity to act was limited. It was also a period when the Regional Development Directorates gradually were emasculated compared to the prominent role they had been assigned with the 1972 decentralisation reform.

This illustrates a problem commonly found in aid relations; the donor develops ambitions for influencing policies and systems that are not in tune with political realities on the ground. Outsiders coming to review RUDEP had a tendency to give the programme a more prominent role than what it had. Looking at a Health Sector Review financed by RUDEP in 1989, this was apparent. The RUDEP Coordinator at a meeting with NORAD complained that the team had not understood the way RUDEP was integrated in the local administration, posing clear limitation on what could be achieved.¹²⁸

The goal of building stronger local governments notwithstanding, there remains until today a “regional vacuum”. Spearheading development in Rukwa a strong regional administration is needed - not as an implementer of services but in formulating and guiding regional development strategies.

The challenge of finding a sub-national role for donor agencies. The story of RUDEP, like other similar programmes, is a tale of trying to establish a workable aid relationship at a sub-national level – Region or District. When regions – like Rukwa – now plead for having donors back, after they “retreated” to Dar es Salaam in the 1990s, some lessons articulated by the outgoing RUDEP Coordinator in 1989 may be relevant.

He then saw a need to rethink the approach of the donors. He argued that the coordinator and other expatriates had very ambivalent roles; partly being seen by Tanzanians as an extended

¹²⁷ http://www.tz.undp.org/mdgs_progress.html.

¹²⁸ Minutes from meeting 21.9.89 at NORAD, Dar es Salaam (in Norwegian).

arm of NORAD to monitor activities, partly and officially being designated as advisors to Tanzanian counterparts, and partly being decision makers with substantial powers – though not formally being accountable to superiors in the Tanzanian administration. It would have been a better solution and one acceptable to Tanzania, he argued, to establish a control and monitoring intermediary in the Region independent of the implementers.

The need for demand-driven approaches to community involvement. With respect to community participation, the Coordinator in 1989 noted that RUDEP had not been able to change the established top-down thinking; government extension officers convincing or cajoling villagers to accept what they had to offer. He advised NORAD to argue for a model where villages or groups on their own initiative sent applications to a development fund. In Phase II of RUDEP this idea was further developed with the facility called District Development Funds (DDF). There is no evidence of any direct link from this concept to TASAF, which was introduced in Tanzania in 2000 by the World Bank, but the similarities are striking.

DDF was approved in 1992 and it was to be coordinated by the Planning Department in each of the districts. According to the guidelines it was “a decentralized, village oriented scheme under which all projects are identified at village level. The projects are the village property and village responsibility. DDF is seen as a funding and advising partner only. Self-help contribution is at least 20% rendered as cash to be entered into a bank account before grant money is made available.” DDF aimed at funding typical village construction projects (schools, dispensaries, water points, bridges etc.) that could be implemented in a one-year period. The 20-80 (RUDEP) cost sharing is the same ratio used by TASAF today.

DDF was ahead of time. Not only TASAF but also the Local Government Support Grant today is based in similar principles. DDF did not last for many years but the response was promising, with many applications in the pipeline when RUDEP closed. Some DDF-projects collapsed because of lack of follow up after RUDEP. Today, many applications to TASAF and LGSP are coming in, and officers interviewed are convinced that part of the reason is related to the RUDEP experience.

5.9 Impacts at the individual level – human resources development

RUDEP provided training and new types of work experience for a large number of people. We were not able to trace in a systematic manner in which ways the enhanced knowledge has benefited personal careers, but during interviews people frequently rated this as among the most important impacts of RUDEP. It is useful to distinguish among four categories of people.

Firstly, there were many ordinary villagers who participated in activities organised by RUDEP. The types of skills that people referred to as particularly useful in the period after RUDEP were group formation, preventive health care, simple construction techniques associated with roads, house construction and water supply, and production of seedlings and tree planting.

Secondly, RUDEP directly or indirectly employed many semi-skilled workers and technicians in labour based road works, water supply, building construction, and mechanical workshops. They received mainly on-the job training as project workers. Some were able to continue within government, whereas most have struggled to earn a living in the private sector. Within this category also come Village Health Workers and Traditional Birth Attendants who went through formalised training. Some of the VHWs have later become nurses. Many of the TBAs trained by RUDEP are still active and some have introduced their daughters to the job.

Thirdly, there were lower level civil servants who had formal roles in RUDEP projects. Their skills development came mostly in the form of practical on-the job experience, since RUDEP never established formalised training programmes for this level of personnel. It is significant that quite many within this category can be found working for the local governments in Rukwa today. Therefore, in retrospect, one may argue that greater investments in training at this level would have been quite beneficial.

Fourthly, it was the category that consumed the bulk of investments in formalised training, namely middle and higher level civil servants. This was driven by the necessity to ensure that project managers and trainer-of-trainers possessed adequate technical skills, but was also influenced by a perceived need to give incentives to senior civil servants to make them work in Rukwa. With the closure of RUDEP, or even before, many left the Region and successfully pursued their careers elsewhere. The latter also counts as impacts of RUDEP, although it also represented a loss to the Region of valuable skills.

It need also be mentioned that the RUDEP-experience influenced the professional careers of many of the expatriates assigned to the programme – the co-author of this report being one example. Even if not beneficial to Tanzania, being a party to the difficult challenge of raising the living standard of people in Rukwa influenced mindsets and for some also work priorities.

6. Lessons for the future

What can we learn from the story of RUDEP that is valid for Tanzanian policy-makers and planners of today, and for development partners that would like to see a more prosperous Rukwa Region? There are possibly three ways to look at this story. The first is to look at where there have been some lasting impacts despite the abrupt closure of the programme and no alternative funding coming to replace Norway's. This may represent a lesson for how to invest aid resources in a setting with a weak and under-resourced public sector. The second way is to look at impacts of the programme while it was still actively pursuing its main objective of strengthening public sector efficiency. Is it possible to argue that the RUDEP approach, which was distinctly different from the way aid is delivered today, had its comparative advantages? And finally, there are possibly lessons related to the phasing out of aid and the quest for sustainability.

6.1 What survived the absence of aid and why?

We were able to find a legacy of RUDEP in three ways:

- In infrastructure that had a technical quality high enough to sustain inadequate maintenance.
- In the adoption of technologies related to agricultural-based income generation.
- In the heads of people who were actively involved in the programme.

Although the number of water points installed by RUDEP still in operation has gradually declined over the years due to problems of maintenance and a dropping groundwater table, the decline has been much less than one would have expected. The reason is not technical sophistication, but rather good workmanship and high quality hardware components. Boreholes and hand pumps, in particular, have exceeded their expected life time, which is a testimony to the durability and appropriateness of the technical solutions. Likewise, some "RUDEP roads" have remained passable until today, despite poor maintenance, serving the Mwimbi area and Rukwa valley. The Kasanga port plays a more important role than ever with a flourishing trade across the Lake Tanganyika. The following lessons from RUDEP can be learned:

- Ensure quality when investing in rural infrastructure. Higher unit costs, involving proper planning and supervision, is likely to pay off in the long run.
- Avoid sophisticated solutions highly dependent on aid financed supplies of spares and technical supervision.
- Invest in people intensive activities. Involvement is in itself a good thing, both for local income generation and transfer of knowledge.
- Using semi-autonomous implementation units is better than getting work done through regular public departments.

There have been major changes in agriculture over the last two decades, first and foremost through increased diversification of crops both for marketing and own consumption. Although marginal in terms of financial outlays, the support by RUDEP (and other programmes at the time) to the introduction of new crops and farming techniques has had substantial multiplier effects. This shows the readiness of farmers to test and adopt new technologies, but that it is a timely process with farmers generally being risk averse. The combined effects in Mwimbi Division on agriculture from intensified advisory services, improved communications and cash incomes from public works were formidable. People intensified agricultural production and started growing new crops and vegetables. Cash incomes were used to invest in improved housing, education and migration. These gains, however, were vulnerable to changing market conditions. Currently, the returns to farmers from cash crops are deteriorating and small-scale

farmers mostly produce for own consumption. The following lessons from RUDEP can be learned:

- Poverty reduction in rural areas depends on the terms of trade for farmers.
- Improved market access is crucial, but has to be followed up by relevant extension services and effective farmer organisations. The latter was not a component of RUDEP.
- With population growth there is an increasing number of marginal rural households. Poverty levels in Rukwa have not gone down and there is an urgent need to address the income and self-sufficiency level of the rural poor. Many will leave the village and look for income opportunities in urban areas. The rapid growth of Sumbawanga town the last decade underscores this trend.
- The strategy of forming collectives and groups, as RUDEP was a party to, did not do well in Rukwa, with the exception of women groups that have continued until today – though not with its original membership and purpose. To reduce poverty, the free market offered opportunities but not the solution. There remains the need for targeting the rural poor, both in terms of assets and mobilisation.

The influence of RUDEP on people's attitudes and perceptions cannot be measured, and we rely on people's testimony. At village level they talked about a change of mind set. RUDEP offered new opportunities for income generation, for access to information and knowledge, and it impacted on people's aspirations and standard setting for their own life. Civil servants working in the programme learned a lot. Some took this knowledge to new jobs outside the region. For those that remained, the scope for practicing the acquired competence and experience was limited with development funds drying up. With new programmes coming in recent years (e.g. TASAF and road maintenance) there is evidence of RUDEP experience being put to use. The following lessons from RUDEP can be learned:

- Aid in the "RUDEP way" represented more than resource transfers to a marginal region. There was a significant element of transfer of ideas through human interaction; involving expatriates but more importantly the increased level of activities of a large number of government and programme employees.
- Today, people appreciate this form of influence as an opportunity for learning, but it took many years of RUDEP presence to be accepted. It shows the importance of time and patience in development processes.
- This notwithstanding, the influence of RUDEP was often not as intended. The goal of building a more effective public sector struggled against mounting problems of corruption and lack of accountability. The goal of strengthening the Region as a policy-making and development coordinating unit was undermined by the decentralisation reform. And the goal of strengthening popular participation was often subverted by public departments reluctant to give up the top-down approach they for so long had been accustomed to.

6.2 Can RUDEP claim any 'best practices'?

RUDEP was never subjected to a thorough ex-post evaluation. This study represents a partial attempt to do so, both focusing on long-term development impacts and experiences gained during implementation. We have concluded that RUDEP at its time of closure – mid 1990s – had contributed substantially to economic growth and improved preventive health care.

Stimulation of the regional economy was mainly due to two factors at the time: RUDEP-financed consumption and the rehabilitation of roads. When RUDEP closed the private sector in Sumbawanga immediately suffered and a period of economic recession followed. Statistics indicate that agricultural production has started picking up from about 2000, with rice, sunflower and potato growing more than maize.

The social benefits created by RUDEP were sustained only in so far as services were not dependent on public funding. With virtually zero replacement funding to fill the gap left by RUDEP, there was a virtual collapse in the extension work of departments such as Water, Health, Forestry and Community Development.

In this light and with the benefit of hindsight, what can be said about various aspects of the RUDEP approach? We will address this through a number of questions of relevance to development planner today?

Is process planning and learning by doing a valid approach? The flexibility of the RUDEP planning system greatly contributed to building local ownership of the programme. Vertical blue-print programmes directed from central level often face serious problems in adapting to local conditions. The RUDEP model, in theory, was well suited to stimulate local governance and accountability. The main problem was the learning capability of a civil service where key decision-makers constantly changed and had little affinity to Rukwa and its population.

- The RUDEP-approach was too open-ended, and served as a “second Treasury” to where all kinds of financial requests from resource strapped departments potentially could be addressed. There was a need for a sharper strategic focus from the beginning.
- The programme would also have benefited from a mix of process and blue-print, reflecting a division of work between units of government responsible for overall planning and monitoring – and learning, and units responsible for implementation. In RUDEP, the regional departments, and the READ in particular, often had both roles which weakened the accountability for results.

Can popular participation be stimulated the way RUDEP tried? RUDEP went through a gradual transformation in its approach to participation from supply-driven to demand-driven. This change was facilitated by the gradual process of political reform, which since has made further strides. Clearly, there is today in both rural and urban communities a greater sense of civic action acknowledging that one can no longer wait for government to solve all problems.

- RUDEP did only get a couple of years experience with its District Development Fund, which in many ways resembled TASAF that came ten years later, but the initial results were promising. Essential to this approach is that beneficiaries on their own initiative submit an application, and that financial support is conditioned on producing tangible results in advance.
- Demand driven approaches ought to be further stimulated. TASAF has limited capacity and as a national programme it has less flexibility in adjusting to local circumstance. There is scope for new funds that can complement TASAF and potentially invite applications from other entities than village organisations – e.g. local governments, NGOs and private sector.

Are area-targeted programmes a valid approach? Opinions among development practitioners have gone back and forth on this issue. For some time, the argument has been that area targeting introduces unwarranted biases and undermines central government’s ability to pursue national policies. Politically, in Tanzania there has been a great reluctance in introducing differential treatment among regions and district. When it has happened it has come as a response to donors’ demands. Yet, the gap between the stronger and the marginal regions is widening, and people in Rukwa vehemently argue that there is a need to reintroduce a measure of preferential treatment, similar to RUDEP. In the aftermath of RUDEP, the Region’s share of total aid to Tanzania declined substantially.

- There is clearly a need for major strategic investments in transport infrastructure and energy supply.
- In addition, special funds can be developed to support small-scale projects based on principles of cost-sharing and results-based funding.

- Broad-based support to public sector capacity building, similar to RUDEP, should be avoided, but there is a need to provide targeted support to strengthen the capacity of the Region to plan and monitor development projects. Rukwa can never be successfully managed from Dar es Salaam.

Is integrated development still a valid approach? The term integration carried two different meanings for RUDEP that by and large contradicted: one was related to the aim of working as part of the Tanzanian government system, and the other was related to the need to better coordinate between sectors. With respect to system-integration RUDEP was probably the most advanced among the donor funded IRDPs in Tanzania, although financial control was kept separate throughout. With respect to cross-sectoral cooperation the achievements were marginal. While this concept logically makes sense, sector departments tended to jealously guard their turfs.

- While supporting the capacity of key departments for strategic planning and learning, implementation of concrete output oriented projects (such as road rehabilitation and water supply) could better be done by semi-autonomous and temporary project organisations. There is no need that all should be integrated or even be part of the government structure.

How can accountability be strengthened? Critical issues in the current aid debate are corruption and accountability for results. RUDEP struggled with both problems and NORAD's decision to terminate funding was greatly influenced by a growing perception that there were too many leakages and too little output monitoring. This problem was not genuine to RUDEP or Rukwa, and has not been resolved by more centralised management of aid. The lessons of RUDEP showed that:

- A clearer division of roles was needed on the recipient side between the agency responsible for challenging funds and the agency responsible for implementation.
- There was a need for greater transparency and dissemination of information about budgets and planned outputs to enhance the scope of beneficiaries and their representatives to monitor government agencies.
- There was a need to move towards more results-based funding.
- The donor – NORAD – needed some kind of extended arm in Rukwa. The more the “RUDEP Office” in Sumbawanga resembled a regular regional department the weaker became the sense of partnership. For a donor to engage in a region remote from the Embassy it is essential that a trusted partner exists in the Region, one that has the legitimacy and capacity to adequately monitor use of funds.

6.3 How to exit aid?

As we have argued above, NORAD's exit from RUDEP was traumatic and poorly planned by both sides. Whereas donors legally reserve the right to unilaterally terminate funding at short notice, it is generally agreed that the phasing out of an aid relationship has to be a joint process allowing adequate time for the recipient to adjust. The problem of RUDEP was twofold.

Firstly, the programme partners never seriously discussed phasing out as an unavoidable and necessary component of the RUDEP strategy – or in other words there was no talk about ‘exit at entry’.

- The open-ended nature of the RUDEP approach almost discouraged any thinking about phasing-out. Exit of aid should have been considered from the beginning, not necessarily in terms of setting a deadline, but in devising financial arrangements preparing for reduction in aid. One approach would have been a mandatory local cash contribution that had to increase every year the programme was implemented.

- In a complex programme like RUDEP, involving very different kinds of projects in various sectors, there should have been guidelines for how to phase-out from individual projects. In particular, there was a need to address the lack of performance. Clearly, not all initiatives were successful, but funding tended to continue for too long.

Secondly, NORAD unjustifiably decided to phase-out funding in a very short time span – less than two years finally. In a development partnership, such harsh measures can only be justified if there is a breach of contract or serious political tensions between the partners. NORAD for valid reasons had been withholding funding awaiting investigations on some audit queries, but this in itself was not a legitimate reason for terminating a programme initially built on a long term commitment from Norway. Understandably, on the Tanzanian side, there was not the financial capacity to accommodate to this rapid phasing out, but more surprisingly there was virtually no political mobilisation on the recipient side, neither in the Region nor centrally, to secure a more gradual phase-out. As a consequence, most RUDEP-funded activities stopped, which, ironically, only served to prove the point made by the adversaries of RUDEP in the NORAD administration that it had become too aid dependant and was not sustainable.

- The negative consequences of the rapid and unplanned phasing out of RUDEP serve as a lesson to both Tanzania and Norway, as development partners, that aid relationships to be successful must incorporate both long term and predictable donor commitments as well as binding obligations on the part of the recipient to a jointly agreed and time-bound phasing-out strategy.

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SUMMARY

From 1978 to 1996 a close link existed between one of Tanzania's least developed regions and Norway. Norway provided aid to the tune of 400 million kroner, or about 70 million dollar, with the broad goal of improving the material wellbeing of the people. By reviewing the development situation of the region today, more than 10 years after the decision by Norad to terminate the Rukwa Integrated Rural Development Programme (RUDEP) this study looks at the impact of this aid. Rukwa still ranks among the poorest regions in Tanzania. Yet, there is evidence of enhanced living standard during RUDEP in areas where transport improved and villages were provided clean water and primary health care services. This is also an account of development ideas no longer in vogue – “integrated” and “participatory” rural development – and the encounter with the realities at the time of a country in economic crisis undergoing frequent policy shifts. What worked, what didn't and what lessons for future aid?

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