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**20-02-2005**

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THE DEVELOPMENT ROLE OF TRADITIONAL AUTHORITIES IN VIEW OF THE

DECENTRALIZATION IN MALAWI

by

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**SUMMARY**

Chiefs in Malawi have traditionally been part of the government machinery since colonial days and continue to play a crucial role in development administration even more so in decentralized structures. They are able upon to mobilize communities in rural areas to initiate and implement community development projects with minimal supervision. Malawi Social Action Fund 1 (MASAF 1) project management approach, which centered on community ownership of projects and registered enormous successes, is a case in proof of this. However, distribution of power and roles between chiefs and local government authorities in view of decentralization demand more research and policy debate if chiefs are to be effectively utilized and for the decentralization process to work effectively. Whilst the local authorities derive their power from the control of 5% of revenue collected in the districts, which they are allocated, chiefs derive theirs from the legitimacy they have over their subjects for being in constant touch with the community.

**Key Terms**

Decentralization

Malawi Chiefs  
Cultural Approach to Development  
Rural Development  
Rural Management  
Community Development  
Popular Participation  
Chiefs and Project Management  
Traditional Authorities  
Development Roles

**DEDICATION**

**I dedicate this work to my beloved wife Winnie and our little daughter Nandi. I thank you both for your patience during all those lonely nights when I was grappling with books instead of being with you. Thank you my wife for your understanding and sharing in my vision because without your encouragement this work would have been impossible.**

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## ACRONYMS

ADC	Area Development Committee
BA	Beneficiary Assessment
CAFRAD	African Training and Research Centre in Administration for Development
CLAIM	Christian Literature Association of Malawi
CODESRIA	Council for the Development of Social Science Research in Africa.
DAD	decide, announce and defend
DANIDA	Danish International Development Agency
DC	District Commissioner
DDC	District Development Committee
DFID	Department for International Development
EOLSS	Encyclopedia of Life Support Systems
ESI	Editoriale Scientifica
FUTURESCO	UNESCO Bibliographical Bulletin of Future Oriented Literature
GNP	Gross National Product
GNI	Gross National Income
GOM	Government of Malawi
GTZ	Deutsche Gesellschaft fur Technische Zusammenarbeit (German Agency for Technical Cooperation)
GVH	Group Village Headman
HIPCI	Highly Indebted Poor Countries Initiative
HSRC	Human Science Research Council
IDS	Institute of Development Studies
IK	Indigenous Knowledge
ILO	International Labor Organization
IRI	Integrated Regional Information Networks
JICA	Japanese International Cooperation Agency
IMF	International Monetary Fund
JOCV	Japanese Overseas Cooperation Volunteers
LADDER	Livelihoods Diversification Direct Explored by Research

LDC	Least Developed Country
LGDMP	Local Governance and Development Management Project
MASAF	Malawi Social Action Fund
MCB	Mercer Commentary on the Bible
MDDP	Malawi District Development Plans
MIT	Massachusetts Institute of Technology
MOFEP	Ministry of Finance and Economic Planning
MP	Member of Parliament
MPRSP	Malawi's Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper
NEC	National Economic Council
NEO	New Economic Order
NFP	National Forestry Programme
NGO	Non Governmental Organization
NIEO	New International Economic Order
NLGFC	National Local Government Finance Committee
NPM	New Public Management
NUFFIC-CIRAN	Netherlands-Centre for International Research and Advisory Networks
OPC	Office of the President and Cabinet
PAR	Participatory Action Research
PIM	Program in International Management
PLA	Participatory Learning and Action
PPA	Participatory Project/Poverty Appraisal/Assessment
PRA	Participatory Rural Appraisal
PRSP	Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper
SoL	Society for Organizational Learning
SWAP	Sector-Wide Approach to Planning
TA	Traditional Authority
TICAD	Tokyo International Conference on Africa's Development
TVM	Television Malawi
UDF	United Democratic Front
UN	United Nations

UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNESCO	United Nations Educational Scientific and Cultural Organization
UNISA	University of South Africa
UNRISD	United Nations Research Institution for Social Development
US	United States (of America)
USD	United States Dollar
VDC	Village Development Committee
VH	Village Headman
WB	World Bank

## **LIST OF TABLES AND FIGURES**

Table 1: Summary of Kroeber and Klukholm's Definitions of



	Culture.....	67
Table 2:	European Commission’s Cultural Criteria Matrix for Aid to ACP Countries.....	73
Figure 1:	Structure of Decentralisation in Malawi.....	142
Figure 2:	Responses to Key Questions.....	153
Figure 3:	Structure of Project Management in MASAF.....	158

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

	<b>Pages</b>
<b>DECLARATION OF ORIGINALITY OF WORK</b> .....	i
<b>SUMMARY</b> .....	ii
<b>KEY TERMS</b> .....	iii
<b>DEDICATION</b> .....	iv
<b>ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS</b> .....	v
<b>ACRONYMS</b> .....	vi
<b>LIST OF TABLES AND FIGURES</b> .....	vii
<b>TABLE OF CONTENTS</b> .....	viii

## CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

1.1	Background to the Study .....	1
1.2	Motivation for the Study.....	3
1.3	Assumptions of the Study.....	5
1.4	Research Objectives.....	6
1.5	Statement of Research Problem .....	7
1.6	Delimitation of the Study.....	7
1.7	Background to Selection of Suitable Research Methodology .....	8
1.8	Research Methodology.....	10
	<i>1.8.1 Participatory Rapid Assessment (PRA).....</i>	<i>10</i>
	<i>1.8.2 Analysis and presentation of data.....</i>	<i>17</i>
	<i>1.8.3 Making inference to the population from which the sample was drawn .....</i>	<i>18</i>
	<i>1.8.4 Presenting the results in logical format .....</i>	<i>19</i>
	<i>1.8.5 Triangulation.....</i>	<i>19</i>
	<i>1.8.6 The pilot project.....</i>	<i>19</i>
	<i>1.8.7 Writing the Report.....</i>	<i>20</i>

1.8.8	<i>Obstacles during research</i> .....	20
1.9	Summary of Chapters.....	22

**CHAPTER 2: THEORETICAL PERSPECTIVES ON LINKAGES BETWEEN DEVELOPMENT PARTICIPATION AND THE CULTURAL FACTOR**

2.1	Introduction.....	26
2.2	The Debate on the Definition of Development Administration.....	27
2.3	How Some Development Approaches Have Viewed Chiefs .....	30
	2.3.1 <i>Basic needs and the role of Traditional Authorities in their identification</i> .....	31
	2.3.2 <i>The Demise of the economic development approach and the rise of socio-culturalism</i> .....	34
	2.3.3 <i>The rise of sustainable, human and social development approach</i> ....	36
	2.3.4 <i>Leveling the playing: New international economic order (NEO)</i> .....	41
	2.3.5 <i>Evolution of the participation approach</i> .....	43
2.4	Recognizing Traditional Authorities as Indigenous Development Administrators.....	52
2.5	Importance of Indigenous Communication Process In Participatory Development.....	54
	2.5.1 <i>Defining indigenous communication</i> .....	54
	2.5.2. <i>Indigenous and exogenous communication compared</i> .....	55
	2.5.3 <i>Identifying indigenous communication channels</i> .....	57
	2.5.4 <i>Chiefs as main actors in indigenous communication process</i> .....	60
2.6	Role of chiefs in Indigenous Knowledge Promotion.....	61
2.7	Conclusion.....	63

## **CHAPTER 3: CULTURE AND CHIEFS AS FACTORS OF DEVELOPMENT**

3.1		
	Introduction.....	6
5		
3.2	The Meaning of Culture.....	66
3.3	Cultural Factors as Prerequisites.....	72
3.4	Traditional Authorities as a Cultural Factor.....	74
3.5	Impact of Culture on Development.....	75
3.6	Considerations of Culture in International Development.....	80
3.7	Effects of Culture on Administration.....	82
3.8	Auditing Culture for Development in Malawi.....	85
	3.8.1 <i>The informal culture audit</i> .....	85
	3.8.2 <i>The formal culture audit</i> .....	86
3.9	Traditional Authorities as a Tool for Change.....	86
3.10	Conclusion.....	88

## **CHAPTER 4: IMPORTANCE OF DECENTRALISATION IN INCLUSIVE DECISION-MAKING**

4.1	Introduction.....	90
4.2	Essential Characteristics of Inclusive Decision-making.....	91
	4.2.1 <i>In what case can inclusive decision-making take place?</i> .....	92
	4.2.2 <i>At what stage of planning is inclusive decision-making process necessary?</i> .....	94
	4.2.3 <i>With whom should concertation be achieved?</i> .....	96
	4.2.4 <i>How does inclusive decision-making work?</i> .....	100
	4.2.5 <i>What are the tools for inclusive decision-making</i> .....	102
4.3	The Definition of Decentralization .....	104

4.4	Factors for Successful Decentralization and Public Administration.....	107
4.5	The Link Between Decentralization, Good Governance, Democracy and Participation of Traditional Authorities.....	111
4.6	Conclusion.....	113

**CHAPTER 5: THE ROLE OF SOCIAL FUNDS IN COMMUNITY PARTICIPATION**

5.1	Introduction.....	11
5		
5.2	Objectives of Social Funds.....	115
5.3	Management of Social Funds.....	116
5.4	Advantages of Social Funds Vis-à-vis Community Participation.....	117
5.5	Disadvantages of Social Funds Vis-à-vis Community Participation .....	119
5.6	The History of Social Funds in Malawi.....	120
5.7	Conclusion.....	120

**CHAPTER 6: FINDINGS OF FIELD RESEARCH ON THE DEVELOPMENT ROLE OF CHIEFS IN DECENTRALIZED DEVELOPMENT ADMINISTRATION IN MALAWI**

6.1	Introduction.....	12
2		
6.2	Malawi	
	Background.....	123
	6.2.1 Role of Chiefs in pre-colonial period.....	124
	6.2.2 Role of Chiefs in colonial period: British indirect rule.....	124
	6.2.3 Role of Chiefs in post-colonial period: One party era.....	126
	6.2.4 New administrative policy of post colonial period: multi-party	

	<i>democracy</i> .....	129
6.3	Current General Development Administration in Malawi.....	130
	6.3.1 <i>Problems of development administration in Malawi</i> .....	132
	6.3.2 <i>Relationship between culture, Chiefs, the state, power and Legitimacy</i> .....	135
6.4	The Malawi Decentralization Policy.....	139
	6.4.1 <i>What are the objectives and design of the decentralized system?</i> ....	142
	6.4.2 <i>What factors will lead to the success or failure of decentralization in Malawi</i> .....	143
6.5	Perceptions About Participation of Traditional Authorities.....	149
6.6	Case Study: Role of Traditional Authorities in Malawi Social Action Fund (MASAF) Projects.....	155
	6.6.1 <i>What was MASAF designed to achieve?</i> .....	155
	6.6.2 <i>How participatory are MASAF projects ad what is the role of Chiefs in them?</i> .....	158
6.7	Concluding Remarks on Field Research.....	160

**CHAPTER 7: RECOMMENDATIONS: INCREASING THE ROLE OF TRADITIONAL AUTHORITIES IN DEVELOPMENT PROJECTS.**

7.1	Strategy for Development Partner Interventions in Malawi.....	162
7.2	Strategy for Capacity Building at Traditional Authority Level.....	164
7.3	Strategy for Overcoming Cultural Obstacles.....	165
7.4	Implementation of Monitoring and evaluation System.....	165

**CHAPTER 8: CONCLUSIONS**

8.1	Introduction.....	16
7		
8.2	Development Role of Traditional Authorities in View of Decentralization in Malawi.....	167
8.3	Fostering Popular Participation Through Traditional Authorities.....	169

8.4 Areas for Future Research.....	170
<b>BIBLIOGRAPHY.....</b>	<b>172</b>

**ANNEXURES**

Annexure 1 Schedule of Research.....	208
Annexure 2 Tables Showing Analysis of Responses to Key Questions.....	209
Annexure 3 Article from the <i>Daily Times</i> of 21 October 2002 on 'Chiefs' Education Vital for Development'.....	214
Annexure 4 Article from <i>The Nation</i> of 22 August 2002 on 'Subjects Install New Katumbi'.....	215
Annexure 5 Article from <i>The Nation</i> 22 April 2002 on 'Chief Deplores Some Traditions'.....	216
Annexure 6 Examples of Questionnaires.....	217