

**DEVELOPMENT, CHILDREN AND THE THIRD WORLD CITY:
CONCEPTUALIZING GUIDELINES TOWARDS A SUSTAINABLE
LIVELIHOOD FRAMEWORK SUPPORTING CHILDREN**

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LIST OF ACRONYMS

<i>ARI</i>	<i>Acute respiratory infection</i>
<i>CMR</i>	<i>Child mortality rate</i>
<i>DFID</i>	<i>Department of International Development. The aid-giving arm</i>
<i>HEA</i>	<i>Household Economic Approach (programme strategy of Save the</i>
<i>HLS</i>	<i>Household Livelihood Strategy (programme strategy of CARE</i>
<i>IFAD</i>	<i>International Fund for Agricultural Development.</i>
<i>IMF</i>	<i>International Monetary Fund</i>
<i>IMR</i>	<i>Infant Mortality Rate</i>
<i>INGO</i>	<i>International Non-Governmental Organisation</i>
<i>IRDP</i>	<i>Integrated Rural Development Programme</i>
<i>NGO</i>	<i>Non- Governmental Organisation</i>
<i>RBA</i>	<i>Rights-based Approach</i>
<i>SCF</i>	<i>Save the Children Fund. A global network of INGOS of Save the</i>
<i>SLA</i>	<i>Sustainable Livelihood Approach</i>
<i>SLF</i>	<i>Sustainable Livelihood Framework</i>
<i>UN</i>	<i>United Nations</i>
<i>UN FAO</i>	<i>United Nations Food and Agricultural Organisation</i>
<i>UN WFP</i>	<i>United Nations World Food Programme</i>
<i>UNDP</i>	<i>United Nations Development Programme.</i>
<i>UNICEF</i>	<i>United Nations Children's Fund.</i>
<i>WB</i>	<i>World Bank</i>
<i>WCED</i>	<i>World Commission on Environment and Development.</i>
<i>WDR</i>	<i>World Development Report</i>

CHAPTER 1. INTRODUCTION AND OVERVIEW

1.1 INTRODUCTION

Duncan Green, writing in his seminal work “From poverty to power” observes the changing life patterns in the mountainous region of interior Vietnam, where the indigenous native H’moung people gather together in a smoky hut, wearing their traditional attire, are indulging in discussions around their family and community issues. The atmosphere is so traditional and a feeling of traditional Vietnamese culture pervades all around.

He continues with his observation that this traditional sanctuary is under siege. Motorcycles and television sets are becoming more common in this village among the more prosperous households. The sanctity of the place is also beginning to attract tourists whose visits injects cash into this traditional rural economy, helping the local community to diversify their livelihood through provision of food stalls, promotion and sale of artefacts and other souvenirs to the visiting tourists. This diversification of their livelihood helps them reduce their vulnerability to crop failure or a sick buffalo. However, the threat of destruction of the sanctity of this rural landscape through this tourist intrusion does not seem to bother the habitants. The opinion of one man seem to portray the collective thinking of the community in this village with regard to the future prospects for their children; “farming is hard. Our dream for our children is education and a skilled job –we want them to get out” is the opinion of one man. The parents want their children to learn English, French or Vietnamese to help them go out of the village and begin a livelihood in a city, even preferring to live by themselves in the village (Green 2008: 119).

The spread of roads and education, as well as communications is gradually exposing the rural communities to the urban world. This exposure is exacerbated by the reach of the televisions to the rural households or stories from the returning immigrants. It is becoming increasingly common for children to leave the farm work and head to cities, sending back money to help their parents to survive (Green 2008: 120). The rural children

recognize that the quality of life in the urban centres is far more superior to what they are experiencing. They obviously seek better opportunities.

On the other side of the Asian continent, commenting on the impact of growing cities on adjoining rural areas in India, Christian, writes of another dimension to the plight of children being absorbed by the ever growing urban centres. A community of landless agricultural labourers, living in Mogalliwakkam, a small rural settlement on the outskirts of the city of Chennai, earned their daily income working as farm labourers on lands they did not own. In an effort to relieve the congestion in the city, the Government urban development authority permitted the elite from the city to buy the agricultural land from the villages, thus depriving the poor landless agricultural labourers of their livelihood. Once the city took over the village of Mogalliwakkam, the inhabitants became landless and began wandering in the city as unskilled labourers seeking a livelihood. The children of this village momentarily were transformed from being in a rural setting to the urban life. The parents seek out their livelihoods on a daily basis, waiting to be picked up by a truck and transported them to a construction site. The children more often are left to fend for themselves in this sprawling city (Christian 1994: 195-197).

As global economic growth accelerates, the impact of this rapid growth is felt more in urban areas than in rural settings. Therefore, places which offer opportunities for earning their livelihood are those to which people tend to migrate and settle. Throughout the history of humankind, the availability of land and water has determined the regions for agricultural growth and people have migrated to these places to settle. According to a UN report, bountiful agricultural production led to accumulation of food surpluses. As a sequel to this, capital was accumulated, which was invested in non-agricultural production activities. These changes led to mechanisation of industrial production, resulting in the Industrial Revolution. This led to more permanent human settlements called cities (UN Population Division 2008: 3, 16, 17 18).

According to the same UN study, in the 1920s the industrial regions of the world, which represented the more developed regions, had an urban population of less than 30 per cent of its total population (UN Population Division 2008: 16-18). As industrialisation advanced in the developing world, so did urbanisation. This trend was more prominent in Latin America, where 41 per cent of the population were urban dwellers by 1950. The same UN study records that in Africa and Asia the levels of urbanisation remained lower, although the urban population increased markedly, particularly in Asia. Between 1920 and 2007, the world's urban population increased from 270 million to 3.3 billion, with 1.5 billion urban dwellers added to Asia; 750 million to the more developed regions; and just fewer than 450 million to Latin America and the Caribbean; and just over 350 million to Africa (UN Population Division 2008: 3, 16-18). Unfortunately, as the UN study points out, there are many more challenges ahead for the humanity as rapid global urbanisation ushers in a new wave of challenges. The study predicts that between 2007 and 2050, the urban population will increase as much as it has done since 1920; that is, 3.1 billion additional urban dwellers are expected by 2050, including 1.8 billion in Asia and 0.9 billion in Africa. These powerful trends will dominate economic and social development in these countries in the coming years (UN Population Division 2008: 3, 16-18)). The increasing investments, and therefore employment opportunities in urban areas, lead to rapid urbanisation. The transition from lower productivity agriculture to more productive mechanised agriculture produced labour surpluses in rural areas. These surplus labours tended to migrate to urban centres in search of a livelihood. A study commissioned by World Vision, a leading international non-governmental organisation (NGO), records that some time in 2007–08, the world's urban population, for the first time in history, surpassed the world's rural population. The global urban population has quadrupled since 1950, and in the next couple of decades, virtually all population growth will be urban, at the urban: rural ratio of 27: 1. A number of developing countries are already beginning to experience rural depopulation. (David 2007: 6). Sachs observes that once the labour force is no longer engaged mainly in

food production, it is natural that the bulk of the population should relocate to cities. These migrants are drawn by higher wages that in turn reflect the higher productivity of work in densely settled urban areas (Sachs 2004: 36).

Thorns, writing in his influential work on the transformation of cities, notes that increasingly, especially in the last decade of the twentieth century and at the beginning of the twenty first century, we are witnessing the emergence of information technology (IT) as a powerful economic engine. This is especially so in emerging economies such as India and many other South and East Asian countries. These knowledge industries, as they have come to be termed, attract skilled people to the IT centres of growth, which are mostly urban centres. These are less dependent on being physically located in particular regions. Their raw materials are ideas and knowledge, and thus require research-centred institutions and access to knowledge flows. However, not all of the migration to urban centres is of educated IT trained professionals. They possibly represent a minuscule minority, but also an increasing trend. Most of the migration from rural to urban centres concerns people who are un-skilled or semi-skilled, with no other resources to support them in a rural setting. They seek to escape from the pressures of rural life and migrate to urban centres in search of a livelihood (Thorns 2002: 5, 65).

What constitutes an urban area? According to Mohan, the traditional characteristics of an urban settlement are population above a given size, a high density of population, and a predominance of non-agricultural activities (Mohan 1994: 18, 19). The cities of the developed and developing worlds have their challenges in managing the welfare of urban dwellers. There are exclusions and inclusions among the population groups. Today, in many cities of the developed and developing worlds, we witness social inequality, which is generally associated with spatial segregation, poverty, unemployment and lack of skills. This situation renders many individuals marginal to the workforce and thus the necessary income to secure them a place in the mainstream of an urban society is inaccessible (Thorns 2002: 5, 65). Chambers, writing on change and uncertainty over growing urbanisation, predicts that the burden of this growth will fall on the poorer

countries. In low-income countries, the population would rise by 2.3 billion, and in 2025 will still be rising. In sub-Saharan Africa, population will treble in the next forty years (Chambers and Conway 1991: 1, 2). The World Development Report, in the current projections for the 36-year-period 1989 to 2025, the populations of the low-income countries and middle-income countries are expected to rise by more than three quarters (WDR 1999: 47, 48,128,130).

1.2 INTERNAL MIGRATION

1.2.1 MIGRATION AND THE COMPONENTS OF URBAN GROWTH

Population distribution in an urban centre is determined by the growth or decline of populations on site. This is the difference between births and deaths, denominated as natural increase. Internal migration and the reclassification of rural localities into urban centres are also factors that contribute to population distribution in an urban centre. Generally, fertility rates in urban areas are less, in relative terms, than in rural areas and therefore, the natural increase of population tends to be lower. In other words, rural-urban migration and re-classification of regions are responsible for rapid growth of urban population relative to that of the rural population (UN Population Division 2008: 3, 16, 17, 18). According to the same UN Population Division study, the countries of Latin America and the Caribbean demonstrate a tendency towards natural increase to account for increasing proportions of urban growth despite decreasing fertility trends. The high levels of urbanisation attained by these countries contribute to this outcome. However, in Africa and Asia, most countries lack sufficient estimates to assess trends, but natural increase accounted for over 70 per cent of urban growth in a quarter of countries in Africa and half of those in Asia.

1.2.2 INTERNAL MIGRATION, DEVELOPMENT AND MIGRANT CHARACTERISTICS

The dominant thinking in economic theory is that individuals migrate from low-wage to high-wage areas, in order to maximise their earnings, which are conditioned by their human capital and the chances of obtaining a job at their final destination. From this perspective, rural-urban migration is the most likely, given the large differences in wages between rural and urban areas. Rural-urban migration is also a means for the rural households to ensure protection against a number of risks and vulnerabilities and, in the absence of well-functioning credit markets, to obtain the funds for investment in grain, fertiliser, education, etc, via remittances. These perspectives have guided much of the analysis of internal migration in developing countries. However, according to empirical evidence, and contrary to the generally accepted view, rural-urban migration may not be the most common type of internal migration in many countries.

According to the UN Population Report, depending on the level of urbanisation in a locale, migration of people between rural areas or those between urban areas may be dominant.

1.3 PROBLEM STATEMENT

Chambers, in his seminal work Sustainable rural livelihoods, asserts that in almost every aspect of human life, change is accelerating. It is not just that change is fast; it is getting faster and faster (Chambers and Conway 1991: 1, 2). Because of these constant changes, two aspects stand out.

First, the conventional values, concepts, methods and behaviours prevalent in professions are liable to lag further behind new frontiers. Second, future conditions become harder and harder to predict. In this flux and future uncertainty, change will probably continue to accelerate (Chambers and Conway 1991: 1, 2).

Satterthwaite observes that detailed sociological research has revealed that changing patterns of economic activity promotes migration trends such as we witness today. The emancipation of the poor through

education is leading to liberation from deprivation and exploitation (Satterthwaite 2004: 9, 14). The central problem to be addressed in this dissertation is this: the people who migrate from rural to urban centres have left behind assets that are physical (land and house); social (local community-support mechanisms, networks and connectedness, relationships of trust, reciprocity); financial (job/labour/income); natural (environmental, atmosphere, land trees, etc); and cultural. What they carry with them is only their human capital. In an urban centre, immigrants struggle to secure assets to support their livelihood and survival. In the competitive urban environment, immigrants often manage to survive on a hand-to-mouth existence with their human capital. Urban settlers become vulnerable to external shocks, and it is often beyond their capacity to earn a livelihood. Under these circumstances, the children of the urban settlers are at great risk. This dissertation seeks to understand the evolving trends in urbanisation, how it affects the quality of life of the people in urban centres, and their poverty and deprivation levels, and household vulnerabilities. Further, this dissertation attempts to understand the situation of children and deprivation in an urban context. As part of an effort to find a solution to urban challenges, the dissertation identifies the ‘sustainable livelihood framework’ (SLF) as a tool for analysing urban household poverty. The dissertation then attempts to address urban poverty and deprivation in order to develop alternate models of urban development within a sustainable livelihood framework. We first try to analyse and understand what a sustainable livelihood framework is. Then we study four adaptations of the sustainable livelihood approach (SLA) as practised by CARE International, Oxfam GB,¹ Department of International Development (DFID) and United Nations Development Programme (UNDP). We then aim to analyse and adopt the best of the four adaptations for an urban programme.

¹ Oxfam GB: An international relief and development organisation that originated in Britain.

1.4 THE CONTENT AND SCOPE OF THE RESEARCH

The subject chosen for the research project is ‘Development, children and the third world city: Conceptualising guidelines towards a sustainable livelihood framework supporting children’.

1.4.1 RESEARCH OBJECTIVES

Goal: To develop a sustainable livelihood development model for urban households focusing on the needs of children.

Objectives

- To obtain an understanding of and define the context of urban children
- To define a sustainable livelihood framework
- To develop, and present guidelines on a sustainable livelihood framework for urban households that protects and sustains the needs of children in such households

The intention of the study is to develop a theoretical framework and produce recommendations for application in urban contexts.

It is not the intention of the study to apply the framework and test it on the ground for its success.

1.5 LIMITATIONS TO AND SCOPE OF THE STUDY

The past decade has witnessed rapid urbanisation around the world, which is more pronounced in the Africa region. The study is a search for understanding livelihood issues related to urban households, and highlight the impact of such issues on children in these households. In other words, the study seeks to understand children’s problems in an urban context and to develop a livelihood approach to addressing the problem, focused on urban households.

The project aims to achieve the objectives through an extensive literature review and research. The student proposes to conduct the literature review, seeking the best available resources for the study. The final presentation will be a set of observations and recommendations. The validity of their applicability to the field context needs to be carefully analysed and then considered for application. The study will contribute towards defining guidelines for non-governmental organisations (NGOs) and civic bodies in order to design and implement urban development programmes focused on urban households that understand their vulnerabilities.

The literature review generally is confined to the African context, with some general observations of the application of the framework to other parts of the world. Therefore, the final analysis aims to provide an improved understanding of the livelihood framework as applicable to the vulnerability context of the urban households. The final recommendations are based on a theoretical approach.

1.6 LITERATURE REVIEW

All of the substance and data for understanding urban-related livelihood issues will be obtained through a literature review.

The World Bank and the UN system, especially UN Population Studies, UN Habitat for Humanity, and United Nations International Children's Emergency Fund (UNICEF) are agencies that have published a number of journals on urbanisation, urban context and urban children. These sources remain important sources for this dissertation.

UNISA library is a major source of books and journals from which to draw literature. Accessing websites through Google Scholar, under titles such as 'livelihood' and 'urban children' also provides access to a variety of literature and journals.

The subject librarian has been of great support in my search for documents and books to further my study. I expect to draw a large number of books from UNISA library for my research and documentation.

Most importantly, I shall seek guidance and advice from Prof de Beer and other members of the UNISA faculty on the choice of books and journals.

1.7 IMPORTANCE OF THE STUDY

Most international non-governmental organisations (INGOs) have been in the business of transformational development and emergency relief since the end of the World War II. Currently there are two major challenges faced development organisations.

These challenges are that some NGOs adopt a sector-specific approach to development, partly because of the technical expertise developed in a specific sector or due to funding limitation. Sometimes such a sector specific approach is narrow in scope, and does not address the overall needs of the community. It is also common to see a limited approach to complex problems at the households and community levels. Secondly, the NGOs are also constrained by the donor requirements to address specific sectors, as the donors also have sector priorities. Most of these development initiatives are rural focussed. The author proposes a sustainable livelihood approach to urban problems that is centred on urban households.

Most development theorists and practitioners have fine-tuned rural development models. With rapid urbanisation taking place, it is important to develop an urban orientation to the theories and practices of development.

It is common to see NGOs becoming too specialised in sectors in which they design and develop programmes. Broadly speaking, these sectors are healthcare, HIV/AIDS interventions, primary healthcare, child survival, micro enterprise development, agriculture, food security, savings and credit groups, forestry and conservation, child protection, etc. Such a narrow sector focus again is mostly owing to donor preferences, which determine NGO strategies and focus. Sometimes, NGOs, of their own volition, decide to pursue a single-track sector approach in their development strategies. This is sometimes a historical necessity, based on the NGO's origins and sometimes

based on donor preferences, though most often owing to the specialised sector expertise the NGO has developed.

Then what is 'livelihood'? Is it also a sector? The limited reading and understanding of the subject 'livelihood' gives a sense that livelihood is not a sector, but the probable and expected outcomes of a combination of sector initiatives through approaches to the targeted beneficiaries. This leads us to an understanding of 'livelihood' as a framework, and not as a sector. The livelihood approach to development places people at the centre of development.

For example, 'food security', a commonly used development term, is a combination of three or four interventions. Food security is not synonymous with agriculture development. Food security represents 'food availability, food accessibility, and food consumption'. The combination of all three interventions, leads to a 'food secure' environment at household and community level.

Therefore, the first importance of this study is to unpack livelihood. If it is a framework, then what does it consist of? What level of interplay between sub-sectors contributes to attainment of a 'livelihood' outcome in the lives of urban households and their children? Based on an understanding, it is necessary to develop a framework of sustainable livelihood that is adaptable to urban households, and the outcomes of which supports the wellbeing of children in urban contexts.

Until now, the outcomes of the efforts of many NGOs have been well-researched documents that articulate conditions in the cities and enumerate the challenges. A cohesive urban development strategy has not come forth until now, though the student came across successful urban development programmes during this research effort. These models were exceptions rather than the outcomes of a well-developed and applied strategy, however. If NGOs are to remain at the cutting edge of development, then an answer to the development needs of urban households, their vulnerabilities, and the needs of children in urban setting needs to emerge with a tested urban development strategy.

The existing livelihood framework of donor and non-governmental sector will form the basis for the literature review related to the sustainable livelihood framework (SLF), as most of these have been universally tested on the ground. The review helps to understand the salient features of the livelihood framework, and to identify key elements of a sustainable livelihood model that has universal application, including an urban setting. Then that model will be proposed for adaptation for an urban livelihood development model.

Therefore, as highlighted under the sections on ‘Project goal’ and ‘Project objectives’ (section 1.4.1), the research project and the findings of this study will attempt to provide answers to the challenges faced by NGOs. These challenges are to determine how best to come to grips with the problems posed by urban households and their vulnerabilities, which affect the children in such households.

Second, as a development practitioner of 35 years standing, the urban context and the plight of children in that setting continue to be a challenge. Yet another key element is the ‘sustainability’ of the livelihood model. We have read more about sustainability in the context of environmental issues. How do we relate sustainability to a human development effort, which is all a livelihood framework is about? It is a people-centred development model.

1.8 RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This research exercise is based entirely on a two-phase literature review. Under the first phase, it is proposed to do a detailed and thorough literature review of the SLF from sources. The author will draw key components of a livelihood framework and attempt to develop and adapt one for urban households, focusing on children and their vulnerabilities. The second part of the literature review will focus on urban children and their households, and identify the vulnerabilities of children in the household, especially their impacts on their lives. Then the author will identify strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats for urban households against the backdrop of the SLF for urban contexts.

Based on the above, the author will develop and present alternatives and options for development theorists and practitioners as well as NGOs. This will be an alternate development model for sustainable livelihood for urban households; the children are seen in the context of the households.

1.8.1 RESEARCH TECHNIQUES

This research proposes to accomplish the project only through a literature review in order to understand and develop a livelihood framework that will help to understand the significance of the vulnerabilities around the urban household's context, especially the impact of such vulnerabilities on children. Such an understanding of the vulnerability context will assist the development practitioners in designing development interventions that will address the vulnerability context surrounding the households.

The research will trace the origins of the SLF, and provide the rationale for a dynamic people-centred development model. The research will sketch the evolution of the people-centred development approach, its early beginnings and the eventual development of the SLF. This will result in obtaining a good understanding of the People centred and holistic Sustainable Livelihood Approach to development. The inquiry will progress towards the adaptation and application of the SLF by governmental organisations and NGOs.

In the world of development, a number of adaptations of the SLF have been accepted as practical tools for people-centred development models. Some of them are detailed below:

- The origins of the SLF are attributed to a dialogue between Chambers and Conway on the people-centred development model. This was presented by these two development thinkers in an article for the Institute of Development Studies of the University of Sussex.
- As a sequel to this, Prof Chambers published a book titled *Rural development: Putting the last first*.

- Drawing on thoughts and ideas presented by Robert Chambers, CARE International was among the earliest NGOs to accept the principles expounded in Chambers' theory.

- CARE International developed a livelihood framework centred on the household as a unit of focus.

- Oxfam GB was another NGO that was instrumental in adapting the same SLF to its programme strategy.

- Soon afterwards, Prof Ian Scoones of the University of Sussex drew key elements of the SLF and made up a checklist for development thinkers and practitioners to adopt while developing a strategy.

- The UK government's foreign assistance unit, the Department for International Development (DFID) adopted Scoones' checklist and developed a livelihood framework to support their overseas aid. This is one of the major sources of information to study and understand the livelihood model.

- With huge investments by the DFID, the SLF was propagated around the world as a suitable livelihood framework for development organisation.

- The DFID-developed SLF model has been accepted and adapted by major INGOs and UN agencies. The United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), the United Nations Food and Agriculture Organisation (UN FAO), International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD), among others, have adopted the SLF as the tool for designing, monitoring and evaluation of their development assistance programmes.

While developing an urban sustainable livelihood model in the concluding part of this dissertation, the best practices from four of these frameworks will be discussed and analysed. Since these four SLF are adaptations of core SLF thinking, the best of them will be considered for an urban model of development.

The guidance and support of the UNISA faculty, especially my course supervisor, Prof FC de Beer, will be an important part of the research process to guide me with the choice of books and journals to broaden my

understanding of the subject livelihood. The resources from UNISA library and the subject librarian to guide are the best support to complete this dissertation.

The second part of the literature review will be on the ‘children in urban areas’, who are they, what is their vulnerability within the urban households. The review will use books, periodicals, UN publications etc to obtain an understanding of the issues related to urban children and their households.

This research-based master’s programme will lead to a focused study, culminating in a doctoral thesis, that is, a doctoral research document that will be authoritative in content and scope, with universal applicability in all urban contexts around the world; a model that will pave the way for NGOs and development organisations to embark on urban children’s development programmes adopting a livelihood model.

1.9 CLARIFICATION OF TERMS

1.9.1 URBAN HOUSEHOLDS: WHAT ARE THEY?

The UN defines a slum household as a group of individuals living under the same roof in an urban area that lack one or more of these five conditions: durable housing, sufficient living area, access to improved water and sanitation, and secure tenure (UN Population Division 2008: 3,16,17 and 18).

Urban households are families and/or groups of people who have migrated from their rural homesteads to urban centres in search of a livelihood. While doing so, they have given up their asset base in the form of financial, physical, social, cultural assets and carry with them only their human asset base in the form of skills. They become vulnerable in an urban context and face challenges while seeking to build their assets. During this phase, they are in an acute vulnerable state.

Blanc explains that the term ‘household’ on the other hand refers specifically to people, related or not, who live together under the same roof (Blanc 1994: 32, 34).

1.9.2 FAMILY

UNICEF, which represents an authoritative voice on children and women among the UN specialised agencies uses the term ‘family’ to include the nuclear and the extended family. In ‘extended family’, we consider the wife, children with parents, siblings and possibly distant family members (Blanc 1994: 32, 34).

There has always been confusion among development practitioners as to what constitutes a family and how it is different from a household. This distinction is important because it allows us to analyse and understand changes that affect the children. One of the most commonly felt impacts of industrialisation are the dissolution of the family linkages within the larger extended family. This has deprived children in urban areas of their physical closeness to and emotional bondage with extended family members. These extended family members may be grandparents or uncles and aunts. This has placed an unusually heavy burden on parents, who in a normal urban context feel the necessity for both the parents to be earning members (Blanc 1994: 32, 34).

1.9.3 CHILDHOOD

Then how do we define ‘children’? The generally accepted understanding has been changing rapidly as well. There was a clear understanding and an acceptable image of what a child was in the developed world, especially after the first phases of industrialisation in the early days of the 20th century. The former image of a child used to rigorous hard manual labour, as portrayed in the English classic *Oliver Twist*, eventually with the rise of the middle class, gave way to a more humane image. This positive image led to children being educated and growing up as ‘normal kids’ these days.

Therefore, the term ‘childhood’ has discussed and analysed to determine what exactly a ‘child’ is and what determines ‘childhood’. It is universally recognised that childhood is increasingly becoming shorter for children. Children are beginning to taking on adult responsibilities more and

more. In these modern times, we are beginning to observe that most children do not have opportunities or time for experiencing childhood or the time to 'grow up. This is visible more in urban centres.

In the South Asian context, where the student originally hails from, the student has observed that the most affected among the children's group are adolescent girls who are particularly vulnerable. In an urban setting, both parents contribute towards the livelihood. Under these circumstances, the plight of the young children and siblings is always a challenge. Often adolescent girls take on the responsibilities for younger siblings at home while their mother is earning money for the family. Often cultural practices in a conservative society force the girls to marry early. Sometimes, this happens out of economic necessity. These young girls often become young mothers themselves. In the process, they lose the opportunity to acquire important life skills and education to be able to do well in life. This deprives the dependants and children of these young women of the best in life.

In the terminology and definitions of children, they are identified as being from 0 to 18 years of age. These definitions and classifications bring adolescents into the category of children, thus expanding the definition. Such an acceptance prevails in the developed world and in developing countries (Blanc 1994: 32, 34).

From the South Asian cultural context and its traditional values, we can observe that the thin line between adulthood and childhood is gradually dissolving; under these circumstances, the childhood experience is becoming more complex, especially in diverse cultural settings and traditional values, which have a bearing on children's progress in developing maturity. Therefore, one should be careful not to draw a clear level of demarcation between childhood and adulthood. Children are much more dependent on their parents during their earlier days and thus are more vulnerable then, physically and psychologically. In modern times, we also observe, especially among our own children, that the children are endowed with a natural propensity to comprehend their surroundings and thus are good at communications. Seldom are the elders aware of this. Parents must recognise

the keen sense of participation among children on issues concerning their lives. Parents should treat and interact with them on an equal basis, rather than from a position of parental dominance.

1.10 LIVELIHOOD FRAMEWORK

Over the past fifty years, most international NGOS and UN systems have adopted the ‘sector’ or ‘cluster’ approach to relief and development programming. Such an approach seems cost effective. Besides, it will leave an impact on the targeted beneficiaries. Donor preferences and funding and technical skills constraint are also contributing factors to the narrow approach.

On the other hand, the livelihood approach takes a holistic approach to development. Therefore, better and sustainable impact on the lives of children is possible from adopting a holistic livelihood approach.

The livelihood approach is people centred and begins with an assessment of what people have, and builds on it rather than seeking to understand what people do not have and trying to provide for their needs.

1.10.1 SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT MODEL

In *Empowerment towards sustainable development*, Singh articulates that the concept of empowerment has been at the centre of a re-conceptualisation of development – a paradigm shift – and the development of strategies for poverty

The word ‘sustainability’ has come to attain significance in the light of the negative effects on the environment owing to globalisation and unsustainable use of natural resources. In the environmental context, the word ‘sustainability’ means using the resources for the optimal benefit of humankind without compromising the ability of the future generations to use the resources (Singh and Vangile 1995: 22).

Within the confines of human development, which is what all livelihood models are about, how do we measure sustainability? Investments on building human capital remain with the individual. This sustains the individual even after the development investment ceases. In development,

thinking this is referred to as ‘empowerment’, building the knowledge and skills of people we are serving so that they are capable of making informed decisions in life, based on an understanding of the alternatives. The term ‘empowerment’ needs to be unpacked and analysed to be able to adapt it to the urban livelihood model of development. Empowerment is not abdication; empowerment is building the skills and knowledge of individuals and communities so they make informed choices in support of their livelihoods.

1.11 DISSERTATION LAYOUT

1.11.1 CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION AND OVERVIEW

This chapter gives an overview of globalisation and the consequent urbanisation. The rapid urbanisation of the world economy is a result of globalisation and the move towards borderless economy. The world is shifting economic activity from primary production means of agriculture to secondary and tertiary production, which consists of processing and servicing industries. The world is changing towards an urban society in the 21st century. Under such a dispensation, urban society is facing pressure on resources, housing, water, health care, education, jobs, etc. This places undue pressure on the people who migrate from rural areas to urban centres. The children who accompany their parents to the urban centres also feel a sense of vulnerability. The challenge faced by the urban households who have migrated from the rural areas is immense.

While there are development organisations that have refined development strategies to address the needs of rural poor and rural children, there is a vacuum in strategies for urban development.

With rapid urbanisation, there is a need to develop a livelihood approach to urban households and the development needs of children in urban households.

What are the options does a sustainable livelihood approach to urban development planning focused on urban household offer? What strategies do we seek to protect the children against vulnerability in the urban context? This research seeks to find answers to that challenge.

1.11.2 CHAPTER 2: POVERTY IN URBAN CONTEXTS

As discussed in chapter 1, globalisation and the resultant urbanisation of the world continue to be dominant development theme of the twenty first century. This theme highlights the challenges humanity and governments face in rising up to these challenges.

In chapter 2, we look deeper into the consequences of rapid urbanisation and its impact on the livelihoods of the people. The inequality and the poverty in the cities dominate our discussion. Rural–urban links in seeking to understand the extent and depth of urban poverty is another factor that is discussed in this chapter.

The discussion continues to draw on the thoughts and views of Satterthwaite, in order to define degrees of poverty and how poverty lines are drawn.

The discussion then gravitates towards the urban contexts and poor people, the contexts in which urban dwellers find themselves in, and begin to discuss urban poverty within a sustainable livelihood framework description of asset bases, the vulnerability context and transformation.

The discussion concludes with a discussion on structures and processes as analysed by Carney. This section, in summary, portrays urban poverty in the urban context, relating more specifically to economic, social, political contexts, setting the stage for a more in-depth presentation of the situation of children in urban contexts in chapter 3.

1.11.3 CHAPTER 3: CHALLENGES FOR CHILDREN IN URBAN CONTEXTS

This section begins with a portrayal of the global trends in urban development and urban poverty. This section further analyses the growing inequality within nations and the negative effects of the global economy on the quality of life of urban dwellers and the difficult situation of children in urban settings. The discussions centres on the lack of basic facilities for healthy living, especially adequate water, poor environmental contexts,

physical hazards, poor housing and the challenges of housing on the mental and physical make up of a growing child.

The challenges faced by the urban community, especially the children, are schooling, the quality of care, and the challenges of women-headed households and the urban neighbourhoods.

The lack of child-friendly spaces and the violence and insecurity children are exposed to, are highlighted.

The section concludes with the declaration of the United Nations on the explicit rights of every child and the challenges the UN, NGOs and the humanitarian community face in the light of the declining living conditions in urban contexts.

1.11.4 CHAPTER 4: AN UNDERSTANDING OF THE SUSTAINABLE LIVELIHOOD FRAMEWORK

In an effort to find an alternate development model for children and households in an urban setting, we look at the ‘sustainable livelihood framework’ as a model to analyse and study.

The section traces the origins of the thoughts leading to the evolution of this framework as a development tool, which emerged from discussions between Chambers and Carney on a people-centred development model, putting the people first in development planning. The key discussions in this section are:

- What is a sustainable livelihood framework?
- How is it different from sector approaches to development?

The section looks at the theory of the SLF and its components. The asset pentagon, livelihood strategies, livelihood outcomes and institutional challenges are the subjects of discussion in this chapter. It explains how the livelihood framework is adapted to different contexts, urban and rural. It then explains how asset bases are expanded by building on the assets, human, physical, social, financial and the environmental, of the households.

1.11.5 CHAPTER 5: ADAPTATIONS OF THE SUSTAINABLE LIVELIHOOD FRAMEWORK

The livelihood approach to development planning has become a well-accepted development framework in the development community. Well-known agencies that have adapted the livelihood framework in their project and programme planning include International NGOs and the UN System.

This section reviews livelihood frameworks and models as adapted and accepted by leading NGOs and the UN System. The livelihood frameworks of four organisations have been chosen, namely CARE International, Oxfam GB, UNDP and DFID models. Each of these organisations has adapted the SLF to its context and programme philosophy.

1.11.6 CHAPTER 6: RECOMMENDATIONS AND CONCLUSIONS

This chapter presents a summary of findings and the recommendations on how to operationalise the urban development programme, using a livelihood approach in development planning and implementation. The focus will be on understanding urban households and their vulnerabilities. How can a development planner seek to address the vulnerabilities in the urban households through carefully planned interventions?

CHAPTER 2. POVERTY IN THE URBAN CONTEXT

2.1 INTRODUCTION

In this chapter, we seek to analyse the effects of rural urban migration on the migrants, the rural–urban continuum, urban poverty, under-employment and falling incomes, and the pressures of cash economy on the migrant families. However, it would be unwise to consider urban centres in isolation: national development policies and national economic performance have a heavy bearing on the economic growth and the poverty in towns and cities. We therefore need to examine broadly the trends in development, drawing attention to the relationships between economic growth, inequality and poverty reduction before examining the urban situation.

The observations in this chapter provide a backdrop to the life of urban migrants in a developing metropolis. We shall discuss the measurement of poverty and drawing up poverty lines.

2.2 URBANISATION, A GLOBAL TREND

According to World Development Report 2000 of the World Bank Group, the world's urban population is set to rise by almost 1.5 billion people in the next twenty years. In developing countries, the share of the population living in urban areas is likely to rise from half today to about two thirds by 2025 (WDR 2000: 47).

According to the same report, in 1997, a total of 74 per cent of the population of Latin America and the Caribbean, 67 per cent in low- and middle-income countries in Europe and Central Asia, and 58 per cent in the Middle East and North Africa lived in urban areas, but sub-Saharan Africa (with 32 per cent), east Asia and the Pacific (with 33 per cent) and South Asia (with 27 per cent) have yet to begin urban transition (WDR 2000: 47).

The same report highlights the finding that the number of cities has increased dramatically and will continue to do so: in 1970 there were 163 cities with populations of 1 million or more; today there are about 350. Between 1970 and 1990, although in absolute numbers mega cities accounted for a large share of urban population growth, their populations were growing

the slowest of all the city-sized categories, while small cities (with a population of less than half a million) grew most rapidly (WDR 2000: 47).

This trend is accentuated by the evolving globalisation of the world's economy, which contributes towards rapid urbanisation across the continents. According to the same report, the two- and three-tier cities are expected to experience a much higher growth rate at 2.5 per cent than the projected rate of 1.5 per cent (WDR 2000: 47-48).

The statistical presentations of rural and urban demographic profiles may not reflect the actual situation. The scope of the definitions also varies between countries and the regions. For example, countries such as India and China have huge populations. A minor variation in the interpretation of the urban population by these two giants could make a huge difference. Second, in some African countries, local political and economic instabilities have resulted in data being obtained through extrapolations. So, the accuracy and reliability of these data are in question. Third, the areas demarcated as administrative divisions may not correspond to actual built-up areas in the cities. Fourth, while computing the urban population, we need to take into consideration the natural increase in populations and the gradual expansion of urban boundaries that lead to an increase in urban population. This broadening of boundaries alone sometimes causes a sudden increase in the number of urban population, distorting past demographic trends (Rakodi 2002: 27).

2.3 ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AND URBAN INCOME DISPARITY

While the gross national product (GNP) in developing countries increased at an annual rate of 2.3 per cent between 1975 and 1995, this average conceals the slow and negative growth in many countries in the 1980s. There were also geographical differences. According to the UNDP report, East Asia recorded a rapid growth of 7.3 per cent per annum while the same period witnessed a decline of -0.9 per cent per annum over the two decades in sub-Saharan Africa (UNDP 1999: 183). According to the same

UNDP report, globalisation and liberalisation have contributed to great disparities in experience across countries and regions, while expanding exports and phenomenal growth of capital flows (UNDP 1999: 39). The top fifth of the world's people in the richest countries enjoyed 82 per cent of the expanding export trade between 1970 and 1997) and 68 per cent of foreign direct investment – the bottom fifth experienced barely 1 per cent (UNDP 1999: 31).

The UNDP Human Development Report for 1999 observes that in Latin America inequality worsened in the 1980s, after two decades of improvement – the poorest 10 per cent suffered a 15 per cent drop in their share of income, wiping out improvements in distribution before the crisis (UNDP 1999: 39).

In recent years, the inequality among people has increased. Joblessness is rampant and keeping jobs has become more and more precarious. Wages in the formal and informal sectors have been falling most low income countries since the 1980s (Gilbert 1994: 607).

In spite of a modest recovery in the 1990s, insufficient jobs were created and wages continue to remain low as they were in the crisis period. This is becoming a challenge with the continued increase in the numbers in the labour force (Watt 2000: 103).

The official statistics on wage levels, unemployment and under-employment do not reflect the true picture of what is happening between and within countries. The situation in Africa is disturbing as well. After an encouraging start in the 1990s, economic growth stalled again as a result of the global financial crisis, which affected the economies of most African countries. As a sequel, commodity prices, which are the mainstay of most African countries, began to decline. Several countries were forced to adopt the World Bank induced structural adjustment programmes, faced increasing poverty levels. Other countries, such as Nigeria and Zimbabwe, experienced increasing poverty levels on account of conflict and adverse weather conditions (WDR 1999: 9-10).

According to the United Nations Commission for Human Settlement (UNCHS) Report for 1996, indicators for health, nutrition and education which are representative of a country's and a region's human development index and quality of life are beginning to show a negative trend, reflective of deterioration in the quality of life of the people. Several countries with low income have invested in human development, improving the quality of life for the people with positive health and wellbeing outcomes. Some of these low-income countries have improved the life expectancy of their populations and reduced IMR levels as well as having raised primary school enrolment, and adult literacy levels and obtaining gender balance (UNCHS 1996: 107).

The World Bank Report notes that on average, the life expectancy of people in developing countries rose from 55 years in 1970 to 65 years in 1997, but 33 countries have seen life expectancy decline since 1990 (WDR 1999: 9,10 and 15).

The same World Bank report cautions that two thirds of the children that were not attending school were girls. The incidence of adult literacy fell in developing countries from around 45 per cent in 1980 to 30 per cent in 1995, but almost all this decrease is owing to progress in East Asia (WDR 1999:22).

Rakodi makes a noteworthy observation on low social and health indicators. These are not necessary indicative of a healthy lifespan for the people. Lack of sanitary facilities continues to affect three fifths of the population. Thirty three per cent of the population have no access to clean water One fourth does not have a safe place to live. One fifth of the children are malnourished. Under-five mortality rate remains high (Rakodi 2002: 26, 27).

2.3.1 CITIES AS ENGINES OF ECONOMIC GROWTH

Rakodi observes that with globalisation of the economy reaching more and more countries, this is leading to increased urbanisation. Most of the industrial countries also witnessed urbanisation as a result of rapid economic growth and the attendant structural transformation. Increased

urbanisation is also generating rising per capita income in the Americas and Asian countries (Rakodi 2002: 27-28).

The East Asian experience has given a model that demonstrates successful rural development alongside sustained economic growth. The prominent example is that of South Korea. This was a society in which the rural population represented 80 per cent of the total population at one time. This 80 per cent contributed to 37 per cent of the GDP in the fifties and sixties. Over the years, as the country experienced rapid industrialisation, the urban population began to grow and represented 80 per cent of the country's population. Their agricultural production share to the GDP fell to 6 per cent in a 20-year time span. This was a remarkable turnaround in obtaining a percentage of agriculture to the GDP. Nowhere else in the world, especially in Africa, have we encountered such a link between economic growth and urbanisation. While Asia has 18 per cent of its labour force employed in industry, in Africa it is around only 9 per cent (WDR 2000: 130).

In Africa in the post-colonial scenario, when restrictions on migration were removed, it was easy for people to migrate from rural to urban areas and vice versa. It appears though that in several instances the pace of urbanisation was fostered more by sociological factors than economic. There have been a number of instances in Africa in which internal, national and regional conflicts pushed people away from their rural havens to urban centres. Owing to constraints in resource availability and lack of infrastructure, such migration places a heavy burden on the urban centres. The urban centres by virtue of their economic dominance hold the political power. This leads to bias in the allocation of resources for development. Urban-centred political power does not generally recognise the importance of agriculture and the rural economy to the national economy. Therefore, agriculture, which is the mainstay of rural economies, receives little support by way of resource allocation (Rakodi 2002: 28).

2.3.2 INEQUALITY AND POVERTY IN CITIES

One of the challenges facing urban areas is gross economic disparity within urban groups. We have analysed above how the urban centres are associated with economic growth. It is unfortunate, though, that not all urbanites benefit from the economic growth of urban centres. The consequences of implementing the structural adjustment programmes introduced by the World Bank and the IMF, as well as the privatisation of the economy, have thrown people out of gainful employment. This has hit the urban centres extremely hard (Rakodi 2002: 29-31).

In the urban areas, the salaried categories and the wage-earning class are made up predominantly of middle-class people. While the economic downturn of the 1990s affected the middle class by and large, its impact affected poor people most and deprived them of regular income and thus deterioration in access to basic services (Ruel, Haddad and Garrett 1999: 1931).

The urban economy is cash based. This is detrimental to the urban poor, as they are faced with unemployment and the generally low wage levels that are the norm in the informal sector, which is the dominant component of the urban economy. The urban informal sector, the main source of livelihood opportunities for the urban poor, is made up of small-scale home-based industries. The newly emerging service sector also contributes substantially to the livelihood opportunities for the urban poor. Most of these are not recognised legally. Thus the urban poor, with limitations on work opportunities and wage constraints, are challenged to maintain a quality of life in a cash-based urban economy (Watt 2000: 103).

The challenge to new migrants to the city was the cash market in which, for every service and facility, they were forced to pay cash, while in their rural setting these services were free. The majority of new recruits to the labour market were left with under-employment in the informal sector as the only option left open to them in order to survive.

There was yet another dimension. The limited number of wage-earning opportunities in the informal sector led to severe competition for

jobs. This resulted in a situation in which jobs and income levels were decreasing. Purchasing power was also declining. The informal sector provided the advantage of being flexible in skills requirement and absorbed some people more easily than others. Nevertheless, the informal sector was unable to absorb all those who needed work.

Urban centres offer greater opportunities for women than rural areas. However, men appear to be more favoured than women for jobs. This places women in a more unfavourable situation with wage earnings. The huge informal sector is always outside the realm of the tax system. Therefore, governments increasingly resort to consumption-level taxes such as value added tax, which leave a negative legacy on economic growth (Watt 2000: 103).

Inequality in income and the resultant quality of life are more pronounced in urban areas. This inequality at household and community level is encapsulated in the Gini coefficient. This statistically analysed method of capturing inequalities in income confirms the general impression that urbanites are better placed in life. However, the urban poor are exposed to lower qualities of life because of air pollution, crime and violence. Similarly, health conditions are extremely deficient for the urban poor compared with their rural counterparts. (Rakodi 2002: 29-30).

In order to determine the extent and incidence of urban poverty, there are not many indicators to guide towards a definite conclusion, though some indicators for measuring the quality of life of the urban poor are under use. Ruel et al also examine under-nutrition, using figures for underweight children in 14 countries. According to their report, there were increased numbers of malnourished and underweight children in urban areas and their numbers were growing faster in urban areas than in rural areas. The report concluded that underweight of children in absolute numbers and their increase in percentage in terms of the total population are alarming (Ruel, et al 1999: 1897).

2.4 RURAL–URBAN LINKS

There is an increasing tendency to treat poverty and inequality among people as purely an urban issue. This is not appropriate, as the issues of poverty and inequality are common to rural and urban populations. The urban economy and the continuous link between urbanites and rural folk provide means of promoting growth. The rural economy supplies the urban centres with foods and services, while the remittances from the urbanites to families back home in rural areas keep the urban and rural economies moving (Tacoli 1998: 68).

Increased agricultural production leads to rise in demand for support services such as marketing, transportation, construction and the supporting finance. The World Bank has estimated that in Africa every increase of \$1.00 in agricultural output generates \$1.5 of non-agricultural output. For Asia, this is \$1.80 (WDR 2000: 128).

The economic growth witnessed in the cities increases the flow of goods and services from the rural areas to urban centres. This leads to increased productivity in urban and rural areas. Transfer of technology and services, as well as investment on education and training, result from this rural–urban link. Negative consequences also arise from rural–urban links. The example is cited of increased demand for agricultural produce leading to unsustainable agricultural practices, detrimental to the environment. The rapid growth of urban areas often encroaches on land and water resources, again detrimental to the wellbeing and common good of a wider population. Urban growth also leaves behind a pile of garbage, industrial waste and pollution of natural resources, on which human life seeks to sustain itself (Rakodi 2002: 32).

In an urban context, it would obviously be inappropriate to categorise households and individuals as urban or rural, but most urbanites are rural folk who migrated to urban areas in search of employment. They maintain their natural roots through family links and trade. Sometimes, they sustain their rural households by participating in more than one wage-earning activity to uphold and promote their livelihood. Some are agricultural and others non-

agricultural wage-earning activities as well. The demarcating lines between urban and rural areas are thin and invisible. These are administrative lines. Therefore, people cross these boundaries often for their convenience and to maintain their livelihoods. Most people live in rural or peri-urban areas and cross these boundaries as often as they can and as is necessary to maintain their livelihoods (Rakodi 2002: 33).

2.5 UNDERSTATING URBAN POVERTY

Satterthwaite, writing in the series on poverty reduction in urban areas, uses the term ‘poverty’ to mean that human needs are not being met. He argues that the extent of poverty in urban areas is not adequately estimated in poor countries (Satterthwaite 2004: 5, 6).

For instance, according to a publication by the US Overseas Development Council, only 130 million of the global population of the poorest countries live in urban areas. This means that less than one per cent of their urban population are poor (Leonard 1989: 3).

Generally, poverty is measured by statistical formulae using the consumption patterns of individuals and households. Current thinking on poverty goes beyond this limited definition to include availability and accessibility to basic services and other necessities of life. Such an approach to measuring poverty has been part of development thinking since the 1970s (Satterthwaite, 2004: 11, 12).

But there are still questionable assumptions about how poverty is understood and measured in most low- and middle-income countries.

Poverty continues to be measured and defined through consumption-based poverty lines, though such a measure does not adequately capture the many aspects of deprivation. The minimum food basket consumption at household level continues to be the current method of measuring poverty. Then needs for non-food essentials are not regarded as part of calculating poverty. This approach tends to distort poverty-level assumptions and projections in urban settings where the economy is cash based. Under this,

individuals and household affordability of non-food items should be realistically assessed (Satterthwaite 2004: 13, 14).

While writing on the evolution of thinking about poverty, Kanbur and Squire note the limitations in assessing the poverty level. Drawing a line between the poor and the non-poor using statistical analysis misses out the human face in assessing poverty (Kanbur and Squire 2001: 37, 38).

However, there are limitations in the ways in which provision is made for non-food needs. As Ravallion notes, of all the efforts and the methods that go into measuring poverty, setting the value of the non-food component of the poverty line is the most contentious (Ravallion 1998: 22).

Most poverty lines use criteria to set the income level below which individuals or households are defined as ‘poor’, but these pay little attention to non-food needs (Ravallion 1998: 14; Wratten 1995: 11-20).

A number of development practitioners and sociologists have written on the inappropriateness and limitations of poverty lines both generally and specifically for urban areas. The degrees of poverty in urban areas are detailed in the table 1. Satterthwaite rightly observes that the cost of non-food essentials should be calculated, based on the cost prevailing in each city, while defining poverty lines. Only then will a realistic poverty level emerge. Safe drinking water, housing, sanitation, healthcare, schooling and the cost of an adequate diet are considered essential non-food needs for individuals and households (Satterthwaite 2004: 24,25).

Table 2-1: Degrees of Poverty (Satterthwaite 2004: 24-25)

Degrees of Poverty				
Aspects of Poverty	Destitution	Extreme Poverty	Poverty	At Risk
Income	Income below the cost of a minimum food basket	Income just above the cost of minimum food basket but far too low to allow other necessities to be met	Income below a realist poverty line* but enough to allow significant expenditure on non-food essentials	Income just above a realistic poverty line*
Housing with access to infrastructure and services	Homeless or no-cost shelter or close to no-cost shelter	Very little to spend on housing - often renting a room in a tenement or illegal or informal settlement	More accommodation options - e.g. slightly more spacious, better quality rental housing or capacity to self-build a house if cheap or free land is available ;extent and quality of affordable options much influenced by government land infrastructure and services policies	
Assets	Typically non or very little (although community - based savings group may provide access to credit for emergencies)		Often some capacity to save, especially within well managed savings and credit scheme	
Vulnerability	Extreme vulnerability to food price rises, loss of income or illness or injury; often also to discrimination and unfair practices (from employers, landlords, civil servants, politicians, the law...)		Similar kinds of vulnerability to those faced by people facing destitution or extreme poverty, although usually less severe; often vulnerability to running up serious debt burdens	

Satterthwaite argues that we will continue to get a distorted picture of urban poverty, even if poverty lines are defined within the context of the needs of the urban poor and their income levels, adjusting for cost differentials of necessities. Table 2 highlights the aspects of poverty. Limiting the definition of poverty and measuring it only according to income or consumption patterns may not necessarily give a correct picture of poverty. Such a view will also distort the poverty reduction measures that are intended to increase income levels and thereby increase consumption patterns (Satterthwaite 2004: 35, 36).

2.5.1 ASPECTS OF POVERTY

The poverty at individual and household level has different dimensions and aspects. Some of these aspects are,

- Inadequate and often unstable income
- Insecure asset base for individuals and households/communities
- Inadequate/insecure housing
- Lack of public health facilities
- Limited social service support structures such as day-care centres and human development support facilities
- Inadequate or total lack of social and safety net measures
- Inadequacy provision by law-enforcing groups to protect poor people's rights
- Overbearing presence and dominance of political structures, depriving the poor people of their voice. This often leads to a sense of powerlessness

(Satterthwaite 2004: 38)

Table 2-2: Poverty in Urban Areas (Satterthwaite 2004: 25-26)



2.6 THE URBAN CONTEXT AND POOR PEOPLE

Meikle, writing in *People centred approach to reducing poverty*, states that the

Context in which people live always determines the livelihoods of the poor. The constraints and opportunities these context presents contribute towards their livelihood opportunities and constraints. This is because context – economic, environmental, social and political – largely determines the assets that are accessible to people, how they can use these, and thus their ability to obtain a secure livelihood. Therefore, the context in which people live predominantly decides the livelihood opportunities as well as aspirations of poor men and women (Meikle 2002: 37)

The context makes the urban livelihood distinctive. The urban contexts as well as the rural contexts are dynamic and multifaceted. However, the urban context is more complex. Urban areas provide a greater number and variety of services, as well as opportunities. In urban areas, the economy is conducted purely on cash transactions. Therefore, availability and accessibility of cash is crucial for the survival of the urban poor. Often, the urban poor lack access to common property resources, such as water and fuel that are available free in rural areas. Meikle adds that the quality of life of the poor people in urban areas is determined to a large extent by the policies and practices of the local Governments. Therefore, the relationship that exists between the poor people, local governments and the political elites is a determining factor in the well being of the poor people (Meikle 2002: 37).

Meikle highlights the effects of the varieties of processes, institutions and politics that form the context, influencing household livelihoods and strategies. These factors affect the vulnerability context of poor people. Not only do they influence the long-term stresses and short-term shocks that affect household livelihoods, but they have a strong effect on the way in which poor households can respond to such impacts. Every aspect of the context should be considered because each can contribute to vulnerability. There are certain key elements that are common to urban areas throughout

the developing world, though the main sources of vulnerability may vary from place to place (Meikle 2002: 38).

- The uncertainty and often the informal legal status of the poor people.
- Poor quality of habitation and their environment.
- The complete dependence on a cash economy for basic goods and services by the urban poor.

If households are to have more secure livelihoods and be less vulnerable, urban contexts must be examined thoroughly and the vulnerabilities addressed. From what has been described above, the seeds of vulnerability are existent in all urban areas (Meikle 2002: 38).

One option would be to begin identifying significant characteristics that exist in urban contexts and their implications for poor people and the individual households. Such an examination of the context will also include an analysis of the ways in which the urban poor determine their assets and entitlements and the extent of their vulnerabilities.

Most urban areas, despite distinctive individual attributes, share similar economic, environmental, social and political characteristics. These have implications for how poor men and women live and frequently mean that the livelihood strategies of the urban poor have to be different from those of their rural counterparts.

Let us examine the contexts under which the urban people live, as Meikle categorises them (Meikle 2002: 38).

2.6.1 ECONOMIC CONTEXT

Urban areas tend to be classified as areas that promote economic growth (UNCHS 1996: 27). Therefore, urban areas draw people with skills and labour potential to enhance their livelihood opportunities. These migrations into cities promote economic growth.

Since urban areas attract economic opportunities and growth, most people prefer to migrate from rural to urban areas in search of a better livelihood. The job opportunities those are available for the urban poor,

whether migrants or city grown, depend on their skills. Although migrants tend to be younger, more adventurous and more entrepreneurial than those who remain in their home areas, not all of them carry with them human and other forms of assets. Some bring negative forms such as malnourished children and diseases (Drakakis-Smith 1995: 662).

Urban areas are also characterised by higher levels of unemployment and under-employment, despite enjoying a more prosperous economic climate. Many urban poor people survive through undertaking a variety of activities that take place mainly in the informal sector. Even when they are fully employed, they produce little towards their social wellbeing. According to Meikle, people engage in a variety of subsistence activities to sustain and promote their livelihood activities. Some are legal and many more are illegal (Meikle 2002: 39).

One of the most challenging aspects of life for an urban migrant is that the urban economy depends on cash. Goods such as water, food and housing have to be bought in the market, whereas in rural locations access to these resources for many rural households is free. This means that the urban poor need higher cash incomes than most rural households in order to survive (Wratten 1995: 22-23).

2.6.2 ENVIRONMENTAL CONTEXT

Elaborating on the environmental context, Meikle highlights the comparative high standards of living enjoyed by the urban middle class with access to piped water and sanitation, to which the urban poor do not have access. Poor households are forced, because of their low incomes, to make a trade off between quality and location. The poor often compromise on their living conditions and the choice of localities for habitation in order to be closer to places that offer greater livelihood opportunities. Such places are often poor in living conditions (Meikle 2002: 40). As a result, they suffer from diseases such as typhoid, diarrhoeal diseases, cholera, malaria and intestinal worms that are associated with water-borne diseases.

Commenting on the Indian context, Chaplin argues that the middle class have always been able to live in conditions favourable to healthy living. The consequence has been the deprivation of basic urban services for large sections of the Indian population (Chaplin 1999: 149).

Elaborating on this, Douglas refers to the appalling environmental conditions in which poor people live in urban settlements. Their health is endangered. These people often indulge in activities that take away their precious time, which could otherwise be devoted to income-generating activities (Douglass, 1998: 108). For example, the facility Municipality provided safe drinking water to urban poor households through piped water system and taps. Normally, such facilities are few in a large habitation of poor urban dwellers. Often the people, mostly the women stand in long line and wait for hours to fetch a few pails of water. With a provision of more taps in the community, the waiting times for women could be reduced thus spend such time on income generating activities.

2.6.3 SOCIAL CONTEXT

Wratten, writing on environment and urbanisation, states that rural areas are endowed with a more homogenous and socially stable environment than urban areas. Urban areas tend to be fluid in structure because of the diversity of their households, leading to tensions and the need for different survival strategies. The social context therefore is vastly different in urban areas from what is witnessed and experienced in rural areas (Wratten 1995: 12).

Social capital refers to features of social organisation, such as networks, membership of groups, relationship of trust and reciprocity and norms. People tend to draw from these social net works in search of improving their livelihood options (Carney 1998: 7). This is especially so when people migrate to the city from rural areas or move within the city to a different location in search of employment, leaving behind the social network they were so dependent on.

Social capital is often used by the poor as a survival mechanism, especially in contexts where the households do not have other forms of assets. Poor people rely on these connections for their day to day survival, for example sharing and reciprocating labour, cash and food and moral support. These social net works also helps during times of crisis such as ill health, death etc (Philips 2002: 132).

As well as local social relations, social capital may include the wider networks of social relations between poor and non-poor, including systems of patronage – systems which are not always benign, as for example, Chinese triads and the Russian Mafia (Meikle 2002: 41).

Strong linkages based on kinship and other ties exist between urban and rural households and they may rely on each other for support in response to crisis or shocks, when social capital often transcends the city to include wider rural-urban linkages (Tacoli 1998: 71).

It is widely acknowledged, not only by development professionals, but by the poor themselves, that social capital is a valuable and critical resource which contributes to their wellbeing, especially in times of crisis and socio-economic change (Moser, 1998: 4; Dersham and Gzirishvili 1998: 1829, 1830; Douglass 1998: 107).

There is evidence that the existence of informal social networks significantly decreases the likelihood of poor men and women perceiving their household's food, economic and housing conditions as vulnerable (Dersham and Gzirishvili 1998: 1829, 1830).

It is difficult to identify the general characteristics of social capital in urban areas, as the concept is rooted in relationships among specific individuals and groups, and is therefore tied to specific locations. However, the theoretical interpretations of urban poverty have implications for social capital. One ongoing debate is concerned with whether the urban poor suffer from conditions of social disintegration and community breakdown or whether they rely on strong networks of solidarity between groups and individuals (Meikle 2002: 42).

Moser, writing about urban poverty reduction strategies, explains that community and inter-household mechanisms of trust and collaboration can be weakened by greater social and economic heterogeneity. This contrasts with the 'moral economy' of rural areas, where the right to make claims on others, and the obligation to transfer a good or service, is embedded in the social and moral fabric of communities (Moser 1998: 8, 9).

Douglass recognises that not only development professionals, but the poor themselves acknowledge that social capital is a valuable and critical resource that contributes to their wellbeing, especially in their times of crisis and social and economic change (Douglass 1998: 122; Dersham and Gzirishvili 1998: 1834-1835).

The reason that some families in some contexts have been able to improve the conditions of their lives has been traced to individual, household, social and community networks of mutual support. While poor communities may have internal solidarity, they may be excluded from wider social networks. Simply by living in informal settlements, communities may be excluded from neighbourhood opportunities and from access to the services they need (Meikle 2002: 42).

2.6.4 THE POLITICAL CONTEXT

With the global trend towards devolution of power to the local bodies, the Municipalities have come to acquire significant power. Therefore, the actions, policy and development strategies of these Municipalities or local governing bodies have varying degrees of potential to influence the impact of economic growth or decline on the livelihood of the urban poor (Amis 2002: 106).

Moser seeks to map out this potential in terms of a livelihoods or asset vulnerability framework and to consider the role of municipality in each case. The provision of infrastructure, a function of the municipality, has a bearing on the labour capital for promoting economic growth. Poverty reduction strategies always recognize the importance of human capital which is mostly attained through the provision of and access to primary health care

and education services. The importance of social capital built through social net works can function smoothly in an environment of safety and respect for human values. In an urban setting with high levels of crime, social net working gets affected. Municipalities have the responsibility to maintain law and order as well as crime prevention. The Municipalities also have the power to lift restrictions on using housing as an asset in generating funds by the poor. Thus the local bodies and the local governance structures have several opportunities to support the livelihood aspirations of the urban poor (Moser 1998: 1, 19).

The local governance bodies need to focus on their core responsibilities of what they are doing best at. Constructing and maintenance of the city's infrastructure, maintaining them in good usable condition, making them available for use by all citizenry at a cost they could afford, building new facilities to meet the emerging new needs and policing the public environment are key aspects of good governance that will sustain the livelihood of the urban poor (Wu 1996: 149).

The understanding of poverty is complex and challenging. As various experiments and research have revealed, the understanding of poverty also widens. This is the view expressed in the journal of the International Institute of Environment and Development (IIED 2000: 7, 8). The report asserts that as an understanding of poverty widens, it is becoming clear that poverty does not mean merely lack of money or resources, but includes sub-standard housing and poor services for basic needs. Lack of a political framework to include the 'current and potential role of local government to contribute to poverty reduction' is another aspect that determines the poverty level (IIED 2000: 10).

A number of analysts have highlighted the weaknesses of specific local governments that are unable or, because of lack of political pressure, fail to address the needs of the poor, and in some cases actively exclude them and discriminate against them.

Increasingly governments are placing emphasis on citizens' ownership and participation in delivery of services. This is achieved through

a process of political decentralisation. Such civil society organisations can have a critical role in urban areas in strengthening democracy, helping to secure inclusive development strategies and directly reducing poverty. It is not always that civil societies play a positive role in urban poverty reduction; some leave behind negative impact and some remain neutral in their impact (Douglass 1998: 123; Beall 1997: 61).

2.7 THE URBAN CONTEXT AND ASSETS

Contextual factors by and large define the concepts of entitlement or rights to access assets. The households then can manage these and transform them into an income or a source of livelihood. To address and reduce household vulnerability, an understanding of this relationship is essential (Meikle 2002: 43).

The urban setting results ‘in a different emphasis for each type of livelihood asset identified by Carney (Carney 1998: 21). Thus, for example, since urban areas are cash based, natural capital is generally of less significance in an urban setting and financial capital is more significant’ (Meikle 2002: 44).

It is a common factor in urban settings that the sewerage system, the educational facilities like schools, the health centres, the transport infrastructure and the banking systems, which are generally considered as physical capital, are established and run by the Municipal bodies and or private entrepreneurs. There are costs associated with the use of these facilities. People have to pay for their usage, and therefore, for many urban poor people, such facilities are beyond their means to pay. Therefore, the availability of assets is not a guarantee for the urban poor and access to these facilities. “This is determined by the entitlements that men and women are able to command, which largely relate to contextual factors) the institutional structures and processes that determine people’s legal, social and economic rights” (Meikle 2002: 44).

Accessibility is the key issue. Unless a household has access to schools by affording the fees, availability of schools alone is not an asset (Meikle 2002: 44).

There are aspects of human well being such as good health, a wealth of knowledge and the presence of marketable skill sets that are considered good human assets. These human assets build the capabilities of individuals. In order to build the livelihood opportunities, using their capabilities, the individuals and households should have access to social and economic infrastructures.

Again access is the key issue to a successful livelihood strategy and outcome (Meikle 2002: 44).

2.7.1 THE URBAN CONTEXT, VULNERABILITY AND TRANSFORMATION

Moser and Carney elaborate on the vulnerability contexts of households and acknowledge the negative impact on individuals, households or communities of sudden exposure to shocks. These sudden shocks can result from changing economic, environmental, social and political contexts. Analysing the nature of vulnerability involves scrutinising not only the responses to external shocks or threats to household welfare, but also the resilience of households in terms of their ability to recover from negative impacts of shocks and the capacity to recover speedily from the shocks (Moser 1998: 14, 15; Carney 1998: 15).

Because assets act as a buffer against vulnerability, resilience is closely linked to access to and control over assets. Thus a family employing diversified livelihood strategies, and with a number of earning members, is less vulnerable to, and will recover more quickly from an economic setback than a household with only one breadwinner.

Therefore, understanding the vulnerability of the poor and the ways that they cope with it is essential for well-thought-out governmental planning, policy analysis and formulation and policy actions (Carney 1998: 15; Moser 1998: 15; Dersham and Gzirishvili 1998: 1832).

Ill-thought-out interventions have proved detrimental to addressing the vulnerability context and livelihood prospects of people. The World Bank and the IMF-induced structural adjustment programmes and their negative impact on urban populations are examples (Meikle 2002: 45).

From this analysis, Carney (Carney 1998: 7) points out that it is apparent that the existing context of urban areas, which incorporates the structures² and processes³ that define people's 'livelihood options', means that poor men and women are susceptible to a wide range of stresses and shocks. The specific nature of these and the assets available to cope with them vary from location to location. However, lack of legal status, a poor living environment and dependence on the cash economy for basic goods and services are at the root of, and contribute to, the insecurity of the livelihoods of the urban poor. It makes sense, therefore, to focus transforming activities on:

- Initiating measures that recognise the people's rights to access, including the right to participate in governance
- Supporting investments on setting up a healthy living environment with the attendant infrastructure and services
- Facilitating access to the support mechanisms (financial and social) and education and training which seek to build on the human capital that contributes to a sustainable livelihood
- Facilitating the formation of urban community groups into homogenous groups. Building their capacity to manage their resources
- Empowering household groups with skills and knowledge so that they take charge of their destiny through informed choices and decision

² Organisations, from layers of government through to the private sector in all its guises

³ Policies, laws, rules of the game and incentives.

- Sensitising and engaging with the municipalities and local governance structures to make them aware of the needs and aspirations of urban poor households
- Through these efforts, building on the capability of the households and local governance structures to meet the basic needs of children so they live and grow up in dignity (Meikle 2002: 5, 46).

2.8 CONCLUSION

After a brief note on the methodology of the research project in chapter 1, explaining the shift from a field study to a literature review, we seek to understand the consequences of globalisation and urbanisation on the livelihood of urban dwellers.

In this chapter, we discussed urbanisation as a global trend with a more detailed discussion on inequalities and poverty in cities, rural urban linkages, and the poverty line as we apply it to an urban context and the urban context itself for the poor. This was followed by a discussion on the economic, environmental, social and political contexts in an urban setting. We concluded this section with a brief note on the urban context and the assets and vulnerability and the transformation. An understanding of the vulnerability of the poor in an urban context is necessary for well-informed policy and action.

In the next chapter, we discuss the impact of the evolving urban context for the children in particular.

CHAPTER 3. CHALLENGES FOR CHILDREN IN URBAN CONTEXTS

3.1 INTRODUCTION

In the previous chapter, we reviewed the context of the global trend towards urbanisation and globalisation and its impact on the livelihoods of urban poor. We also reviewed the contexts under which they live and their vulnerabilities to their urban contexts. In this chapter, we seek to understand the impact of the evolving urban scenario on the lives of children.

Kofi Annan, former Secretary-General of the UN, made a poignant remark when commenting on the state of the children in the world. He observed that while the image of a malnourished child, living in unhealthy and undesirable conditions, is often reflective of life for children in rural areas, with increasing urbanisation and urban poverty, such sights are not uncommon in the mega- and meta-cities of the world (Pais 2002: 1). Kofi Annan remarked that cities are no longer the seats of human culture and modernity. Cities are no longer reflective of the power and glory of industrialisation, economic growth and prosperity. Most of these urban poor live in extreme poverty, in unhealthy conditions without safe drinking water or basic environmental and sanitary facilities. This deteriorating urban life continues to attract youngsters from rural areas, who are seeking to eke out a livelihood (Annan 2009: 29).

Among such urban populations, as Marta Santos Pais of UNICEF observes, the children are the most affected. These are children who are entitled to a quality of life with access to education and healthcare, as declared in the promotion of universal human rights, but the opposite is true in the real world. (Pais 2002: 1).

Pais describes the plight of urban children as one in which they are silent witnesses to the abrogation of the fundamental right of every child to basic education and healthcare. Thus they are denied the opportunity to live up to their full potential. Unfortunately, outsiders tend to believe that urban

children are the most privileged. This unacceptable life situation remains a challenge for our children to realise their full potential (Pais, 2002: 1).

In this context, we seek to understand the situation of children in the urban areas through a literature review. Who are these children? What is their situation, their plight? What are the challenges they face?

3.2 WHY LOOK AT CHILDREN IN URBAN AREAS?

The UNICEF Report on Poverty and Exclusion among Urban Children estimates that at the turn of the current millennium, nearly a billion children came into the category of ‘urbanites’. This represents nearly half of the world’s children (UNICEF 2002: 2). While they continue to live in highly developed cosmopolitan cities, their actual habitation within the cities reflects a predominantly rural setting. The concentration of global urban children, more than 80 per cent of them in the third-world cities of Asia, Africa and Latin America, continues to be a cause for concern, as urban infrastructures in these regions are not well enough developed to sustain a quality of life for urban children. The African region alone has twice as many urban children as North America.

The same report highlights that given the economic prosperity enjoyed by urban centres of growth, they have attained significant economies of scale to deliver better basic health care, education for children, safe drinking water, acceptable levels of sanitary and drainage facilities to their urban people than is enjoyed by their rural counterparts. In addition, the urban population enjoy an average higher level of income for the majority of the population. This generates higher income for urban governments, which could be used to upgrade urban utilities and infrastructure (UNICEF 2002: 14).

The report stresses that the higher income enjoyed by the urban population and the Municipalities, is a great opportunity to use the natural urban advantage over the rural scenario to promote the welfare of children in urban areas. However, it depends on the establishment and running of competent structures for effective and responsive local governments in cities

and towns. Therefore, while seeking to promote the rights of the children, it is a great opportunity to highlight through advocacy, the necessity for accountability, equity and social inclusion at community and local level. This could be done with the full support of the local governments, as part of their commitment to children's rights (UNICEF 2002: 16).

3.2.1 GLOBAL TRENDS IN URBAN DEVELOPMENT

Although the statistical figures point to a gradual increase in migration from rural to urban areas, a closer look reveals the higher density of urban population and increased urbanisation trend in South Asian, sub-Saharan and Latin American countries. China and India alone account for one fourth of the urban population.

The increase in urban population is obvious to anyone visiting any of the South Asian cities as well as sub-Saharan countries. The twentieth century witnessed an explosive growth in urban population by ten times. In the 1900s, less than 15 per cent of the population lived in urban areas. This number had grown to 48 per cent by the end of the twentieth century (UNICEF 2002: 5).

The increased commercial and industrial investments in urban areas became a global trend. Such investments led to large-scale expansion of the world's economy, mostly in the urban areas.

Several other factors contributed to the rapid expansion in urban population. These included sociological aspects that contributed to the growth of urban population in African countries. For example, at the time of their independence from their colonial masters, the newly formed national governments allowed the wives and children to join their spouses and fathers in the cities. The earlier constraints imposed by the colonial masters on their male servants (not to have their families with them) had been removed. Besides, the impact of HIV/AIDS has contributed immensely to the deterioration of living conditions for orphaned children who migrated to urban centres in search of a livelihood (UNICEF 2002: 5).

In China, the rural-to-urban migration began soon after the late 1970s, when the authorities removed control over such movement of people. The collapse of the Soviet Union also led to the dispersal of population towards urban centres. The increased population growth rates contributed to rapid urbanisation. Therefore, while the rapid economic growth accelerated the process of urbanisation, several sociological factors exacerbated the influx of people from rural areas to urban centres (UNICEF 2002: 5).

3.2.2 URBAN POVERTY AND EXCLUSION

According to UNICEF, a number of statistical indicators promote the view that people living in urban areas are financially and materially better endowed than the national average. This is because generally the higher-income population tend to be concentrated in urban areas (UNICEF 2002: 5).

Where statistics are available for low-income people of urban centres, such data highlight the higher infant mortality rate (IMR) and higher incidence of water-borne diseases in the cities. It is not always that the urban dwellers earn more than rural people. Often the earnings of urban dwellers are lower than the national average. Generally, official statistics tend to hide the gravity of the situation.

Donahue draws an example from Brazil on the plight of urban children on account of their exclusion from society. Between 1945 through 1970 Brazilian economy went through accelerated growth, without the benefits reaching out to the lower social and economic strata in the community. When an economic recession hit the country in the 1980s, positive trends of economic prosperity were reversed during the decade. By 1989, 26 million children under the age of 17 years lived in families with earnings equating them at poverty levels. The vast majority of these children (71%) lived in urban areas, most in sub human conditions of degradation (Donahue 1994: ix).

It was a recognised fact that children mostly worked on the street to help themselves and their families financially. This is in fact the reality of the urban poor. Besides, many children were facing tensions at home leading to a

stressful existence and violence, most of it arising out of economic hardships which could not meet the basic needs of a family (Donahue 1994: ix).

It was also recognized around this time that the older children who left their home and community to work in the streets were the most visible and the highest risk urban groups, excluded from the society. Often, these children were picked up by police and the judiciary put them in institutions until they reached adulthood. Such a situation emerged due to the poverty of the children and their continued exclusion from their family and society (Donahue 1994: ix).

When the economic recovery took place in Brazil without equitable distribution of wealth, the problem of children and adolescents was sought to be addressed through a social-welfare system which was more correctional and repressive. This amounted to social control, leading to isolation and exclusion of such children, viewing poor children on the street as a threat to safety and security for themselves and to the larger community. In the 1960s a more progressive approach was considered but the approach still continued to be top down and institutionalization oriented. Children were removed from their families and communities and committed to large institutions. Such an exclusion from families and society lead them to learn all wrong things (Donahue 1994: x).

Eventually, the academic community in Brazil, encouraged by a few creative government institutions began a research into the problems of children that produced a new vision for the street child. This approach eventually led Brazil change its attitude about street children, a shift from being looked upon as 'social outcasts' necessitating exclusion from society, to a perception that began to look at them as young adults working on the streets and trying to help their families and themselves who live under very difficult economic circumstances (Donahue 1994: x).

The prevailing conditions all over the world continue to testify to the reality that many urban children are not the privileged children we might imagine. The cities represent the frontline for promoting actions and efforts

to overcome some of the most serious obstacles to children's development and enjoyment of their rights.

With more research on children in urban areas, the perception is gradually changing, as there are also examples of good governance where children's rights have been recognized and valued, in small cities and towns where Municipal authorities have realised the advantages of helping children living in poverty to promote their social inclusion, to respect their human rights and to involve them as partners in urban development. There are good examples of small towns and cities taking a proactive stand in promoting 'child friendly' policies and activities towards attaining universal children's rights (Pais 2002: 1).

However, much of these efforts are possible only by the allocation of needed funding resources to the local bodies. The available resources generated through taxes and levies of local bodies go to support Municipal infrastructure and investments on new infrastructure to meet the needs of increasing urban population. This is where sensitization through advocacy efforts is critical and needed to act on improving the situation of urban children and prevent their exclusion. Often funds may be available to embark on urban development efforts to promote a healthy life for children, but most often these may not be acted upon due to lack of awareness or sensitization. Most of the International donors relay on Government statistics to understand and realise the gravity of the urban poverty. This is where some of the problems are. The current level of projecting the level of poverty and deprivation among people are based on statistical methods and thinking which does not reflect the reality of the urban poor. As Satterthwaite highlights below, most of the determinants of poverty level are flawed and does not project a correct picture of the gravity of poverty or the various dimension of it (Satterthwaite 2004: 13).

Satterthwaites report that most of the statistics related to poverty level indicators are biased in favour of determining the cost of food needed for family sustenance, with no provision for non-food requirements of the household. This approach tends to distort the poverty image of a household

with no income, no access to education, healthcare, etc, with one that has all these facilities, but continues to have the same no income, as the former. (Satterthwaite 2004: 13).

This explains why ‘estimates of the scale of urban poverty worldwide are so much lower than the estimates for the number of people living in very poor quality housing that lacks basic services’ (UNCHS 1996: 107). Therefore, to determine the poverty level in urban centres based purely on the cost of food does not give a realistic picture of poverty, since the definition of poverty excludes the costing of most goods and services. The main challenge to computing a realistic poverty level is the inability to cost the value of housing, schooling for children in urban centres, healthcare, water and transportation. Everything is based on the cost of food, which determines the poverty level (Satterthwaite 2004: 107).

It is not uncommon for utilities, medical care and transports each to take 5 per cent of income. Invariably, the costs of utilities and public services tend to be much higher for urban households. This is especially so for the poor people in illegal settlements, who have to purchase from water vendors and also pay for sanitation facilities and their use to the local owners of such facilities. These are common trends in third-world cities (UNICEF 2002: 6).

The UNICEF Report on Poverty and Exclusion among Urban Children shows that while in determining poverty lines in high-income countries the costs of housing and utilities services are decisive factors, such costs are not considered relevant when computing the poverty level for low- and middle-income countries (UNICEF 2002: 6).

Variations in setting the criteria for determining poverty lines between countries limit the validity of comparisons between countries and regions at the global level. Universal poverty lines (for instance the \$1.00 a day poverty line) are vague formulations because differences in income within and between countries, as well as variations in establishing poverty lines, are not considered when calculating an arbitrary figure (UNICEF 2002: 6).

In summary, the challenges facing the children in urban centres are manifold. These call for concerted efforts by the local bodies, mainly Municipal bodies as well as Donors to initiate child friendly policies and programmes. The efforts need to be inclusive of children and make them part of the decision making process affecting their future. The necessity to advocate for such programmes begin with a correct portrayal of the poverty level measured in realistic terms. This millennium offers the opportunity to elevate the urban children out of poverty and deprivation, which should not be lost, lest a blot will continue to remain in our urban landscape involving children.

3.2.3 FACTORS CONTRIBUTING TO URBAN POVERTY

According to UNICEF, so many factors contribute to urban poverty that exists at several levels, ranging from the most local to international levels. Generally, the immediate causes for the poverty are dealt with and resolved in a timely manner. However, addressing the root causes of the problem leads to sustainable long-terms solutions. Such an approach needs to consider the ownership of the process by the community and solutions found by the community through empowerment. Community empowerment entails community awareness building on issues so they make informed decisions. For example, when children are to be enrolled in school, community members consider the options and opportunities versus their prevailing constraints and make informed choices and decisions (UNICEF 2002: 7). The same report recommends that these three key themes on child deprivation need focus. They are:

- The commitment of the local and national governments
- Increasing disparity of wealth among nations
- The effects of the global economy (UNICEF 2002: 7)

3.2.3.1 The quality of local and national governments

The distribution of power, authority and resources at various levels of government and the quality of governance are important considerations. ‘Quality of governance’ means how responsive the authority is in addressing

the needs of the people, their accountability for management of the material, and cash resources for the good of the greater society. Factors such as transparency in decision making and efforts to work closely with civil society are also important (UNICEF 2002: 7).

The financial power in a nation state is concentrated in the urban centres of economic power. Therefore, the stability of urban households and the wellbeing of children are dependent on and tied to the economic situation and changes in the urban areas. Factors such as equal distribution of the benefits of economic growth, government and civic policies and practices in support of urban poor, good working practices and ethics, provision for vocational training and education, protective labour laws and practices also affect the urban poor.

Micklewright points out that the level of funding transferred from central government to local government is an important factor because local bodies and civic institutions have the responsibility to construct and maintain the civic infrastructure. Most local governments, especially in the developing world, do not have the fiduciary power to raise financial resources and thus they tend to neglect the needs and welfare of the child's safety, welfare, health and other development needs (Micklewright 2000: 7).

3.2.3.2 Growing inequality within nations

A great deal of child deprivation is linked to economic and social disparity within nations. This is so even in countries with good economic performances. India is a case in point. India is considered one of the fastest growing economies in the world, registering 9 per cent economic growth. It is unfortunate, though, that India continues to remain the home of one third of the world's malnourished children. The paradox is that India also produces on average 220.0 million tons of food each year, and 16 per cent to 18 per cent of the food is lost in storage (Dhar 2008: 5).

3.2.3.3 Effects of the global economy

Child deprivation is directly linked to poor economic performance by many of the low-income countries and the economic deterioration witnessed

in middle-income countries. In recent times, we have noticed that the large debt burden faced by some of these countries can also be a debilitating factor for the poor.

Declining household income and the fall in government expenditure make it difficult for households to protect children and to meet their basic needs. Tacoli shares the view that urban households are always exposed uncertain economic climate and thus become more vulnerable to those changes. This is all the more so in an urban context where the economy is cash based in a highly monetary context. In the same way, a booming economy benefits much of the urban population. It is also important to discuss the linkages that exist between urban and rural areas, which cannot be discussed in isolation (Tacoli 1998: 73).

Potts and Mutambirwa argue that ‘strong urban–rural interactions and interdependencies mean that structural adjustment affects both rural and urban populations’ (Potts and Mutambirwa 1998: 56).

3.3 CONDITIONS FOR CHILDREN IN URBAN AREAS

The welfare of the children, youth and other vulnerable groups both south and north, have been severely threatened by the economic recession which began in the early 1970s. Much of these negative forces can be attributed to the impacts of external debt, declining terms of trade, protectionism imposed by the developed countries against imports from developing countries and also excessive military spending. The structural adjustment programmes imposed by the Bretton Woods institutions on developing countries, perceived as a panacea to the economic problems of countries did not solve the problems adequately, but rather exacerbated the problem (Blanc 1994: 1).

While the impact of these global economic trends on children have been well documented, how these have led to social transformation creating with unhealthy, disheartened and troubled population of young people is becoming more difficult to demonstrate. The urban areas of developing world are witnessing social deterioration. This is causing more urban

children to be born into poverty, be born prematurely, die in their first year of life, suffer low birth weight, and have mothers who receive no pre-natal care. Besides, these children are more likely to have parents who are unemployed or under employed, see a parent who go to prison, live in single parent household, live in substandard housing, often suffer child abuse and drop out of school. These children are also prone to be abused in work places under exploitative setting; these children are more likely to be involved in drugs, prostitution, and become more exposed to violence on the streets (Blanc 1994: 2).

While adequacy of physical infrastructure is a necessity for the whole family and community, they are of particular importance for children for inadequate physical infrastructure can affect the children much more than adults because of their greater vulnerability to disease and illness. Therefore, the priorities for the local government and their partners will change if they decide to focus on the needs of children (Bartlett 2002: 1).

Children living in urban areas face innumerable challenges. These challenges leave significant negative impacts on them. Adolescents are also affected by the poverty. Often, challenges arising from the status of being poor have an effect on the mental wellbeing of the children and the rights of the children. The deteriorating environment, inadequate physical infrastructure, inadequate housing and the social context contribute to unhealthy situations for urban children. Let us examine the impact of poor urban living environments on children.

3.3.1 PHYSICAL INFRASTRUCTURE

3.3.1.1 Health: Physical infrastructure for healthy living

While planning for children to live and grow in a thriving atmosphere, we often tend to limit our view to the social support and services that are important to them. These are mostly related to the love and protection of their families, the friendship of their peers, the clear guidance of social norms and values, and the health services and most important of all, education. It is also important to recognize that supportive physical

environments are also needed to contribute towards their optimal development. The physical environment problems can present major challenges to urban children, undermining their well being. The availability of decent housing, provision of water and sanitation facilities, adequate space for playing with other children, the levels of traffic and pollution have a profound impact on children. These services are beyond the means of parents alone to provide to these children and the absence of such supportive measures from the local Governments (Municipal bodies); it becomes a challenge to the parents (Bartlett 2002: 1).

While adequacy of physical infrastructure is a necessity for the whole family and community, they are of particular importance for children for inadequate physical infrastructure can affect the children much more than adults because of their greater vulnerability to disease and illness. Therefore, the priorities for the local government and their partners will change if they decide to focus on the needs of children (Bartlett 2002: 1).

3.3.1.2 What do urban children need from their physical environment?

The needs of the children are adequate security, stability and protection provided by adequate housing, besides a healthy and safe environment. They also need access to play and a friendly and supportive neighbourhood that will help to promote their mental and social development. Therefore, efforts with regard to provision of adequate sanitation, road construction, settlement upgrading, security and regulations regarding land tenure, will lead to positive living outcomes for children.

Generally, the standards of environmental support and piped water systems have been abysmally poor in many developing countries and the investment to maintain the standards for the increasing population in urban areas has been low. The high concentration of people in urban areas and the lack of adequate waste disposal and drainage facilities cause contamination, leading to the incidence of contagious diseases. Unless effective measures are taken to strengthen the health infrastructure as well as both the preventive

and the curative side of medical care, the health of the children's populations will deteriorate.

In cities served by protected water systems, proper sanitation and drainage, timely waste removal, and a good healthcare system, CMRs are generally around 10 per 1 000 live births and few deaths are the result of environmental hazards. In contrast, 'in cities with inadequate health, sanitary and environmental protection provision, it is common for child mortality to be 10 or 20 times higher' (UNICEF 2002: 8).

In Glasgow, in the UK, in 1900, the IMR in a poor area 'was 47 per 1 000 live births, compared with 10 per 1 000 live births for a more affluent suburb' (Pacione 1990: 310).

3.3.1.3 Water and sanitation

The survival of children and maintenance of good health depends as much on safe and healthy environment as on the provision of health services. Inadequate sanitation and drainage, a lack of sufficient clean water, uncollected waste and pollution all lead to child mortality and morbidity to unacceptable levels. More than half a million children die each year before they reach the age of five; these deaths are largely preventable diseases occurring due to poor quality of environment. According to estimates, more than two thirds of the illnesses occurring among young children are caused by poor living conditions (Bartlett 2002: 5).

It is medically accepted that the predominant cause of infant and child mortality among urban people is diarrhoeal diseases. 'Human excreta are the primary source of diarrhoeal disease pathogens' (Cairncross and Feachem, 1993: 2).

Problems of inadequate water supplies are compounded by poor sanitation, which leads to heightened need for hygiene. Safe stool disposal is the most appropriate way to eliminate all possible contact with excreta, than any amount of hand washing (Curtis, Cairncross and Yonli 2000: 24-29).

Public Health reports admit that the predominant cause for repeated bouts of diarrhoea in Children, worm infestations, scabies, rashes,

open sores and eye infections are caused due to children growing up in unsanitary conditions. The only way to prevent the occurrence of these diseases is adequate provision of water and sanitation as well as drainage and waste disposal (Bartlett 2002: 5).

When supplies of water are inadequate, due to more number of people being served through one water point, it places a stress on the community.

When investments in and provision of water and sanitation are poor, diarrhoeal and other diseases linked to contaminated water or contaminated food and water are among the most serious health problems within urban neighbourhoods – or whole cities. The impact of diarrhoea, combined with malnutrition, which is so highly prevalent in the sub-Saharan and South Asian contexts, and the resultant health hazards for children, especially urban children, can be disastrous (Bartlett 2002: 6).

The UNICEF Report on the State of the World's Children states that such a combination of diarrhoea and malnutrition can 'so weaken the body's defences that diseases such as measles and pneumonia become major causes of child death' (UNICEF 1997).

'Long-term impacts for children are not restricted to health; a city study in Brazil has related early diarrhoeal disease in children to impaired cognitive functioning several years later' (Guerrant, Moore, Lima, Patrick, Schorling and Guerrant 1999: 710).

It is therefore, important to provide for safe water in sufficient quantities and proper sanitation in urban areas to ensure children's health and wellbeing. These are frequently absent in poor urban settlements in low- and middle-income countries.

Cairncross and Feachem share the view that availability of safe, sufficient water supplies and provision for adequate sanitation are basic necessities for maintaining a healthy life for children. Owing to financial constraints or lack of proper strategies in the allocation of resources, civic bodies and local governments often fail to provide for these necessities, especially water and sanitation (UNICEF 2002: 8).

Victoria, writing in the *International Journal of Epidemiology*, comments that where water is scarce and needs to be paid for, households tend to restrict its usage. They are inclined to manage with less water than is required to maintain a child's health. She refers to the situation in Brazil 'where infants were five times as likely to die in households using public standpipes as in those with water pipes to the house' (Victoria, Smith, Vaughan, Nobre, Lombard, Tei Veira, Fuchs, Moreira, Gigante and Barros. 1998: 652).

A further study by Rossi-Espagnet, Goldstein and Tabibzadeh confirms that where there is not adequate safe water, it affects the hygienic preparation of food. Together with a situation where there is no provision for storing food, the likelihood of food contamination is greater. 'Bottle-fed babies and young children being weaned are at particularly high risk' (Rossi-Espagnet, Goldstein and Tabibzadeh 1991: 192).

In urban areas, households often decide to restrict water consumption, as they have to pay for water in bottles. In such instances, many households make do with much less water than is required for good and safe living for the children (Victoria et al 1998: 653).

The impact of inadequate water is compounded by the effects of poor sanitation. Only a small proportion of poor urban residents have adequate provision for sanitation and here too the problems are not confined to informal settlements. Devas and Korboe refer to the prevalence of over-used and poorly maintained public toilets for the households in the informal settlements. 'One settlement in Kumasi, Ghana, had 320 persons per latrine and long queues been inevitable' (Devas and Korboe 2000: 126).

The lack of adequate water supplies leads to unhygienic living. This results in a high prevalence of skin and eye infections among children. Besides, scabies and trachoma – associated with a lack of water supplies for washing – are particularly high among those living in poor-quality homes and neighbourhoods (Landwehr, Keita, Ponninghaus and Tounkara 1998: 589).

In Bangalore, a metropolitan city in India, well known for its high tech industries, public fountains with broken taps or pipes and broken unplastered platforms account for water supply needs of more than half its six million population. Nearly a third of its population do not have access to piped water and 113,000 inhabitants resort to open defecation with no access to latrines. This deteriorating environmental sanitation condition coupled with lack of adequate supply of drinking water is a primary cause for disease and illness among urban children.

In Luanda, the capital of Angola, 75% of the inhabitants of the 4.0 million populations live in informal settlements with little or no infrastructure services. In the city of Ibadan, Nigeria, only 22 percent of the population are served by the municipal water system. In Ibadan there is no sewage system.

In Nairobi, more than half the population occupy less than six percent of the city's land, thus squeezing themselves into small hutments, with no provision for toilets or sanitation. This leaves the children with no space to neither play nor do the children have access to clean drinking water and healthy living conditions. Such unhealthy living conditions cause infectious and communicable diseases among children. This leads to high infant mortality rates and lower life expectancy among the urban dwellers, especially among children (UNICEF 2002: 9).

3.3.1.4 Environmental contexts

There is increasing concern worldwide on the effects of chemical pollutants on the environment, especially in urban areas. These chemical pollutants, as well as biological pathogens and toxic waste from industries, continue to pollute the urban environment, especially water resources and the air.

Chance (1998), writing in the Canadian Journal of Public Health, presents the view that 'Children are particularly vulnerable to harm from exposure because of their rapid growth and immaturity, both physiologically and metabolically' (Chance and Harmsen 1998: 10).

The growing number of vehicles on the city roads has led to increased consumption of leaded petrol. This spews out highly carbonised fumes through the exhaust, polluting the atmosphere in the cities. This polluted atmosphere is unhealthy for urban children, especially those who eke out a living on the streets.

‘Lead ingestion is a particular problem for urban children, especially in countries where leaded fuel and paint are still used. In Kaduna, Nigeria, for instance 92 per cent of children examined had blood lead levels above acceptable limits’ (Nriagu, Oleru, Cudjoe and Ada 1997: 9-13).

‘In the USA, the ingestion of dust in households containing lead-based paint remains the most common environmental health problem affecting children’ (Campbell and Osterhoudt 2000: 428-436).

A field investigative report by Landrigan, in the UNICEF report points to the high health risk children are exposed to owing to degradation of the urban environment. The reckless usage of pesticides to control cockroaches, rats and other insects is a matter of serious concern (Landrigan, Claudio, Markowitz, Berkowitz, Brenner, Romero, Wetmur, Matte, Gore, Godbold and Wolff 1999: 431-437).

Chemical pollutants may not be as much of a health problem as biological pathogens, but pollutants in water supplies, food and air are a worldwide concern. This is specially so in urban areas and more so in locations inhabited predominantly by urban poor people. The children are most vulnerable to these toxins (UNICEF 2002: 10).

The indoor air pollution is beginning to be a major health hazard among children in low income countries, mostly occurring on account of use of coal and bio-mass fuels, poor quality stoves and inadequate ventilation. This affects infants and young children more because they remain with the mothers while they cook or undertake other tasks within their homes. The effects of these pollutants, combined with malnutrition, may retard growth as well as contributing to increased incidence of acute respiratory infections (UNICEF 2002: 10).

Recent studies have confirmed the alarming increase in the incidence of asthma and other respiratory infections among urban children. While this has been observed to be a serious issue in developed countries, it is beginning to receive attention in other urban centres (MacIntyre, De Villiers and Owange-Iraka 2001: 2001: 667-672).

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3.3.1.5 Malnutrition

The deteriorating environmental conditions, combined with inadequate water and sanitation in urban areas is a major cause for the increasing incidence of Malnutrition among urban children. The children's immune systems are under constant challenge from the unsanitary living conditions. The body intake of nutrients goes to support the maintenance of the immune system rather than physical growth (Solomon, Mazariegos, Brown and Klasing 1993: 327-332).

Frequent incidence of diarrhoea often lead to loss of calories as do children affected with worm infestation which also take considerable part of a child's daily intake (UNICEF: 1998).

It is a general perception that the effect of Diarrhoea is temporary and transient, but it becomes difficult to catch up with children's growth if the occurrence is frequent (Moore, Lima, Conaway, Schorling, Soares and Guerrant 2001: 1457-1464).

Once the children become malnourished, they become much more vulnerable to disease and infection and become more malnourished (Rice and Socco 2000: 1207-1221).

Continued status of malnourished can lead to repeated illness and lead to long terms negative impacts that go beyond health and growth. Research findings have concluded that the number of early episodes of

diarrhoea lead to lower cognitive functioning when children are eight or nine years of age (Guerrant, et al 1999: 707-713).

Some other studies have also confirmed that worm infestation affects children's memory, reasoning ability and reading comprehension (Sakti, Nokes, Subagio Hertano, Hendratno, Hall, Donald, Bubby and Satato 1999: 322-34).

From the above reading, we recognize how important the environmental conditions, especially the adequate provision of water and sanitation facilities for urban dwellers, if we are to provide for good health care and nutritional support for children in urban areas. The more challenging the physical environment is, the more critical the quality of care becomes for children's health and survival. Several studies have confirmed that Health and well being of children, especially in urban centres can never be accomplished in the absence of water and sanitation (Mertens and Jaffar 1992: 1157-64 and Gilman and Marquis 1993: 1554-58).

3.4 HOUSING

The issues that generally affect the adults in the family, especially inadequacy of housing stock, exorbitant rentals, lack of adequate housing finance etc leave a significant impact on the children. Secure housing is a basic need for a secured family life; a secure housing is also a critical asset if a family want to move beyond chronic need, providing a foothold to tackle other problems of poverty. When this basic need is not met, then children can be affected in a variety of ways (Bartlett 2002: 3).

Children tend to experience practical and material implications as well as psychological consequences due to insecure house tenure. Children develop a sense of emotional security and trust is as much due to their relationship with other people as much as in the security and familiarity of their physical environment. The children need to live in a place that will not be taken away the next day (Bartlett 2002: 3).

It has also been observed that the emotional problems of children have been found to include anxiety, sleeplessness, and withdrawal (Vostanis, Grattan Stuart 1998: 899-901).

The children are sensitive to their parent's plight, even though they may not be homeless. The family stress of exorbitant rents, lack of basic supports and the unpredictable living circumstances are factors that affect the children emotional and psychologically (Bartlett 2002: 3).

Decent, secure and affordable housing is a fundamental right of every child. A healthy physical and emotional life for growing children is dependent on decent and clean habitation in a secure environment. Nevertheless, the urban poor struggle with housing, getting it, keeping it and coping with its inadequacies (UNICEF 2002: 11).

The UNICEF Report on Poverty and Exclusion among Urban Children comments that it is not uncommon to see 25 to 50 per cent of the population living in shacks and structures built illegally, violating all civic body regulations and rules. This is a common practice in most cities in low- and middle-income countries. In most cities, there are varying degrees of illegality, from settlements where all aspects are illegal to those that have aspects of legality, and illegal sub-divisions in which the land is not occupied illegally. The uncertainty of their existence and livelihood is always compounded by the insecurity of their tenure (UNICEF 2002: 12).

One of my senior colleagues, who have been in international development for over thirty years, once mentioned the plight of children in Mongolia. She was visiting the street children to get to know their situation. Most street children in Ulan Bator, the capital, live in underground sewer ducts. These children live in the midst of squalor and the city's drainage, exposing them to life-threatening diseases. They do so to escape the severe winter cold that pervades Mongolia (Wavre 2002).

3.4.1 EVICTIONS

One of the most difficult circumstance and an emotionally draining experience a child faces is the forced displacement or eviction.

Audefroy, analysing eviction trends around the world, reviewed 40 eviction cases between 1980 and 1993 and found that eight cases involved more than 100 000 people. South Korea has the dubious distinction of having evicted 720 000 people in preparation for the Olympic Games (Audefroy 1994: 17).

This was not a one-off event; 'between 1960 and 1990, 5 million people were evicted from their homes in Seoul, many of them several times, often from sites provided after previous evictions' (ACHR 1998: 90).

Given the challenges of slums within the city's peripheral limits to the quality of life, Mumbai, a metropolitan city in India, embarked on a 'slum clearance' programme. In the year 1998 alone, the Brihan-Mumbai Municipal Corporation evicted 167,000 persons from their homes. One of such eviction programme concerns a community of 5000 people living in Ambedkar Nagar, a reclaimed tidal mangrove swamp. In this colony the inhabitants were evicted from their homes 45 times over the past ten years. Most of these people were construction workers brought in from outside their state. Through hard work, these persons had re-built their homes each time they were pulled down, turning this swam into a valuable real estate property.

In May 1998, two months after the eviction, a research team undertook a study of women and children in the community, looking at their health status. Out of a sample of 70 children, of ages one to five, 46 were found to be stunted and 12 to be wasted. Diarrhoea, acute respiratory infections, including pneumonia and skin infections was widespread among the population. Each of the eviction upset the stability of the household. Repeated eviction wears away capacity to recover. The women had to find money to reconstruct the houses each time they were demolished. Initially they purchased the housing reconstruction materials out of their wage earnings; then they began to draw upon their savings and eventually the women had to sell their brass vessels and jewellery to raise money to rebuild their houses. By the time their houses were demolished in 1998, most of the

households had exhausted all their avenues and finally turned to money lenders, borrowing at 100% interest (UNICEF 2002: 12).

Evictions leave a devastating impact on the lives and mental make up of the children, as it always lead to homelessness and a financial and an economic upheaval for the family. It is not uncommon for people to lose their possessions during eviction and family stability jeopardized. This also leads to dislocation to children's schooling and break up of social net works so assiduously built over the years. Children explain the violence, panic and the confusion arising from the evictions. They share the experience of sleeping through restless nights and being separated from friends. More often, if the family is relocated to another locality, then the loss of friends and the consequences of stress and economic difficulties causing break down in family relations (UNICEF 2002: 11).

A house, whatever its condition, accommodates the family, shelters them against the forces of nature, and provides a sense of security. For the children in particular, a house provides refuge from the often-hostile environment. Demolition of their houses and eviction, in front of their parents, can be the most demoralising moment in a child's life.

3.4.2 HOUSING QUALITY AND CONDITIONS

In several instances, the house tenure may be secure, but most urban households live in noisy, overcrowded, run down conditions, which can drain the emotional resources of both children and their families. It is a common knowledge, which has been confirmed by several studies that crowded and chaotic conditions contribute to stress and stained social relations (Evans and Lepore 2000: 204-206).

It has also been established that poor cognitive development in children, lower reading comprehension and lower motivation are attributable to crowded noisy and run down conditions of the homes and their neighbourhoods (Evans, Lepore, Shejwal and Palsane 1998: 1514-1523).

Pio, writing about acute respiratory infections in children, comments that with limited health and financial resources, a child who contracts

bronchitis or pneumonia in low- and middle-income countries is 50 times more likely to die than a child in Europe or North America (Pio 1986: 181).

Generally, the standards of environmental support and piped water systems have been abysmally poor in many developing countries and the investment to maintain the standards for the increasing population in urban areas has been low. The high concentration of people in urban areas and the lack of adequate waste disposal and drainage facilities cause contamination, leading to the incidence of contagious diseases. Unless effective measures are taken to strengthen the health infrastructure as well as both the preventive and the curative side of medical care, the health of the children's populations will deteriorate.

In cities served by protected water systems, proper sanitation and drainage, timely waste removal, and a good healthcare system, CMRs are generally around 10 per 1 000 live births and few deaths are the result of environmental hazards. In contrast, 'in cities with inadequate health, sanitary and environmental protection provision, it is common for child mortality to be 10 or 20 times higher' (UNICEF 2002: 8).

In Glasgow, in the UK, in 1900, the IMR in a poor area 'was 47 per 1 000 live births, compared with 10 per 1 000 live births for a more affluent suburb' (Pacione 1990: 310).

Another health factor that seldom gets attention is that abnormally high noise levels and overcrowding have an impact on the cognitive development of children and consequently on their behavioural patterns. This has been observed in several countries, including India and the US (Evans, et al 1998: 1518).

It is therefore, important to provide for safe water in sufficient quantities and proper sanitation in urban areas to ensure children's health and wellbeing. These are frequently absent in poor urban settlements in low- and middle-income countries.

3.4.2.1 Physical hazards

The explosive growth in urban population and the lack of adequate space to house the ever-increasing population leads to the formation of urban settlements in unsafe areas. The author has seen urban squatter camps adjoining railway tracks in Jakarta (in Indonesia), as well as in Mumbai, Calcutta and Chennai in India. The tragedy is that children as well as adults go to the railway tracks early in the mornings for their ablutions, often to be run over by trains.

Urban centres attract people because industries, which offer employment, are located there and therefore bring about congestion. Most of the urban settlements and squatter camps are located near such industrial units. If these are chemical units, then they pose challenges to the urban poor communities living near them. Back in the 1970s, one of the major chemical units belonging to the American Multinational Union Carbide had a chemical plant in Bhopal, a large city in the central India. The plant had an explosion at midnight and toxic chemical gas leaked out in large quantities. The gas poisoned and killed a few hundred people and mutilated several thousand others, some incapacitated for life. Such a tragedy orphaned many children, and some children were maimed. No amount of financial compensation was adequate to bring life back to the families.

Many urban children eke out a living as street children and some as beggars. The heavy road traffic has injured and often killed young people in their prime. High levels of overcrowding increase the likelihood of these events.

3.4.3 SOCIAL DIMENSION

Where the governance structure is weak, and there are constraints on resources, the distribution of services and resources are poor the burden on the deprived households and individuals in the urban areas is heavy. The situation is compounded and the impact on children is devastating where there is a lack of community organisation and collective action. The

inadequate and environmentally inappropriate physical environment compounds the difficulties of the poor (UNICEF 2002: 12).

3.5 QUALITY OF CARE

A high level of parental awareness of health and hygiene alone is not sufficient guarantee for provision for and protection of children. Caregivers for children are generally overstretched, having to work long hours after hours of walking to places of work from their homes (UNICEF 2002: 12).

The same UNICEF report quotes Wachs and Corapci's observation, that the girl child at home is always saddled with the responsibility of caring for young siblings, when the parents are at work. The psychological stress imposed by living in poor urban conditions also takes its toll. Caregivers tend to be more restrictive, controlling and punitive while serving in crowded and difficult situations.

Writing on the impact of economic hardship on the black families and children McLoyd states that 'under the many pressures of poverty this can escalate to abuse and neglect' (McLoyd 1990: 316).

3.5.1 WOMEN-HEADED HOUSEHOLDS

One of the challenging social factors in urban areas is the break up of the family as a unit. This occurs for various reasons. In an urban setting, each household seeks to increase its livelihood opportunities and thereby its household income by adopting multiple livelihood activities. The pressures on family life are extensive, often leading to disintegration of families. The incidence of 'single-mother-headed households' is an increasing phenomenon in urban areas. This phenomenon is gradually becoming a global issue. Many observers have pointed this to be a cause for poor outcomes for children. There is enough evidence to suggest that the households of single woman are disproportionately poor. The effort required for providing high quality of care for children is much more in the case of a single woman. However, there is also evidence that women are more likely to invest their limited resources in children's well being and long term

success. Many children do better in female headed households (O'Connell, as quoted in UNICEF 2002: 13).

3.6 URBAN NEIGHBOURHOODS

The pressures of living in an urban setting and the competing demands on the household's earning members leaves little time to provide for the children's emotional and physical needs. Living conditions in run-down inner cities and peripheral squatter communities provide few recreational opportunities for children.

In four Johannesburg neighbour hoods, children described settings that were almost completely lacking in appealing possibilities. There were no recreational facilities or safe places to play or see friends. Mobility was limited by heavy traffic, crumbling sidewalks and broken traffic lights. 'The bus service was patchy and unaffordable, and streets were so poorly lit that children were afraid to go out at night' (Swart-Kruger 2001: 13)

In the busy part of Johannesburg, there is a squatter camp called "Canaansland" where a community of 350 families live in an area less than an acre of land. This piece of habitation does not have toilet facilities, no electricity and only one water tap. An International Research programme on called "Growing up in cities", sought to explore children's own understanding of their own urban environment. The intention was to seek children's own understanding and the children's own recommended solutions to the community problems. Their observations and comments were summarised as "it is not a good place" said one child; there is a lot of fighting said another. The roads are too busy and people drive very fast; almost most of them felt that it smells very bad when there is a wind and when it rains.

Lack of adequate facilities for a health living was a major concern expressed by most children. The single water tap catered to the needs of 1000 people; waiting for several hours to fill water in their containers for the family needs. The only available toilet was crowded and most people used nearby open areas for defecation. The children were revolted at the stench

that emanated from the open latrines. The children were bothered by the filth and rubbish that surrounded them, and were concerned that such filth was cleared only at irregular intervals.

The children lived in small and crowded hutments, with little or no protection from wind and rain; the winter cold was always a challenge to deal with. Open braziers were the only source for warming and children were aware of the dangers of toxic fumes and the fire hazard such braziers posed to their own household and the neighbourhood.

The violence and the quarrels in the community upset all the children. They spoke of adult drinking problems, street brawls and gun shots in the city.

Most importantly, because of their identity as city squatters, children felt stigmatized and humiliated by the surrounding community; abuses by passers by were not uncommon.

When the children were asked to come up with suggestions to improve the life in their camps, they came up with four major issues that confronted them. Improved housing that would keep them out of inclement weather was of primary concern. The urgent need for sanitation and a place to call their own where they could do their homework. Finally, the children from the squatter camp wanted the people living nearby, who are better off, to treat them with respect and human dignity (Swart-Kruger 2001: 13).

Living in such an inhuman and substandard environment, children feel their dignity is compromised. Children are extremely sensitive to their living conditions and often find their poor living environment a cause of humiliation and distress (UNICEF 2002: 13).

3.6.1 LACK OF CHILD-FRIENDLY SPACES

Since homes are overcrowded, children have little option other than to spend most of their time outside their homes. They are resourceful about finding a game to play in restricted space. However, they play in restricted spaces that often place children at serious risk. Therefore, the caregivers often

respond to such an unsafe living environment by restricting play (Swart-Kruger 2001: 13).

Adequate time and space for play teaches children about team spirit, and physical exercise, and gives them an opportunity to breathe fresh air. These factors contribute to healthy living.

Most urban centres do not have space for children to play. In older cities, as well as in new government-promoted townships, such facilities were provided for children's play. However, in the current phase of development, where every square -meter of the urban centre is measured in millions of dollars, private developers cash in on every square- metre of land in urban areas, without providing space for children's recreational facilities.

3.6.2 VIOLENCE AND INSECURITY

Increasingly, violence in inner cities and the behaviour and influence of anti-social elements in the neighbourhood are exposing children to the criminal world. Such exposure often leads to depression, as well as anxiety and distress among children and adolescents (UNICEF 2002: 13)

Poverty and the inadequate living conditions, insecurity and marginalisation experienced by poor communities often lead to frustration and aggression. A study in Chicago reports that 47 per cent of girls and 55 per cent of boys between 7 and 13 had witnessed violent crime and over 20 per cent lived with someone who had been shot (Sheehan, DiCara, LeBailly and Christoffel 1997: 503-504).

In Washington DC, 75 per cent of a sample of African-American elementary schoolchildren had witnessed violent physical assault and gang violence as well as rape and homicide. 'Almost half their parents were unaware that their children had been exposed to violence' (Hill and Jones 1997: 273).

Children and adolescents sometimes contribute to violence. Drug abuse and gang-related crimes are a cause of fear and concern in communities around the world. Sometimes, children cross the path of law-enforcement agencies. In certain cases, where the juvenile justice system is

weak or non-existent, children become subject to arbitrary treatment by the police and to other human rights abuses. In many communities, the provision of recreational facilities, job training and options for constructive involvement for children seeks to wean them from crime (Vanderschueren 1998: 4).

3.6.3 SCHOOLING AND WORK

Vimla Ramachandran, a journalist in India, reported that even when government schools are within reach, many urban children do not attend schools. A house-to-house survey revealed that the poor quality of school facilities and the weak standards of schoolteachers were major factors in children not attending schools (Ramachandran 2001: 5).

Often, in urban households, children are considered an economic asset and are withdrawn from school to enable them to work and contribute to the household income. Frequently, parents living in urban areas look at children as economic assets, encouraging them, even at a tender age, to work and earn. This tendency deprives them of their educational opportunities. This is not a healthy practice and the child could feel it to be degrading. Child labour not only impacts on educational opportunities, it can take a dangerous and a degrading form (Furedy 1992: 53, 54; and Hunt 1996: 112,113).

3.6.4 CHILDREN ON THE STREET

The phenomenon of 'street children' is predominantly an urban one, although many of these children may be from rural areas. The demands for work for some urban children push them onto city streets for many hours of the day. This often leads to children's relationships with their homes becoming very tenuous. It is also possible that in some instances children have left home because of abuse, a desire for excitement or relief from oppressive home conditions. At night, these children become particularly vulnerable to all forms of abuse. In winter, cold is a deadly enemy; in Moscow, where there are estimated to be 50 000 homeless children, many sleep on air vents for the Metro system to escape the freezing temperatures.

Some children risk their lives to disease in the city's sewers in order to find relative warmth (Electronic Telegraph, 2002: 3).

A large proportion of the children on the street engage in hazardous work – dodging traffic as they sell goods to passing motorists for instance. Many are involved in legitimate work; some are forced to indulge in illegal activities.

The student once personally met a 12-year-old child selling 'ear buds' on the streets of Pondy Bazaar in Chennai, a large metropolis in south India. The student was interested in supporting the young girl, who was on the streets to earn additional income for the family. So, he purchased three tins of ear buds for twenty-five rupees. The student offered the young girl a tip of ten rupees to acknowledge and encourage her work on the street. She politely turned down the tip and insisted that if the student wanted to help her, he could purchase two or three more cans of ear buds. The student was disinclined and continued to thrust the ten-rupee currency note into her hand. Then she whispered to the student that the man whom she is working for is watching her and will take away the tip. The only way the student could support her was to buy more cans of ear buds on which she will get a commission. It was pathetic to see such young children being held hostage to local thugs.

3.7 ECONOMIC HARDSHIP OF URBAN HOUSEHOLDS

Most migrants bring with them their skills set to re-establish their livelihood in an urban setting. Unfortunately, they do not have access to established banking facilities, as they do not possess collateral. This leads them to local loan sharks, who cream off the major portion of their earnings.

To assist the small artisans, flower, fruit and vegetable street vendors to overcome this handicap, an NGO in the state of Gujarat, in India, started a self-help group called the Self-Employed Women's Association (SEWA). The members are self-employed women, who have formed several self-help groups. Through a savings and credit scheme, the group has been able to

sustain and grow, servicing its members to attain economic independence and prosperity (Green 2008: 162).

Grameen Bank of Bangladesh was formed on the same principles and has grown into a large financial institution. Grameen Bank was founded because poor people and small artisans needed cash to develop small businesses; banks seldom regarded such poor people as creditworthy, as the poor households could not offer collateral, which was the primary security on which the banks could advance their loans; Mohammed Yunus, an enterprising person, founded Grameen Bank on the principle that 'people themselves offer their peer pressure' as a collateral; it was recognised that a homogenous group is formed and they collectively or individually get a loan. The loan repayment has been almost 100 per cent because group members do not wish to default and lose their social standing among the group and community. Grameen Bank as well as its counterpart the Bangladesh Rural Advancement Committee (BRAC) succeeded in reaching out to small households in rural Bangladesh with credit facilities. Most of the beneficiaries were women. A few years ago, Mohammed Yunus, founder of Grameen bank, was awarded the Nobel Prize for Peace in recognition of his reaching out to millions of poor households in Bangladesh with credit facilities to transform their lives (Sachs 2005: 12,13,14).

As Sachs observes, it was perhaps more amazing than stories to hear from the women how micro finance was fuelling economic prosperity, were the women's attitude to child rearing. Sachs goes on to share his observations during a visit to one of the villages with Dr Allan Rosenfield, Dean of Columbia University's Mailman School of Public Health. He was one of the leading experts in the field of reproductive health. When Dr Rosenfield interacted with the women, they expressed their conviction that they would have no more than two children and another 25 percent of the women confirmed no more than one child. Dr Rosenfield has been visiting Bangladesh since the 1960s, and he remembered vividly the days when Bangla Deshi rural women would typically have had six or seven children (Sachs 2005: 13, 14).

This spirit of jobs for women in cities and rural off farm micro enterprises have led to a new spirit of women's rights and independence and empowerment. This has led to dramatic reduction in the child mortality rates, rising literacy of girls and young women; and more importantly the availability of family planning and contraception have made all the difference for these women. The economic prosperity of these women will further fuel Bangladesh's rising incomes. With fewer children, these poor women and their household can invest more in the health and education of each child, thereby equipping the next generation with the health, nutrition, and education of each child. Thus, the economic prosperity can lift Bangladesh's living standards in the future years, observed Sachs (Sachs 2005: 13, 14).

Writing on Sustainable Livelihoods, Helmore and Singh record the findings of a livelihood project in Ethiopia. The Relief Society of Tigray (REST), a multi-donor funded organization is working to promote human transformation. REST's food security initiative addresses the issues related to food availability and accessibility. A case study on one of its client's success is portrayed below.

Haimanot Kebedew, a 39 year widow, is one of RESAT's 360,000 clients. To support her children, she opened small tea shop borrowing money at exorbitant interest rates from local money lenders. She and her children barely had enough to eat, and most of her earnings went to pay her debt. She could not afford to send her children to school but had to put them to work to earn and augment the family income. The boys tended livestock for nearby farmers and the girls fetched water for neighbours for a small fee.

Then Kebedew joined the savings and credit scheme of RESAT, when it opened up a branch in her area. She signed up and took two successive loans, the first for US\$114 and the second for US\$143 at an interest rate of 12.5 percent per year. The only collateral she had come up with was to join a group of six other borrowers, who encourage one another in their business activities and in repaying their loans on time.

Since then her financial situation improved. She improved her income from her tea shop and builds a house; diversified her business by buying more supplies. She confirms that her children's labour is no longer needed. She is now able to feed them and send them to school wearing decent clothes and shoes. In the two years since she took her first loan from REST, she has repaid her loans on time and has accumulated a total of US\$1,214 in profits, which she spent on her new house, a bed and chair, and cooking utensils. She has also put US\$286 into a savings account- which is a comfortable hedge against disaster in an uncertain environment (Helmore and Singh 2001: 57, 58).

Though the second case study reflects a rural livelihood activity, the above two examples demonstrate that be it urban or rural, a people centred approach that builds on the assets of households, brings out livelihood outcomes which are financially rewarding, contributing towards increased security and well being of children.

Today, World Bank and major commercial banks are seeking business tie-ups with Grameen Bank, because of the credit rating it has achieved through community ownership of the institution.

The NGO sector has a great opportunity to promote self-help groups in urban centres in order to promote and sustain livelihood for urban groups.

3.8 CONCLUSION

The General Assembly of the United Nations has declared the explicit rights of every child to enjoy adequate living conditions, a safe environment and access to housing and basic social services, including education and health. Article 25 of the 1948 Universal Declaration of Human Rights states that 'everyone has the right to a standard of living adequate for health and wellbeing of himself and his family, including food, clothing, housing and medical care and necessary social services (UN 1948: 3).

From this analysis, it is clear that the urban context of the 21st century is unhealthy for children. The urban environment is increasingly

insecure for children to grow up in. The challenges are the lack of infrastructure, leading to inadequate provision of a healthy living, free from diseases, lack of provision for safe and healthy housing and environment, lack of safe and free child space to provide for a child-friendly environment that could promote friendships with peers. More often, the urban living environment makes the parents regard their children as economic assets to attain and sustain a subsistence level of livelihood. In the process, the children are deprived of their childhood and become young adults early in life. The parents are also caught in the fast urban lifestyle, depriving the children of parental care and love. The safety of children is compromised owing to lack of adequate parental care. The high cost of schooling deprives urban children of opportunities for education. The plight of street children is particularly distressing, as they are exposed to abuses from street thugs as well as the police. They need protection.

Recognising the plight of children around the world, the UN General Assembly, promoted and ratified the International Convention on the Rights of the Child (UN 1989). Humanity has a responsibility to make this dream a reality.

In September 2000, the largest gathering of world leaders met in the UN and accepted the UN Millennium Development Goals, designed to end poverty by 2015. Five of the eight development goals set by the UN focus on children. These efforts reaffirm the commitment of the International community to the welfare of the children.

In the previous chapter, we analysed the livelihood framework for sustainable development and described some factors that contribute to a SLF for a household. In this chapter, we looked at the context of children in an urban setting. While developing a programme focused on children, we see the children within the larger context of their family and the family within the larger context of the community. In the next chapter, we seek to understand the larger issues related to urbanisation that will provide a backdrop to the final chapter 5 in which we apply the factors that contribute

to a livelihood framework to an urban household that will focus on the lives and wellbeing of children.

CHAPTER 4. AN UNDERSTANDING OF THE SUSTAINABLE LIVELIHOOD FRAMEWORK

4.1 INTRODUCTION

The theory and practice of development has witnessed changes and challenges for as long as they have been central to global efforts to eradicate poverty. It was not uncommon for major donors and non-governmental actors to seek solutions to the problems of poverty through trial-and-error methods, sometimes with such an approach becoming too costly to afford.

A few well-known rational techniques of planning and management were adopted in the 1960s and 1970s to control and promote development activities. While some of these yielded positive results, very few left an impact on the people to whom the development assistance was intended. Based on the learning from such efforts, the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund (IMF) subsequently developed and administered ‘structural adjustment’ programmes, aimed at reforming the economic and fiscal policies of the recipient national governments. None of these efforts encouraged the flexibility, experimentation and social learning that are crucial to successfully implementing complex and uncertain development activities (Rondinelli 1993: i).

Conventional planning and administrative methods used by international assistance agencies and governments in developing countries have often resulted in costly and ineffective analysis, greater inconsistency and uncertainty, and the delegation of important development activities to technical experts. These have led international agencies and governments to make inappropriate and sometimes harmful interventions because the intended beneficiaries were not involved in decision making. In his seminal work, Rondinelli explores the divergence between the nature of the development process and the practice of development administration (Rondinelli 1993: ii).

This was also partly because there was much more focus too narrowly on single issues and have largely failed to see the larger, multifaceted

development picture. The development work was more divided into sectors and issues, thus overlooking the cohesive, dynamic interplay or synergy of all these elements in the actual lives of real people (Helmore and Singh 2001: 2). This approach understands that the problems of the households are too complex at community level to be addressed by a single-sector approach.

As if in answer to these concerns, a cross thematic approach to poverty eradication, powered by the energies and talents of the poor people emerged. The Sustainable Livelihoods approach reveals the multi-sectoral character of real life, so that development work is better able to address actual problems as they exist at the village level. Sustainable Livelihood (SL) is an integrative framework that seeks to promote cross sectoral and cross thematic approach that seeks to be the hallmark of the development work (Helmore and Singh 2001: 2).

The Sustainable Livelihood is an approach and not a programme. An approach that seeks to build on the fundamental blocks of development, including income generation, environmental management, women's empowerment, education, health care, appropriate technology, financial services and Good Governance. The SL places these development blocks in such a way that the interplay between them through a combination create a powerful synergy leading to attaining a Sustainable Livelihood. The concepts such as adaptive strategies, participation and empowerment, science and technology, financial services and Governance and policy are the foundational blocks of Sustainable Livelihood (Helmore and Singh 2001: 2).

The simplest definition of livelihood was offered by Chambers when he articulated livelihood as a 'means of gaining a living' (Chambers 1995: 23, 24).

The idea behind the promotion of livelihood approaches is to look at the context in which households eke out a living and understand the complexities of life as seen by the rural and urban poor. When we closely analyse the context of poor people and how they earn their livelihood, we observe that people indulge in a variety of activities to protect themselves from their vulnerabilities. They carry out several activities simultaneously in

order to sustain and improve their livelihoods. People display a great sense of adaptability in coping with uncertainties and at the same time building their livelihoods. They do not rely on one activity to protect themselves from vulnerabilities and to maintain their livelihoods, but a variety of activities. The combined outcomes of the activities contribute towards building a resilient household, capable of protecting itself against vulnerabilities and building on its livelihood assets. Therefore, the livelihood approach to development planning sets the stage and the framework for development thinkers and practitioners to begin their planning with the households and the communities. The dialogue begins with the people.

It is important to highlight here, that the SL did not emerge on the development scene suddenly, but a rather through an evolutionary process of development thinking. The earliest thinking on a people centred development approach was introduced by the Brazilian educator Paulo Freire who introduced the concept of participatory development in the 1970. Writing in “Pedagogy of the Oppressed”, Freire describes what he calls “training for Transformation”. He further explains this concept as a method for teaching illiterate adults how to think critically about themselves, their circumstances and the world around them. The concept of participatory development was a reaction to the development policies of the 1970s. These policies had encouraged the relationships of economic dependency on Governments and donors. Such external donors never acknowledged the people as key stakeholders in their own development process. The shortcomings of this paradigm led to the popularization of participatory development. In this concept of participatory development, facilitators focus on community’s assets, strategies, and strengths rather than its needs (Freire 1970: 52-67).

Such an approach brings in a sense of equality rather than inferiority between the development facilitators and the people. While Paulo Freire sowed the seeds for a people centred development thinking and practice, the idea was further developed and expanded by leading development thinkers such as Robert Chambers and David Korten (Helmore and Singh 2001: 12).

As a sequel to this line of thinking, leading development thinkers and practitioners began to advocate for SLAs in development from the 1990s. The earliest discussions, centred on the sustainable livelihood approach to poverty alleviation emerged from a dialogue between Chambers and Conway (Chambers and Conway 1991: 5).

Further impetus for this thinking was added by Ashley and Carney in 1999. These discussions and dialogues accelerated the pace of development practice along a sustainable livelihood approach by leading donor agencies and international development organisations.

4.1.1 HISTORICAL BACKGROUND TO LIVELIHOOD APPROACHES

Although the movement towards livelihood thinking in development practice gained a momentum as a sequel to the influential paper of Chambers and Conway in 1992, such thinking had been experimented with more than fifty years earlier. The earliest expression of a cross-disciplinary livelihood perspective that had profoundly influenced rural development thinking and practice was recorded by Fardon (1990: 155). He records an early experience in integrated rural development effort by the Rhodes-Livingstone Institute in Northern Rhodesia (Zambia). Fardon described an integrated people-centred development process initiated by a group of anthropologists, agriculturists and economists. This group sought an experimental development approach to challenge the existing rural systems and define a means of addressing development challenges. This was a collaborative effort of ecologists, anthropologists, agriculturists and economists, looking at changing rural systems and the development challenges (Fardon 1990: 155).

When we look back over the past two decades of increased focus on SLAs, it is evident that the seeds for such a people-centred, people-owned, integrated development approach were sown much earlier (Scoones 2009: 174).

However, such multi-sectoral development perspectives continue to face challenges from the modernists. The theories of modernisation

continued to dominate and influence development thinking and practice in the coming decades. Professional economists influenced the policy of aid and thereby set the agenda for rural development, relegating field practitioners of development to the sidelines. Thus the development models were sought to be dictated by the exigencies of the demand and supply side of market economics as frequently articulated by the Bretton Woods Institutions⁴ of the World Bank and the IMF.

The World Bank and the IMF, UN System, bi-lateral development agencies, as well as national governments in newly independent countries globally, were persuaded to go along with these market-friendly economic policies. These policies were dictated by economists in specialist technical disciplines from the natural, medical and engineering sciences. This approach sadly bypassed the people whom they had intended to serve. The causality was also the multi-disciplinary thinking and the cross-sector approach, which was the hallmark of the livelihood approach to development planning.

Around the same time, other dominant political forces, led by radical Marxists, who were so focused on confronting the global capitalist forces at the political and economic levels, neglected the deeper roots of sustainable people-centred micro level issues that were the reality at grass-roots level (Scoones 2009: 175).

However, there were exceptions to this phenomenon. Several studies in India focused on the impact of the green revolution on rural farming communities (Farmer 1977: 210). While these studies were concerned with the micro-economics of agricultural production and distribution of wealth among farming communities, their scope was on sustainable livelihoods of rural communities.

⁴ Bretton Woods Institutions: The World Bank and the International Monetary Fund were two financial institutions formed in 1945 at the end of World War II to assist the developing countries and to stabilise the global financial system. These institutions were formed at Bretton Woods in the US.

A few years later, on the African continent, an innovative multi-sectoral approach to community development that centred on people was attempted in Zambia. Long refers to the livelihood approach to development thinking and practice that was taking place there. This approach was reflective of what has come to be termed the 'Wageningen School' of development thinking (Long 1984:3, De Haan 1999: 30).

Such studies, at variance with the traditional approach, encouraged the development of new thinking about households and larger farming system strategies of different types. This new thinking led to the emergence of higher levels of approach to development thinking and research in the 1980s (Moock 1986: x, ix). Focus in intra-household dynamics in development became the norm.

This new dimension, which exhibited a particular focus on intra-household dynamics in development, became the norm (Guyer and Peters 1987: 202). As a sequel, newer efforts at development research began to shift more towards farming systems. The aim was to look at an integrated model of development in order to identify problems at the farming community. This approach led to research on agricultural systems within a larger ecological system (Conway 1985: 33).

A further expansion of development thinking initiated the development of rapid and participatory rural appraisal approaches (Chambers 2008: 69), thus expanding the scope of development research in methodology and in approach.

As changes began to happen in development thinking and practice, there was a gradual shift towards the livelihood approach. Furthermore, such an approach began to be seen within the larger context of environmental change. This major shift towards the sustainable livelihood approach brought together the ideas of social scientists, which were able to analyse rural settings with a concern for ecology and history. They also looked at cross-sectoral issues related to gender and cultural contexts through the sustainable livelihood lens (Richards 1985: 142).

Consequently, the field of development and environment began to be discussed along a broader margin of territory. This naturally led to detailed analysis of livelihoods at household level, encompassing the subject of coping strategies, and adaptation of livelihoods to specific contexts by households (Scoones 2009: 173).

New ideas emerged on development thinking in the 1980 and the 1990s. Increasingly, development was seen in the larger context of environment. The combination of development and environment was gathering momentum as a movement. This movement began to be aware of the implications of focus on poverty reduction and development efforts, causing longer-term environmental shocks and stresses.

Discussions on development and environmental concerns could not be separated from the concept of sustainability after the publication of the Brundtland report in 1987 (WCED 1987: 47). 'Sustainability' was the word that set the boundaries for discussions in development and environment and was the main policy concern at the UN Conference on Environment and Development in Rio in 1992.

The gradual acceptance of the sustainable livelihood approach to development planning – focused on the needs and priorities of people and placing people at the centre of development – eventually produced the sustainable development agenda. This led to sustainable development becoming the main concern of Agenda 21. This also set in motion global concerns about and awareness of environmental issues, leading to strict protocols on climate change, which became part of the sustainable development agenda (Scoones 2009: 174).

The combinations of various approaches – such as village-level studies focused on household economics, and gender analysis, environmental change and household and community resilience studies – have helped understanding of the diverse and complex rural households and their coping mechanisms.

To sum up, the evolution of development thinking and practice towards a sustainable livelihood approach had an interesting history, beginning with the multi-disciplinary effort in Zambia in the 1960s.

4.1.2 EVOLUTION OF SUSTAINABLE RURAL LIVELIHOOD APPROACH

The words ‘sustainable,’ ‘rural’ and ‘livelihood’ eventually formed one inter-connected word – ‘sustainable rural livelihood’ – which articulated a particular development approach that was first discussed by Dr. M.S. Swaminathan, Robert Chambers and others in Geneva in 1986.

Taking on the discussions further towards ‘sustainable rural livelihood’, Chambers communicated his people-centred development approach in his influential book ‘Rural development: Putting the last first’ (Chambers 1983: 70-74). About the same time, as Scoones observes in his paper, a conference was organised by the International Institute of Environment and Development in 1987. The initiative for this conference came from Brooke (Conroy and Litvinoff 1988: vi, vii). This initiative and the outcome of the conference also provided the impetus to Chambers to begin thinking about a people centred development model which eventually led to the development of the ‘sustainable livelihood framework’.

However, it took another five years for the sustainable rural livelihood approach to development to be defined in clear terms by Chambers and Conway. In 1992, they produced a working paper for the Institute of Development Studies (IDS) in which a new definition of sustainable livelihood emerged. The paper stated that:

A livelihood comprises the capabilities, assets (including both material and social resources) and activities for a means of living. A livelihood is sustainable when it can cope with and recover from stresses and shocks maintain or enhance its capabilities and assets, while not undermining the natural resource base (Chambers and Conway 1991: 5).

Looking back at developments since the mid 1980s, the earliest policy debate of what was later conceptualized as the SLA began to emerge with the publication of the Brundtland Commission Report of 1987. This report elevated the discussion around SLA firmly on to the Global development and political agenda. The report defined sustainable development as one that meets the needs of the people in present context without compromising the opportunity of future generations to meet their own needs. It proposes two key concepts within this thought process: the concepts of ‘needs’, in particular the essential needs of the world’s poor, which needs to be recognized as the overriding priority; and the idea of limitations imposed by the state of technology and social organization on the environment’s ability to meet present and future needs (WCED 1987: 43).

The WCED report further argued that in seeking to attain sustainable livelihood requires a political commitment that recognizes the opportunity for citizens to participate and practice effectively in decision making (Solesbury 2003: 5).

An economic system which is just and equitable, a social system which promoted harmony, a production systems which respects the ecological balance, a technological system that is constantly innovative, an International trade that promotes sustainable finance and trade patterns and a flexible administrative system that is self corrective in design and practice (Solesbury 2003: 5).

This followed the publication of the IIED papers in support of its conference on “Greening of Aid: Sustainable Livelihood in Practice”, which continued to promote the agenda of the SLA. Following this, was the publication of the UNDP of its first Human Development Report. The Conference on Environment and Development organized by the UN in 1992 added further impetus to the promotion of SLA (Solesbury 2003: 5).

However, looking back at developments since the mid 1980s, it appears that the paper published by Chambers and Conway under the auspicious of the Institute of Development Studies was the starting point of what came to be known later in the 1990s as the ‘sustainable livelihood

approach' (SLA) to development planning. The paper reflected the ongoing discussions between the two authors. They saw an important link between their own concerns with 'putting the last first', by placing the people first in development thinking and practice and agro-ecosystem analysis and a sustainable development approach that is people owned and people centred. The authors believed that the people needed to be at the centre of development dialogue as they confronted challenges of sustainable development.

Chambers and Conway offered a framework that was normative and practical. They presented their policy prescriptions under three headings: enhancing capability, improving equity and increasing social sustainability. The concluding part of their paper highlighted their concern that the paper raises more questions than is sought to answer (Chambers and Conway 1991: 31, 34).

As often happens, a cutting edge and revolutionary concept in development such as the SLA was not appreciated and acceptance of the new idea was non-existent.

Though this was not a good development, the World Bank and the IMF-induced development thinking around neo-liberal economic policies and the promotion of the economic reform agenda became the dominant theme. The persuasive power of development thinking about people-centred and people-owned development thinking never seemed to gain much appreciation or acceptance. The neo-liberal economic policy continued to dominate development debate, thinking and practice. Policy formulations and practices were centred on neo-liberal economic concepts.

Sometime in the early 1990s, a few International Non Governmental Organizations began to appreciate the SLA and began employing the SLA in their Programme development approach, often contextualising the approach to their own organizational vision and mission statements and strategic focus.

From 1993, Oxfam was promoting sustainable livelihoods as a component in programme strategy. In 1994, CARE International adopted the sustainable livelihood approach to development and formulated a variant of

the SLA to focus on households. This was referred to as “Household Livelihood Security” Strategy as a programme framework in its relief and development work (Scolesbury 2003: 6).

Following this was the World Summit for Social Development in 1995 in Copenhagen which highlighted issues related to poverty, employment and livelihoods.

In further efforts to appease development thinkers, the neo-liberals sought to pull sustainability out of their livelihood contexts and to plant it in market-oriented solutions (Berkhout, Leach and Scoones 2003: 20). Under this dispensation the people -centred SLA continued to remain outside the development debate (Scoones 2009: 176).

However, the relegation of sustainable livelihoods to the background did not last too long. In the latter part of the 1990s and 2000s, challenges to the neo-liberal thinkers emerged. The neo-liberal economic and development policy began to be challenged because many countries in Africa and in Asia had suffered because of adopting the policy formulation and because the economic boom promised by the Bretton Woods Institutions did not materialise. These challenges manifested on the streets, such as the Battle of Seattle at the World Trade Organisation Ministerial Conference of 1999. These challenges were also witnessed in the debates generated by global social movements at world social forums after 2001 in Porto Alegre. The academics were not to be left behind. Academic debates including in economics and in countries whose economies had not grown as projected by World Bank and IMF policy makers, led to decimating the state capacity in many countries, propelling social movements. The magic medicine of neo-liberal reform and the fundamental principles of World Bank policy reform began to be questioned (Scoones 2009: 176).

An example often quoted in Southern Africa is that of Zambia. The IMF and World Bank, under the guise of ‘structural adjustment programmes’ asked the government of Zambia to withdraw state subsidies to farmer groups, stating that the ‘market mechanism’ should prevail. The withdrawal of state subsidies was made conditional on receiving World Bank funding for

development. Small and marginal farmers began to sell off their assets in order to survive and eventually failed. The two institutions insisted on 'stabilisation' and 'structural adjustment programmes' in the country. It was unfortunate, though, 'that the acceptance of such policy reforms quickly became a litmus test for countries to access development assistance from donors. This literally led to turning the bank and the fund into gatekeepers of the global financial system' (Green 2008: 297).

Although the donors were dispensing grants to newly independent countries of Asia and Africa, as well as to emerging economies of the development developing world, the recipient countries lacked the technical skills and management expertise to handle development assistance. Therefore, donor development assistance then became mostly the responsibility of government bureaucrats to administer and implement development projects. Without project management experience, the bureaucratic forces sought to implement the projects and programmes adopting the management by objective (MBO) approach – a far cry from the people-centred and people-oriented sustainable development approaches advocated by development thinkers of the time.

As Salil Shetty, a well-known Indian development thinker and practitioner points out, 'the development initiatives promoted by external forces continue to perform a "cutting edge" function' (Shetty 1993: 3) Most of such interventions have left behind monuments for posterity, many among them in a state of decay.

Therefore, 'the power of the project approach is so blinding that attempts at suggesting alternatives such as "learning process" approaches have either been rejected by mainstream development thinkers and practitioners or simply incorporated as a footnote in project planning manuals' (Shetty 1993: 3).

There was, however, gradual realisation that the project management-oriented approach to development, with its focus on management by objective was not leaving behind a legacy of human transformation. It was also recognised that sustainable human development efforts needed to be

holistic in approach, involving the people from the conceptualisation stage to design and implementation. So much so, as Shetty points out, that ‘the projectisation’ of most development work had left its negative effects and this has led critics to debunk such development initiatives as a pathological affliction (Shetty 1993: 3).

4.1.3 EVOLUTION OF THE SUSTAINABLE LIVELIHOOD FRAMEWORK

At last, for those propagating and advocating for a people-centred development approach, otherwise called as the UK based institutional debates about development, the turning point came in 1997 with the arrival of a new Labour government, with a development ministry, the Department for International Development (DFID). The Government of the UK published the white paper on International Development in 1997, which emphasised the renewed thinking on poverty alleviation reflecting changed thinking to development assistance. The white paper committed to achieve international development targets, including the aim to halve the proportion of people living in poverty by 2015. This commitment gave the much needed impetus to the DFID’s adoption of SL approaches and use of the SL framework (Ashley and Carney 1999: 5).

Clare Short, a vocal and a committed minister, began to set the development agenda for DFID. The DFID policy document committed itself to the promotion of ‘sustainable rural livelihoods’ as a core development priority.

There was considerable debate following the publication of the white paper. The debate centred on how to attain the new policies and goals including the commitment to support ‘policies and actions which promotes sustainable livelihoods’. The Natural Resources Policy and Advisory department of DFID led the consultative group on operationalising the concept of ‘sustainable livelihoods’ (Ashley and Carney 1999: 5).

The work contextualised the livelihood approach within social, economic and political realities, drawing on social anthropology and political

ecology. This approach was on the lines propounded by Bebbington in his seminal work on the capitals and capabilities framework for rural livelihoods (Bebbington 1999: 22).

An opportunity emerged to engage in conversation with the new institutional economics, social relations and culture with the inclusion of social capital in the multi-disciplinary subject of sustainable livelihoods (Putnam, Leonardi and Nanetti 1993: 164). Development thinking 'emphasised the economic attributes of livelihoods as mediated by socio-institutional process' (Scoones 2009: 177).

Livelihood approach thinks in terms of strengths or assets that people have and seek to build on them, rather than viewing people as deprived. Central to the approach is that poor people may not have cash or other savings, but have other material or non-material assets – their health, their skills sets and their labour, knowledge, friends and family and the natural resources around them (Helmore and Singh: 2001: 10).

The SLF sought to expand the theory into practical terms. Inputs in development theory are referred to as 'capitals' or assets'. The result of the interactions of various assets produces outcomes. Livelihoods strategies are designed and administered in order to reap the desired livelihood outcomes that will promote a sustainable livelihood for the household at community level (Scoones 2009: 177).

Thus, poverty began to be seen through the larger lens of household wellbeing outcomes, leading to improved livelihood (Baulch 1996: 39, 40). The terms 'inputs' and 'outputs' expressed in the livelihood framework appear to find common ground with those of economists in economic science.

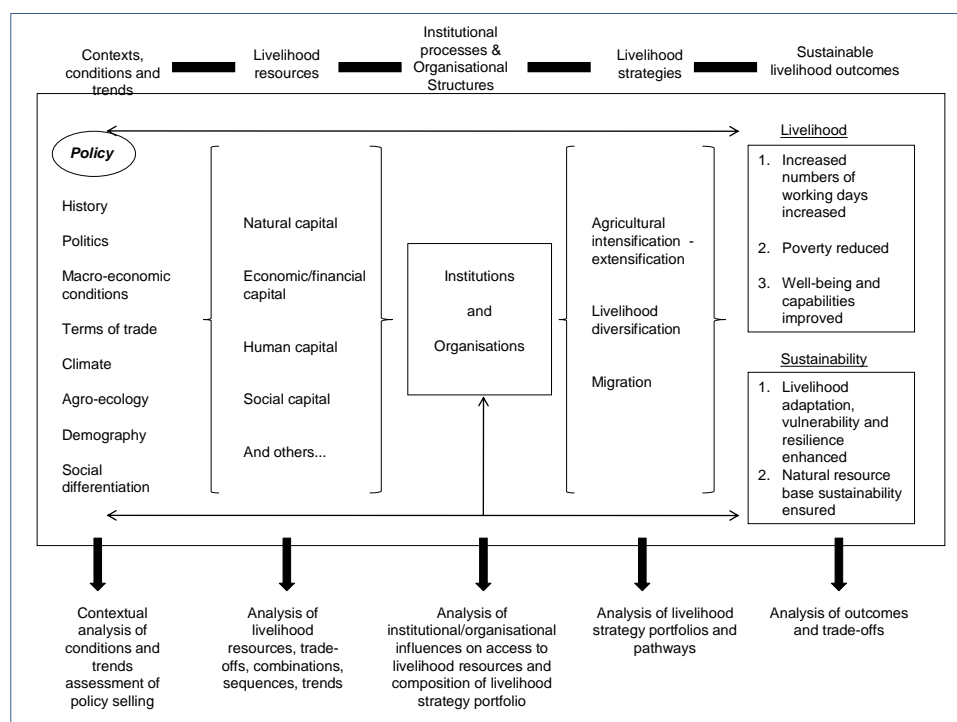
When analysing the livelihood framework, the terms 'asset pentagon' and 'capitals' appear to draw attention away from the more important components of the livelihood framework. The IDS studies stressed that institutions and organisations are important components in mediating livelihood strategies and pathways. Such a link between the institutions and the resultant strategies explains why there is a strong correlation between

asset inputs and the resultant strategies and outcomes (Brock and Coulibaly 1999: 14). The livelihood framework demonstrates the dominance of power and politics in the analysis. The questions of rights, access and governance are also considered important features, which are necessary for understanding and analysis of the Sustainable development framework. The role of these emphasises the complex process, requiring in-depth and qualitative understandings of power, politics and institutions – which exposed a new way of conducting field research.

The IDS published a working paper in June 1998, providing for an analytical framework for rural livelihoods (Scoones 1998: 2). The figure in 4.1 shows the framework diagram from this paper.

What was this diagram intended to convey was the question. The diagrammatic framework highlighted five interacting elements, which are, the contexts, resources, institutions, strategies and outcomes. The origin of this framework is attributed to a brainstorming exercise IDS conducted in 1996 in preparation for a competitive bid by DFID for a research on Sustainable Livelihood, for which IDS was participating (Solesbury 2003: 9). The IDS bid for the research project contained this diagrammatic framework.

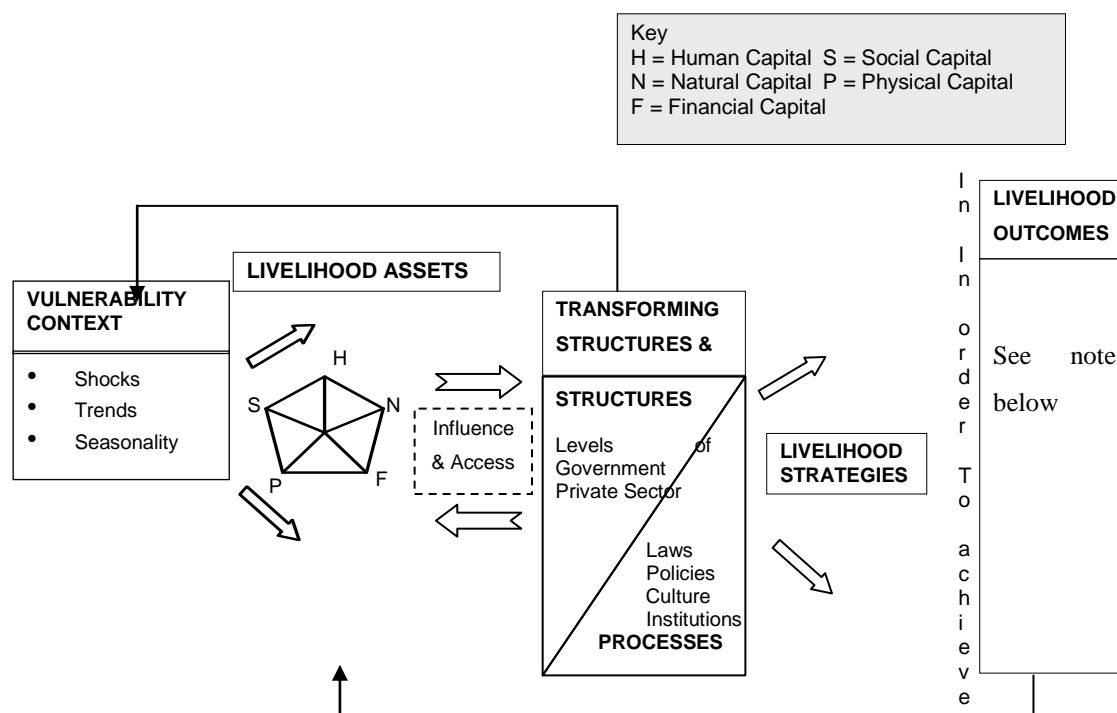
Figure 4-1: IDS's Sustainable livelihood framework: a checklist (Scoones 2008:4)



The Overseas Development Group (ODG) also submitted a bid for this DFID's competitive bid for a research project on Sustainable Livelihoods. The ODG's bid contained a different version of the framework; it had though, some similarities to the IDS framework shown in 4-1 above. Both were independently developed from the same set of ideas. These two frameworks were discussed in 1998 by the DFID Rural Livelihoods Advisory Group and a diagrammatic framework was eventually adopted by the Group, discussed at the Natural Resource Advisory Committee's Conference and published by DFID (Solesbury 2003: 9).

The result was the DFID framework in which the IDS checklist was transformed by professionals into an acceptable diagrammatic DFID's version of a Sustainable Livelihood Framework.

Figure 4-2: Sustainable livelihood framework. DFID sustainable livelihood guidance sheets'. (DFID 1999:15)



H - Represents human capital: all personal and human attributes that contribute towards earning a living. For example, the skill sets, knowledge base, physical strength and the attitude to labour and earning a living that a person possesses.

P - Represents physical capital: the basic infrastructure required in a place which enables people to earn a livelihood, for example transport facilities, shelter, water, energy and communications. It also refers to the materials, equipment and means that enable people to pursue their livelihoods.

S - Represents social capital: 'social resources' refers to networks, membership of groups, relationships of trust, access to wider institutions of society such as savings and credit groups which operate on mutual trust and faith among individuals. These allow access to resources that people draw in pursuit of livelihoods.

F - Represents financial capital: the financial resources that are available to people. These could be savings and access to credit, regular remittances or pensions which provide them with livelihood options.

N - Represents natural capital: the natural resource stocks from which resource flows useful for livelihoods are derived, for example land, water, wildlife, biodiversity and environmental resources.

Livelihood outcomes: The Sustainable Livelihood framework seeks to achieve these livelihood outcomes:

- More income
- Increased wellbeing
- Reduced vulnerability
- Improved food security
- More sustainable use of natural resource bases

(These could vary among organisations depending on their vision, mission and strategic direction.)

SLF thinking gradually dominated development thinking and practice in the developmental community around the world. The livelihood approaches seemed all-encompassing, touching every aspect of human life and livelihood. The SLF was applied to livestock, fisheries, forestry, agriculture, health, urban development and more. As the SLA became the accepted mode of programme planning, it became linked with other aspects of programme design, especially sector strategies (Gilling, Jones and Duncan 2001: 309).

Livelihood thinking gradually began to embrace take hold where cross-cutting themes were dominant. The newly emerging threat of HIV/AIDS was transformed from a health sector problem to a livelihood focus. As a sequel, the diversification of livelihoods, population migration and non-farm rural income became part of development planning and design (Tacoli 1998: 69, De Haan 1999: 18).

The SLF also began to expand its horizons by gradually bringing within its framework complex humanitarian emergencies, conflict resolution,

disaster mitigation and responses, which had hitherto been responded to as requiring independent responses.

4.2 A DEEPER UNDERSTANDING OF THE SUSTAINABLE LIVELIHOOD FRAMEWORK

In promoting people-centred sustainable development strategies in the poorest countries of the world, development thinkers and planners have encountered mixed results (Helmore and Singh 2001: 1). Not all efforts to use the SLA were successful. Some sector-specific efforts in health and HIV/AIDS prevention succeeded, however. Alleviating or eradicating the root causes of poverty remain a challenge and elude a solution.

Development experts focused too narrowly on single issues and failed to see the larger, multifaceted face of the households and the community in their contexts. By dividing development work into ‘sectors’ and ‘issues’ – health, gender, food security, environment, income generation and so on – the cohesive, dynamic interplay or synergy of all these elements in the lives of real people was often overlooked. When analysing the household context through a livelihood lens, the wholeness of the community’s situation must be acknowledged rather than looking at it in compartments. (Helmore and Singh 2001: 1).

Jones brings a different perspective to the sustainable livelihood approach to development thinking and practice. In the rural development work of the late 1980s and the 1990s, the concept of environmental sustainability retained central importance. However, poverty reduction maintained a strong programmatic focus. This led to the thinking that relative poverty or economic wellbeing should be understood from the point of view of the people themselves. This people-centred approach to development planning sought to work with the poor in implementing their livelihood strategies. It begins with what people have and seeks ways and means to build on them. In other words, the focus remains on building on the people’s assets rather than on what they do not have. The emphasis was on

helping households and communities overcome their vulnerability and accept conditions outside their control (Jones 2002: xvi, xviii).

4.2.1 ADAPTIVE STRATEGIES

Most development approaches begin by conducting a community needs assessment. However, the sustainable livelihood approach is different from other approaches. Focusing on poverty consistently distracts development experts from what sustainable livelihoods advocates believe must be the fundamental blocks of any development initiative: the SLF stresses the need to understand the livelihood systems of the poor as they exist in their community context. Then the sustainable livelihood approach facilitates households and the community to develop adaptive strategies to counter their economic, social, financial and environmental vulnerabilities (Helmore and Singh 2001:2, 3).

The SLA is thus seen as complementary to more traditional approaches to development. In particular, it provides a holistic and cross-sectoral approach to problem definition and analysis, and the evaluation of programmes and policies. However, unlike the integrated area-based planning approaches that were in vogue in rural and urban development in the 1970s, the SLA encompasses a sectoral approach to the design of programmes. Livelihood strategies and outcomes are determined by a holistic approach to understanding the context. This facilitates single or multiple ‘entry points’ for livelihood intervention in terms of particular sectoral interventions; the outcomes are thus pre-determined if the strategy and the interventions are properly and timorously implemented (Jones 2002: xvi, xvii).

4.2.2 DEFINITION OF KEY CONCEPTS

To obtain a broad understanding of the livelihood framework, key concepts and the terminology are discussed below.

4.2.2.1 What is a livelihood?

A livelihood is defined as ‘comprising the capabilities, assets (including both material and social resources) and activities required for a means of living’ (Carney 1998: 4).

‘A livelihood is sustainable when it can cope with and recover from stresses and shocks and maintain or enhance its capabilities and assets both now and in the future, while not undermining the natural resource base’ (Chambers and Conway 1991: 5).

4.2.2.2 Sustainability

We tend to shorten the SLA concept to ‘livelihood approach’. ‘Sustainable livelihood’ is a more appropriate and acceptable way to describe and understand sustainability. The word ‘sustainable’ has various connotations. It has been widely used in the context of global change, environmental degradation, deforestation and global warming. However, the word has a larger application, especially in the livelihood approach to development.

A livelihood approach is sustainable when:

- The household can cope with external shocks and stresses.
- The approach depends on what households and people have and is not reliant on external resources for sustenance.
- It deliberately tries to maintain the longevity of the natural resources on which the livelihood strategies are mounted.
- It does not pose a threat to the livelihood options of others.

(DFID 1999: 8)

Sustainability is an important qualifier to the Sustainable Livelihoods Approach ‘because it implies that progress in poverty reduction is lasting, rather than fleeting’ (DFID 1999: 8).

4.3 CORE PRINCIPLES OF A SUSTAINABLE LIVELIHOOD FRAMEWORK

Ashley and Carney define the core principles of the sustainable livelihood framework as follows: These are foundational to the livelihood approach to development programming (Ashley and Carney 1999: 7).

4.3.1 PEOPLE-CENTRED

Development by the people, for the people, and of the people is the centrepiece of DFID's model of livelihood framework. People are placed at the centre of development planning, policy development and analysis. The people own the content and process of the development planning concerning them. The people set the goals and objectives. They determine the what, why, when, where and how of development planning concerning themselves and their community. Finally, the people themselves analyse the results to see whether the goals and objectives have been met. The people (we may talk of individuals, households or the community) determine the pace of development. The framework focuses on the impact of policies on the people and households. It stresses the importance of influencing policies so they promote the agenda of the poor. This means that the sustainable poverty reduction can be achieved only if the external support works with the people in a way that is consistent with the people's livelihood strategies and aspirations (Ashley and Carney 1999: 7).

4.3.2 HOLISTIC

The people-centred approach always seeks to understand the context that the people are in, and the challenges confronting them. After an analysis of the context, the livelihood approach facilitates a process by which people find ways to address the challenges in their context. It helps people find opportunities in their context, challenges and identify the opportunities related to each other.

The livelihood framework does not offer ready-made solutions to problems or time-tested development interventions to address the needs of

the community. The framework is a lens through which we assist the people to understand their context, identify their problems find solutions in their vulnerable context.

Therefore, the approach, and the resultant understanding and solutions to the problems, is all encompassing (DFID 1999: 8).

4.3.3 DYNAMIC

Whenever we analyses the lifecycle of households in a given area, especially in urban situations, we find it constantly changes. External shocks and trends, economic changes, population migration, and changes in weather patterns cause modifications to happen in the environment. The households are endowed with the resilience to cope with such dynamic changes in the environment. For households, be they in rural or urban settings, adaptability and acceptability are important to their survival. Therefore, their lifestyle is ever dynamic, and the livelihood framework that seeks to understand their environment needs to remain dynamic and capture the changes (DFID 1999: 8).

4.3.4 BUILDING ON STRENGTHS

As is an accepted principle in the ‘participatory appreciative enquiry’ process, that the enquiry always focuses in what people have and begin to build on it rather than begin the enquiry with what people do not have and seek to fill their needs. Adopting the same approach, the livelihood approach seeks to help people find their strengths or what they have, rather than what they do not have or on what they need. The livelihood framework describes what people have as ‘assets’. The assets could be a set of skills, physical assets, financial savings, and network of people who can connect and support one another. The process of analysis in the livelihood framework assists people to understand and recognise their assets and assists them to build on these assets.

The framework also assists households in a livelihood enhancement process through a combination of their assets that will contribute towards producing livelihood outcomes (DFID 1999: 8).

4.3.5 MACRO-LEVEL LINKS

Most of the development efforts of the government, as well as donors and national and INGOs, are focused on the impact on the community. The governments and in some instances major donors such as DFID, Canadian International Development agency, the Swedish International Development Agency, United States Agency for International Development and UNDP also focus on the formulation of right policies which will have a cascading effect on the lives of households at micro level.

In the livelihood-focused approach to development, the effort seeks to move beyond the constraints faced by the households towards the realisation of their potential. The livelihood framework seeks to achieve sustainable people' through a facilitative process of the people by the people and for the people. In short, the approach bridges the gap between macro-level policy interventions to micro-level development initiatives (DFID 1999: 8).

4.3.6 WHY A FRAMEWORK?

At a presentation of a conceptual framework as a backdrop to a World Vision 'Lessons Learned' event on 'Southern Africa Food Security Emergency', Michael Drinkwater, a leading authority on household livelihood approaches to development and consultant to CARE International, defined a framework as a 'particular way of viewing the world' (Drinkwater 2003: Personal Dialogue).

In order to alleviate poverty among the deprived sections of the population, it is necessary first to understand the context, the vulnerabilities the households face and the assets the households have before initiating a development alternative. In doing so, we need to understand the totality of the situation and the complexity of all the resources that are available and the resources that are needed to strengthen the development. Therefore, a framework approach looks at the situation holistically in order to understand and address the problems in an integrated approach.

The livelihood framework is a lens through which it aims to analyse context and its people. It does not offer solutions or suggest a course of

action. ‘Although the sustainable livelihood approach is broad and encompassing, it can however be distilled to six core Sustainable Livelihood Objectives’ (DFID 1999: 3).

- To improve access to high quality education, information, technologies and training and better nutrition and health
- To recognise the social net works and the strength of mutual support among households in the community
- To ensure more secure access to and better management of natural resources
- To provide better access to basic and facilitative infrastructure
- To provide easy and secure access to affordable financial resources
- To enable policy and institutional environment that supports multiple livelihood strategies and promotes equitable access to competitive markets for all

All of these objectives relate directly to the livelihood framework.

The livelihood approach begins with the people and the people are central to the development process (DFID 1999: 3).

4.4 WHAT ARE LIVELIHOOD ASSETS?

The livelihood framework begins by assessing what people have. This is referred to as assets or capitals. (The terms ‘assets’ and ‘capital’ are interchangeable, as they both refer to what the households have.) The DFID framework classifies asset forms of individuals and households broadly into five categories: human capital, social capital, natural capital, physical capital and financial capital (DFID 1999: 8).

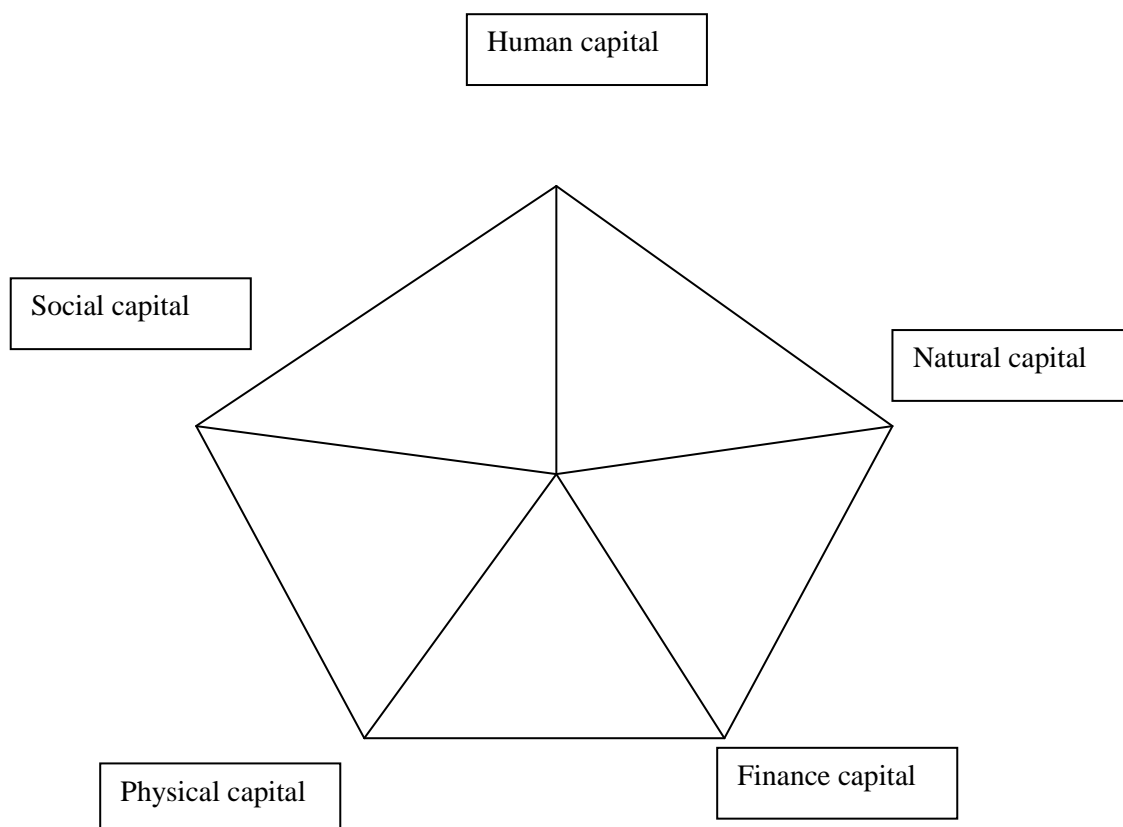
4.4.1 THE ASSET PENTAGON

These five capitals are explained in section 4.1.3, figure 2. To provide a pictorial presentation for clarity, the five capitals (human, natural, financial, physical and social) are arranged in a pentagon, with each capital being placed at one of the corners. This is commonly referred to as the ‘asset

pentagon'. While doing an analysis, the asset pentagon changes shape according to the strength of individual capital.

The asset pentagon is the core of the livelihood framework, in the vulnerability context. It helps to place people's assets in a visual form and to see how the assets are interconnected (DFID 1999: 8).

Figure 4-3: Asset pentagon Source (DFID Guidance sheets: Section 2.3 (page 19))



The centre point of the asset pentagon represents zero access or zero availability of assets for the individual or household under analysis. Therefore, the further the point of a particular asset from the centre point, the greater the accessibility and availability of the asset. The shape of the asset pentagon reflects the strength of accessibility or availability of a particular asset. Let us now unpack each of the five assets in the asset pentagon. Since these asset bases form the source of livelihood outcomes, these assets are also called capitals (DFID 1999: 8).

4.5 WHAT IS A VULNERABILITY CONTEXT?

The next level in the livelihood framework analysis is the understanding of the ‘vulnerability context’. The availability of the capitals alone is not a sufficient factor to promote livelihood interests in households. These capitals are governed by external factors in the environment that determine the efficacy of the various capitals to promote and preserve livelihoods.

‘The vulnerability context frames the external environment in which people exist. People’s livelihoods and the wider availability of assets are fundamentally affected by critical trends as well as by shocks and seasonality’ (DFID 1999: 16).

Trends, as well as shocks and seasonality factors, have a tremendous bearing on the environmental context of the individuals and households. Unfortunately, no one has control over these. What then are these trends, shocks and seasonality factors that determine the environment? The dramatic increase in population and changes in demographic patterns, globalisation and the resultant economic trends, wars and population migration (forced by war or economic migration as in South Africa with Zimbabwean refugees) and rapid technological innovation are some of the trends that influence on livelihoods. Partly as a consequence to these erratic trends, households and the community experience shocks.

There are also the possibilities of sudden epidemics affecting the health of the population, and financial turmoil (as is happening now in the Western world) affecting markets and prices, which leads to an economic downturn, recession and sudden loss of jobs. The vagaries of monsoons make agricultural production unpredictable. These are some of the factors leading to instability in the environment and making individuals and households vulnerable.

The asset status of the poor is positively or negatively impacted by changes in the environmental context, leading to vulnerability. Such changes are in the form of trends, shocks and seasonality factors and influence livelihood outcomes.

However, not all the trends are negative; several can have a positive influence as well.

4.5.1 TRENDS, SHOCKS AND SEASONALITY

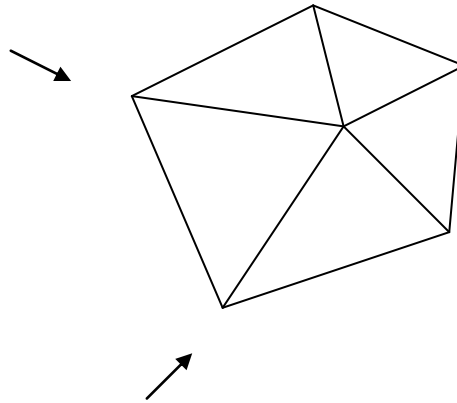
Trends	Shocks	Seasonality
Population	Human health	Prices
Resource	Natural	Production
Including conflict	Economic	Health
National / International Opportunity	Conflict	Employment
Economic	Crop / livestock	health
Governance		
Technological		

(Source: DFID Guidance Sheets 1999: 16; section: 2.2).

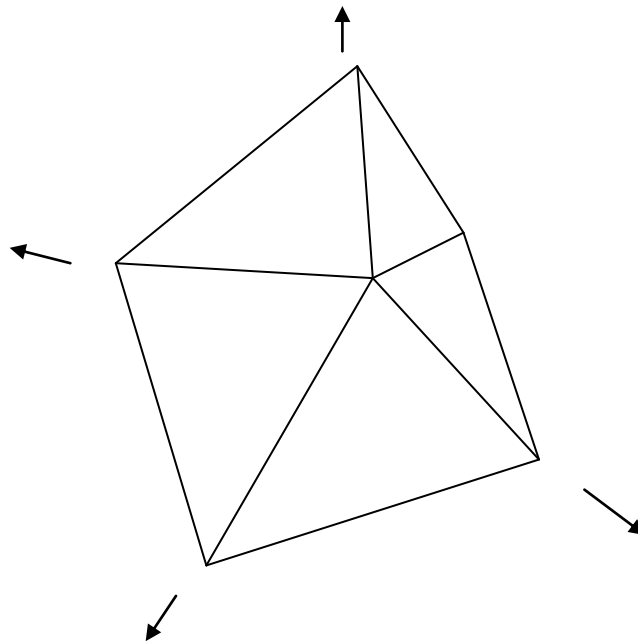
4.6 SUMMARY OF LIVELIHOOD APPROACH TO DEVELOPMENT

The livelihoods approach to development is always concerned primarily with the people. As we conduct a SWOT analysis, the livelihood framework first assesses the household's assets in relation to their environment and finds ways to build on these assets for positive livelihood outcomes. The strength of these assets is determined by environmental factors, classified under trends, shocks and seasonality. These factors lead to the vulnerability of the assets, and thus that of the individuals and households. The trends and shocks may not necessarily be negative in influencing the factors. Sometimes, there are positive outcomes from these trends and shocks.

Pentagon changes in access to assets



The pentagon above shows reasonable, but declining, access to physical capital and limited access to natural capital. Social capital is also falling. Perhaps the people whose livelihood assets are represented above live in an urban area but do not have the skills or finance to invest in infrastructure maintenance. The decline of social capital, as reflected in the pentagon, also constraints their ability to form shared workgroups.



The second pentagon above shows the situation after support that has extended access to financial capital (perhaps through a group-based micro-finance scheme that helps build social capital) as well as providing skills and training (human capital). Together these enable the people to maintain and extend their physical capital. Access to natural capital remains unchanged.

Source: DIFD Sustainable livelihood guidance sheets, section 2.3.

Fundamentally, the livelihood framework seeks to involve people in understanding their contexts; assessing their assets or capitals and help, them analyse and build on the assets they have. The livelihood framework begins with the people, and is people-centred and people owned exercise.

4.7 LIVELIHOOD STRATEGIES

The livelihood framework primarily seeks to empower people with decision making based on understanding their livelihood assets, the environmental context that determines their vulnerability, determining their livelihood priorities that could lead to positive livelihood outcomes. The framework plays a facilitative role, assisting households to take ownership over the process that will lead to recognising their assets and make efforts to build on their asset base. The strategy, therefore, is one of individual or household or community empowerment process in which the households take ownership over their own development process, which determines their destiny and livelihood outcomes.

The households will be empowered with the skills, knowledge and understanding that help them make informed choices for their livelihood outcomes, after an analysis of their strengths and weaknesses. The individuals or households determine their own livelihood outcomes through informed choices.

The people often take charge of their own development through adaptive strategies by making changes and adjustments to cope with difficult circumstances, which actually serve as the entry point for the SL approach (Helmore and Singh 2001: 3).

4.8 LIVELIHOOD OUTCOMES

Livelihood outcomes are the result of informed choices by individuals or households in pursuit of a better quality of life. When we as outsiders seek to measure them, we need to be careful only to investigate, observe and listen, and not to jump into quick conclusions. It would be unwise to come to hasty conclusions. Experience shows that people make informed choices not necessarily to increase their cash income, but for a better quality of life, especially for the house hold and the children.

4.9 SUMMARY OF KEY ELEMENTS OF SUSTAINABLE LIVELIHOOD

The sustainable livelihood approach is a framework, a way of looking at the issues and context. The SLF is people centred, holistic, and dynamic, builds on the strengths and assets of households, and identifies these assets as human, financial, physical, social and natural. The SLF aims to understand the vulnerability context of the households while facilitating the development process.

The livelihood of people, however meagre, is made up of three components. These are activities, assets and entitlements. These together with the short terms coping mechanisms and long term adaptive strategies that are often employed by people in terms of crisis, help the people adjust to hardship, loss and change to maintain a livelihood. The best way to understand how People's livelihoods can be made more productive and sustainable is to first understand their current livelihood activities, assets and entitlements (Helmore and Singh 2001: 4).

CHAPTER 5. ADAPTATION AND APPLICATION OF THE SUSTAINABLE LIVELIHOOD FRAMEWORK

5.1 INTRODUCTION

The term ‘livelihoods’, as is being widely used refers to the means by which people make a living. The search for income, whether in cash or kind, through which they can access resources to sustain themselves and their families, is a significant factor in understanding how people structure their everyday lives and plotting their activities, often across national boundaries. Thus, the economic activity becomes centrality to the pursuit of livelihoods. The link between economic factors and poverty alleviation is that economic growth is not only the most important anti-poverty strategy but is also the only strategy that can contribute to poverty reduction in very poor countries (Mills and Pernia 1994: 11).

“A ‘livelihood framework’ recognizes that households construct their livelihoods within broader socio-economic and physical contexts, using social as well as material assets” (Carney 1998: 4).

The various assets that people possess are described within this framework include human capital, social and political capital, physical capital, financial capital and natural capital (Rakodi 2002: 14). Their inclusion as central to the analysis of livelihoods is intended to focus on what people have – and to build on that capital – rather than identify them as passive participants. To summarise, the guiding principles of a Sustainable Livelihood Framework is intended to place the priorities of the vulnerable at the centre: the first priority is not environment of production, but livelihoods, stressing both short term satisfaction of basic needs and long term security (Chambers 1989: 1). The focus of policy shifts from outputs to people and what the people defined as their priorities, Sustainable Livelihood Frameworks” (SLF) challenges assumptions about what those priorities might be, and place them within a wider context.

In the example of the impact of livelihood approaches adopted by the Grameen Bank of Bangladesh, on the lives of young women, the positive

impact of the livelihood outcome on the changing values of the young Bangladesh women is very evident. The changing attitudes contribute towards the impact on the lives of children as well explained above in section 3 (refer to Section 3.7 on Economic Hardships of households). The donor agencies as well as International and National NGOs are adapting the SLF and contextualising the SLF to their own organizational strategy. What follows in this section are descriptions of various adaptations of the SLF, but the fundamental principles of the Sustainable Livelihood Framework remains. As explained above under section 3.7 above, the improvement in the livelihood of women contributes towards increased income; women invest the increased income on rearing their children, through investments on the children's education, health and nutrition care and their welfare. The increased income helps the household to invest on the well being and care of their children.

Since DFID formulated the SLF, and the livelihoods approach to sustainable development, a great deal of literature has been published on the development stage. DFID also provided a great deal of literature and tools to support innovative approaches to development planning through sustainable livelihood approaches. Since then, a large number of donors, INGOs and UN agencies have adapted the SLA in development planning and policy analysis and development.

In this chapter, we provide a comparative review of current understandings and uses of the SLA. We also examine the context in which some INGOs utilise sustainable livelihoods and provide a guide to the way it has been thought about and applied by bi-lateral donors, multi-lateral agencies, NGOs and governments.

These comparisons yield insights that are pertinent to adapting the sustainable livelihood approach to development planning and thinking, thus improving the effectiveness of poverty reduction efforts. As we review the application of the SLF and approaches by various agencies, we recognise that the fundamentals and core principles of sustainable livelihood thinking are real. This has been accepted by most international organisations and donor

agencies. The organisations adopting the SLF are aware of the asset limitations of the poor. They are also cognisant of the risks that the poor confront and the institutional environment that either facilitates or blocks them in their own endeavours to build pathways out of poverty. (Ellis 2002: 11).

However, beyond this core understanding, there are differences and variations in emphasis of the SLA. Such differences are manifested more over the scale or level of SLF understanding and application. The SLF can be applicable to a community-level context, regional and district context. But the more successful applications are those where the SLF is focused at household level. There are also differences in approach, depending on the organisational focus, be it on economic, social, political or social and cultural aspects. The ultimate test is whether the end result of adopting the SLA contributes to poverty reduction.

Organisations that adopt the SLF must be rooted in its core principles and values, especially the asset vulnerability framework. Such rigidity of approach, adhering to the fundamentals of the SLF, will be the principle driver in poverty reduction strategies. Another principle is that the SLF is a tool for analysing the context; it is not a panacea for development problems. If this is not understood, then its application will not lead to the desired outcome in poverty reduction. It is critical to adhere to the fundamentals of the SLF by applying the core principles and, at the same time, being creative enough to apply the SLF to the organisational contexts. Therein lays the scope for varied applications (Ellis 2002: 11).

5.2 ADAPTATION OF SUSTAINABLE LIVELIHOOD FRAMEWORK

A number of INGOs and key members of the UN System have adapted the SLF in their programming strategy, including CARE International, which pioneered the SLA in 1992. Oxfam GB, UNDP and DFID are among the many others to adapt to SFL in project/programme design and approach. Over the years, UN FAO, United Nations World Food

Programme, the International Fund for Agriculture Development, and Swiss Development Agency, among others, have accepted the principles of the SLF in their programme planning. In the process, these organisations created an array of livelihood approaches to development thinking and practice. With these adaptations came a new variety of sustainable livelihood frameworks, each designed to fit in with the organisation's vision and mission and strategic directions. Let us examine a few of them.

5.2.1 BEGINNINGS OF THE SUSTAINABLE LIVELIHOOD FRAMEWORK MODELS

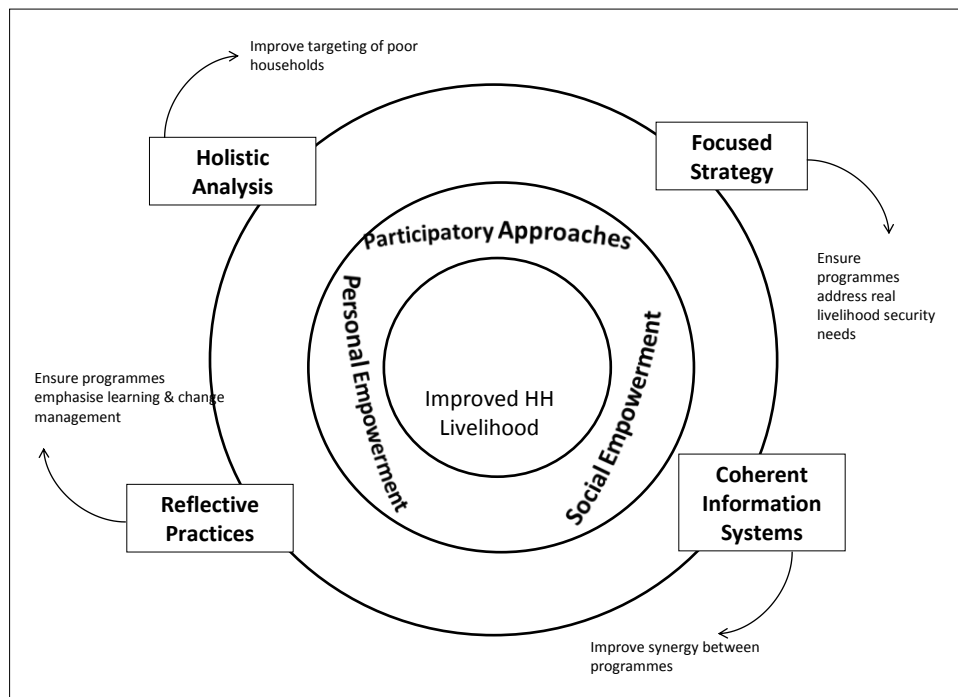
The common thread that unites all the agencies is that they link their ideas back to the work of Chambers and Conway in the early 1990s and most adopt Chambers and Conway's definition of livelihood (or some slight variant on this).

5.3 CARE'S LIVELIHOOD APPROACH

CARE's organisational mandate is to uplift the poorest and the most vulnerable households in communities. The livelihoods approach is its primary programming framework. CARE was the first INGO to incorporate relief, recovery and development work into an integrated programming model. The advantage in adopting this sustainable livelihood approach increases the opportunities for a multi-sectoral intervention, where inter-sectoral coordination attains perfection. The approach is deemed sufficiently comprehensive to address the challenge of large-scale poverty, yet sufficiently flexible to address context-specific constraints.

The most important aspect of the CARE's livelihood approach is the definition and focus on 'household livelihood security' (HLS). HLS is set in the sustainable livelihood framework. The effort is to understand and frame the livelihood strategy and seek the livelihood outcomes against the backdrop of household vulnerability. CARE's livelihood strategy is rooted in the principles of community empowerment, especially personal and social empowerment, adopting a participatory approach. See also Table 4.

Figure 5-1: CARE's programming principles for livelihood projects (Hussein 2002:31)



5.3.1 CORE EMPHASIS AND DEFINITIONS

From Chambers and Conway's definition of livelihoods, CARE has identified three fundamental attributes of livelihoods:

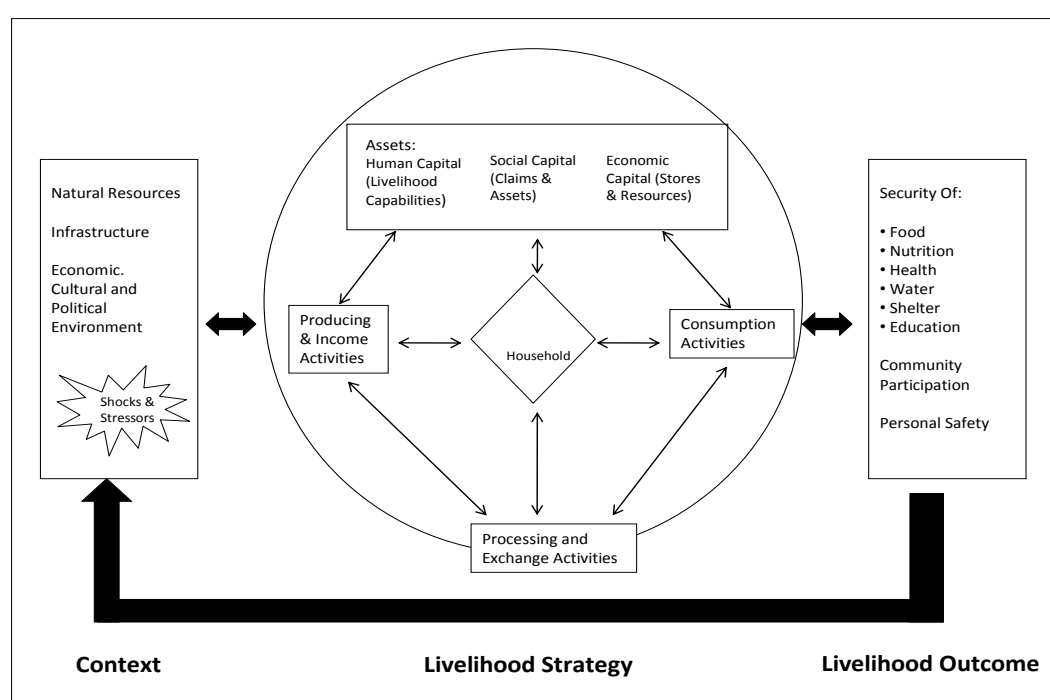
- The possession of human capabilities (such as education, skills, health, and psychological orientation)
- Access to tangible and intangible assets
- The existence of economic activities

The interaction between these attributes provides the ideal livelihood strategy for a household to pursue.

CARE's approach seeks to maintain an emphasis on HLS linked to basic needs. In order to address the root causes of poverty, CARE feels it is important to address the basic needs of the household through a rights-based approach. The rights-based approach provides an additional lens, as does a stakeholder and policy analysis. Combining a rights-based approach with a needs-based approach leads to a holistic analysis. The focus is on the

household. However, this does not mean that the household is the only unit of analysis, or that all CARE's interventions must take place at household level. According to CARE's programme strategy team, the differing perspectives brought to livelihoods analysis 'contribute to the generation of a range of strategic choices that are reviewed more fully during detailed project design' (Frankenberger, Drinkwater and Maxwell 2000: 34).

Figure 5-2: CARE's livelihood model (Amber, John: CARE International Program Strategy Paper).



5.3.2 TYPES OF ACTIVITY

CARE's innovative approach aims to apply the livelihoods approach to project/programme design in urban as well as rural contexts. Besides, CARE's programming approach adopts three categories of livelihood activities. These are based on programmatic necessities and contexts, applied in the relief to development continuum. These livelihood activities are not mutually exclusive (Amber 2002: 6). They are:

- **Livelihood promotion:** Improving the resilience of households, for example through programmes that focus on promotion of household savings and credit, crop diversification, access to markets, reproductive health, community capacity building, personal empowerment and community involvement in service delivery activities. Most livelihood promotion activities are longer-term development projects that increasingly involve participatory methodologies and an empowerment philosophy.
- **Livelihood protection:** Programme interventions are intended to prevent a decline in HLS. Early warning systems, cash or food for work, distribution of seeds and tools, health and nutrition education, flood prevention are some of the activities considered under this category.
- **Livelihood provisioning:** These programme interventions relate mostly to emergency relief to save lives. Direct provision of food, water, shelter and other essential needs, often in emergency situations, are considered under this category.

These activity categories are inclusive. A good livelihood promotion strategy comprises elements that also seek to protect the households in areas of vulnerability. Besides, it assists in improving livelihood security. Likewise, the aim is that elements of protection and promotion should be built in as early as possible to traditional relief (provisioning) activities. For instance, institutions established to help with relief activities are set up in a very participatory way. Over time, capacity-building training is provided, so that the same structures can be used to plan and initiate livelihood promotion activities (Amber 2002: 6).

5.3.3 CARE'S AREAS OF LIVELIHOOD SUPPORT:

CARE's three focus areas of activity are cross cutting with these areas of livelihood support.

- **Personal empowerment:** This means equipping individuals and household members with skills, knowledge and awareness, so that they make informed choices and decisions. CARE's approach recognises the fundamental right to choose by individuals and households.
- **Social empowerment:** Promotion of education (especially among women) and community empowerment, leading to collective action for the benefit of the whole community, are features of the social empowerment concept. Political advocacy is another key component.
- **Service delivery:** Through advocacy and promotional activities, households and the individuals gain increased access to basic services for the poor.

The SL framework developed by CARE focuses less on the influencing factors of structures and processes and the processes and macro-micro links. This minor deviation is obvious when compared to the DFID framework, which stresses the importance of the influencing factors of structures and processes. Nevertheless, it does not mean that CARE does not consider the strength of institutional and organisational factors while designing the livelihood strategies. As an INGO, CARE is less involved in the micro-macro issues that are key features of agencies such as UNDP and DFID. In the organisational realm, CARE's work has been mostly limited to local matters such as community mobilisation. CARE also sees local institutional building as an important contributory factor in poverty alleviation.

In support of this, CARE works with local authorities and national government agencies to legitimise and gain support for democratic, local structures. CARE is increasingly involved in advocacy, helping higher-level authorities to develop appropriate strategies for working with community groups, etc. This is particularly true of urban livelihood projects, because urban areas tend to be highly politicised, and projects must closely work with municipal and sometimes national government from the outset.

CARE has invested human and material resources and tools in order to operationalise the livelihood approach to programming strategy (Amber 2002: 32).

5.4 DEPARTMENT FOR INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT

DIFD's adoption of SLA stems directly from its commitment to halve global poverty by 2015. This is stated in its 1997 policy paper on international development. One of three specifics designed to achieve this aim is a commitment to 'policies and actions which promote sustainable livelihoods'. Sustainable livelihoods are thus, for DFID, an approach to achieving poverty alleviation, rather than a goal in their own right.

DFID has fine-tuned the SLF for adaptation to rural and urban contexts. The initiative came from the rural side of the organisation with efforts to extend to urban livelihoods and mainstream the approach in the organisation as a whole gathering strength in 1999. Currently, DFID is extending discussion of sustainable livelihood ideas and assessing how they fit with other procedures (for example country programming systems) and approaches (sector-wide approaches, rights-based approaches).

5.4.1 CORE EMPHASIS AND DEFINITIONS

As with all other agencies, Chambers and Conway's definition of a livelihood remains the cornerstone of DFID's policy framework: 'A livelihood comprises the capabilities, assets and activities required for a means of living. A livelihood is sustainable when it can cope with and recover from stresses and shocks and maintain or enhance its capabilities and assets both now and in the future, while not undermining the natural resource base' (Chambers and Conway 1991: 5)

DFID recognises that there is no one single approach that attains livelihood outcomes. DFID also stresses that there are six underlying principles to all these livelihood approaches.

Sustainable livelihood, according to DFID's interpretation, designed at poverty eradication, needs six underlying principles. These are:

• **People-centred:** The external forces, seeking to induce qualitative change in the lives of the people they wish to serve, must begin with dialogue with the people themselves in order to contribute towards a sustainable livelihood outcome. The people should own the development process.

• **Responsive and participatory:** The role of the external forces should be facilitative and supportive of the process. Poor people themselves must be key actors in identifying and addressing livelihood priorities.

• **Multi-level:** Poverty elimination is an enormous challenge that will be overcome only by working at multiple levels, ensuring that micro-level activity informs the development of policy and an effective enabling environment, and that macro-level structures and processes support people to build on their own strengths.

• **Conducted in partnership:** This partnership must include the public and private sectors.

• **Sustainable:** The external forces must proceed with an understanding of the four key dimensions to sustainability: economic, institutional, social and environmental. All are important and a balance must be found between them.

• **Dynamic:** The dynamic nature of the livelihood strategies must be recognised. The need to respond flexibly to changes in context that have a bearing on people's livelihood is important, with an underlying commitment to poverty elimination, which is the thread running through all DFID work.

• **Asset based:** The DFID framework stresses the importance of livelihoods of capital assets and acknowledges five categories of assets: natural, social, physical, human and financial. DFID focuses on clearly defined livelihoods and outcomes, which are qualitative and thinks about how development activity impacts upon people's livelihoods. DFID recognises the limitations of project outputs, which are purely quantitative.

As a government-sponsored and development-focused funding institution, DFID recognises the need to operationalise the livelihood approaches in many contexts. The DFID aims to promote the livelihoods approach to development planning through the following:

- Direct support to expand and grow the asset bases (providing poor people with better access to assets that act as a foundation for their livelihoods). ‘Access’ is the key word; availability of an asset does not guarantee a livelihood outcome unless the people have access to it.
- Support for the more effective functioning of structures and processes through advocating for policies. Support for public and private sector organisations, markets, social relations is part of DFID strategy. These influence not only access to assets, but also which livelihood strategies can open up new avenues for the poor to wriggle out of poverty.

Community empowerment is the concept that links these two ideas. The underlying principle is that if people have better access to assets they will have greater ability to influence structures and processes. Their access will become more responsive to their needs. Three types of activities that can contribute to poverty alleviation have been identified.

Enabling actions are those that support the policies and context for poverty reduction and elimination.

- Inclusive actions are broad based and improve opportunities and service generally. They address issues of inequality and barriers to participation of poor people.
- Focused actions are targeted directly at the needs of the poor people.

SLAs are adaptable to needs and contexts in different areas. Work at the level of transforming structures and processes are linked to an empowering process of enabling actions. Efforts to build each of the assets might be inclusive, for example education programmes, or focused efforts in the form of supporting micro-finance for poor women.

5.5 OXFAM GB'S SUSTAINABLE LIVELIHOOD APPROACH

Oxfam GB is a British-based international development organisation working with the poorest of the poor in poverty alleviation programmes. Oxfam is generally acknowledged to be an organisation that expresses the voices of the poor. Oxfam has a strong and a recognisable voice in the arena of advocacy campaigns in support of the poor.

Oxfam GB has adapted the SLA since the early 1990s. Oxfam felt the need for a broad framework that could accommodate issues of environmental change together with concerns about globalising markets, deteriorating economic rights, debilitating gender and wider social inequality, and strengthening deprived people's participation in the development process. The analytical work on the sustainable livelihood as articulated by Chambers and Conway seemed to offer a positive approach that could integrate all these issues, without falling into the trap of simply adding the environment to Oxfam's core aim of alleviating poverty.

Oxfam uses the SLA in the project design stage, including planning and assessment (of projects and wider programmes), and incorporates it in the overall strategic focus of its programmes. Oxfam, however, is a decentralised organisation working with more than 1 000 partners in over 50 countries. Therefore, as an international organisation, committed to the philosophy of devolution of power to local entities, Oxfam felt the necessity for the programme framework to be compatible with the ideas and the languages of all its constituent units. Therefore, to accomplish this, Oxfam created an environment in which the SLA could be sensitive enough to be accepted and adopted by its constituent programming units, rather than promoting it as the sole way of doing programming.

5.5.1 CORE EMPHASIS AND DEFINITIONS

Oxfam recognises the seminal work by Chambers and Conway in its definition of sustainable livelihoods. However, Oxfam also recognises that sustainability has various dimensions:

- Economic sustainability, attainable through the functioning of market and credit supply
- Social sustainability, attained through established networks of reciprocity, including gender equity
- Institutional sustainability attained through leadership development and capacity building, which enable access to services and technology, and political freedom
- Ecological sustainability, leading to quality and availability of environmental resources for subsequent generations.

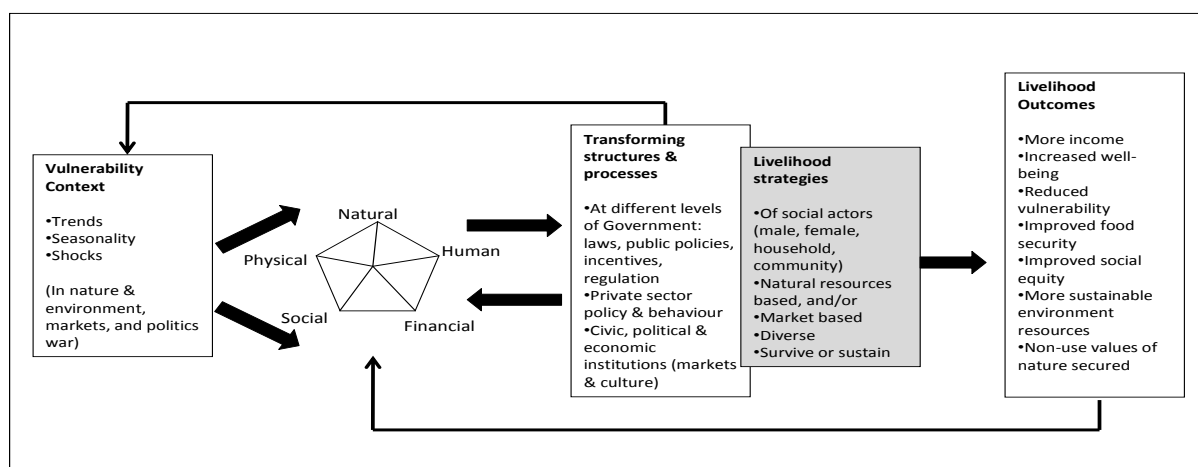
(Ellis 2000: 37)

(NB. DFID built on Oxfam's work when developing its own ideas about sustainability.)

The fundamental right of everyone for a sustainable livelihood is the foundation principle of Oxfam's approach to sustainable livelihood. The human capacity to make a living and meet the basic needs for a sustainable quality of life is the precept on which Oxfam's livelihood approach is built.

According to Oxfam's interpretation, 'a sustainable livelihood is one that allows people to recover from crisis, and maintain consistent quality of life over time'. It draws on the old adage, 'give a man a fish he feeds his family for a day; given him a net, he feeds his family indefinitely'. That is the essence of Oxfam's livelihood strategy, which helps to realise people's rights to a long-term income, as well as a safe environment, housing, clean water and sufficient food (Generation Why - the issues, www/oxfam.org.uk).

Figure 5-3: Oxfam GB's sustainable livelihood framework



As a rights-based organisation, Oxfam's five current corporate aims combine to help secure the 'right to a sustainable livelihood'. This aim, together with the objective of saving lives in humanitarian crises, is the most important in financial terms. Under the sustainable livelihood aim, two strategic change objectives have been formulated. These stress outcomes similar to those included in the DFID framework.

Oxfam's desired outcomes are that:

- People living in poverty will achieve food and income security
- People living in poverty will have access to secure paid employment, labour rights and improved working conditions

The right to social services, the right to life and security, and various forms of social equity are a few of Oxfam's corporate aims and change objectives. Oxfam seeks to address at least three of its five corporate aims in any given programme and a way to link humanitarian support in crisis situations with longer-term development. Through this, Oxfam

acknowledges its commitment to relief to recovery and the long-term development continuum.

5.5.2 TYPES OF ACTIVITY

Oxfam GB has pioneered the SLA since 1993, both in formulating overall aims and in improving project strategies. While formulating the SL approach, Oxfam has articulated the need to help deprived people gain better access to and more control over productive resources, to strengthen their position in markets, and to ensure that these improvements are structural rather than temporary. In the area of structural changes, Oxfam has adopted the approach to formulate inclusive and participatory projects and to assess their impact on livelihoods, the environment and social relations.

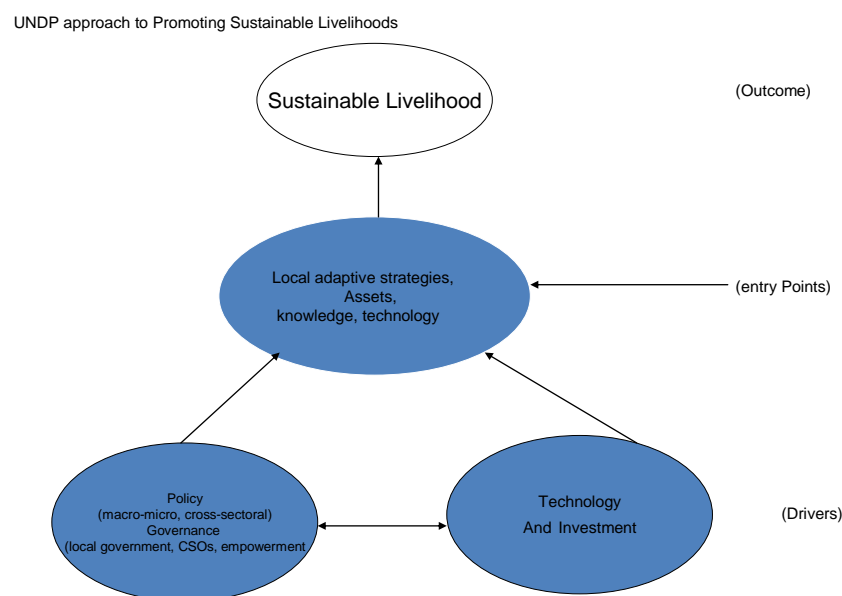
Oxfam is following in the footsteps of CARE by becoming increasingly involved in issues relating to macro-micro links, policy formulation and advocacy. Oxfam expects these types of interventions to expand in the future. Thus, Oxfam is setting itself to the advocacy role, an important function in development thinking and practice, an area not many NGOs venture into.

5.6 UNDP SUSTAINABLE LIVELIHOOD APPROACH

Human development has been the theme and focus of the UNDP over the years. The UN Development Report highlighted this strategic intent.

Therefore, the sustainable livelihood agenda is part of the organisation's overall sustainable human development mandate that was developed and adopted in 1995. This includes poverty eradication, employment and sustainable livelihoods, gender, protection and regeneration of the environment and governance. In this context, the SLA is one way of achieving poverty reduction, though other strategies are being pursued in the organisation (for example macro economic growth, community development, and community-based natural resource management).

Figure 5-4: UNDP 1995: Approach to promoting sustainable livelihoods.



5.6.1 CORE EMPHASIS AND DEFINITIONS

Sustainable livelihoods remain a key mandate for UNDP, providing a framework for a conceptual and programmatic initiative for poverty reduction in a sustainable manner. Conceptually, ‘livelihoods’ denotes the means, activities, entitlements and assets by which people make a living. The sustainability of livelihoods becomes a function of how men and women utilise asset portfolios on short- and long-terms basis. Sustainable livelihoods are those that are:

- Capable of building the resilience in households to cope with and recover from shocks and stresses (such as drought, civil war, policy failure) through adaptive and coping strategies
- Economically self-sustaining and effective
- Ecologically sound, ensuring those livelihood activities maintain the natural resource base of the eco system that sustains life beyond the current cycle

- Socially equitable: the promotion of livelihood opportunities for one group should not be at the cost of other group. The whole community or the group should benefit from the UNDP efforts.

(Ellis 2002: 24)

The sustainable livelihood framework of UNDP seeks a holistic approach, bringing together the issues of poverty, governance and environment. The UNDP adopts an asset-based method, favouring the need to understand adaptive and coping strategies in order to analyse the use of different types of assets. Other key aspects of the UNDP approach are:

- It seeks to build on the strengths of households and the community, rather than on weaknesses and needs.
- Stress on macro-micro links should be actively supported
- There must be constant emphasis and stress on the ‘sustainability’ aspect of programme design.

Unlike most other NGOs, UNDP considers technology an important input in poverty alleviation efforts. Therefore, during the participatory assessment, before project design, technological options that could improve the productivity of assets are considered part of the assessment exercise. UNDP gives priority to adapting local and indigenous technology in their programmes. UNDP also advocates with the national governments and the NGOs to favour local technology over imported technology.

5.6.2 TYPES OF ACTIVITIES

Primarily, the agricultural and natural resource sectors have attracted UNDP efforts in applying the sustainable livelihood approach. Urban livelihood strategies are yet another area of focus for UNDP. Its goal is to promote access to and sustainable use of the assets on which men and women rely. To do this, and to understand how assets are utilised, it takes as its entry point the adaptive/coping strategies that people employ in their livelihoods. This is not the same as the DFID approach.

DFID focuses its development activity on assets themselves or on structures and processes that contribute to livelihood strategies and

outcomes. Strong emphasis is being placed on maximising people's opportunities over the long term.

UNDP usually works at the national level with specific programmes and activities at district and village level. However, the SL analysis takes place at household and community level.

5.7 AN URBAN SUSTAINABLE LIVELIHOOD MODEL

The origins of the SLA and its variations as expressed by different donor and NGOs as discussed in chapter five had strong rural orientation. However, NGOs like CARE have been adapting the SLF and the SL approach for urban programme designs as well. More recently, Meikle, jointly with Tamsin Ramasut and Julian Walker attempt an understanding of the sustainable livelihood for an urban context. Here are some thoughts of Sheilah Meikle, Ramasut and Walker approach to Sustainable Urban Livelihood (Meikle, Ramasut and Walker 2001: 4-15).

5.7.1 UNDERSTANDING THE BASICS OF AN URBAN SUSTAINABLE LIVELIHOOD APPROACH

- Poverty is not regarded merely as lack of wealth, but is defined as vulnerability to shocks and stresses.
- To overcome vulnerability, households use a variety of assets.
- The complexity of short-term and long-term strategy used by the poor to mobilise assets.
- The character of poverty and adaptability of livelihood strategies are dynamic in nature.
- Livelihoods must be understood from the point of view of poor women and men.
- The focus has always been on households and families as key units for understanding and organising livelihoods.

(Meikle, et al: 2001: 8)

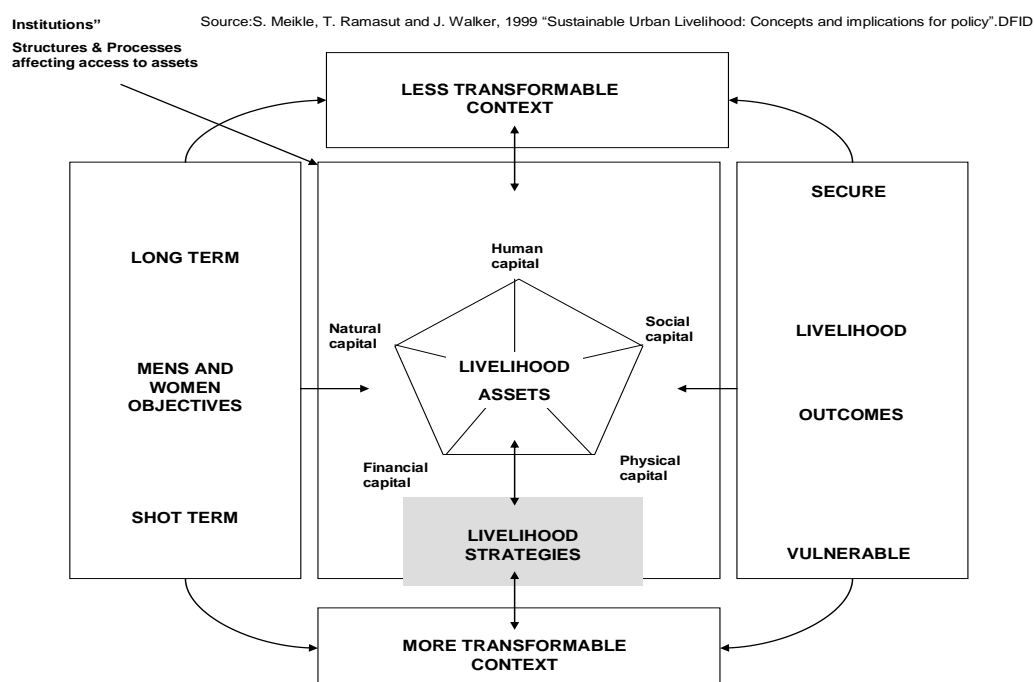
The sustainable livelihood approach to poverty eradication (see chapter 4) must be:

- Sensitive to people and communities and appreciate the importance of social links for livelihoods.
- Equity oriented with the full participation of the poor; people are considered as participants and not as beneficiaries.
- Related to other Policy objectives and human rights issues.
- Sensitive to environmental needs and conditions, both of the communities and the requirements of broader environmentally sustainable development
- Holistic in approach in order to reflect the multidimensional nature of the poverty and the survival nature strategies of the poor.

(Meikle, et al 2001: 8)

These are adapted and practices are based on specific contexts. Figure 7 below presents a sustainable urban livelihood model. The specific elements and linkages of the sustainable urban livelihood model are described in detail below. This description highlights specific features that distinguish the needs and conditions of urban from rural livelihoods (Meikle, et al 2001:9).

Figure 5-5: Urban Sustainable Livelihood Model (Meikle, Ramasut and Walker: 2001:9)



5.7.2 ASSETS

As in other forms of livelihood analysis, above figure is presented as a pentagon of five types of assets: financial, human, natural, physical and social, as proposed in DFID's model (DFID 1999: 15). There is not much change in these generic models between rural and urban sustainable livelihood models. However, an urban setting may result in a different emphasis for each type of asset. Thus, for example, natural capital will generally be of less significance in an urban setting and financial capital more significant.

5.7.3 LIVELIHOOD STRATEGIES

Many poor urban households are dynamic, diversifying their sources of income and drawing, where possible, on a portfolio of activities (such as formal waged employment, informal trading and service activities). As Douglass observes, poor urban households are not reliant on one single activity to sustain their livelihoods. They always seek to diversify their income earning by seeking multiple activities by family members. Each of

them seeks to engage in different types of activities and sectors of the economy (Douglass 1998: 117).

The assets available to household members will in part determine the activities undertaken by poor households.

5.7.4 LIVELIHOOD OUTCOMES

Households adapt a variety of strategies to produce positive livelihood outcomes, though their correct usage of assets varies (Meikle, et al 2001: 10). Livelihood outcomes can be placed on a continuum between vulnerability and security (Moser 1998: 7). The livelihood strategy of an individual or household is vulnerable to unexpected changes that could affect the asset base. A sustainable livelihood is one which is secure and guards people against shocks and stresses. Dependence on the earnings of only one person leads to insecurity, while multiple wage earners in a household provide for much higher security for households against vulnerabilities (Meikle, et al 2001: 14).

5.7.5 CONTEXTS

Meikle points out that many of the underlying causes of the vulnerability of the poor relate to the context in which they operate. We discussed urban contexts in chapter 2.

5.7.5.1 Differences between agencies: How much do they matter?

While reviewing the SLA of all four agencies, we find a lot of commonalities. The focus on assets and macro-micro level links has its roots in the early work of Chambers and Conway. These agencies recognise the necessity for a flexible approach while promoting and adapting the SLF.

We also need to analyse how the various organisations operationalise their SLAs. Differences in approach may only be internal, meaning that different parts of the organisation operate in different ways and in comparison with each other.

Contextual factors, according to Meikle, are determinants of the underlying causes of the vulnerability of the poor. (We discussed this aspect under urban contexts in chapter 2.) An analysis of the SLF approaches reveals that there are more commonalities between agencies than differences.

- An asset-based approach is a common factor among the organisations. Some agencies consider a smaller number of assets than others. The approach is the key factor in determining outcomes, and not the number of assets.

- The understanding of the key concept of ‘sustainability’ varies between agencies.

- An understanding of effective macro-micro links is stressed as important by all agencies.

- Similarly, different levels of importance on ‘empowerment’ are noted among NGOs.

- While UNDP stresses the need to adopt technology in its framework DFID considers it an input into human capital.

(Hussein 2002: 50-53)

5.7.6 OTHER ORGANISATIONS’ APPROACHES TO THE SLF

The relevance of and the necessity to adopt a people-centred development approach has been accepted by the FAO and IFAD. These agencies have adopted the SLF in their programme design and development approach (Hussein 2002: 21 -23).

The SLF continues to be the dominant theme in policy formulation geared towards an enabling development. The UN World Food Programme and DFID are partnering to increase the use of SLA in the WFP programming cycle. The WFP’s increased focus on vulnerability assessment in its programme context is part of this partnership strategy (Hussein 2002: 29, 30).

The household economy approach (HEA) adopted by the Save the Children Fund in its programme strategy is centred on the sustained livelihood approach to development planning (Hussein 2002: 39, 40).

The European Commission (EU) has adopted the SLA in its development policy document, drawing on the sustainable livelihood framework. The approach to development at the World Bank is centred on the SLA, though the World Bank has not explicitly adopted or institutionalised it. Its position paper on development strategy is guided by SLA principles, including the work of Chambers on participation and that of Chambers and Conway on livelihoods (Hussein 2002: 43).

The core principles expressed by World Bank in its World Development Report 2000/2001 on Poverty are compatible with those of SLA. For example, the World Development Report, which was informed by the participatory survey 'Voice of the Poor', emphasises three pillars of poverty reduction: vulnerability and assets, empowerment and opportunity. (Hussein 2002: 26).

5.7.7 ADVANTAGES OF THE LIVELIHOOD APPROACH

The livelihoods approach to development planning, focused on an analysis of livelihoods and assessment of vulnerability, contributes to quality livelihood outcomes. Additional advantages are as follows:

- Through a clear and concise analytical framework, the livelihoods approach ensures the internal coherence and analytical strengths of the programmes. Therefore, the SLA assists in programme design, implementation and monitoring. Complex community and household contexts can easily be navigated through adopting the SLF in programme design and planning.
- The SLA leads us through a holistic analysis of household and community contexts, thus directing resources to the targeted community leading to increased impact.
- This livelihoods approach supports targeted skills development and overall human capital.
- The SLF adopts a higher participatory approach through bestowing the ownership of planning on the community from the conceptualising and design stage.

- Opportunities for collaboration and partnerships are part of the SLA.

- The SLF increases access to donor funding. Since most donors have adopted the SLF in their programme design, they understand the significance of the SLA in the recipient organisation's approach to development.

- It complements existing approaches to development.

5.7.7.1 Framework strengths

The adaptation and application of the SL approach to Programme design and development has several strengths. Some of these are:

- The SLF seeks to understand changing combinations of modes of livelihood in a dynamic and historical context, often leading to a creative tension between levels of analysis.

- The SLA recognises the need to transcend the traditional rural and urban sectors.

- The SLA requires detailed analysis at household level, calling for attention to intra-household and extra-household social relations.

5.7.7.2 Framework weaknesses

However, the SL framework and its adaptation also have some weaknesses. Some of the weaknesses are:

- Some vulnerability contexts, especially financial turmoil and rampant inflation, as well as civil conflicts and environmental issues, are difficult to predict and quantify, although they have a serious bearing on the vulnerability analysis.

- The SLA always looks at the positives, especially in building and strengthening the asset base of the households. The SLA may tend to overlook the uncertainties.

- Inequalities of power and conflicts of interests are not sufficiently acknowledged.

- The SLA commitment to participation may tend to ignore the power equation in the community. Often one group benefits in a way that detrimental to other groups.

- The term ‘sustainable livelihood’ needs in-depth analysis. What is the time span for determining the success of sustainability?

5.7.7.3 Synthesis and a model sustainable livelihood framework

While reviewing these sustainable livelihood models, it is apparent that the livelihood model as developed and perfected by the DFID to support its worldwide development strategy appears to be acceptable. The livelihood approach is neither a sectoral approach nor a multi-sectoral approach, but a holistic approach to development policy and planning. The conditions of poor people are analysed in their context through a lens. The framework is people centred, and the people own the assessment process. The livelihood analysis process begins and ends with the people. People are at the centre of development. Their self-respect and dignity are recognised. This in essence is the strength of the SLA.

In the past 60 years or more, when development planning emerged as a critical component for overseas aid, efforts to promote people-centred, sustainable development in the world’s poorest countries have met with mixed results. Applied nutrition programmes and integrated rural development programmes, among many others, have left monuments of failure in development thinking and practice. Some approaches have succeeded, however. Nevertheless, real progress in eradicating the root causes poverty has remained elusive because of many development practitioners practising narrow sector-wise approaches to development rather than holistic approaches. As Helmore and Singh aptly remark, ‘the tendency to reduce a community into separate compartments precludes acknowledging the wholeness of the community situation’ (Helmore and Singh 2001: 1).

The sustainable livelihood methodology is not a programme. It is an approach that adds onto the building blocks of development. A change in mindset is required of development thinkers and practitioners. Sustainable

livelihoods seek to set these building blocks in place in such a way that the people recognise their relative importance and their combination and interaction lead to successful livelihood outcomes. 'The philosophy is built on ideas such as adaptive strategies, participation and empowerment, science and technology, financial services and governance and policy' (Helmore and Singh 2001: 1).

The SLF views people as operating in a context of vulnerability. Within this context, they have access to certain assets or poverty-reducing factors. Risk and vulnerability analysis should be used in the design of projects and programmes for the community. Risk analysis is an essential approach to understanding sustainability and designing exit strategies.

The key element for a successful livelihood approach to programme planning is to recognise the vulnerability factor and build in strategies for reducing the vulnerability of the community. Vulnerability involves an inability to manage risks.

Vulnerability can be reduced through an asset-based approach to risk management. While the SLF assists us to begin a dialogue with the community, it draws on community knowledge to assess the human, financial, natural, social and physical asset base. Then the dialogue with the community continues in order to identify ways to build on each asset base to reduce vulnerability.

An understanding of community resilience is critical in analysing vulnerability. Resilience can be defined as the human ability to recover from disruptive change. The concept of vulnerability takes the short- and long-term consequences of risk exposure into the analysis.

In summary, the sustainable livelihood framework is an excellent tool that assesses community strengths and gives an opportunity to build on strengths and capabilities through a process owned and managed by the community. Recognition of vulnerability factors is an important component of the process that will help the community to build resilience to shocks.

5.7.8 CONCLUSION

5.7.8.1 Criticism of the sustainable livelihood approach

The SLA has been criticised for not taking power and politics into account in the contextual analysis. This view is not correct. Livelihoods approaches encompass a broad range of conceptual ideas and thoughts. Substantial research has been done on the sub-theme of transforming structures and processes, policies and institutions.

Important work has been done to elucidate what is meant, in variants of the frameworks, by ‘transforming structures and process’, ‘policies’, institutions and processes, mediating institutions and organisations, sustainable livelihood governance and drivers of change’ (Scoones 2009: 180).

Several of these thoughts and consultations have focused on social networks and political structures and processes that contribute to influencing livelihood choices. These debates, unfortunately, did not gain momentum in the mainstream development discourse. The poverty reduction agenda propounded by the economists continued to be a dominant force in development dialogue.

The multiplicity of frameworks adopted by UN agencies and INGOs did not help to produce a unified idea of SLF. The dominant role that power played in all aspects of livelihood from assets to strategies and outcomes was recognised. There was another school of thought that felt that, given the dominance of power in livelihood analysis, another asset called ‘political asset’ had to be included in the framework. However, there were other voices in the neither debate, who felt that merely adding ‘power asset’ to the equation did not recognise nor deal with the complexity of the power equation in sustainable livelihoods analysis. As Harriss observes, adding the power asset diminishes the complex issue of power to its lowest denominator (Harriss 1997: 921). Therefore, the regular pleas to pay attention to power and politics often fell on deaf ears, and an instrumental application proceeded as normal, but with a livelihood label.

5.7.8.2 The decline and fall of the livelihood perspectives?

There has been gradual recognition that the substance and relevance of the SLA and SLF are beginning to wane in the development debate and thought. Some critics suggest that the SLF concept gained substance and adaptation widely during the period of political opportunism, when the government of the UK placed all its political and financial muscle behind this idea. 'In some instances, the ideas became part of the mainstream thinking and practice' (Scoones 2009: 181).

On the other hand, while seeing the acceptability and adaptation of SL perspectives by leading international NGOS and UN agencies as cutting-edge development thinking and practice, one cannot ignore the relevance of SLF as a tool that is in the forefront of development practice at community level. SLF thinking brought in new ideas from the people. New sets of skills were in charge of development. We could witness the empowerment of the community in its true form.

New insights were developed and lessons learnt, as the introduction of the SLA to development planning brought new understandings and new approaches. These efforts led to debates on rights, governance and agrarian changes (Scoones 2009: 182).

There are four reasons that livelihood perspectives are not as prominent as they were a decade ago. Some people tend to exaggerate these as four failings of the livelihoods perspective. The first criticism is the feeling that the SLA does not take into consideration the impact of economic globalisation on sustainable development. Such a criticism comes from the economists' lobby in DFID. They feel that references to economic aspects in the SLF are too meagre to make a lasting impact on livelihoods. Moreover, there is a feeling that the methodology for livelihood approaches is too complex for community-level challenges and the resultant action planning. The critics also feel that given the shift in donor policy towards direct budget support for national governments, the complex community- and household-based focus of the SLA was becoming irrelevant (Scoones 2009: 181,182).

Second, critics argued that the SLA does not focus sufficiently on the influence of power and politics in framing livelihoods and governance issues that have a major bearing on development. A limited attempt was made, though, to give recognition to the influence of power and structures on livelihood and community empowerment (Scoones 2009: 183). These were more pronounced in the work of NGOs that favoured rights-based approaches (Sustainable Livelihoods in Southern Africa (SLSA) SLSA 2003a: 79-96; SLSA 2003b: 99-107) and in the implications in the larger development realm of agrarian change (Lahiff 2003: 53). However, these efforts were confined mainly to debates and not thought of seriously as worthy of implementation.

The impression thus gained is that development practitioners, as idealists, kept their focus on micro-level issues rather than seeking to mainstream SLA among larger debates on agrarian reform and the social movement of the times (Scoones 2009: 182).

The third failing, as pointed out by critics of the livelihoods perspective, is the failure to respond to the issues surrounding climate change. Were the SLAs up to this challenge? Perhaps this is a big challenge of the 21st century that development thinkers and practitioners cannot ignore. The lack of conscious effort to take cognisance of environmental degradation and its impact on livelihood of community is considered a major lacuna in the debate over adopting the SLA (Scoones 2009: 182).

The development concept of 'sustainability' is often referred to in the SLF as the means of addressing vulnerability. While doing so, the SLA tends to ignore local knowledge and practices, which generally have the capacity to withstand vulnerability. The SLA must integrate local knowledge into the design stage (Scoones 2009: 182).

Fourth, the livelihood approach must modernise and upgrade the thinking by including the impact of globalisation and the consequent urbanisation. This is leading to agrarian change and a shift in demographic patterns, which are key development indicators the SLA needs to consider more seriously. Thus the fourth criticism is that the SLA is not futuristic, but

conceived and developed on what is past and present. However, there is recognition of this inadequacy in SL thinking among the proponents of the livelihood approaches. This is leading to newer research on livelihood diversification (Bryceson 1996: 98).

Recognition of the four failings has re-affirmed that discussions on SLA are beginning to move forward, taking into consideration evolving global contexts in global climate change and macro-economic issues. Yet, there is another view among the practitioners that livelihoods perspectives address the needs of the community and those are what the SLA is all about. By seeking to make the SLA modernistic, the other approaches tend to miss out the core principles of SLA with possible negative consequences. The continued focus should be on people centred and people focussed. What is needed, though, is the right balance between the traditional SLA and evolving modernistic thinking (Scoones 2009: 183).

5.7.9 WHERE DO WE GO FROM HERE?

The subject of this dissertation is developing a sustainable livelihood approach for urban households, with innovative strategies for children. Recognising the impact of urbanisation on the households and the children, the first chapter explained the emerging global phenomenon of urbanisation and sought to present the research action plan. The twentieth century began with rapid industrialisation that was focused on urban centres as a sequel to resources, material, human and financial, accumulation in the urban areas. The resultant influx of the population into urban centres and its impact on the quality of urban life was portrayed in chapter two. We also discussed the global view of emerging urban contexts.

In chapter three, we discussed the challenges faced by children in an urban set-up and the consequences of rapid urbanisation on children. We also reviewed the challenges faced by children in the emerging urban context.

In chapter four, as a way forward towards developing a sustainable development strategy for children in urban contexts, we reviewed the SLA and analysed it in depth. In chapter four traces the origins of the SLF and the

Sustainable Livelihood Approach to development practice. While promoting poverty alleviation programmes, donors and development practitioners began to recognize the challenges facing the household are multi dimensional, multi-faceted and therefore seeks a multi-disciplinary approach. A single sector approach was not adequate enough to address the complexity of issues and problems confronting the households. If a development effort was to be sustainable, the people need to be at the centre of development;

In order to do so, the SLF adopts an appreciative enquiry process, in which the SL approach seeks to understand what the people have in the form of assets and begin to build on the assets through various interventions. The assets are classified as Human assets (skills, physical strength, health and the right attitude to work and earn a living) Physical assets (basic infrastructure, shelter, water, transportation etc), Social Assets (refers to net works of households and groups, membership of groups, membership in savings and credit groupings etc), Financial Assets (in the form of savings and credit group membership, regular remittances or pensions which provide them with livelihood options. Finally the Natural Assets (land, water, environmental resources etc).

These five asset bases are linked to form an asset pentagon. The SL approach to development planning seeks to build on the asset base and expand the total asset area of the pentagon. The broader the asset pentagon is, the more opportunities for increased livelihood outcomes.

The salient feature of the SLF is that a multi-sector intervention is required in order to build on and expand the asset base so all the five different assets are invested upon and built while strengthening the livelihood opportunities for the households. The SLF is a frame work which is applicable to either urban, rural and semi urban contexts. In an urban setting, adopting the SLF approach leads to investing on the asset base of households and thereby increases the income capabilities and livelihood outcomes of the households.

The increased livelihood opportunities lead to increased income among urban households; the increased income for the households lead to

increased investments on the well being of the children. The parents, especially the women, seek to invest on the education, health, nutrition of their children. Therefore, the Sustainable Livelihood approach to development leads to increased “Child well being outcomes”. This is so much relevant in urban contexts, where the economy is cash based. Children are no longer considered as economic assets but as worthy beings to be invested upon and build their human capital.

The model propounded by CARE, among the various other models of other organizations is focussed on Household Livelihood Security. This model is applicable and relevant to Urban as well as rural contexts, as explained with examples in section 3.7 above.

CARE International began experimenting with and refining its own livelihood approach which has come to be termed as “Household Livelihood Security (HLS)”. Drawing upon the lessons from its rural food security strategies, CARE realised that livelihood strategies and approaches find remarkable resonance in helping to interpret the complexities of urban living. Some of the key aspects of this approach are (Sanderson and Hedley 2002: 247-249):

- The starting point for the exercise is the identification of vulnerable women, men and children in urban settings.
- Building and strengthening of household level tangible and intangible assets is at the centre of programme interventions.
- The analysis of programming problems and opportunities is holistic in approach; these could be single sector or multi-sectoral.
- The approach is multi level and multi dimensional, from household level asset building to municipal level control of resources.
- The programming tools and interventions are participatory and aimed at empowering those at all stages are used.
- The consciously evolving programming approach requires coherent information and learning systems. This includes a good monitoring and evaluation system.

CARE has successfully demonstrated the Household Livelihood Strategy and its positive livelihood outcomes two of its Urban Livelihood Programming models in Zambia. These are the PUSH (Peri Urban Self Help) and its successor PROSPECT (Programme of Support for Poverty Elimination and Community Transformation) (Sanderson and Hedley 2002: 247-249).

As reflected in Chapter three under section 3.7, increased livelihood opportunities lead to increased income at the household levels; increased income leads to investments on the welfare and wellbeing of children (Sanderson and Hedley: 247-249). This is a sure way to provide and meet the needs of children living in urban areas.

In chapter six, we unpack CARE's sustainable livelihood framework, elaborated under household livelihood security in the urban context, as a way forward towards developing an urban programming model, with the household as the unit, in which the needs and aspirations of children are provided for.

CHAPTER 6. FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

6.1 INTRODUCTION

The seeds of embarking on this research effort were sown some years ago, when development practitioners and thinkers were witnessing the miseries of urban dwellers, especially new migrant labourers in the urban employment market. This was caused by the rapid urbanisation of the world, resulting from globalisation of the economies. Children in urban households generally faced untold miseries. Therefore, the initial thinking behind this research was to understand the situation of children in an urban context, then to understand the livelihood framework and its adaptations so the best sustainable livelihood framework could be applied that addressed the special needs of children. The SLF approach was favoured as it was people centred, holistic, dynamic and adaptable.

As the research progressed, it became clear that the SLF was focused on individual households and on communities and not on children. Therefore, the doubt began to emerge as to whether the topic chosen for research was the wrong one. After some thinking and discussions with development workers and practitioners, it became clear that the answer was both yes and no. It was yes, because the SLF regards the household as a unit for analysis. Children are not the focus, but households. We seek to develop a sustainable livelihood approach for households.

However, the answer is also no, because a child-focused livelihood framework, with the household as the unit of focus, is also a model for adaptation. After all, in the development world, we consider a child in the context of her/his family and the family in the larger context of a community. Therefore, a livelihood approach to developing a household automatically covers the children in the households. We cannot isolate the child from its household in development planning and the household from the community in which they live.

Therefore, the student applied to the registrar and obtained approval to change the title of the dissertation to ‘Development, children and the third

world city: Conceptualising guidelines towards a sustainable livelihood framework supporting children’.

6.2 LIVELIHOOD APPROACH TO URBAN DEVELOPMENT

The key elements of the sustainable livelihood model are assets, vulnerability context, livelihood strategies, livelihood outcomes, context and men’s and women’s short- and long-term objectives as defined and examined in detail in chapter four.

Traditionally, development thinking has been on what people do not have. The livelihood framework adopts a positive approach to development by focusing on what people have and building on it. As Rakodi observes, and as the proponents of the SLF argue, beginning with an analysis of the weaknesses and strengths of people is a more appropriate way to understand and address the needs of the people than to begin on a negative note with what people do not have (Rakodi 2002: 7).

6.2.1 CONCEPTUAL ISSUES AND DEFINITIONS

Consequent to this recognition, there is a view among practitioners that every household should adapt a variety of activities to promote their livelihood, rather than rely on a single activity. The increased focus on vulnerability to the context and recognition of the environmental context are important. As Carney points out, a livelihood is ‘sustainable, when it can cope with and recover from stresses and shocks and maintain or enhance its capabilities and assets both now and in the future, while not undermining the natural resource base’ (Carney 1998: 24).

Several policy initiatives and changes over the past years were the outcomes of a better understanding of the how peasant agriculturists and how farmers cope with vulnerabilities. Similarly, increasing research on urban poverty in the 1990s contributed to a better understanding of the vulnerability of urban households to external shocks arising out of such factors as global financial crisis, recession and the World Bank and IMF induced structural adjustment programmes.

As a result of these understandings, the evolving livelihood strategies in development planning are more reflective of ground realities. However, a few others have proven problematic as well.

To obtain a better understanding of the term livelihood, it is important to understand the meaning of terms such as ‘poverty’, ‘deprivation’ and ‘wellbeing of households’.

6.2.2 POVERTY, DEPRIVATION AND WELLBEING

Insufficient human, financial, natural, physical and social assets lead to human deprivation and poverty (Radoki 2002: xv). The poverty line is measured and quantified in terms of the value of goods and services that represent the household income. Where the conventional method of measuring the poverty line is used, the norm is inadequate command over commodities. This represents the new dimension of poverty measurement and determines the composite welfare and state of wellbeing experienced by the household and the community. Accurate measurement of income is best assessed by the consumption pattern of the households. This is also beset with difficulties as some non-cash transactions cannot be accurately measured and recorded (Lipton and Ravallion 1995: 2253).

Poverty has many dimensions. Therefore, to determine the poverty level based on household consumption only does not represent the true picture of poverty. This is from the view of people who are the subject of analysis.

According to current research findings, poor people do not regard low income alone as a definition of poverty or their status of deprivation. The human sense of deprivation and insecurity are also considered dimensions of poverty. Attempts to place monetary value on deprivation calls for many assumptions and the effort become meaningless (Jones 2001: xv).

Inadequate health, leading to loss or reduction in capabilities and physical weakness, exposure to other vulnerabilities and loss of power, is reflective of poverty among households, besides the lack of income and assets (Chambers 1989: 4).

6.3 HOUSEHOLD STRATEGIES

Attaining secure livelihoods is the aim of most households. Households use a combination of assets and capabilities at their disposal to improve their livelihoods. Households make informed choices, based on their context and vulnerabilities, as they understand them, and deploying their available assets (Chambers 1989: 4; Chambers and Conway 1991: 5).

Households, whether in rural or urban areas, always seek ways of obtaining increased resources and look for additional opportunities to enhance their livelihood opportunities and outcomes. They resort to options such as increased saving and borrowing, indulge in production activities through pooling resources and increase social networking to attain their desired livelihood outcomes (Grown and Sebstad 1989: 937).

6.4 URBAN CONTEXT

The urban context was discussed in detail in chapter 2. That section highlights the challenges that urban dwellers face.

Factors such as poverty lines that are not weighted for higher costs in urban areas and fail to take account of non-income-based aspects of poverty mean that poverty is frequently under-estimated.

The livelihoods of the urban poor are defined in large part by the opportunities and constraints under which they are operating. It is therefore necessary, in order to understand the nature of sustainable urban livelihoods, to comprehend the urban context.

6.5 PREFERRED SUSTAINABLE LIVELIHOOD FRAMEWORK FOR AN URBAN MODEL

In Chapter five, we discussed the adaptation of the SLF and its application by various international and donor organisations. While each of them have adopted the SLF for its relevance to poverty alleviation programmes at the global, regional and National levels, the CARE model goes a step further and developed the “household Livelihood Security” (HLS), within the SLF as the Sustainable Livelihood Approach to development planning and programming.

CARE focuses on the vulnerability context of the households to design interventions to protect the households from the vulnerabilities. CARE made wider use of the HLS framework to help focus its efforts on individuals and families in the poorest communities of the world and enabling them to live in dignity and security. The HLS approach of CARE can be described as follows:

“Adequate and sustainable access to income and other resources to enable households to meet basic needs and to build up assets to withstand and recover from shocks and stresses” (Drinkwater and Rusinow 1999: 6).

- The goal of this study is “to develop a sustainable livelihood development model for urban households focussing on the needs of children”. Therefore, the CARE’s approach to development planning and programming focussing on “household Livelihood Security” is considered the best approach to attain urban household livelihood outcomes.

CARE’s household livelihood security model and DFID’s Sustainable livelihood approach have many aspects in common. Placing the vulnerabilities of households at the centre, HLS describes how household members access resources, who controls these assets, and how assets are used to reduce the impact of shocks. Addressing the vulnerability context is a key strategic focus of CARE in maintaining the HLS (Drinkwater and Rusinow 1999: 8).

6.5.1 APPLICATION OF THE SUSTAINABLE LIVELIHOOD APPROACH

Since adapting its programming diagram (section 5.2) in 1999, CARE has developed five programming principles, which are applied to all its development and relief work. These principles are integrated throughout all CARE projects, for example at the building household assets level, at urban management authority level and at the overall country-specific strategy level. In practice, CARE links livelihood programming with action planning and participatory rural appraisal (PRA) methodologies.

The CARE's programming framework seeks to apply the following CARE's five programming principles:

- **Significant scope:** A key programming principle is to address a large audience with significant scope, meeting the needs of a significant number of people.

- **Fundamental change:** Projects address basic needs and reduce limitations on people's lives that result from poverty. One way of bringing about these fundamental changes is through 'capital formation' (by capital formation, CARE refers to land, labour, physical infrastructure, and entrepreneurial skills).

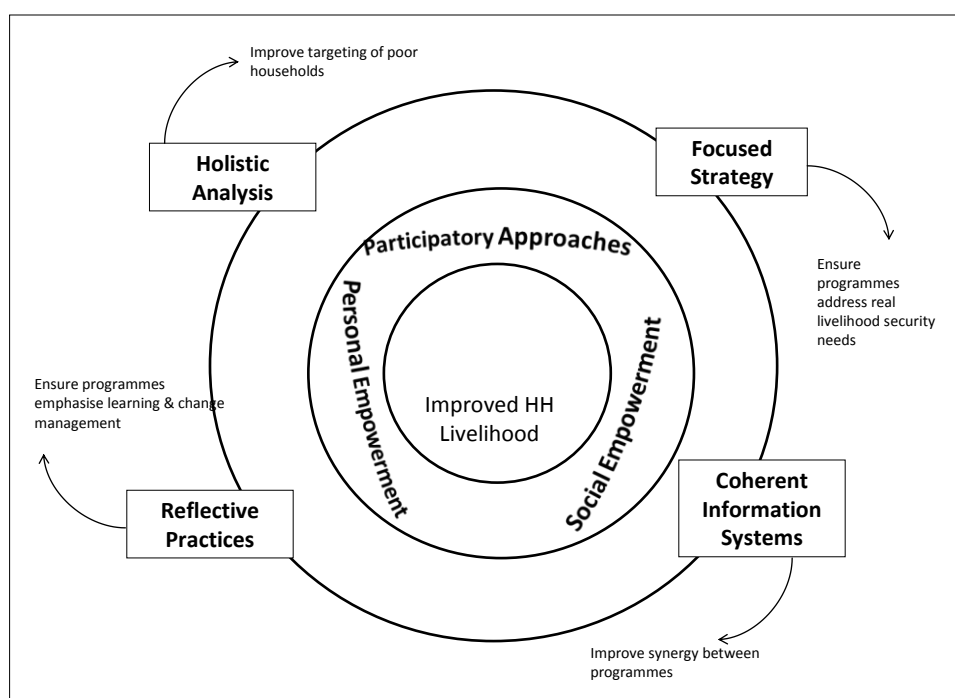
- **Working with poor people:** The target populations for all CARE projects are the poor of the developing world.

- **Participation:** All proposed CARE projects must demonstrate the full participation of the target group and the counterpart agencies involved in the project. This holds for all phases of the project life, including design, implementation and evaluation.

- **Replicability:** A replicable project is one that may be duplicated elsewhere in similar conditions, given similar resource allocations.

A recent expression of the HLS model is depicted in the following figure. This route map is a visual equivalent of the HLS framework described earlier, and provides a tool for understanding how members of urban and rural households live. HLS also provides a more tangible and practical basis for application.

Figure 6-1: CARE's programming framework for livelihood projects (Hussein 2002:31)



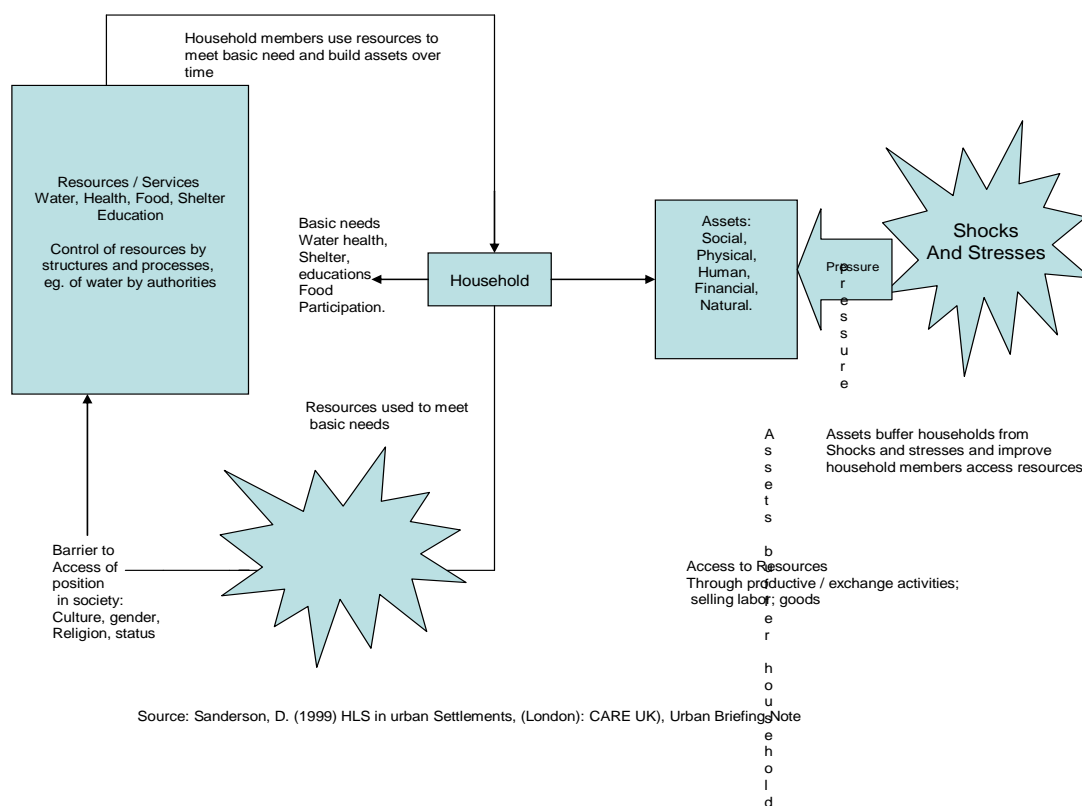
Central to the HLS framework are vulnerable households and recognition of the factors that perpetuate poverty. Following the arrows, the household has basic needs: in order to meet these needs, household members access resources. Access is gained through payment or by undertaking productive activities. However, the poor often encounter barriers that limit their ability to access resources or service. These barriers might be position in society (for example gender, culture, religious or economic status) or control of resources by structures (for example government, and private sector employers) and processes (for example laws, and regulations). Depending on the degree of success in overcoming these barriers, household members may be able to access resources, thus being able to meet basic needs and accumulating assets. Assets are used to buffer households against stresses and shocks, and to increase the ability to improve access to resources in the future.

More recently, CARE has been exploring a rights-based approach (RBA) to livelihood programming. RBA and SLA both emphasise the

importance of policies, processes and institutions. Integrating these two approaches highlights areas such as accountability and social justice, which are not explicitly covered by sustainable livelihood approaches, and identifies additional entry points for CARE's development assistance. These distinct approaches make CARE's HLS approach adopting the SLA, an ideal entry point for the design of Projects and Programmes to support and enhance "HLS". The CARE's integrated SL framework links poverty, vulnerability and livelihoods (refer to diagram 6.2 below). This framework applies the HLS to urban, rural and semi-rural contexts giving HLS a much wider applicability. Besides, the HLS also fits in well within a Relief, Recovery and development contexts (refer to diagram 6.3 below).

Given this wider relevance for applicability, CARE's HLS model is considered the most relevant and appropriate model for urban programming models.

Figure 6-2: Household Livelihood Security in Urban Settlements (London: CARE UK),
Urban briefing note (Hussein 2002: 33)

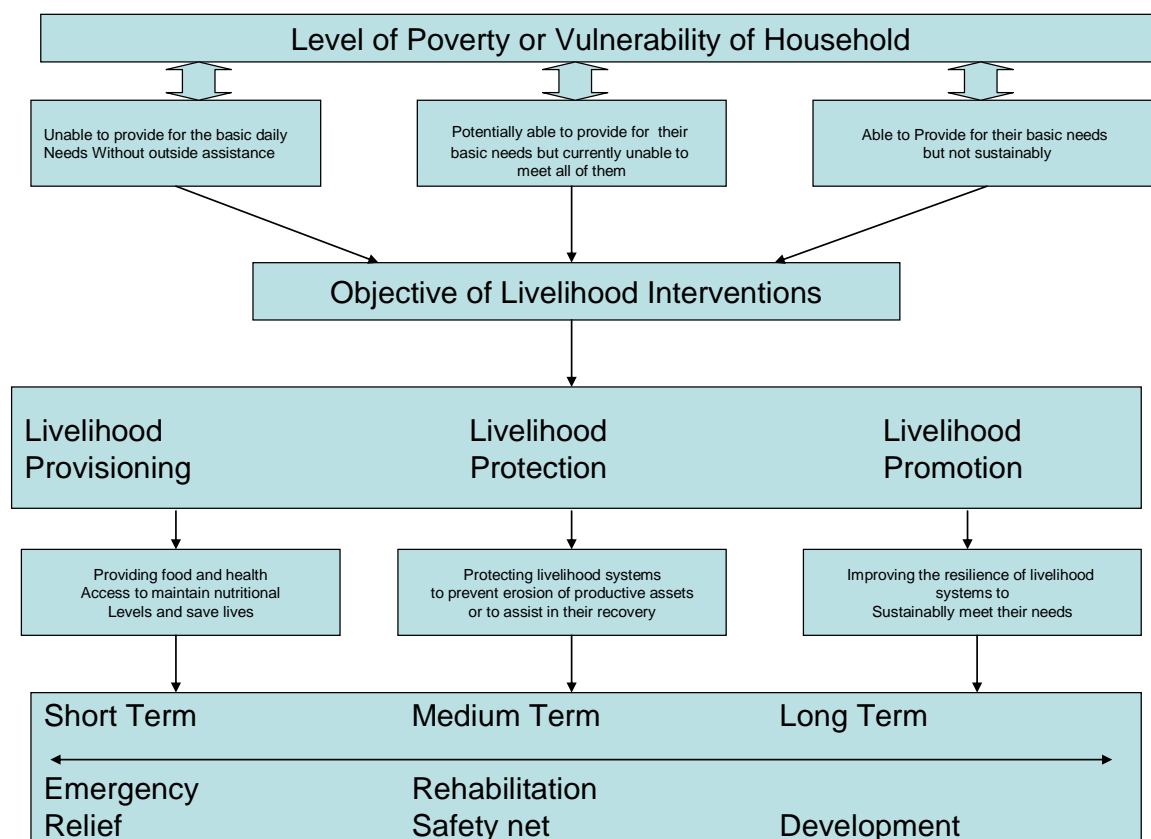


The threat of disaster is implicit in everyday life and this is acknowledged in the SLA. The HLS provides an opportunity to combine disaster reduction and development interventions in one assistance strategy.

The HLS approach to development programming encompasses the concept of relief to development as a continuum. Therefore, CARE has been creative in its operational strategy by proposing livelihood provisioning, livelihood protection and livelihood promotion.

Figure 6-3 below articulates the view.

Figure 6-3: CARE's Integrated SL Framework, CARE: Linking Poverty, vulnerability and livelihoods (Hussein 2002:56)



CARE seeks to achieve their programmatic goals through a focus centred on the 'improved livelihoods through the realisation of rights with a gender emphasis' (CARE's programmatic orbit)

The programme themes are:

- Strategic partnerships and advocacy
- Improved quality and access to services
- Strengthened participatory governance
- Livelihood diversification.
- Community institutional strengthening

- Working with service providers
- Building coalitions
- Building and protecting assets
- Building individual capacity
- Strengthening decentralisation
- Mainstreaming HIV/AIDS
- Improving rural incomes.

6.6 CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

As we began this research project, we set out an objective for the study. The project was prompted by the author's personal interest in seeking a development framework that addressed the needs of children in urban contexts.

Therefore, we set the research goal and objectives as follows:

Goal: To develop a sustainable livelihood development model for urban households focusing on the needs of children.

Research objectives

- To obtain an understanding of and define the context of urban children
- To define a sustainable livelihood framework
- To develop and present guidelines on a sustainable livelihood framework for urban households that protects and maintains the needs of children in urban households.
- As we conclude the study, let us examine the findings emerging out of the preceding chapters and see how best a sustainable livelihood framework for urban households protect and sustains the needs of children.
- After analysing the poverty in the urban context in chapter two, we reviewed the challenges for children in urban contexts and the factors contributing to urban poverty in Chapter three. While the quality of the Governance stood out as a major factor there were several other

conditions which made life for children insecure, unhealthy and poor in urban areas. The Physical infrastructure is one. The poor water and sanitation in urban areas was a major factor contributing to the poor living conditions and thereby posing a health hazard for children. Water and sanitation alone was a major contributory factor causing diarrhoeal diseases, and malnutrition. The lack of urban space, the lack of housing and the necessity to live in squatter camps affects their sense of dignity. The insecurity prevailing in urban slums is yet another aspect of urban life which makes the life for children unacceptable in an urban setting. The challenges of the urban environmental context affecting the quality of life of urban children were also discussed in chapter three. The physical hazards were yet another factor affecting the life of the child in an urban setting.

- Therefore, the foregoing analysis presents a picture of challenge and complexity in an urban setting. The developmental response to these challenges is necessarily to be multi sectoral. A livelihood approach reflects an inter-sectoral, holistic understanding of people's lives whereby sectors such as health, education, employment and environment as well as social networking, physical infrastructure needs are seen as intrinsically mixed. It is paradoxical to see the sectoral analysis of the approach to the problem while the problems are multi dimensional requiring a multi-sectoral approach. Health is a component of human capital and is both a determinant and outcome of livelihood strategies. Health and livelihood strategies are linked, in that good physical and mental health status are needed for production and reproduction, learning and participation in good citizenry activities. Sometimes, livelihood strategies affect health, as expenditures on competing basic needs, living in a poor environment and the non-use of services may lead to poor health. Therefore, a purely biological or medical approach to urban health problems are not much favoured as against a social and environmental model of health by those working in Public health

research. This then complements a livelihood approach to urban health (Harpham and Blue 1997: 497-498).

- There are a wide range of diseases urban populations are exposed to, diseases which are poverty driven, like Malnutrition and infectious diseases, and then there are health problems arising out of urban industrialisation, such as mental health, to socio economic causes. There have been recent interests in the distal determinants of health, which are closely related to poverty and livelihood strategies, rather than the contributory contextual and environmental factors.
- Often, health is analysed within a vulnerability context. The changes in the environment contexts, such as economic, political, social and physical are always determine the health of the population, especially in urban contexts. Therefore, it is necessary to analyse the urban health and livelihoods by first considering the vulnerability context under a livelihood framework which surrounds and impacts on everyday livelihood strategies of urban residents.
- Yet another example of relationship between various capitals is the linkage between human and social capital. Research in the United States explains that trust, reciprocity, and membership in social institutions which form part of the social capital which contributes to an increased life expectancy, infant mortality, heart disease and violent crime (Kawachi I., Kennedy, B., Lochner. K, Prothrow, Stith, D. 1997: 1491-98). ; Sampson, RT, Randenbush, SW, Earls, F: 1997: 918-924).
- The social capital provide links to small savings and credit groups within the community as such the link between the Social capital and the financial capital becomes part of the livelihood strategy to derive the desired livelihood outcome. Since the 1970s, there has been an increased focus on helping the poor, mostly women, with setting up 'microenterprises' through credit (Rutherford S., Harper, Grierson, J. 2002: 112,113). Promotion of micro credit involves development of human capital, through training in book keeping and financial management; formation of women's group and bring about a

cohesiveness in their functioning leading to promotion and building up of social capital; these efforts contribute towards attainment of Financial capital; We see the interconnectedness of the human capital, social capital which lead them on to building the financial capital in the livelihood approach to development. Once the financial capital is built among the women's groups, it leads on them on to invest on Physical assets in the form of house; ultimately the women begin to invest the earnings on the rearing of children by investing on their school education, school uniforms and shoes etc; they also invest on the children's health and nutrition. The welfare of the children is the focus for the women and the households. The women also begin savings to protect against vulnerabilities.

- There are also linkages between human capital and other capitals aside from the linkages to social capital as explained above Housing, which is a physical capital, determines the health status of the household (Dunn 2000: 341-345). As we saw in the case study under section 3.7, the women invest on upgrading their houses out of the savings accruing out of increased income. The households become more adept at managing their income and expenditure. This contributes towards the creation and upgrading of the physical assets.
- The livelihoods framework seeks to build the capacity of the human resources through investments on skills and training. This contributes towards enhancement of assets leading to reducing the vulnerabilities.
- As we seek to draw lessons from a livelihood approach and its interconnectedness with multi-sector approach, let us examine case studies presented in section 3.7.
- The young Bangladeshi woman was trained (investment on Human capital) in micro enterprise development; through savings and credit as well as small loans; this was facilitated through a women's group, (formation of a network of social capital); she was able to build a viable small business enterprise (Financial capital). The earnings and profit empowered the women who made personal decisions on choices that

were available; the women chose to adopt birth control measures (reflection of personal empowerment), have no more than two children and invest their earnings on the welfare of the children.

- The Sustainable Livelihood Framework adopts a multi-sector analysis of the context to understand the vulnerabilities and begin investing on building the human, social and financial capital through means designed to expand the asset pentagon.
- This is a clear example of a Household livelihood security approach to urban development, contributing towards child well being outcomes.
- The example of the Ethiopian woman under the same section 3.7 articulates the same approach of adopting a household livelihood security which has changed the life of the woman and her children. In this case as well, the interplay of investments on the human capital, social capital, and financial capital eventually contributes towards building the physical capital (house). The woman invests on her children's education, health and nutrition.

To begin the research work, a project design document was prepared outlining the scope of the study, the research methodology and the process. Chapter 1 of the dissertation scans the emerging global environment and provides a global picture of the emerging urban scenario.

Chapter two explains the pace of urbanisation, the causative factors for rapid urbanisation, and the impact of urbanisation on the urban households.

To obtain an understanding of the situation and context of children living in urban areas, a literature review was undertaken. The scope of the review, the methodology and the findings of the literature review are covered in chapter 3 of this dissertation. While the study seeks to obtain an understanding of the context of urban children, it recognises that the child is the focus and that the child is viewed as part of a larger grouping of a household. In addition, we see the household in the larger context of a community. In an urban setting, where the population is fluid and constantly

on the move in the city, with rural-urban and intra-city movements, we see the household as the unit of study.

In chapter four, we begin to unpack the sustainable livelihood framework through a detailed literature review beginning with publications by Chambers, Carney and Scoones. Substantial research documents published by the Institute of Development Studies of the University of Sussex in the UK were a major source of subject literature.

In chapter five, we unpack the SLF as is contextualised and practised by several international organisations, donors and non-governmental organisations. Each of them has adapted the core principles of the SLA and begun to incorporate variations and changes to the SLF application modules without compromising on the fundamental principles on which the SLF was built.

In the process, we review the SLF as adapted by various organisations. Thus we see variations and enhancements to the DFID framework as articulated by CARE's livelihood framework, UNDP and Oxfam.

In the chapter six, we analyse the relevance and applicability of a livelihood approach to programming for an urban context. As we progress with the argument, we recognise that the SLF as adapted and developed by CARE appears to be the best approach for an urban programming model. This recommendation is based on the understanding that CARE's adapted SLF model includes these principles:

- The programme focuses on household livelihood security.
- The household is the unit for promoting development.
- Non- governmental organisations and international donors committed to child-focused programmes view children in the context of their households and the households in the context of their community.
- A household focus on livelihood enhancement seeks to provide emotional, physical, mental, financial and social security for children.
- CARE's SLF model is applicable to urban and rural contexts.

- CARE's SLF model is adaptable to emergency relief, recovery and transition contexts.
- In all of these contextual variations, CARE's SLF model retains the fundamental principles of the SLF programmatic approach.
- CARE has demonstrated a successful and sustainable urban livelihood enhancement programme adopting their SLF focused on a household livelihood security model, contributing towards improving the quality of life of children in urban areas.

6.6.1 WHAT ARE THE VALUES OF THE LIVELIHOOD FRAMEWORK FOR ANALYSING URBAN POVERTY?

The livelihood framework provides an analytical starting point for understanding urban poverty and deprivation, by identifying the main factors that affect livelihoods and the relationships between them. Researchers on urban household strategies generally agree that the framework has already proved itself as an analytical tool, although there is always a danger that such a framework, and the concepts on which it is based, will become a straightjacket rather than an aid to understanding. Livelihood analysis has contributed to the development of a bottom-up understanding of the nature of urban poverty and deprivation that does not impose preconceived concepts.

The framework places poor households at the centre. Analysis of livelihood strategies is important in understanding their situation.

A secure livelihood is one that provides economic security, personal safety, and healthy living and working conditions. Many of the policy interventions that can help to secure these outcomes depend less on economic growth and increased wealth than on political commitment to addressing these concerns of the poor. Such a commitment will be secured only if poor people can exercise their right to make claims on those who wield power at local, national and international levels.

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