

**CHILDREN'S PARTICIPATION IN DEVELOPMENT: A STUDY OF CHATA AREA
DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMME OF WORLD VISION.**

By

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Executive Summary

Participation in development is not a new concept as over the years, facilitators of development have realized that meaningful development can only be achieved when the people concerned take part in decision making and implementation of activities affecting them.

This study was done to examine the extent to which child participation is being achieved in a development programme area, facilitated by World Vision Malawi, a Non Governmental Organization. The study was done in Chata Area development programme (ADP) located in T/A Chimutu in Lilongwe district. Children are defined as any person below the age 18.

The study used mixed methods approach in which quantitative and qualitative approaches were used. Through random and purposive sampling, 110 children and 105 adults were interviewed using a questionnaire. Focus group discussions and key informant interviews were also done to supplement information collected through the questionnaires.

Analysis of the quantitative data collected was done using Scientific Package for Social Scientists (SPSS) tool while the qualitative data was analyzed manually using common themes that emerged from the findings.

The findings of the study show that despite the many development activities in Chata area participation of children has been limited. Adults look down upon children as a minority group which cannot meaningfully participate in development activities. Furthermore, the study found such factors as cultural and traditional practices, gender, level of education and other household characteristics to be the major barriers to children's participating in development activities. Surprisingly, the findings further indicate that much as the programme has been engaged in advocacy activities, these

have focused more on creating awareness on child protection only rather than child participation.

The study argues that if children will have to sustain the development gains in communities such as Chata, then they equally need to participate in the development process to enhance their future capacities in related development activities.

On the overall, therefore, the study recommends that there is a need to create awareness on the adults to change attitude when they look at children and begin to create room for children to participate in the development process in an age appropriate manner. There is a need to create systems and structures that will enable children be included in the decision making process while building their capacity and self esteem.

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ACRONYMS

ADP	Area Development programme
AG	Assemblies of God
AOP	Annual Operating Plan
AIDS	Acquired Immuno Deficiency Syndrome
CAC	Commitment Area Committee
CDO	Community Development Officer
CDP	Community Development Project
CIP	Children in Programme
CRC	Convention on the Rights of Children
CCAP	Church of Central African Presbytery
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
HIV	Human Immuno Deficiency Virus
IIRR	International Institute of Rural reconstruction
MICAH	Micronutrient and Health
NGO	Non Governmental Organization
PRA	Participatory Rural Appraisal
RC	Roman Catholic
SPSS	Scientific Package for Social Scientists
TD frame	Transformation Development Framework
TDI	Transformational Development Indicators
UNICEF	United Nations Children's Fund
WVI	World Vision International

Chapter 1

Research Background

1.0 Introduction

The study focused on assessing participation of children in development process being facilitated by a development institution. Chata Area Development Programme (ADP), which is being implemented by World Vision Malawi, was used as a case study. Chapter one outlines background and rationale of the research, research objectives, brief research methodology, outline of the chapters and research schedule.

1.1 Background/rationale

The concept of child participation is relatively new, coming from the realization that children ought to take part in the development process not only because they are equal citizens but also because of the potential they have to make significant impact in achieving transformational development. As Beers (2002:11) puts “professionals dealing with children’s issues have discussed intensively children’s participation in development and have ended up incorporating the concepts in their policies”.

When facilitating development processes, participation of the people that are part of the interventions is seen to be an important element as this helps to ensure that the interventions will meet the people’s desires and expectations. This has been recognized by other key institutions working in different aspects of development. Williams (2004:3) says, “Over the past decades, participatory approaches to poverty reduction have been common and these have been encouraged by multilateral donors such as World Bank and International Monetary Fund (IMF). The reasoning behind is that their involvement would produce more effective policies and increase the degree of ownership of the development activities”. This is also stressed by Myers (2006:147) who argues that local

participation of those that are part of the development is a critical success factor for transformational development to take place.

Children have most of the times been sidelined from participating in the development process and decision- making as highlighted by Kane (2003:1). In recognition of the fact that children are equally citizens of the world that are supposed to enjoy rights as every citizen, in 1989, the United Nations established the Convention on the rights of the Child (CRC). In the convention, a child is envisaged a subject of rights, who is able to form and express opinions, to participate in decision-making processes and influence solutions, to intervene as a partner in the process of social change and in the building up of democracy (Mais 2000:93). Children's participation has been identified as a general principle for the realization of all the articles of the UN convention on the rights of the child (Beers 2002: 11).

By the year 2000, the CRC was ratified by all countries except United States and Somalia (Mais 2000:93). This means that countries are under obligation to ensure that the rights of children are upheld. Malawi is one of the countries that ratified the convention. Even though many countries agreed to the convention, there seems to be a gap between simply acknowledgement and the actual practice. This is also applicable to organizations as only a few organizations have been able to truly adhere to the principle of child participation and managed to implement it in their daily work (Beers 2002:11).

There is, however, a paradigm shift occurring about the place and status of children's voices in society. Children and young people are increasingly being recognized as social actors and citizens (Kane 2003:1). This provides a new direction on how children are being looked at so that they can be encouraged to participate in the development process just like any other person.

This calls for organizations that are actively involved in promoting the welfare of children to equally internalize child participation in their practice and conduct as they facilitate the

development process in communities. For development agencies such as World Vision, child participation can be seen as enabling children to have an authentic voice in evaluating and improving the conditions of their lives (Young 2008:2). The study was, therefore, done to assess the extent to which children take part in the development process beginning from home to the community level.

1.1.1 Country background

The study was conducted in Malawi which is in Central Africa. According to CIA-The World Fact Book (2008:1), the country is ranked as one of the least developed countries in Africa with an estimated population of 13 million people. The country's economy largely depends on agriculture, which accounts for 37% of the GDP. More than 53 percent of the people live below the poverty line earning less than 1 US dollar per day. The majority of the people (85 percent) live in the rural area with subsistence agriculture as their main source of livelihood.

The country is divided into three administrative regions of South, Center and North with a total of 28 districts and the population is youthful with 46 percent comprising of people below the age of 14.

Malawi changed into the multiparty democracy in 1994 after more than 30 years of one party state during which development activities were largely controlled by the state machinery. During that period, participation in development activities was enforced by the government structures and every citizen of the country was under obligation to comply. With the advent of multiparty system, people understood democracy as being liberated from participating in development work and as such it created a need for sensitization of the people, including children, on the merits of participating in development activities.

Chata ADP, where the study was conducted, is located in Lilongwe district within the central region of the country. The district is the capital city of Malawi with a total estimated population of 1,897,167 with 64.7% of the people living in rural areas (Malawi Government 2008:2). The district lies within what is popularly known as the Lilongwe–Kasungu plain which is a flat area conducive for agricultural production. The major occupation of the people in the rural areas of the district, is farming with maize and tobacco as the major crops grown.

The Malawi government, through various departments is the main player in the implementation of various development activities in the country targeted at improving people’s livelihood. Several Non Governmental Organizations (NGO) are also working throughout the country implementing various development activities complimenting the efforts of the government in tackling poverty. World Vision is one such organization.

1.1.2. World Vision International

World Vision is an international Non Governmental Organization working in the country complimenting government efforts in improving people’s livelihood. The mission statement of the organization states that:

World Vision is an International Partnership of Christians whose mission is to follow our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ in working with the poor and the oppressed to promote human transformation, seek justice, and bear witness to the good news of the kingdom of God (Wagenaar 2004:1).

This mission is pursued through an integrated and holistic commitment to transformational development that is community based and sustainable. Currently the organization is working in more than 100 countries across the world (Wagenaar 2004:1).

Operations of the organization in Malawi started in 1982 through implementation of Community Development Projects (CDP). These projects mainly focused on the

improvement of infrastructures such as school blocks, clinics and bridges in the targeted communities. From 1992 to date, the organization is implementing development activities through Area Development Programmes (ADP). Apart from infrastructure development these programmes also focus on people's development because of the realization that if people are not empowered they may not adequately benefit from the infrastructure development services. It is through the ADP approach that the organization seeks to achieve transformation of households and the communities to attain sustainable development. There are currently 44 ADPs in Malawi situated across the entire nation (World Vision Malawi Annual Report 2007:3).

The vision for World Vision in Malawi is "hope for the children and the poor" (World Vision Malawi 2002:1). The organization seeks to achieve this by focusing on four critical areas in line with the challenges faced by the majority of people in the communities. These areas of focus are:

- **Food Security.** The organization seeks to enhance level of food availability at the household level by promoting crop and livestock production.
- **Health.** Activities are aimed at improving nutrition status, water and sanitation level, family planning and primary health care for the communities.
- **Education.** Quality of education is enhanced through construction of educational infrastructures and provision of school materials.
- **HIV/AIDS.** Activities implemented seek to mitigate the impact of the pandemic through creating awareness of the disease, care and support for the sick and advocating adoption of policies that promote the well being of those that are infected.

1.1.3 Why World Vision focuses on children

The organization places a special emphasis on the lives of children in its development activities because, as Christian (2003:4) outlines,

- Children represent the most vulnerable group in a community.
- Children represent the future i.e. capacities for a better future may be sustained through the next generation of mothers, fathers and community leaders.
- Children have potential to be primary social players in building the present and the future they live in.
- Children represent the best indicator of the community development process and the “health” of the community.

There is, therefore, a need to invest in children if meaningful development is to be achieved. Plan International (2003:4) contends that “Children make up over 50 per cent of the population in the communities and as such it is not right to sideline such a vast number of community population”. This does not necessarily mean ignoring adults but rather ensuring that development activities enhance capacities of communities to take care of children and their needs. If communities take proper care of children, they will grow up as responsible citizens ready to take over the development interventions implemented in the communities.

1.1.4 Transformational Development

In the context of World Vision, Transformational Development is a process of restoring and enabling wholeness of life with dignity, justice and hope for all girls, boys, women, men, households and their communities (Christian 2003:24). Deliberate effort is made to mention each category of people separately namely, girls, boys, men and women, because there is a tendency of ignoring other categories when it is simply generalized.

The Transformational Development framework has five domains of change. These are the desired changes that should happen in a community to ensure that transformational development has taken place as outlined by Christian (2003:24), which include:

1. The well being of children, and their families and communities.
2. Empowered children to be agents of transformation.
3. Transformed relationships.
4. Interdependent and empowered communities.
5. Transformed systems and structures.

The diagram below shows a graphical presentation of the Transformational Development (TD) frame.

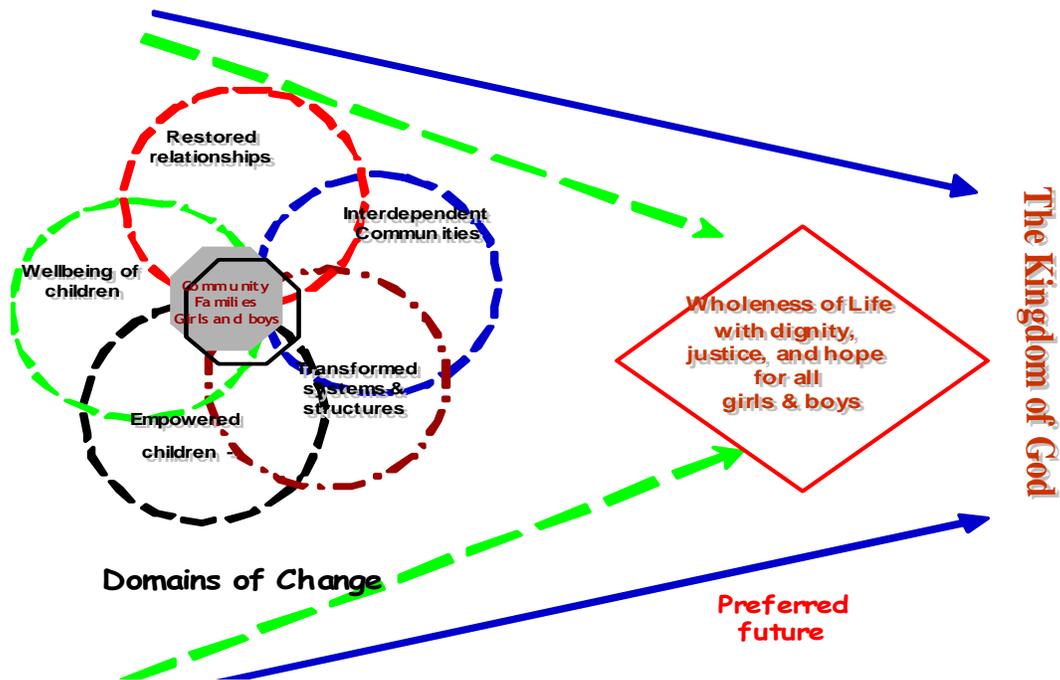


Fig 1.1 TD Frame (Source: Christian 2003)

Focusing on the lives of children in the communities, the development activities seek to ensure that children grow up in a family and community setting where they will be protected from any form of abuse and exploitation. They will have an access to basic health and education and will have the capacity to earn a future livelihood.

1.2 The importance of the study

Children in the African continent are faced with immense challenges resulting from widespread poverty, conflicts and the devastating impact of HIV/AIDS on families and communities, which have set a difficult stage in realizing their rights. The resulting effect is that millions of children across the continent are vulnerable to abuse and exploitation and yet their voices are rarely heard (Young 2008:13). In Malawi, the situation is not different.

There is an increasing awareness that children in Africa are the most vibrant source of creative approaches and solutions to major problems in the continent (African Union 2004:31). It is, therefore, important to assess the extent to which the interventions allow children to be engaged in the development process that would empower them as agents of transformation.

The study area was carefully chosen because it is one of the programmes where activities have been implemented for twelve years and as such more experience would be derived from community members on the extent to which children participate in the development activities.

1.3 Research problem and objectives

Despite the potential that children have to contribute to the development process, in Sub-Saharan Africa, social and cultural norms relegate them to the world of the muted allowing them little opportunity to raise their concerns and influence change (Young

2008:13). The potential that children have will, therefore, only be utilized if they are given an opportunity to participate in the development process just like any citizen.

Shier (2001:107) in her model on participation, identified different levels of participation and the first is where children are listened to. One way of achieving this is by making sure that children are part of the decision making structures in the community. During a mid term evaluation of the Chata ADP conducted in 2003, it was found out that children have not been represented in the various development committees that are influential in the implementation of development interventions (Munthali 2003:24). Children have at times only been targeted as beneficiaries of the interventions.

The primary objective of this study, therefore, was to examine how child participation in development activities was being achieved in Chata Area Development Programme (ADP).

Secondary objectives were as follows:

1. To describe the development activities that Chata ADP implemented in the area.
2. To examine how children participated in the development process through the activities being implemented by Chata ADP.
3. To find out factors that enhanced or hindered children's participation in Chata ADP.
4. To draw out lessons on child participation that would be critical to government and other non governmental organizations as they implemented development activities.

1.4. Study area

Chata area is located in Traditional Authority (TA) Chimutu about 30km North West of Lilongwe, the Capital City of Malawi¹. It is a rural area and the people depend on agriculture as the main source of livelihood. The area is dominated by the Chewa tribe. Other tribes include Yao and Ngoni.

Apart from various government departments, there are a number of organizations working in the area in trying to improve people's livelihood. These include organizations such as World Vision, CARE Malawi, Red Cross and Malawi Social Action Fund (MASAF).

Chata ADP was initiated in 1992 with an overall goal of improving people's livelihood in the community. This would be achieved through implementation of various development activities in line with the strategic direction of World Vision Malawi. Over 90% of funding for the development activities in the programme come from child sponsorship (World Vision Malawi 2002:2). Child sponsorship is a fund raising initiative where children are registered and linked to sponsors who commit themselves to provide regular funds towards community development initiatives where these children live. They are referred to as Children in Programme (CIP) (World Vision International 2007:10).

Community members participate in the implementation of development activities. The project is subdivided into 8 commitment areas which have a committee of at least 10 people from within the area that are responsible for planning and implementation of development activities. This is called a Commitment Area Committee (CAC). From the CAC two members are elected to be part of ADP committee, which is the overall institution managing implementation process of activities. For each specific activity there are sector committees facilitating implementation of activities both at household and community level. Since these committees are the ones that plan activities to be

¹ See Map of Malawi on appendix no 2 – for the location

implemented, whoever participates in the committees has an influence on the type of activities to be implemented and the extent to which the activities will impact them.

1.5 Research methodology

Both qualitative and quantitative methods were used in this study to collect information from different sources ranging from individuals to groups of people. This helped to triangulate information collected. The methodologies are fully discussed in Chapter 3.

1.6 Data collection and analysis

Secondary and primary information was collected. A review of the relevant literature on child participation was done to get in-depth understanding on the need to have children participate in any development process. These included articles and books on children and development, publications from institutions like World Vision, UNICEF and Save the Children. The last three organizations have a special focus on uplifting the lives of children.

A questionnaire was used to collect quantitative information from both adults and children on the extent to which children participate in the development process. On the other hand, focus group discussions were conducted with groups of children as well as adults to collect qualitative information on the same.

The analysis of the quantitative information collected through the individual interviews was done using the SPSS software package while the qualitative information from the focus group discussions was done manually.

1.7 Time frame

This research was done over a period of eight months starting from December 2003 to June 2004. The first month was for developing and testing the tools and the actual data collection was done in January and February 2004. Data entry and analysis was done between March and June 2004.

1.8 Limitation of the study

This study was only done in Chata area in Lilongwe due to financial limitations to carry out the study in more than one area. The results therefore can only be used as lessons learnt from Chata area. The survey was conducted during the rainy season when people were busy in their fields which affected their availability and hence the field level research was done on a longer period. Moreover, the study concentrated on children participation in World Vision supported activities only because of time and resource limitations that the researcher had.

1.9 Outline of chapters

The thesis has five chapters as outlined below:

Chapter 1 Research background

This chapter presents a brief background to the problem and the objectives of the study. It also includes a narration of the motivation and importance of the study, the research design i.e. research methodologies used, literature used and data collection methods that were used in the study. Finally the chapter presents an outline of the dissertation.

Chapter 2 Children's participation: A theoretical perspective

After having understood the research background, Chapter 2 presents a review of what others have already done on the subject of child participation. The key area is on

understanding children and their rights and the concept of child participation within the context of development. An overview of World Vision and its philosophies has been highlighted.

Chapter 3 Research methodology

Having dealt with the theoretical perspective on child participation, this chapter highlights the different research and data collection methodologies that were used in the research and the reasons why the particular methods were used.

Chapter 4 Research findings

This chapter presents findings from the primary data that was collected from the field survey. The results have been analyzed in line with the theoretical perspectives as were discussed in chapter 2.

Chapter 5 Recommendations and conclusions

This chapter draws up relevant conclusion from the study with relevant recommendations. Areas for further study in enhancing children's participation have also been highlighted.

1.10 Conclusion

This study has assessed the extent to which children are taking part in the development process and examined the factors affecting levels of their participation or enhancing their participation within the Chata area.

This chapter has introduced the study by highlighting background information, importance of the research and objectives research methodology and an outline of the thesis chapters.

The next chapter presents a theoretical perspective of child participation concept. This has been done through review of related literature on the subject.

Chapter Two

CHILD PARTICIPATION IN DEVELOPMENT: A THEORETICAL PERSPECTIVE

2.0 Introduction

This chapter reviews related literature on children's participation in development. It presents an overview of the understanding of children, their rights and why there is need to uphold rights of children as citizens of this world. Different arguments that have been made on children's participation are presented in the chapter. The benefits of letting children participate have also been examined. All this has been linked to contemporary theories of development. Key concepts used in the study have also been defined in this chapter.

2.1 Key concepts

There are four Key Concepts that are used in this dissertation namely child, participation, child participation and development. These will be discussed below.

2.1.1 Who is a child

The definition of a child has been so varied according to different cultural and traditional settings in different parts of the world. Some criteria used to define a child in some communities may not apply in another area. In Nepal, for example, those that are below the age of 16 are generally considered to be children while in the same country some communities regard children as those below the age of 10 since after this they can go for wage labour (Victoria et al 1998:43).

Amongst the Chewa tribe in Malawi a male who has not gone through the initiation ceremony is still considered to be a child regardless of how old he may be. Similarly amongst the Yao tribe once a girl has gone through initiation ceremony, she is considered to be an adult regardless of the age.

In a child-headed household, children have taken up the role of looking after other siblings and thus perform all the duties of an adult person. In such circumstances, children may be perceived as adults compared to their age mates growing up in a family where adults are the head of the household.

According to the United Nations, “a child is recognized as a person under the age of 18, unless under the laws applicable to the child, a majority is attained earlier” (Williams 2004:6). In other words, this includes babies, small children, older children and young people. In Malawi similarly children are recognized as being under the age of 18 (Malawi 2002:4).

For the purpose of this study, children are defined according to the United Nations definition because of its simplicity and objectivity in looking at the definition of a child.

2.1.2 Participation

Peoples’ participation in development has been a common aspect in the implementation of development programmes as a tool for achieving positive change in the lives of the people that the programmes do target. The concept of participation, however, is not new (Welford 2008:8). It has been used as a positive step forward in the fight against poverty. In simple definition, participation would be referred to as taking part in the activities that are being undertaken. In the context of rural development participation has been defined in different ways.

According to IIRR (1998:45) participation has been defined as the “art of taking part or having a share with others in some action”. In the context of development, participation should facilitate the exercise of people’s decision making power and promote higher levels of self reliance (Tapia et al 2008:3). From this view, participation is not only limited to taking part in development activities but also entails people’s involvement in the decision-making processes. People need to participate in deciding what development activities ought to be done and in the implementation of the different activities. In other words, people ought to be involved in the whole life cycle of the project.

It must be noted that participation will vary in every situation and thus different types and levels should be viewed as part of a continuum towards those higher levels of self reliance (Tapia et al 2008:4).

UNICEF (2002:4) defines participation as a process of sharing decisions which affect one’s life and the life of the community in which one lives. The Global Movement for Children (2002:69) adds that “in participation, whenever decisions are being taken about a particular situation, your voice has to be taken seriously and not just be tokenistic whereby you are seen to be participating simply because they want to make you happy and yet your voice is not taken seriously”.

There are many benefits of letting people participate in the development process. As Williams (2004:3) indicates, major institutions such as the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund (IMF) have over the past decade used participatory approaches to poverty reduction as a recognition that effective poverty reduction policies require the input of those that are affected. When people are involved, it does help in creating an awareness of their capabilities to make choices and build their self confidence thus enabling them to influence outcomes of the development interventions.

The concept of people's participation in the development process does not go without criticisms. Williams (2004:9) explains that some critics have looked at participation as merely passing fads and will be replaced by another fashion that will come along the way. It calls for careful effort to make sure that people are really involved.

Much as some have criticized the concept of participation, people ought to be involved in the development process since they are the ones that are supposed to benefit from the efforts being undertaken. "Those affected by development projects are to be the main players and decision makers" (De Beer and Swanepoel 2000:270).

2.1.3. Child participation

Children are equally citizens that need to be given an opportunity to participate in making decisions on development interventions and thus make their contribution towards development of their families and in the community as a whole. The concept of child participation has also faced a number of criticisms just like the concept of participation in general and this requires a proper understanding of the concept.

2.1.3.1 What child participation is

In the context of children and their rights, child participation is the act of encouraging children to make their views heard on issues that affect them (UNICEF 2002:4). It is the involvement of girls and boys in the decisions and actions that affect their lives, the lives of their families and community and the larger society where they live (Feinstein et al 2004:5). Beers (2002:18), on the other hand, defines children's participation as a "process in which children display best their abilities by expressing their ideas, viewpoints and having their problems solved, suitable to children's ages and bio-psychological levels of development".

Child participation goes beyond simply being visible. In actual fact, children are even more visible in certain circumstances, for example, in prostitution but this does not mean

that they are being involved in the development process (Johnson et al 1998:6). They ought to be empowered and that their views should be taken into account. As children participate in the development process they should not be denied all other basic rights as children (Plan International 2003: 3).

By promoting meaningful and quality participation of children, it ensures their proper growth and development. A child who has been given an opportunity to participate from an early stage grows up with competencies to develop through early childhood, respond to educational opportunities and move into adolescence with confidence, assertiveness and the capacity to contribute to democratic dialogue and practices within the home, school, community and the country (UNICEF 2002:4). This is echoed by Speak (2000: 31) who argues that “many of the barriers to adult participation may have been avoided if they had been encouraged to be involved as children”. A proverb in Chichewa language expresses very well as “**fodya nkunazale**” which means for someone to get a good crop of tobacco in the field, it starts with the type of seedlings that one has prepared at the nursery. You cannot expect a good crop if you begin with a weak seedling. Similarly, if adults have to effectively participate in the development process, it has to start from when they are children.

Children, just like any human beings, are not the same and, therefore, there is a need to take care of the different needs of specific groups of children. Johnson et al (1998:52) highlights differences such as age, gender, disability, wealth and ethnicity that will have an effect on how children actively participate in the development activities. It is, therefore, important to deliberately raise the visibility of the marginal children to avoid dominance by the more articulate and affluent children only (Johnson et al, 1998:52). This can be accomplished by using different types of methods and techniques to ensure that all are involved.

Hart (1998:29) mentions two broad age ranges that will react differently to participation. The pre- adolescents (up to 12 years), who seem to be eager to develop and test their

sense of competency and the adolescents (from 12-13 years) who need opportunities to experiment with different social roles as they struggle to form an identity through engagements with their peers. It is important to recognize these differences as they do determine how children will want to interact with each other and with their environment and also how they will relate to adults. There is need to recognize these age differences so that children are encouraged to participate in an age appropriate manner.

During this study the focus has mainly been on children aged between 10 to 18 years because this age band represents the most active group of children and they do have a better appreciation of the development concepts.

For children to effectively express their views, adults must change their mindset with regard to the potential that children have. As Pais (2000:99) explains “adults need to listen, learn understand and consider the child’s point of view and re examine adults’ own opinion and attitude”. He continues to say that “adults evolve from being mere providers, protectors or advocates to negotiators and facilitators. Adults are still required to act as coaches and then show children the way.

It would be unreasonable to imagine that children would be able to take up the critical decision-making role in the same way as adults. If children are left on their own without the right kind of direction and support they would easily mess up things simply because of inexperience and lack of maturity. Adults, therefore, still need to ensure that children are being well groomed but not deny children opportunities to participate.

Johnson et al (1998:71) agrees that even though children have not been given the opportunities to participate in decision making process, experience has shown that they actually do make decisions on various aspects of their life. He continues to say that there are times when the responsibilities that children are given, far outstrip their decision-making rights. It is high time that adults realize this potential and give children the right and opportunity to display their abilities.

Children's participation in Africa has not been completely absent, but it has not been developed as it should be. It is lack of evaluation and documentation of good practice that presents a barrier across the continent to ensure that they are able to participate in meaningful and authentic ways (Young 2008:13).

As we consider advancing participation of children in the development process, there is a need to carefully reflect on the purpose for their participation. Some of the ways this could be achieved is detailed below,

a) Children participation in research

As one way of advocating for involvement of children in the development process, they have been encouraged to participate in some participatory research initiatives. Participatory research is generally taken to mean involving people in the research process where people are not necessarily subjects or objects but active participants. In the case of children, participatory research has been in many forms such as letting them be part of focus group discussions, children being given questionnaires to administer to other children or even instances where children lead the research process and be responsible for the decisions as well (West 1999:272).

By involving children in the research process it demonstrates to the adult community that children have important experiences and opinions to contribute, which differ from those of adults (Theis 2004: 84). If children have to be involved in research, it requires that adults should appreciate the role that children can play.

Traditionally, children have not been involved in research work but when they are given the opportunity to participate it helps them express themselves and be able to enjoy their rights as citizens. Many times children bring in issues that adults would not even think of (Beers 2002:19).

b) Children participation in planning

Organizations that are child-focused cannot afford to ignore child participation in the planning process of the activities being implemented. Children can participate in activities that are focused on children only. In this case children have to decide on what kind of activities they would want to do and how they will carry out the activities. If the activities, on the other hand, affect whole communities then children need to be involved as equal participants with everyone as children can be used in setting up the agenda and in generation of ideas and preferences (Inglis 1998:102).

Their views can also be used to cross check with what adults are saying. This would help in generating more reliable information that will eventually improve quality of the project plans.

There is a need to use processes and techniques that will make children be heard by the adults. Inglis (1998:102) observes that processes that would enable the less confident adults participate will also have a similar effect on children. Such activities would include use of Participatory Rural Appraisal (PRA) methodologies such as social mapping, wealth ranking and focus group discussions.

c) Child participation as a right

Just like any other person, children have their rights as well. Children should not be denied any opportunity to associate themselves with any one and be involved in meaningful activity for their own benefit and the benefit of the communities. Participation of children should not only focus on preparing them for their future role. It must be appreciated that it is within their right as citizens to participate. This call for adults to play a supportive role that will encourage children to participate fully. Children and young people want adults to help create a conducive environment for them to participate (Save

the Children 2004:24). Details on the rights of children have been described later in this chapter (See section 2.1.3.7).

2.1.3.2 What child participation is not

Caution need to be taken to ensure authentic participation of children. UNICEF (2002:5) observes that sometimes children are merely used for decoration during meetings. Their role is simply to dance for visitors, recite poems and sing songs but they are not involved in the real discussions that take place. They may also be used as a token simply to impress donors or other visitors that children are involved. It is only a lip service to the idea of child participation. It continues to say that sometimes they are assigned some roles to play by adults without prior consultations with them. Children simply carry out orders from adults. Too easily, child participation can drift into being 'adult-centric' having been designed in ways inappropriate for a child's capacities and be imposed on unwilling children. The projects are entirely run by adults and children do not have any slight idea what the project is all about even though they are required to decorate these functions. When delegates from outside the area come to visit project activities, children sometimes are even asked to come out of classes to entertain them, yet they do not have any single idea what the visit is all about.

Kane (2003:46) highlights different aspects and levels of children participation defined in broad categories as non-participation and varying degrees of participation. Where children do not participate at all, they are manipulated as adults hold a complete authority and simply ask children what to do. Children would supposedly be given a chance to participate yet decisions have already been made by adults. It is only seen as a token of recognition but in actual fact they are not contributing anything towards the decisions made. Much as children are the most photographed people in the society they are the least listened to. Sometimes children may be used as respondents in a project survey but would not be given any feedback at all.

2.1.3.3 Arguments for and against child participation

There have been different thoughts about the need to let children participate in the development process. The following presents views suggesting that it is not necessary to let children participate.

It has been argued that it is so naïve to imagine that children who do not have any powers to make decisions over adults could be involved in participation. There is no need to bother ourselves encouraging participation of an age group that is deemed to be powerless (Johnson et al 1998: 8). It has been taken to be a waste of time and other resources as children do not have the experience or understanding of the relevant issues to participate effectively (Williams 2004: 9).

There are those who argue that children lack the competence for rational thought and informed decision making and that extension of citizen rights to children would give them unnecessary work and responsibilities, and may expose them to risk of abuse and exploitation. After all children are not self sufficient, they always depend on adults (Kane 2003:32). According to these views, children should not be part of any decision making processes.

On the other hand, arguments in favour of children's participation have largely been divided into two broad categories as highlighted by Williams (2004:8) whereby it leads to better decisions as it helps children to develop critical thinking, dialogue and citizenship. Other than this, it is their right as citizens to participate in decisions that affect them. Beers (2002: 12) highlights that it is all about empowerment and reinforcing democratic principles as we uphold human rights that include those of children.

While it is a fact that at times children make irrational decisions, we all grow into maturity and are all prone to mistakes in life. As a matter of fact, mistakes are not necessarily negatives, but can provide positive opportunities to learn from our experiences. By denying them the opportunity to participate in decision-making we will be doing a

disservice to children and we would not be allowing them to grow. It is not expected that children can participate in the same way as adults but in ways that are meaningful to them and that reflect their lived experience (Williams 2004:9).

From this analysis, much as it has been argued that encouraging children to participate is a waste of time, there seems to be a merit for children to participate especially in enabling them to be confident and assertive in fostering the development process. This will be explored further in the research.

2.1.3.4 Barriers to child participation

Much as there has been a lot of talk about children's participation, there are not many organizations that have seriously taken up steps to enhance their participation in the development process (Beers 2002:11). One reason for this kind of scenario being that the people are so much concerned about professional understanding and justification of letting children to participate and mostly they have found it of less value.

The relationship that exists between adults and children has to a greater extent been a barrier to children's involvement. White (2002:1097) describes in detail different models on the kinds of relationships that exist between adults and children, which to a large extent influence the kinds of actions we do take on issues relating to children.

The first view is where a child is seen as a savage, pre-school toddler and requires strict discipline. Johnson et al (1998:viii) compliments this by saying that "adults tend to look at children as ignorant to be taught, irresponsible to be disciplined, immature to be brought up and a nuisance to be seen and not to be heard". Adults in this situation are seen to have all the power that is supposed to be used to bring up children.

The second scenario is where a child is seen as a very innocent being, in need of protection from the harsh society. Much as this seems to be gentler and looks to be caring to children, the power is still vested in adults and does not give a child a leeway to

exercise his or her rights. Adults still see themselves as having all the absolute power and control over children and do not have any regard on the effect this has on the children.

The third relationship is where adults realize the need to develop a child's natural faculties according to different stages of child's development. This gives adults an opportunity to appreciate that children have the potential that simply needs to be harnessed to ensure effective growth and development. Adults do appreciate the fact that children are at different stages of growth which does affect the way they can articulate issues. This is important because it eventually helps to avoid unnecessary frustrations on the part of both adults and children themselves.

Sometimes adults, especially parents, feel threatened when upon hearing about children's participation and children's rights and regard these as mechanisms to undermine parental authority (Schurink 1998: 4). Such parents will usually brush off the idea about letting children participate in the development process especially in decision making.

The environment through which children grow has contributed in preventing them from participating effectively (Beers 2002:14). In many cultures and families children are supposed to be respectful and simply ought to take instructions from adults. Even in schools, children are told to listen and only speak when asked. Children are hardly given a chance for their voice to be heard. It is high time that children are given the chance to participate in decision making as echoed by Pais (2000:91) that "children are not simply the passive recipients of care or of adult decisions".

Gender inequalities help to reinforce the lack of participation especially by the girl child who is normally expected to be even more respectful than the male child (Hart 1992: 39). It is also common in many households that girls are more involved in household

chores than boys and this puts them at a disadvantaged position unlike their male counterparts.

The economic status of the families where children are coming from has an effect on the level of their participation. Families with adequate economic resources tend to value independence more than those with low income who value obedience from their children (Hart 1992: 38).

There are some people, on the other hand, that have said that children actually do participate in several activities at home hence no need to make a big fuss out of it (Casas 1997:285). This is not always the case as there are different situations that do prevail affecting children. This kind of generalization has greatly contributed to the low effective participation of children not only at household level but also in community activities.

As has been discussed, it is evident that children have been faced with factors that have hindered them from participating and this is what will be explored in this study.

2.1.3.5 Benefits of letting children participate in development

A child whose active engagement with the world has been encouraged from the outset grows up with competencies to develop through early childhood and move into adolescence with confidence, assertiveness and capacity to contribute in the home, community and the country as a whole (UNICEF 2003:9). Children, who have a positive sense of self-esteem and a sense of control over environment, can manage stressful experience and can show initiative in new ideas (Johnson et al 1998:3).

Encouraging children to participate enhances the spirit of togetherness in achieving set objectives leading to effective community work. This is the very essence of democracy, a key in development. The values of democracy are best learned in childhood. As the children grow and develop, their opportunities for participation expand from private to

public spaces, from local to global influence (UNICEF 2002:3). “Promoting early engagement in public and community life is crucial in building and sustaining a healthy society” (Denham 2001:6).

Involving children helps to improve the perspective of the policy makers on how we ought to do development in order to benefit children (Beers 2002:41). It is interesting to note that most of the policies impact children directly or indirectly yet they are developed in ignorance of how they will affect their present life and the future well-being (Lansdown 2001:4). It is only through close interaction with children through their participation at different levels of programming that development facilitators would get a better perspective on the kinds of policies that need to be advocated to improve the welfare of not only the children but also the community as a whole.

Despite the fact that children have faced some factors that have hindered them from participating in the development process, it is clear that there are benefits for the children to participate.

2.1.3.6 Children have rights

The United Nations is the world’s body that seeks to ensure equal rights for every one in the world. This includes helping in peacekeeping initiatives so that people live in harmony with each other. In 1990 a special session called “The World Summit for Children” was held specifically looking at issues affecting children. It was during the session that the Convention on the Rights of the Child was drawn and signed by over 122 governments (Schurink 1998: 4). This was probably a very big milestone achieved in trying to recognize that the world needs to take deliberate efforts to consider the welfare of children, which many times, has simply been ignored as a responsibility of the families. As Bala & Sinnasamy (2006:2) put it, “the Convention on the Rights of the Child affirms that every child has the right to participate in all matters concerning him or her”.

The Convention also acts as a legal document that sets minimal standards for the well-being of children (World Vision 2003:2). Children are human beings with the same rights as adults, rather than 'human becomings' who require socialization before being regarded as full subjects of rights (Ennew and Hastadewi 2004:25). The concept of children's participation is, therefore, one of the fundamental rights of children as contained in the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child. Under article 12 of the Convention, children and young people are entitled to express their views freely in all matters affecting them (Williams 2004:9). The fact that almost all countries, have signed the Convention does mean that governments have a legal obligation to ensure the well-being of children and their participation in the context of their families, and within their social and cultural contexts.

The family is the fundamental unit of society and the natural environment for the growth and well-being of its members, particularly children (UNICEF 2004:1). It is, however, observed that it is not always the case as many instances of violation of children's rights take place in the home.

It has to be appreciated that much as children have rights, these are not absolute but subject to qualifications. There is need to take into account the fact that adults have a crucial role to play in encouraging participation of children. In fact, children are often unable to carry out activities without the help of adults (Williams 2004:8). Maybe this is where most parents feel unhappy when issues of children having rights is being talked about because they know that as parents, they do have obligations to ensure the proper growth and development of children. However, if all children grew up in the kind of environment where they do experience the care and support from the guardians, then probably the talk about upholding their rights would not have been relevant. The truth of the matter is that the opposite is true and as such the call for everyone to act.

2.1.3.7 Different types of rights

Rights can be classified as (1) legal rights, which are laid down by the law and can be defended in the courts, (2) moral rights, normally based on religious beliefs and (3) human rights, and these are universally or generally accepted principles of fairness (Schruink 1998:4). As Development Practitioners get busy with development efforts, there is need to be conscious of the impact that the development process is making towards the livelihood of all people including children.

The infringements on the rights of children necessitate development practitioners to take some actions to ensure that this most vulnerable group is not subjected to abuse but that they instead receive the protection. In many parts of the world, people are taking advantage of the innocence of children and exploit them for their own benefits without having a careful consideration on the extent to which the rights of children have been infringed. It must be realized that once adults have destroyed the future of the child, it will not only affect the child at that particular point in time but also affect the great contribution the child would have made towards the development of the family, the community and the country as a whole. The Convention contains the platform through which the rights of the children will be upheld by people throughout the world.

A child has a right to survival. In other words, this calls for all parents and guardians to make sure that children are brought up properly and that their needs are well taken care of in terms of daily needs such as food, clothing, and a proper place to live on. This is becoming increasingly difficult in some parts of the world because of the high levels of poverty, which are threatening the survival and well-being of children. If a family is not able to provide these needs, then the state is supposed to come in and help children (Donnellan 1999:37).

A child has the right to development. This includes the fact that every child should be given an opportunity to get access to education for his or her development. Many

countries have made primary education free to give children an opportunity to get educated through the reduced cost of schooling. In Malawi, for instance, the government introduced free primary education in 1994. Since the introduction of the free education, enrollment rate in primary schools increased by 68 percent (Malawi Government 2002:1).

A child has the right to play, which forms part of his/her development. When children are playing it should not be seen as if they are wasting time. A child has a right to protection. This does not only call for parents and guardians to take responsibility to protect children but even the state has to make sure that children are protected from all forms of abuse that are affecting their growth and development. Children have a right to personhood. They are entitled to a name and should belong to a family, which is supposed to let them grow as responsible citizens.

Children have the right to make friends and mix up freely to enhance their personhood and every one needs to recognize them as people who also have rights (Donnellan 1999:36). This includes the fact that children have a right to participate in all forms of development and particularly in decision-making on issues that will directly affect them. This has been difficult for most adults who think that because of their moral obligation to raise up children, there is no need to get any consent from them even on matters that are affecting them. Adults tend to think that they know what children would need having already passed through their stage. Much as this may be the case, the fact is that the environment and circumstances in which children are growing up are different and as such the needs may not be exactly the same.

It will not be right to imagine that there is nothing happening to ensure that children's rights are being upheld. There are actually many national and international efforts and meetings being held to make sure that the voices of children are heard (Johnson et al 1998: xix). However, the meetings are mostly arranged by adults such that the chances

of manipulation are high. As meetings are organized, children ought to be given an opportunity to set the agenda and participate in leading deliberations.

It is important to ensure that children have the opportunity to influence decisions that are being made on their behalf. If the needs of children are not fully understood and addressed, then poverty alleviation efforts, which our development activities want to achieve, will not be meaningful (Johnson et al 1998: 3). What will happen is that only those in the society whose voices are heard will benefit thereby increasing the poverty gap.

2.1.3.8 What children are saying

During the UN General Assembly's Special Summit on Children in 2002 in their declaration the children stated that:

"We are not the sources of problems; we are the resources needed to help solve them. We are not expenses: we are investments. We are not just young people; we are people and citizens of this world".

During a study on children's perception on poverty in Uganda, children explained that one of the causes of poverty is that they are treated as only children and not given a chance to do suitable tasks to develop their own skills (Witter and Bukokhe 2004: 649). They further mentioned that they are capable of doing certain jobs according to their ages and that they do have knowledge and some of their skills are innovative. Their worry was that parents do not teach them how to look after themselves and when they encounter some difficulties in life, they cannot solve them on their own (Witter and Bukokhe 2004: 649).

Canaan and Warren (1997:61) quotes the words of young people who had gathered for a festival of children's rights who at the end of the occasion said:

“Why shouldn’t we be consulted about our future? Not only do these decisions concern us more than anyone else, we believe we also have a lot to offer and valuable opinions. We have new and innovative ideas. We are the adults of tomorrow”.

Young people are frustrated for not being adequately provided for and not being asked what they think as expressed by a 13 year old boy quoted by Smith et al (2000:225-226) who said:

“People like politicians and stuff don’t really know what we want to do, and just think we’re really stupid and a bit of a waste of time. They think, ‘oh, he’s just a little kid, what does he know’ ”

Children themselves are very positive and confident that they can make a difference if only given an opportunity to do so.

2.2 Development

A child is usually associated with the smaller circles of the family, home and neighborhood, yet these are being influenced more and more by external global forces. It is therefore important to have an understanding of the larger context within which the child is living to advocate better for their rights (Knutsson 1997:18). Children do not participate in a vacuum but in different ways especially in the development process.

The term development is very abstract and has been defined in several ways by different people. Myers (2006:3) says that many times when people think of development, they usually think of material change or social change in the material and as such development is associated with having more things. This kind of thinking presents a limited view because as De Beer and Swanepoel (2000:71) indicate “development is about people, their needs and their circumstances”.

Myers (2006:96) further argues that development needs to be looked at as a process that seeks to enhance peoples' and institutional capacities in managing resources to improve quality of their lives. Development process empowers the individual members of a household through their involvement in relevant activities. Development seeks to enhance the livelihood security of the people.

This is also highlighted by De Beer and Swanepoel (2000: xvii) who explain that development should emphasize the human factor and thus it must involve a process in which the capacity of people is built up so that they take responsibility for their own development.

One critical aspect in the definition is that development needs to be a long lasting initiative and it involves a capacity building process. If we have to achieve any meaningful development in the community where we are working, then people's participation cannot be over emphasized. Capacity has to begin at an individual level before we can have institutional structures to sustain the process. Since those that are children now are expected to carry on with the development process, it is of paramount importance that their personal abilities are enhanced now if the development process has to be sustainable hence the need to let them participate in the development process.

The Global Movement for Children (2002:65), on the other hand, defines development as "giving the people more control over their lives and more choices about how they live as their basic needs are being satisfied". Children are people and they equally need to have an opportunity to exercise control over their own destiny much as they need guidance from adults.

Children are tools that could be exploited in the development process for greater impact. For example, in the fight against the spread of HIV/AIDS, there is a focus on children as the window of hope. If efforts can be made targeting this group of people to make them

avoid contracting the HIV, then this would go a long way in curbing the spread of the pandemic. If we have to break the cycle of poverty we need to put special emphasis on children.

In this study, a combination of different definitions of development, have been used because of the multifaceted nature of the concept. Development will have taken place if the well being of the people is enhanced. The focus is on the people to ensure that the process of development builds their individual and institutional capacities to manage activities that will lead to an improvement in their lives. People themselves should be part of the process as they define the course of action. This includes children.

2.3 Conclusion

In this chapter, various concepts used have been clearly defined and these include the definition of who a child is, about participation, child participation and development. From review of the literature, development is a process and people targeted to benefit need to participate in the planning and implementation process. Children are citizens and are supposed to enjoy equal rights as those of other citizens in the society. Letting children participate in the development process would not only help them in their growth and maturity, but also improve overall implementation of activities. However, participation of children has been met with so many obstacles as many people still look at them as incapable of making rational decisions because of lack of experience and maturity.

The next chapter explains the methodology that was used in collecting data during this study in trying to establish the extent to which child participation has been achieved.

Chapter Three

Research Methodology

3.0 Introduction

This chapter discusses design of the study and data collection methods used. These methods focused on gathering information to examine how child participation in the development process is being achieved in Chata ADP which is the primary objective of the study. Different sources and methods in data collection were used during the research that enabled triangulation of information for coherence. Use of different methods and techniques helps to improve quality of the research (Mouton 1998:39).

3.1 Research Approach

The study utilized a mixed design in which quantitative and qualitative approaches were used to arrive at the findings. Quantitative methods can be construed as strategies that emphasize quantification in the collection and analysis of data that entails a deductive approach to the relationship between theory and research (Bryman 2004:19). In other words some research instruments are used in testing theories as per objectives of the research after which the data collected can be analyzed and draw conclusions (Bryman 2004:63).

Qualitative approach, on the other hand, can be construed as strategies that usually emphasize words rather than quantification in the collection and analysis of data (Bryman 2004:19). This approach, according to Bryman (2004:20) predominately emphasizes inductive approach to the relationship between theory and research. In qualitative methodology, one normally has a set of general questions and data collection is much more ethnographic where you spend much more time in observing, listening to what is being said while asking some questions (Bryman 2004:269). Qualitative

methods that were used during the research included Focus Group Discussions and key Informant interviews and these have also been described later in the chapter.

3.2 Data collection

Data collection involves applying the measuring instrument to the selected group for investigation (Mouton 1998:67). Two sources of data were collected in this study, which included secondary and primary data. The process of data collection started with a review of relevant literature on child participation before primary data was collected. The collection of primary data was done over a period of two months in February and March, 2004.

Secondary data is where the data has already been collected by someone else and you only need to extract the required information for the purposes of your study (Kumar 1999:124). During the study, secondary data was collected in order to have an understanding of what has already been done by others on child participation. As Kumar (1999:26) explains, “review and use of secondary data helps to acquaint ourselves with the available body of knowledge in the specific area of interest”. During this research different sources of literature were used that provided relevant and reliable information on the subject under study. Both published and unpublished sources were used in the review. These were research papers, journals, books, World Vision publications and reports from Chata ADP.

Mouton (2001:69) refers to primary data “your data”. In other words, this is the actual data that has to be collected in trying to find out the information that will provide answers to the research objectives. In order to collect this information interviews were done with different categories of people in Chata area through questionnaires, focus group discussions and interviews with key informants as will be detailed later in the chapter.

3.2.1 Sampling

There are many factors that prevent one from getting information from the whole population. Such factors include issues such as expenses, time and accessibility (Cohen et al 2000: 92). This necessitates collection of data from a smaller group or a subset of the population. Depending on how the selection has been done, the samples can be used as a legitimate basis for drawing inferences about the population from which they are drawn (Michael et al 2000:75). What is important though is that the sample has to be representative of the population under study (Bryman 2004: 87).

To determine the size of sample used depends on a number of factors which include how accurate you wish to be, confidence level and the budget available (Birchall 2005:1). He continues to offer the following formula for calculating the sample size

$S = (z/e)^2$ where S is the sample size, z confidence level and e error you are prepared to take. Suppose the confidence level is 95 percent (which is mostly used) a value of 1.96 is used and if the error you are willing to tolerate is 10 percent then the sample size would be $S = (1.96/.1)^2 = 384.16$. The sample size therefore would be 385.

As indicated, apart from simply using the formula the budget available is considered as a large sample requires more resources. One of the most basic considerations is that, it is the absolute size of a sample that is important not its relative size. (Bryman 2004: 87). According to Cohen et al (2000: 93), a sample size of 30 is held by many to be the minimum number of cases if a researcher would like to use the data for statistical analysis. Bryman (2004:99) continues to highlight that, a community that is heterogeneous will require a larger sample size than one which is homogenous. Chata area where the study was conducted is a homogenous society as the people largely belong to one tribe. During the study 110 children and 105 adults were interviewed which was adequate for statistical analysis.

Cohen et al (2000:99) mentions two methods that could be used for sampling as probability (random sample) and non-probability (purposive sample). A probability sample is selected randomly where each unit of the population has an equal or known chance of being selected while a non probability sample is not randomly selected implying that some units in the population are more likely to be selected than others (Bryman 2004:87). During this study both probability and non probability sampling methods were used.

3.2.2 Data collection techniques

Four techniques were used to collect data in this study and these were: questionnaire, Focus Group Discussions (FDGs), Key Informant Interviews (KII) and Document Review.

3.2.2.1 Questionnaire

A questionnaire is a data collection tool that comprises a set of questions intended to gather information pertaining to the research objectives. It is a form of quantitative data collection methodology and this is restricted to data of experiences and rejects any form of speculation (Plooy 2001:21). Use of the questionnaire as a data collection tool is helpful in that it helps to provide uniform information which assures comparability of data Kumar (1999:109). However, quality of data collected in such kind of data collection depends on the quality of interaction between the respondents and the one administering the questionnaire and in that case quality of the interviewer is very important to ensure that the researcher collects information (Kumar 1999: 115). During the research, enumerators were carefully selected who had adequate experience in collecting data.

Questionnaires were administered to children to find out perception on their participation in the development process (see appendix 1). Initially the selection of children

interviewed was purposively done to include differences in gender, age and whether they are in school or not. From each category, the participants were randomly selected. Different categories were interviewed because as highlighted by Johnson et al (1998:52), differences such as age, wealth and gender will have an effect on how they will actively participate in the development activities. Younger children were not interviewed to narrow the focus of the study between adolescents and those in teens.

The other set of questionnaire was administered to adults because of the important role they play towards assisting the growth and development of children into responsible citizens. The questionnaire was aimed at finding out the extent to which adults give children an opportunity to participate in the development process.

The majority of people in the targeted population could not understand the English language. It was necessary for the questionnaire to be translated into the local language, Chichewa, for ease of administering. The translation was done by the enumerators so that they could have a better understanding of the translated questionnaires. The translated questionnaire was reviewed by the researcher and Chata ADP supervisors to ascertain quality and reliability of the information. The questionnaires for interviews with representatives of government departments were not translated since they could be easily understood in English language.

Pre-testing

Research data that is collected needs to be reliable. Cohen et al (2000: 117) define reliability as being a synonym for consistency and reliability over time, over instruments and over groups of respondents. In other words, the research information collected should be proved true even if it is done during different periods and in different areas. In order to achieve this, a pre-test of the questionnaire was done before the actual administering of the questionnaire in the community. An area outside the ADP boundary was selected for the testing exercise. This was done by the enumerators and this helped

them to be accustomed to the questions even before the commencement of the actual exercise. The lessons that were drawn from the pre-testing were used to make necessary amendments to the questionnaires. This helped to improve quality of the data collected and ensured that right information relevant to the study is collected.

The enumerators

Chata ADP frontline staff were used as enumerators during this survey. They do have a minimum qualification of Malawi School Certificate of Education which is equivalent to O levels. All of them have had an extensive exposure to the conduct of research and surveys as they participated in two major evaluations of development activities taking place in the area. During both surveys, they did play the same role as enumerators. Developing the questionnaire was done together with the enumerators. To avoid bias in data collection, during the field survey they exchanged the area of jurisdiction, for example a particular member conducted the survey in the commitment area that is managed by another member of staff. The total number of enumerators was 24.

3.2.2.2 Focus Group Discussions

Focus group discussion is a qualitative method of data collection, which may be used to explore new areas, or achieve greater insight into the meaning of existing data (Godsell 2000:9). It is an open-ended group discussion guided by the researcher with a focus on a specific topic or a particular group of people (Robson 2002:285).

The focus group discussion has an advantage in that during a group discussion there is a lot more freedom for people to talk on issues under discussion with very little influence from the researcher and the participants are able to provide checks and balances within themselves weeding out extreme views in the process (Robson 2002:284). On the other hand, Godsell (2000:10) cautions that such sessions need to be well managed as

presence of peers in a meeting may inhibit others resulting in only a few people dominating the discussions.

The group discussions were held with members of one evangelism committee and one youth club. The groups were purposively selected to represent adults and children's committees respectively. The membership of the groups comprised of people from the entire ADP area as such information collected was representative of the whole community.

3.2.2.3 Key informant Interviews

Key informants are people who have the knowledge about the society or group being studied (Cohen et al 2000: 144). The people do not only need to be reliable but should also be competent enough to comment or discuss the critical issues under discussion. Eleven (11) key informants were purposively selected for interviews because of the different roles which they play in the community that has an effect on children. The key informants interviewed were Village Councilors, School head teachers, Church leaders, Community Development Officer (CDO) and an Agriculture and Extension Development Coordinator (AEDC).

Village Councilors are among the people that are responsible for the preservation of culture in the society. These were especially targeted to shed more light on some cultural practices that have a bearing on the growth and development of children. One male councilor and one female councilor were interviewed to get information on the initiation ceremonies that are done for boys and girls respectively.

The Ministry of Gender, Children and Community Development (MoGCCD) is responsible for overseeing growth and development of children in the country. A CDO from the Ministry was interviewed to get a perspective on how the development interventions are impacting children.

Being an agricultural based society; the Ministry of Agriculture plays a critical role in enhancing people's livelihood. The head of section from the Ministry (AEDC) in Chata area was interviewed to understand more on how the economy of the area is impacting on children.

The formal education system is intended to enhance intellectual, social and even physical development of children. Four School head teachers were interviewed to get their perspective on how formal education is helping in developing children to actively participate in the development process. The teachers were randomly selected as representatives of their peers in the area.

World Vision works closely with Churches in the implementation of development activities. As the Church focuses on people's spiritual development, there is a growing realization for the Church to be holistic in its approach and in upholding children's rights. Three Church leaders were interviewed to learn more on whether the activities in the Church have any deliberate focus to enhance the rights of children. The leaders were purposively selected as they represented major denominations in the area. These included the Church of Central Africa Presbytery (CCAP), Roman Catholic (RC) and Assemblies of God (AG) representing Evangelicals, Catholics and Pentecostals respectively.

3.2.2.4 Document review

A review of the Chata ADP Annual Operating Plans (AOP) was done to assess the extent to which the ADP has been including activities that would enhance participation of children in the development process. The AOP reviewed covered the period from 1999 to 2005 because they were the ones that were available on file.

3.3. Data capturing and editing

Before the actual analysis was done all the questionnaires were coded and given specific numbers for ease of data entry and analysis. The team of enumerators did this after checking and verifying the information on each and every questionnaire. This was done to minimize errors.

When conducting focus group discussions, there were always two people who were handling the discussions, a moderator and a recorder. This was done to capture almost all the information that was being gathered. To minimize errors, the FGD data were compiled on the same day while still fresh in their minds.

3.4 Data analysis

Data analysis is a process that involves organizing, accounting for and explaining the data or in other words, making sense of the data in terms of the participants' definitions of the situation (Cohen et al 2000:147). This is also indicated by Mouton (1998:161) as "the resolution of a complex whole into its parts".

There were two types of analysis done during the exercise because of the different types of data that were collected. Quantitative data was analyzed using the Scientific Package for Social Scientists (SPSS) computer software program. Content analysis was used to analyse qualitative data. The enumerators and the researcher analyzed the content of the responses from the discussions and the interviews and drew common categories and themes. The results were used to compliment the quantitative data.

3.5 Short comings

There were some challenges that were faced during the whole process of data collection and data analysis including issues of time, perceptions and cultural beliefs.

In terms of time, the study was conducted during the months of January and February, which is the peak of rainfall and agricultural season in Malawi. Consequently it was difficult to find people especially adults in their homes because most of them were working in their gardens. The field study was therefore conducted in a period of two months to give more time for the enumerators to interact with the community.

Another limitation concerned community's perception on child participation. The concept of child participation is relatively new in the community and many of the adult respondents did not fully understand it. Some people thought that the enumerators were proposing that children should start being leaders as such they simply brushed off the idea. On the other hand, others thought of child participation as being child exploitation and were completely negative about it. The enumerators spent a lot of time to explain the issues and the need to uphold the rights of children. This also contributed to length of time taken with one particular respondent.

Cultural beliefs were another limitation in the study. The project area is located in an area steeped in Chewa culture, where the people's tradition includes an initiation ceremony for children with some elements of ancestral worship. The ceremony is very secretive and initiates do not reveal much about it. It was difficult for them, especially local leaders who are custodians of the culture to be very open about it and its effects on the growth and development of children. Use of different variety of data collection techniques helped to ensure that as much information as possible was still collected.

3.6 Conclusion

The chapter has discussed the methods that were used to collect data for the study. Both secondary and primary sources were used to collect data for the study. While as secondary sources were mainly review of literature on what others have already done on the subject, primary data was mainly collected through administering questionnaire to both adults and children to understand their views on participation of children. Different

sources were used to collect the data in order to have a better understanding of the subject and for triangulation of information. The chapter that follows presents and discusses details of the research findings.

Chapter Four

Findings and Discussion

4.0 Introduction

This chapter highlights results of the research that was done in Chata community on participation of children in the development process. These findings present views of both adults and children after analysis of the information collected from the questionnaires. The findings are divided into four sections. The first section highlights household characteristics of the participants in the research while the second and third sections focus on child participation and factors that hinder child participation respectively. The last section looks at how child participation can be enhanced.

4.1 Household characteristics

There were a total of 105 adults that were interviewed to assess their perception on issues of child participation in the home as well as in the community and the extent they give children an opportunity to participate in the development process. The Table 4.1a summarizes details on the characteristics of the adults interviewed that include gender, household head and level of education of the interviewee.

Table 4.1a Characteristics of adult interviewees

Characteristic		Frequency	Percent
Gender	Male	62	59
	Female	43	41
Head of household	Male headed	93	88.6
	Female headed	12	11.4
Education Level	Did not go to school	12	11.4
	Primary School < std 5	45	42.9
	Primary School > std 5	36	34.3
	Secondary School	12	11.4

As for children, there were a total of 110 that were interviewed and the Table 4.1b presents the characteristics of the interviewees which include age, gender, head of the household in their family, education and whether they are CIP or not.

Table 4.1b Characteristics of children interviewees

Characteristic		Frequency	Percent
Age (years)	10	4	3.6
	11	2	1.8
	12	14	12.7
	13	15	13.6
	14	18	16.4
	15	16	14.5
	16	16	14.5
	17	15	13.6
	18	10	9.1
Gender	Male	60	54.5
	Female	50	45.5
Household head	Male headed	90	81.8
	Female headed	20	18.2
Education	In school	100	90.9
	Out of school	10	9.1
CIP status	CIP	64	58.2
	Non CIP	46	41.8

4.2 Children's participation in development activities

This section discusses the development activities taking place in Chata area as indicated by both adults and children.

4.2.1 Development activities taking place

All adults and children interviewed indicated that there were some development activities taking place in the area. Different types of development activities taking place and the findings are summarized in the Table 4.2.

Table 4.2 Reported Development Activities

Respondent	Development Activities						
	Agriculture	Health	Education	Roads	Afforestation	Micah	Water
Adults	100%	84.6%	77.7%	6.9%	33.8%	27.7%	23.8%
Children	88.2%	52.7%	48.2%	0	0	0	0

Agriculture is the most common development activity mentioned by both adults (100 per cent) and children (88.2 per cent). This finding is not surprising considering that Chata community, as the rest of the country, is an agrarian society and thus depends on agriculture as a source of livelihood. Specific activities implemented in Agriculture included improving the crop and livestock production for food and income. Health activities as reported by adults (84.6 per cent) and children (52.6 per cent) are implemented to improve the health status of people in the community. These included primary health activities such as basic sanitation and hygiene and improving access to medical facilities. Education activities mainly aim at improving the learning environment of pupils through construction of structures such as school blocks. These were reported by 77.7 per cent of adults and 48.2 per cent children. Activities to improve the road network in the area were reported by adults only (6.9 per cent). These include construction of bridges as well as maintenance of the actual roads to enhance accessibility of the area to basic social services such as markets and hospitals. The communities are engaged in afforestation activities aimed at planting trees on the bare land as a way of rehabilitating the environment. MICAH is a special micronutrient and health project focusing on improving nutritional status of people in the area. The project facilitated activities such as growing of indigenous vegetables and rearing of small

ruminants. Only adults seem to be aware of the activities as reported by 27.7 per cent of those interviewed and none by children. To improve access to potable water, activities such as drilling of boreholes and protecting shallow wells are being implemented. These were also reported by adults only (23.8 per cent).

It should be noted that not all activities reported by participants were being implemented by World Vision. There were other NGOs and the government that facilitated various activities in the area. These include Care Malawi that was implementing Water and Food Security activities, Save the Children implementing Health and Sanitation and Malawi Social Action Fund (MASAF) implementing infrastructure development activities.

Based on the results in Table 4.2, Children had a limited scope of the knowledge on the development activities taking place in the area as they only mentioned agriculture, health and education. This may be a reflection of their limited participation in the development activities. The fact that all participants in the study mentioned some kind of development activities taking place in the area is not surprising because as long as there are human beings in a locality, there are always some activities that they would be involved in. As De Beer and Swanepoel (2000:71) point out “development is about people, their needs and their circumstances”. The circumstances within which people live in are always changing and as such people will be active at all times in response to the changes.

4.2.2. Children’s participation

This section discusses the extent to which children participate in the development activities both at home and the entire community. Reasons why children participate or do not participate have also been highlighted including why it is important for children to participate.

A) Participation in the home

The study investigated the extent to which adults gave children opportunities to decide on issues. Similarly, children were also asked whether they are given the opportunities. The findings are presented in Table 4.3.

Table 4.3 Whether children are given opportunity

Respondents	Do children have an opportunity or not.		
	Yes	No	Not sure
Adults	57.7%	40%	2.3%
Children	16.4%	83.6%	0

There were a total of 57.7 per cent of adults who indicated that they gave children an opportunity to decide on issues in the home while 40 per cent said they did not. The majority (83.6 per cent) of the children said they were not given any opportunity. Unlike adults, no child was unsure on whether they are given opportunities or not.

The adults were asked for reasons why they gave their children opportunities and these were varied as Figure 4.1 shows.

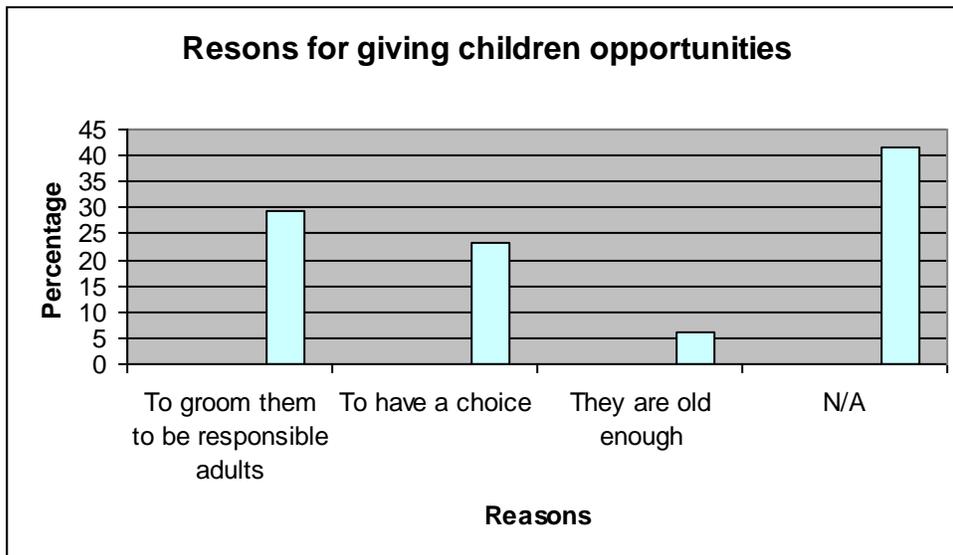


Figure 4.1: Reasons for giving Children opportunities

Based on the figure, one major reason is the need to groom children to be responsible citizens of in future (29.2 per cent). Other reasons included the fact that children need to have a choice, and because they are old enough. The 41.5 per cent represents those that did not have a particular reason why they give the children an opportunity and those that do not give them any opportunity at all.

There is a contrast between adults and children on how they perceived the opportunities, which children were given to participate in decision-making in the home. While as more adults indicated that children were given the opportunity, children themselves felt there was a gap. As indicated earlier on in Chapter two on section 2.2.34 page 58, adults generalize that children are always participating in several activities in the home hence no need to make a big fuss out of it. This is contributing to the low effective participation of children as indicated by children themselves. Interestingly, even for those adults that claimed that they gave children some opportunities, there were still gaps in the types of opportunities they gave children. For instance the majority (72%) of such respondents

gave opportunities that mainly had to do with deciding on some simple issues in the family like what food to eat on a particular day. Only a few of them (4 percent) claimed that they gave children an opportunity to participate in some critical aspects of the home like budgeting and investments. These findings agree well to what Mabusela (2001:14) claimed that very few children know about how family resources are mobilized and even less about what informs decisions to allocate these resources within the whole family.

The fact that 29.2 per cent of adults indicated that they gave children an opportunity to participate for grooming children to be responsible citizens, suggests that they want children to be prepared for their future roles as adults without recognizing their current potential. It is said that “Charity begins at home”. If effective participation of children in development has to be achieved, it matters what happens in the home. As White (2002:1098) explains “In all societies, the fundamental relationships for the nurture and development of children are structured through the institution of the family.” As the basic unit of the society, adults ought to create opportunities for children to participate not only in simple matters but also even in matters relating to use of resources. After all, whatever investments that the family is engaged in, has a long lasting impact and influence on children.

B) Participation in community meetings

It should be noted that it is a custom in the area for the village headmen to call for a community meeting where several issues are discussed. The issues range from those that have to deal with settling disputes in the village and development related issues. It is during such meetings when plans are usually drawn on development interventions to be carried out in the community for the benefit of the individual households as well as the community. Respondents were therefore asked about children’s participation in community meetings and the findings are summarized in Table 4.4.

Table 4.4 Children's participation in community meetings

Respondents	Response	Frequency	Percentage
Adults	Yes	28	26.2
	No	77	73.8
Children	Yes	28	25.5
	No	82	74.5

From the responses, both adults and children generally agreed that participation of children in community meetings was very minimal as 73.8 per cent and 74.5 per cent of adults and children respectively indicated that children do not participate in such meetings.

The reasons adults gave for children's minimal participation in community meetings were varied as shown in Table 4.5.

Table 4.5 Why Children do not participate in community meetings

Reason	Frequency	Percentage
Too young to contribute	63	60.0
Make noise	6	5.7
Meetings conducted when children are in school	3	2.9
N/A (those that say children do participate)	33	31.4
Total	105	100

The findings show that children did not participate in such meetings as can be seen from the responses of both adults and children themselves. This practice limits children's contributions towards the development process in the area. Inglis (1998: 104) says that "in most societies you have two groups of people, one that goes to public meetings and one that does not. Children are often in the group that does not go".

The findings further show that apart from lack of the will from adults to get the views from children, logistically such meetings have not given children room to participate as they are held when children are in school. If adults were serious about getting the views from children, some of the meetings would be deliberately arranged in such a way that they would take place when children are available. In any case, not all children attend school.

From the group discussions, children indicated that sometimes they would be asked to attend such meetings simply because there is a role which they would like to play such as assisting in arranging chairs for adults to sit on. Even in the event that they attended such meetings, children said they are normally not given an opportunity to speak or contribute to the discussions. They simply end up being listeners. The absence of children during such community meetings means that they have limited opportunity to contribute towards issues affecting them.

Children further indicated that unlike when meetings were organized by community members themselves, children were usually invited when development institutions called for such meetings. However, while as an opportunity was given to participate in the planning process during Participatory Rural Appraisal (PRA) exercise, many times the input from children was given less attention when consolidating the plans.

The reason that children may make noise during the meetings qualifies the argument that since they are given minimal attention, they will simply play around to draw the people's attention.

C) Participation in project cycle

The study sought to find out the extent of children's participation in the project cycle that included planning, implementation and evaluation of project activities. Table 4.6 highlights the findings.

Table 4.6 Children's Participation.

Respondents	Response	Frequency	Percentage
Adults	Yes	83	79.0
	No	22	21.0
Children	Yes	46	41.8
	No	64	58.2

As can be seen from the table, 79 per cent of adults indicated that children do participate in development activities, while as for children only 41.8 per cent indicated they did participate.

The results here show a contrast between adults and children on how they view the level of children's participation in development activities. Although the findings show the majority of adults felt that children participate in development activities, from the group discussions it was noted that what they meant by participation was limited to the involvement of children in carrying out some errands when there was a development activity taking place. For instance, it was reported that when a construction project was being implemented in a particular area, the community is required to contribute some locally available materials like bricks and sand towards that project. Children were mostly used to carry out such local materials when they are constructing infrastructure like school blocks or teachers houses. The errands were sometimes used as part of manual work during school sessions or at times as a form of punishment when children misbehaved.

When deciding on activities to be done in the community, children were not involved as can be seen from Figure 4.2 where only less than 1 per cent participated.

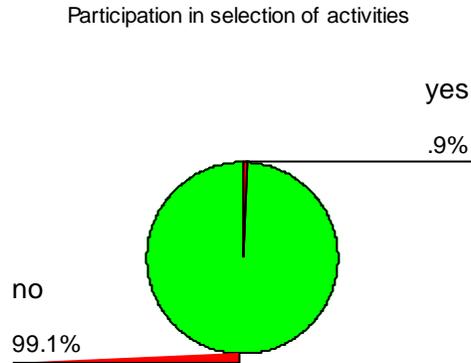


Figure 4.2 Participation in selection of activities

Based on the findings, children did not participate in decision-making process where they would contribute on what development activities need to be done. During a focus group discussion, children indicated that the development activities were not adequately addressing issues like recreation, sports facilities and skills development, which they would have contributed if they had been given an opportunity to be heard. Children were only being used to mobilize the resources in the implementation of activities that were decided upon by adults. This is not necessarily participation and indeed “visibility does not equal participation” (Johnson et al 1998:6). In fact children have their own concerns and issues affecting them that may not always be the same as for adults hence the need to give them opportunities to decide. Furthermore, while children are taking an active role in mobilizing resources for various development activities, care needs to be taken to ensure that this does not necessarily infringe on their rights such as right to play and education.

“Participation of children should not stop at their involvement in activities, but there is need to explore their increased participation in processes and decision-making that affect their own lives.” (Johnson et al 1998:7). If development interventions will have more meaning and impact on the lives of children, then children need to be included from the very beginning. If they are brought in later, as it is usually the case, then they have no opportunity to shape or influence either the process or the outcomes (Lansdown 2001:10).

4.2.3 Why it is important for children to participate in development activities

Respondents in the study were also asked why it is important for children to participate in development activities, and these are presented in Table 4.7.

Table 4.7 Is it important for children to participate?

Respondents	Response	Frequency	Percentage
Adults	Yes	99	94.3
	No	6	5.7
Children	Yes	80	72.7
	No	30	27.3

Despite the fact that participation of children was reported to be limited, a total of 94.3 per cent of adult respondents did indicate that it was important for children to participate in development activities, while the other 5.7 per cent said it was not important.

Similarly, 72.7 per cent of the children respondents indicated that they ought to participate and felt that it was worthwhile and 27.3 per cent did not seem to be very sure. What is interesting though is that adults and children had different reasons why children should participate, as can be seen from Table 4.8.

Table 4.8 Importance of Children’s participation

Respondents	Reason	Frequency	Percentage
Adults	To be self reliant in future	60	57.1
	It is their right	1	1.0
	To learn from adults	38	36.2
	N/A (should not participate)	6	5.7
Children	Contribute their views	45	40.9
	Being part of the community	2	1.8
	Learn from adults	27	24.5
	To bring innovative ways	6	5.5
	N/A (should not participate)	30	27.3

While as the views of 57.1 per cent of adults focused on preparing children for their future roles when they become adults, children themselves are confident of their capabilities to contribute to the development process even now as they do learn from adults. Only 1.0 per cent of adults knew that it is the right of children to participate. This agrees with what Clifton and Hodgson (1997:59) say that “adult encouragement for participation by young people is characterized by future citizen perspective, emphasizing the educative potential of involvement and responsibility rather than rights.”

For adults that said children should not participate, two main reasons that they gave were that children are too young to contribute and that children are represented by adults. Thus children are looked upon as too young to make meaningful contributions towards the development process and this is because of the perception that children are not capable.

Adults also argued that children are well represented by those adults who know their needs having gone through the childhood stages themselves. It may, therefore, not be necessary for children to participate. Adults are considered, even by external agency

staff, to be experts on children's needs (Ackermann et al 2003:7). Children are equal citizens and they need to be given opportunities to actively engage themselves in the development process. If they are given the opportunity it will help them not only now but also in future as they will grow up with all the confidence about their abilities in life.

Smith et al (2000:14) explains that "Children's rights have not been given much attention because the notion of children having rights tends to be interpreted as being permissive and giving them too much power and control". In fact, adults, more especially parents, feel threatened when we talk of children's rights and regard these as mechanisms to undermine parental authority (Schurink 1998:4). Adults should not feel undermined when children are given an opportunity to express themselves and participate in the development activities. It is their right to do so.

4.3 Factors that hinder children's participation

Factors hindering participation of children in development activities were explored from the participants. This included an assessment of the cultural factors in the area.

4.3.1 Child participation within the Chewa cultural context

Culture determines the value system of a society and as such it can have an influence on people's perception regarding participation of children. The study investigated cultural aspects in the community deemed to hinder participation of children and the findings are presented in Table 4.9.

Table 4.9 Cultural Practices affecting children’s participation

Respondents	Percentage				Total
	Mask Dance	Initiation Ceremonies	Early Marriages	None	
Adults	90.0	6.2	3.8	0	100
Children	77.3	20.0	0	2.7	100

From the finding, some of the cultural practices in the area have been noted to play a negative influence in encouraging children to participate in the development process as identified by both adults and children. The traditional culture of mask dance popularly known as “Gulewamkulu”¹ among the Chewa was noted to be a major limiting factor to the participation of children in development activities as mentioned by 90 per cent and 77.3 per cent of adults and children respectively. When children get initiated through this traditional practice one of the things that they are taught is strict discipline and absolute obedience. While as these aspects may not be negative per se, children are given very limited opportunity to express themselves and to let their views be heard. Their opportunity to express themselves comes only when they have been asked to do so by elders. Children have a subservient position and are expected to be humble and obedient to parents and the elders. It is no wonder it is said that “A child breaks the shell of a snail and not of a tortoise” (Obeng 1998:132). This implies that a child should behave as a child and not as an adult and this tends to limit participation of children.

It was also reported that the practice contributes to low educational attainment by children in the area. The cases of early school drop out are high as children get involved in the traditional practice. As it will be seen later in this chapter, education has an impact on the level of participation.

¹ *Gulewamkulu*, which literally means big dance, is a traditional initiation ceremony for young people to symbolize their adulthood. It is characterized by masked dancers and is highly secretive. It is associated with worship of ancestral spirits.

Communities are organized differently according to the social context and structures and participation is often shaped and constrained by the social fabric (Johnson et al 1998:5). Culture is all about individuals and societies and the way such people and groupings are described and evaluated. It concerns the ideas and beliefs held by those individuals, personally and collectively (Stephens 1998:122). Children cannot be excluded from the context in which they live and whatever beliefs are inherent will always shape who they are. The cultural context within which children live will influence the extent to which they will be given room to participate.

Culture is dynamic and it keeps on changing with time in response to changing patterns of time. It is not right for people to remain silent on an issue that they clearly see as having a negative effect on livelihood of children and the entire community. This calls for urgent attention for community leadership to reflect on how they can uphold their culture without compromising growth and development of its citizens. It must be appreciated, on the other hand, that the natural environment has a significant impact on the cultural adaptations of a society and as such no culture can be condemned in preference to another (Obeng 1998:132).

4.3.2 Hindrances to child participation

Children were asked on what they thought were issues acting as a barrier to their effective participation in the development process. The responses are presented in the Table 4.10.

Table 4.10 Hindrances to Child Participation

Hindrance	Frequency	Percentage
Adults dominating	38	35.2
Ignorance of the benefits	29	26.9
None	16	14.8
Cultural traditions	13	12.0
Lack of interest	9	8.3
Conflict with school	3	2.8

Based on the findings, the domineering attitude by adults is seen to be one of the major factors hindering children from actively participating in the development process. Most adults have the attitude of looking down upon children thinking that they cannot effectively contribute. As expressed by children themselves, there is a general lack of appreciation of the benefits to the entire communities if children would be given the opportunity to actively participate in the development process. As mentioned earlier, cultural traditions through which children have to undergo an initiation process were seen as a barrier to child participation in many ways.

A small percentage of children (2.8 per cent) reported that they were afraid that if they were to fully participate it would affect their schooling. They also explained children had been sidelined for a long time as such it was difficult for them to imagine how this would be achieved without affecting them.

Children will need to be involved in a manner that does not affect their growth and development. Children need to have some time for play much as they need to have the time to concentrate on academic studies. There is a need to redefine the way activities are done to cater for children. As an example, if the development planning meetings are always held during the time when children are in school, if we have to let them fully

participate without jeopardizing them, it would require the community to adjust time of the meetings so that they will be held when children are not in school.

From the focus group discussions, it was apparent that children were still skeptical that adults would accept them as partners in the development process and that is why some of them did not take any interest in participating in the development process. They thought that adults would simply ignore them and this would even be more frustrating on children. Adults have not had any regard to include children's ideas on their agenda for a long time. This requires adequate civic education and sensitization to both adults and children to let each of them appreciate benefits of letting children take part in the development process.

4.3.3 Cross tabulations

An analysis was done to correlate different household characteristics on the effect which they had on participation of children. These included characteristics for both adults and children.

A) Adults

Characteristics for adults analyzed were on sex of the interviewee, education background and head of the household.

Children's Participation versus Sex of Interviewee

This analysis was aimed at finding out whether there was any relationship between the sex of interviewee and how the extent to which they gave children an opportunity to participate. The findings are presented in Table 4.11.

Table 4.11 Participation of Children vs. Sex of interviewee

Sex	Children's Participation		
		Yes	No
Male	Count	47	15
	% within sex	75.8%	24.2%
Female	Count	36	7
	% within sex	83.7%	16.3%

More females than males indicated that children do participate. In most communities women are the ones that are usually involved in household chores at home. It is not surprising they indicated that children are involved because most of the activities that children do are within the home.

Children's participation versus education of interviewee

This analysis was aimed at determining whether level of education of the interviewee had any influence on the extent to which they gave children an opportunity to participate. The findings are presented in Table 4.12.

Table 4.12 Participation of Children vs. Level of education

Education level	Participation of Children		
		Yes	No
Did not go to school	Count	9	3
	%within education	75.0%	25.0%
Primary School <std 5	Count	30	15
	%within education	66.7%	32.3%
Primary School >std 5	Count	32	4
	%within education	88.9%	11.1%
Secondary School	Count	12	0
	%within education	100%	0

Even though more of those that did not go to school gave children an opportunity to participate, generally the higher the education that one attained the more the appreciation of involving children in the development process. All respondents that attained secondary level of education gave room to children to participate. Education helps to improve the level of articulation and understanding of development issues. For children to be involved it requires an appreciation and understanding on the part of the elders and the parents to acknowledge the rights of children and their potential in contributing to the development process.

Children’s participation versus head of household

This analysis was aimed at exploring whether having male headed or female headed household had any influence on participation of children. The results are presented in Table 4.13.

Table 4.13 Household head vs. Participation of children

Household Head Type	Children's Participation		
		Yes	No
Male headed	Count	72	21
	%within household head	77.4%	22.6%
Female headed	Count	11	1
	%within household head	91.7%	8.3%

There were more female-headed than male-headed households that said children are involved. In other words, roles that children can play in the home are being appreciated more in female-headed households than in male headed households. All male-headed households had wives i.e. they were not single parents. This means that in female-headed households, children were raised by one parent.

During the focus group discussions the female-headed households indicated that they involved their children more because the women would rather confide with their children than with an outsider. In other words, since they have no husbands to confide in, children are the next alternative. While female household heads' involvement of children is appreciated, it does not have to be a feeling of inadequacy that should encourage parents to let children participate in the affairs of the home, rather parents need to take deliberate effort to involve children upon realizing their potential. Children should not be used to fill in the gap of being a single parent.

B) Children

Just like with adults, some characteristics of children participate were analyzed to determine how such characteristics had an influence on participation. These characteristics included Sex, being or not being in Programme as CIP, age and whether the child was in school or not.

Participation of children versus sex of child

This analysis was aimed at exploring the effect of gender on participation of children in the home. The findings are presented in Table 4.14.

Table 4.14 Participation vs. Sex of the Child

Sex of child	Participation in home activities		
		Yes	No
Male	Count	20	26
	%within sex of child	33.3%	52.0%
Female	Count	40	24
	%within sex of child	66.7%	48.0%

More girls than boys indicated that they participate in the development process. This agrees with the earlier finding among adults where more females than males indicated that children do participate. As alluded to, girls are mostly involved in household chores than boys. The girls, therefore, do have this background of their active participation in the home. Doing household chores, though, does not necessarily mean that they are actively participating in the affairs of the home.

Participation of children versus children in programme

This analysis explored the extent to which being recruited as a child in Programme influenced participation in development activities. The results are presented in Table 4.15.

Table 4.15 Participation in development vs. child in programme.

Children in Programme (CIP)	Participation in development		
CIP	Count	Yes 28	No 18
	%within child in programme	43.8%	39.1%
Non CIP	Count	36	28
	%within child in programme	56.3%	60.9%

From the results, being part of Children in Programme (CIP) did not influence children's level of participation. By registering children as (CIP) does not entail creating a special caliber of children. All children need to be encouraged to be active participants of the development process.

Participation of children versus age

The age of children participants was analyzed to examine whether age influenced the extent to which children participated in development activities. The findings are presented in Table 4.16.

Table 4.16

Age of children vs. Level of participation

Age of Child	Participation in development		
		Yes	No
10	Count	1	3
	%within age	25.0%	75.0%
11	Count	0	2
	%within age	0%	100%
12	Count	4	10
	%within age	28.6%	71.4%
13	Count	7	8
	%within age	46.7%	53.3%
14	Count	5	13
	%within age	27.8%	72.2%
15	Count	5	11
	%within age	31.3%	68.8%
16	Count	7	9
	%within age	43.8%	56.3%
17	Count	12	3
	%within age	80.0%	20.0%
18	Count	5	5
	%Within age	50.0%	50.0%

The highest number of children that indicated that they participate was those that are 17 years of age. General trends from the results point to the fact that, as children get older, they tend to participate more in the development process. From the group discussions, these were participating in some decisions at the home while in the community they were mainly participating in youth related activities. This finding agrees with what Hart

(1998:29) indicates that adolescents begin to experiment with different social roles as they struggle to form an identity. Children begin to prepare themselves for the adulthood responsibility. The society needs to engage children into active participation in the development process so that they are well integrated in the society.

Participation of children versus school going

An analysis was done to examine how participation of children was being influenced by attending school or not. This was aimed at assessing whether education had any impact on children’s participation. The results are presented in Table 4.17.

Table 4.17 Participation vs. Children in school

Attendance in school	Participation in development		
		Yes	No
In school	Count	44	56
	% within child in school	44.0%	56.0%
Not in school	Count	2	8
	% within child in school	20%	80%

The results do not show much difference in terms of the level of participation amongst the school going children. There were, however, some differences between those that were in school and those that were not, with 44 per cent of those that were in school participating against only 20 per cent of those that are not in school participating. As indicated earlier on, whenever there are construction activities taking place in schools, children are normally asked to assist in collection of bricks, and water to the construction sites. Hence the higher number of children in school participating in development activities. However, this form of participation is limited as the focus has only been on such manual activities within the school premises. The fact that 56% of the school going

children indicated that they do not participate could signal a strong desire on their part to be actively involved in the development process.

On the other hand, education has been found to be a significant tool in providing opportunities and open up minds of children to actively involve themselves in development process (Masesa 2004:11). For those children who were not in school, only one child had completed secondary education. The rest had dropped out due to various reasons such as lack of school fees or simply because they were not interested in school. Focus group discussions with adults indicated that children did not participate because they were mostly in school (see section 4.2.2). This contradicts with these findings because, if that was the case, then more children who were not in school should have been participating.

4.4 Enhancing children's participation

Adults and children have different ideas on how child participation can be enhanced even though both groups hinted on the need for inclusion/involvement of children in the various development committees. The Table 4.18 presents the responses from both adults and children on how children's participation can be enhanced.

Table 4.18 How to enhance participation

Adults	Level of Involvement	Frequency	Percentage
	Involve children in community meetings	29	27.6
	Encourage them with education	28	26.7
	Share responsibilities in community projects	30	28.6
	Create more youth clubs	17	16.2
	None	1	1.0
Children	Give equal opportunities	10	9.1
	Create more youth clubs	39	35.5
	Should be part of committees	38	34.5
	Civic education on Child Rights	22	20.0

While as 26.7 per cent of adults thought that by encouraging children to go to school it would automatically enhance their participation in development activities, children themselves did not express any need to be encouraged on education because they were already going to school. The percentage of children that were going to school was 90.9 per cent. Adults want children to be educated so that they can find out on their own ways of how they can be fully involved in the development process.

Encouraging children to participate in community meetings and by simply sharing responsibilities between adults and children will not be helpful if the views of children will not be taken seriously by adults. As Lansdown (2001:3) argues, “the adults do not always act in the interest of children”. Many are the times when adults have been responsible for decisions that are very inappropriate or even harmful to children while claiming to promote their welfare.

Children, on the other hand, are looking for more inclusion in the entire development process and be given equal opportunities. This will have to start with educating adults on the rights of children so that they can appreciate that children are equal partners in development. Children want to be part of the various development committees that are

in the community. If they would be included in the committees, they can contribute to development issues that would enhance their well-being much more than what adults are doing at the moment. For example, at each primary school there is a school committee that looks after the welfare of both teachers and pupils at the school. While teachers are represented by the head teacher, there is no single child that is part of the committees. Adults only think and imagine that they can easily decide on the needs of children without involving them.

What is interesting is that both adults and children would like more youth clubs to be initiated so that children can be involved in the various activities. There is a need that as part of youth club activities, children be given opportunities to express themselves through such kind of activities like debates. This will help children to be confident within themselves and as such, it does help to groom them as young people to be assertive to effectively tackle the issues of life and participate in various development activities as well.

If children will actively participate in the development process, adults need to deliberately consider taking serious steps and begin to value them as partners in development. It is only then that they can make room for children. Adults should not provide space out of feeling pity for children or simply because there are more calls from many players on the inclusion of children, otherwise that would only be tokenism. There is a need to have adults take deliberate steps and create enough space for children.

4.4.1 Project planning on children's issues

Organizations like World Vision that seek to work with children in letting them take an active role in the development process need to reflect such activities in project plans. A review of the project annual plans was done to assess extent to which the plans reflect whether there are any deliberate efforts being done to encourage participation of

children. The plans reviewed were for six years starting from the year 1999 because that was the latest the project plans were available. Table 4.19 summarises the findings.

Table 4.19 Summary of planned interventions

Sector	Summary of Activity Planned					
	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004
Agriculture/ Forestry	<p>Improve availability of food for 600 households.</p> <p>Increase re afforestation among 1500 farmers.</p>	<p>Equip 300 households with skills and knowledge in food production.</p> <p>Equip 1500 farmers with forestry management procedures</p>	<p>Equip 800 households with skills and knowledge in food production.</p> <p>Equip 1500 farmers with forestry management procedures</p>	<p>Equip 1200 households with skills and knowledge in food production.</p> <p>Equip 1500 farmers with forestry management procedures</p>	<p>Crop diversification programme for 1500 farmers implemented</p> <p>Improve animal production for 3390 households.</p>	<p>Crop diversification programme for 760 farmers implemented</p> <p>Re afforestation programme implemented.</p> <p>Dietary diversification for 1500 farmers implemented</p>
Health/Water	<p>Improve health services among 1500 households.</p> <p>Improve access to potable water for 1000 households.</p>	<p>Improve health services among 1500 households.</p> <p>Community HIV/AIDS programme implemented.</p>	<p>Improve health services among 1500 households.</p>	<p>Community Health Action-Oriented Programme implemented</p>	<p>Community Health Action-Oriented Programme implemented</p>	<p>Enhance staff and community capacity in managing health issues.</p>
Education	<p>Improve educational facilities in 13 schools</p>	<p>Improve educational facilities in 13 schools</p>	<p>Improve educational facilities in 15 schools</p>	<p>Improve educational facilities in 15 schools</p>	<p>Improve educational facilities for 10500 children.</p>	<p>Improve educational facilities for 12000 children.</p>
Leadership	Enhance	Enhance	Enhance	Enhance	Enhance	Enhance

Sector	Summary of Activity Planned					
	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004
Agriculture/ Forestry	Improve availability of food for 600 households.	Equip 300 households with skills and knowledge in food production.	Equip 800 households with skills and knowledge in food production.	Equip 1200 households with skills and knowledge in food production.	Crop diversification programme for 1500 farmers implemented	Crop diversification programme for 760 farmers implemented
	Increase re afforestation among 1500 farmers.	Equip 1500 farmers with forestry management procedures	Equip 1500 farmers with forestry management procedures	Equip 1500 farmers with forestry management procedures	Improve animal production for 3390 households.	Re afforestation programme implemented. Dietary diversification for 1500 farmers implemented
Development	leadership skills of project management for 22 local leaders.	leadership skills of project management for 22 local leaders.	leadership skills of project management for 22 local leaders.	leadership skills of project management for 22 local leaders.	leadership skills of project management for 22 local leaders.	leadership skills of project management for 22 local leaders.
Christian Witness	Enhance spiritual nurture for 3000 families.	Reach 3000 families with the Gospel	Reach 3000 families with the Gospel	Reach 5650 families with the Gospel	Reach 5650 families with the Gospel	Reach 5650 families with the Gospel
Child Sponsorship	Customer care standards and procedures established and operational.	Customer care standards and procedures established and operational.	Customer care standards and procedures established and operational.	Customer care standards and procedures established and operational.	Customer care standards and procedures established and operational.	Customer care standards and procedures established and operational.
Advocacy			Sensitize ADP Staff and community on	Sensitize ADP Staff and community on Child Protection	Sensitize ADP Staff and community on	Sensitize ADP Staff and community on

Sector	Summary of Activity Planned					
	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004
Agriculture/ Forestry	Improve availability of food for 600 households.	Equip 300 households with skills and knowledge in food production.	Equip 800 households with skills and knowledge in food production.	Equip 1200 households with skills and knowledge in food production.	Crop diversification programme for 1500 farmers implemented	Crop diversification programme for 760 farmers implemented
	Increase re afforestation among 1500 farmers.	Equip 1500 farmers with forestry management procedures	Equip 1500 farmers with forestry management procedures	Equip 1500 farmers with forestry management procedures	Improve animal production for 3390 households.	Re afforestation programme implemented. Dietary diversification for 1500 farmers implemented
			Child Protection and HIV/AIDS.	Child Protection and HIV/AIDS.	Child Protection and HIV/AIDS.	Child Protection and HIV/AIDS.

From the summary on the findings of project plans, Chata ADP had done very little to encourage children to participate in the development process. One reason why this has been so is that child participation is an emerging issue arising from the realization on the need to work with children, as one of the most vulnerable groups in the society.

From the year 2001, the ADP started incorporating advocacy issues in their plans with a special focus on Child Protection. Through this initiative the project has been sensitizing the communities on the need to uphold the rights of children to enable them to grow in a supportive environment. However, the efforts of the ADP have been geared towards creating a community where children are protected from various forms of abuse and not empowering them to participate in the development process as agents of change. This is echoed by Chambers (1998:xvi) who says that there has been a lot of talk about addressing problems that children are facing but we have not thought much about their active participation as development partners even though over the years there is more recognition of children.

4.5 Conclusion

Participation of children in development activities has been very limited as there is still a need to create an understanding of the communities on the need and benefits of letting children participate. Adults have an attitude that looks down upon children and as such no adequate space is being created to enable them be encouraged to participate. Adults focus more on preparing children on their future role other than their potential to contribute even now. Children, on the other hand, are ready to take up the challenges only if adults will give them the space. Other than attitude, the endemic structural and cultural tendencies act as a barrier to participation of children. Such structures begin from the setting in the home where there seem to be designated roles for adults and children and even between gender of the children. At the community level, the processes that are done at a communal level do not have children in mind making it almost not possible for children to participate.

As a child centered organization, World Vision has not deliberately included plans that foster participation of children. The focus has mainly been on ensuring that children are being protected from abuse.

The next chapter presents a summary of the recommendations that need to be considered to enable children to participate in the development process. Areas of further research will also be indicated at the end of the chapter.

Chapter Five

Conclusions and Recommendations

5.0 Introduction

This chapter makes some recommendations on children's participation in the development process based on the results of the research work done in Chata ADP. These recommendations are in line with the primary objective of the study which was to examine child participation in the development process using Chata ADP as a case study. Recommendations made are useful for all development institutions such as NGOs and the government as we seek to enhance well being of children. Some areas for further research have been highlighted.

5.1 Key issues

Major findings of the research have been isolated In line with objectives of the research. These formed the basis of the recommendations made.

5.1.1 Children's participation in development activities

Both adults and children acknowledged that there are various development activities taking place in Chata area and these were in the sectors of Agriculture, Water, Education, Road Construction, Afforestation, Micronutrient and Health. While it was acknowledged that children needed to participate in development activities, adults and children held different views on why they should participate. The focus by adults was on preparing them for their future roles whilst as children are confident that they can effectively contribute to the development process now and need not wait for the future when they become adults. Children have been looked down upon that they cannot make meaningful contribution now and their potential has not been realized.

So far participation of children has been limited to routine kind of activities such as household chores or mobilizing resources for construction work. Children are rarely given an opportunity to participate in decision making in the home except for a few instances where mostly female headed households involve them in some decisions.

Children are not available during community meetings where planning of development activities is done and this has denied them an opportunity to participate in the decision making processes at the community level.

5.1.2 Factors affecting children's participation

The cultural context of Chata area has a significant effect on influencing children's participation. As they go through the initiation process, children are told that they need to be loyal to authorities and as such are not encouraged to question what they have been asked to do. This has limited the extent to which children can freely express themselves especially in the presence of adults.

Household characteristics have an impact on the level of participation as well. On gender, women tend to let children participate more than their male counterparts. Children growing up in female headed households are more likely going to participate in decision making on various issues in the home than those growing up in male headed household.

On the part of children themselves, characteristics such as gender, age and attendance to school had an influence on their level of participation in the development process. More girls than boys indicated that they participate in implementation of development activities. Girls do participate in household chores much more than boys and as such they are more inclined to feel they are participating in the development process. The levels of participation of children tend to increase with age of the child.

5.1.3 Enhancing participation of children

In order to encourage participation of children, adults indicated that children need to be encouraged to go to school. This view, however, focuses on the future role of children and does not recognize the potential they have now. On the other hand, children are looking for inclusion in the entire development process. Children want to be included in the various committees that are established to facilitate implementation of the various development activities so that they contribute their ideas.

Both adults and children would like to see establishment of an increasing number of youth clubs where children can interact among themselves.

On education, adults that have gone to school have a better appreciation on letting children participate in the development process than those that did not go to school. Similarly, it was found that school going children participate more in development activities than those that are out of school. Education provides a significant tool in encouraging children to competently engage with the society. Being part of the CIP on the other hand, did not have a significant influence on the level of participation in development activities. The organization seeks to empower all children in the community and by registering some children as CIP, should not give them an advantage over the others.

5.1.4 Programme planning

From the analysis of the programme plans, very little has been done to encourage participation of children in the development process. Participation of children so far has been coincidental other than emanating from a deliberate planning process.

Much as plans incorporated advocacy issues, these have been limited to sensitizing communities to protect children from various forms of abuse. The plans have not advocated for empowering children as agents of change but rather have dwelt much on protecting them.

5.2 Recommendations

The study makes the following recommendations on children's participation in the development process based on the results of the research work done in Chata ADP. Children can actively and meaningfully participate if only given an opportunity to do so. As a matter of fact "children have always participated in life: in the home, in school, in work, in communities, in wars" (UNICEF 2003:3). What has been a problem is that children have never been acknowledged and that their participation usually has not been intentional as a realization of their abilities.

5.2.1 Change in attitude

It is recommended that development practitioners should develop mechanisms to change attitudes that undermine children's capacity to participate in development activities.

Some of the attitudes that adults need to change include the following:

1. The Nathanael phenomenon. This is the Biblical illustration from the Gospel of John 1 vs. 46 whereby after being told about Jesus of Nazareth, Nathanael reacted by saying "can anything good come from Nazareth?" (The Holy Bible 2005:1741). Adults need to change the attitude of looking down upon children and their capacity to develop themselves and their world thinking that nothing good can come out of children.
2. The attitude that when children are involved in household chores then they are participating in affairs of the family. Much as children need to be engaged in household chores as part of the socialization process, they need to go beyond the chores and should participate in relevant decision making process as well.
3. Adults should not think that when children are involved in mobilizing resources for development activities such as construction of community structures then they are participating fully in the development process. Many times children have simply been used as an easy resource in mobilizing these local materials on projects in which children did not have any opportunity to decide on. Adults need to let children participate in decision-making process on projects to be initiated in their areas.
4. Adults need not think that by letting children participate it will undermine their roles as parents (Obeng 1998:133). On the other hand, the quality of children's participation and the ability to benefit from it are strongly influenced by the efforts

that adults make to provide an enabling environment for children to actively participate (Save the Children 2004:8).

5.2.2 Strengthen programming of development interventions.

It is recommended that development interventions should be deliberately strengthened through facilitation of activities that will enhance participation of children in development activities.

The following are some of the interventions that need to be included in programming

- 1 It is recommended that development organizations should engage with the local leaders for them to have a self reflection on the effect that some of the cultural traditions and practices have on the growth and development of children. Traditional leaders are the custodians of culture who have the mandate to safeguard the identity of the community. However, they need to critically analyze these traditions to look at the advantages and disadvantages, otherwise the status quo will remain. It must be realized that not all cultural practices are negative.
- 2 Considering that household characteristics have a significant effect on child participation, development organisations need to carry out a detailed analysis of the different factors and come up with interventions to mitigate the effects. These should include conducting a gender analysis to create awareness on the biases that are inherent in the community on gender roles.
- 3 Since children have different characteristics and abilities, programme facilitators should realize that children have different strengths on how to engage themselves with the world. Participation of children should, therefore, be encouraged according to the different circumstances e.g. age appropriateness. As Hart (1998:28) points out “a wide diversity of media should be used in order to achieve maximal involvement of all children”.

- 4 Development organizations should facilitate a process of creation of youth clubs to encourage children participate in development activities. As Abrioux (1998:26) explains, “any activity or discussion encouraging children to express themselves is a considerable step towards their genuine participation. The clubs should be self initiated as organizations play facilitation role. They should also consider age representation to ensure that all age groups are equally participating in the activities of the clubs. The clubs should be holding some debates on topical issues affecting them as young people. It will help them build confidence in public speaking that will help them to engage effectively even with adults.
- 5 Development organizations should form children’s committees. These committees will provide a forum where children can have meaningful interaction among themselves. These committees should be a representation of children from different parts of the communities and will have a responsibility of discussing developmental issues taking place in the area just like there are committees for adults. The committees should be led by children themselves and members should and they should be linked to the decision-making committees of adults in the community. Through this, children will have an opportunity to make a contribution and influence decisions regarding development activities being implemented in the area.
- 6 Considering that level of education has a bearing on child participation, it is recommended that child participation, as a topic, should be integrated in the adult literacy classes that are conducted for those adults that did not have an opportunity to go through formal education.

5.2.3 Recommendations related to programming in World Vision

Being a child focused organization; World Vision should be seen championing activities that ensure realization of the well-being of children. This does include the fact that children need to be active participants in the development process in order for them to be agents of transformational development. Learning from the experience in Chata ADP, the following are some of the issues to be taken into consideration if participation of children will be enhanced:

1. The planning processes of the interventions being done in the programmes need to deliberately include activities that will enhance the active participation of children. It should not be event based, which in most cases tend to be tokenistic in nature, rather it has to be a deliberate process. One way of doing this is by planning activities within a project that will be managed by children themselves. In the planning documents, there is need to have more of child sensitive indicators (Johnson et al 1998:4). Planning of children's related activities will obviously have to go along with resource allocation to the particular activities as well.
2. There has been an increasing advocacy work that is being done to promote the rights of children in chata ADP. There is need for the advocacy work being done to strengthen child participation issues and not simply focus on child protection. The focus on protection alone is not empowering because it will be adults that will be engaged in protecting children as the vulnerable group and children will have no opportunity to participate since they are subjects.

5.3 Other considerations

As we seek to promote participation of children in the development process, other considerations include the following:

1. Participation of children should be voluntary (Lansdown 2001:10). Since adults have a propensity of thinking for children many times we have not given them any room to decide whether they would be willing to participate or not. On the other hand, adults have tended simply to impose on children what to do. For example, children have been asked many times to assist in collecting bricks for construction of a school block on the understanding that they will appreciate that it is the block they will use for learning but they are not consulted at all. This is usually done when children have gone to attend classes. If they were consulted they probably would have chosen to gladly participate in carrying the bricks when it is not time for classes.
2. As a common practice when delegations visit programme areas, children are asked to prepare extensively in welcoming and entertaining them yet many times they do

not even have an idea why it is important for them to do that and what benefits are there for them, let alone the purpose of the visits. Unfortunately, some times even classes have been interrupted in order for them to participate in such functions. If children have to participate, it should be out of self-will because they may probably have an idea on how they will compensate for the classes that were disrupted by the visit.

3. As participation is voluntary, children need to understand the process and their role (Lansdown 2001:9). Our role should be to play a facilitator role and let children fully appreciate the need for them to participate. Children need to have information that will help them make rational decisions according to their different circumstances.
4. Because of the different capabilities that children have, it is easy as we promote their participation, to breed some special group of multitalented young people. Many times such small groups of children claim to be speaking on behalf of others and such increased professional status attained by such children can alienate others. If this happens the unfortunate outcome is that for those children that are not part of the group can be easily discouraged and thus easily withdraws. There is need to create a balance and ensure that all children are included.
5. We must also appreciate that children are growing and that they will eventually become adults. In that case they will cease to represent the interests of children. It is important to make sure that there is adequate capacity to pass on the skills to the younger generation to avoid that all our efforts are easily derailed. Lansdown (2001:1) suggests having child advisors where those that are graduating into adulthood can continue providing support to children.
6. Children need not be left alone to fight the battles to achieve a respect on their rights (Lansdown 2001:1). For a long time they have been marginalized and it will take the support of adults in upholding the rights of children and let them be regarded as equal partners in the development process. As partners what will be different is the level of participation but it should not be no participation at all. Children need guidance and support from adults.

5.4 Areas for further research

Some of the areas that could be researched on to build on this study are:

1. To assess the relationship between child abuse and child participation. As we are getting increased levels of children being abused through issues like child labour, prostitution etc, it would be of interest to know if by encouraging children to participate in decision making process both in the home and the community would make any difference to lessen abuses.
2. The study was done in one community predominately with one culture, (Chewa). It would be of interest to study several cultures to find out whether, at all, there would be any differences in the level that children do participate in the development process. If it would be different, an area of interest would be to look at the factors within the cultures that are encouraging or discouraging participation of children.

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Appendix 1

Questionnaire 1 Children's participation in development (for children)

Name of interviewer

Name of interviewee

CIP or not

Age.

Sex

Commitment area/Village.

Head of household

1. Are you still at school?

2. If yes which class?

3. If not why did you leave school?

4. What development activities are taking place in your area?

5. Are the activities benefiting the children in the community? Explain how?

6. To what extent are children involved in

A. Selection of activities?

B. Implementing activities?

C. Monitoring of activities?

7. If not would you want to be involved? Why?

8. If you were involved would there be any changes to the activities? Explain.

9. Should children participate in development activities?

Yes

No

Not sure

10. Are children invited to the community gathering called by the chiefs?

Yes

No

Why?

11. What do you think are the hindrances to child participation?

12. What should be done to enhance participation of children in development activities?

13. What are the cultural/ traditional beliefs that are oppressive to the children?

Questionnaire 11 Children's participation (for adults)

Name of interviewer

Name of the interviewee

Sex

Education of interviewee,

Household head

Village/Commitment area

In order to ensure that the benefits of the development interventions are reaching a wide sector of the population there is need for everyone to be involved in all aspects of the development process including children.

1. What development activities are taking place in your area?

Afforestation
Farming
Irrigation
Water
Micah
Education
Roads
Health

2. Are children involved in the development interventions? Give reasons.

Yes

No

3. Do you think it is important for the children to be involved? Give reasons for your answer

Yes

No

4. Do you give any opportunity for the children to participate in deciding in the affairs of the home? Give reasons

Yes

No

5. If yes what opportunities are given to the children?

6. What cultural traditions or beliefs would have an effect on the child's development? Explain.

7. To what extent are the children benefiting from the development interventions a) in the family? b) In the community?

8. During the community meetings by the Village headmen, do children participate in the meetings? Give reasons

Yes

No

9. What should be the role of adults in enhancing participation of the children in development activities? Probe if thinks it's the role of traditional leaders.

Appendix 2. Map of Malawi showing Chata



SUMMARY INFORMATION

Title	CHILDREN'S PARTICIPATION IN DEVELOPMENT: A STUDY OF CHATA AREA DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMME OF WORLD VISION.
By	H.L Banda
Degree	Master of Arts
Subject	Development studies
Supervisor	MRS M J RAKOLOJANE
Summary	<p>Development activities are aimed at improving the living standards of people. Non Governmental Organizations, like Word Vision, work in partnership with government in implementing development activities. Development activities need to involve the people that are targeted to enable them participate in deciding what ought to be done to improve their well being. Children are usually part of the most vulnerable group in the society but many times they are left out in the decision making process. As equal citizens in the society, children have equal rights like anyone else and as such they need to be part of the development process where they can also participate in decision making on the activities that should be done to meet their needs. Children should, therefore, equally participate in an age appropriate manner, in the implementation of development activities. Children are defined as any person below the age of 18.</p>
Key terms	Child; Participation; Child Participation; Transformational development; child rights; Well being of children; project cycle; age appropriate; child protection;