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Sustainable Development Projects For Refugees Case Study: Measuring The Scope Of Sustainability Of Sustainable Development Projects And Microcredit In Eritrean Refugee Camps In Eastern Sudan

Khalid Alssardiyah

SIT Graduate Institute

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Sustainable Development Projects for Refugees

Case Study: Measuring the Scope of Sustainability of Sustainable Development Projects and Microcredit in Eritrean Refugee Camps in Eastern Sudan

Khalid Alssardiyah
PIM 68

A Capstone Paper submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for a Master of Arts

SIT Graduate Institute
Brattleboro, Vermont, USA.

24 July, 2011
Advisor: Janaki Natarajan, Ph.D.
Abstract

Sustainable development projects are a vital modern method in fighting poverty and in reducing unemployment; they provide the main motivation for communities to become involved in the decision-making process of building their lives in their society. International institutions focus on establishing sustainable development projects for many communities, but this concern has yet to reach those in the greatest need, such as the refugees in eastern Sudan.

This capstone paper identifies sustainability of sustainable development projects and microcredit, as well as the challenges facing these efforts. A case study was conducted on Eritrean refugees in Shagarab camp in eastern Sudan where American Relief Agency for the Horn of Africa (ARAHA) implemented sustainable development projects. Data was collected using questionnaires, discussions via phone and internet, and ARAHA documents.

The study found that implementation of sustainable development projects was limited to three kinds of projects: education, water wells and livestock. Furthermore, these projects were limited to only a few families. Establishment of microcredit projects was found to be nonexistent; and more importantly, there has also been no evidence of engaging the community in any project stage. This lack of community participation will lead to further challenges within the community regarding the means of obtaining basic needs for the future. The low graduation rate from higher education, an overall lack of knowledge, as well as the absence of large international organizations contributes to impacting on improving refugees’ livelihoods. Additionally, women’s empowerment projects were completely unrealized, despite the undeniable role women play in community development.

Given the study’s findings, greater focus is needed regarding sustainable development projects for Eritrean refugees in eastern Sudan. The study recommends more research and
assessment of sustainability projects to enhance the productivity of refugees and promote women’s empowerment. Furthermore, this effort can in turn increase international awareness in order to raise support for development projects targeting these refugees.
Dedication

This work is dedicated to:

My **MOTHER**, my incentive to the hope

My **WIFE**, for her supporting, understanding and patience

My **CHILDREN**, the reason to why I am alive

My **BROTHERS**, who taught me patience and success

My **SISTER**, who offers me her love and kindness
Acknowledgements

“Thank those who give to you and give to those who thank you”

I would like to express my profound gratitude to Janaki Natrajan Ph.D. for her time, advice and assistance during the completion of this capstone. I dedicate this work to my family and brothers who supported me through thick and thin.

I am also grateful to all ARAHA staff with special appreciation to Mohammed Idris, the executive director of ARAHA in Minnesota.

Additional gratitude must be extended to the SIT Graduate Institute and my loyal friends Raed Altabini, Salim Aloun and Sami Ali Thani.
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Refugees Camp’s Map in Eastern Sudan……
**Abbreviations**

ARAHA ............................................................... American Relief Agency for the Horn of Africa
NGOS ................................................................. Non-governmental organization
UN ................................................................. United Nation
UNDP ............................................................... United nation Development program
UNHCR ........................................................... The United Nation Refugee Agency
FAO ............................................................... Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations
DAC ............................................................... The Development Assistance Committee
OECD .............................................................. The Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development
CIRDAP ......................... Centre on Integrated Rural Development for Asia and the Pacific
GBB ............................................................... Grameen Bank of Bangladesh
USD ............................................................... The United States dollar
MCFD ............................................................ Monterey Conference on Financing for Development
MFIs ............................................................. Microfinance Institutions
IMF ............................................................... The International Monetary Fund
WB ............................................................... The World Bank
WTO ............................................................. The World Trade Organization
RPP ............................................................. Reflective Practice Phase
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Background

The Horn of Africa is composed of the countries of Somalia, Ethiopia, Eritrea, Djibouti, Kenya, Sudan, Tanzania and Uganda. This area is plentiful in natural resources and has an strategic geographical location, as it is situated at the watercourse between Western countries and Southeast Asia, making it the center of trade between the East and the West. Sadly, this region has become the land of war, drought, hunger, famine, disease and widespread poverty in this century. The Horn of Africa is considered one of the poorest regions in the world not only because natural disasters such as drought but also international political issues have wreaked havoc on its ability to flourish. The situation compounding in the Horn of Africa is unfortunately linked to political and economic motivations from the developed nations. These many factors have displaced Eritreans, compelling them to flee across borders and create makeshift homes (ARAHA, 2008).

As Bariagaber states, “Population migration is one of the most serious threats to peace, security, and the sovereignty of nations in the post–Cold War era. A particularly volatile form of this threat is the global refugee crisis, and nowhere has this problem been more severe and persistent than in the Horn of Africa” (Bariagaber, 2006, p.6). While people in the horn of Africa suffer from more migration than other regions on the world, international focus has been on West Africa and neglected the conflicts in the Horn of Africa. Furthermore, a major cause of the current refugee crisis in eastern Sudan stems from intervention from outside the borders of their countries. When assistance is fast and effective, refugee problems are quickly resolved. The best course of action is for relief agencies in the refugee area, like international NGOs, to implement plans to promote self-reliance. However, current efforts are limited to short-term supplies and fail to create a sustainable environment for obtaining even the most basic necessities of life.
Eritrea, as one of the Horn of Africa countries, suffers from the same circumstances of natural disaster and wars as the other countries in the area. The war between Ethiopia and Eritrea has led to Eritreans being displaced internally and in Sudan. The prolonged war is a vestige of the period of colonialism that only ended in 1991, leaving a disputed area of land between Eritrea and Ethiopia. In eastern Sudan specifically, where the large Eritrean refugees camp named the Shagarab clusters to accommodate 30,000 populations, many relief and development agencies support and develop projects to help needy people. The relief agencies’ policy is based on direct emergency grants to families, and its funding consists primarily of donations. This study will discuss why development projects are not sustainable and why there is a lack of micro-credit projects used in order to widen beneficiaries. ARAHA, where I volunteered for my practicum site, also follows a similar policy as the one mentioned above.

Another humanitarian crisis is evolving in the borders between Sudan and Eritrea. According to recent reports, despite the “shoot to kill” order in place by the Eritrean government in the borders, every day an average of 100 refugees cross the border from Eritrea to Sudan. Furthermore, it has been reported that hundreds of Eritrean refugees were abducted from Sudan by Eritrean government agents.

The total number of refugees who have crossed the border to Sudan in 2008 has already exceeded 10,000 people, straining the resources even more for the already existing half million Eritrean refugees living in more than 23 refugee camps in Eastern Sudan. ARAHA reached their camps and delivered food and clothes as well as granting some families dairy cows or water tankers to empower them and to promote self reliance (ARAHA, 2008, Annual Report).
Chapter One: Introduction

1- Introduction:

In 1952, after 10 years of British colonial rule, Eritrea was federated with Ethiopia. A decade later, Ethiopia abrogated the federal arrangement of the United Nations and annexed Eritrea as one of its provinces which led to the Eritrean struggle, thus leading to a destructive war lasting from 1961 to 1991.

Eritrea was a colony of the British until it gained independence in 1991. In 1992, it became a member of United Nation. The main resources for generating income are agriculture and pastoralism, with 80 percent of the population relying on these methods.

There were many colonial rules controlling Eritrea until it became a federated system with Ethiopia after 10 years of British colonial rule.

Three decades of destructive war for self-determination is the direct causes of massive conflicts, humanitarian crises, displacement and widespread poverty for the Eritrean people (www.er.undp.org). Thousands of Eritrean refugees have sought sanctuary in the arid lands of Kassala and Gedaref in Sudan. Many refugees passed through the borders to Sudan during the war between Ethiopia and Eritrea over a span of 30 years until independence was gained in 1993. According to the UNHCR, as of 22 August 2007, Eritrean refugees lived in 12 camps as well as rural areas. Every week there are more than 120 Eritreans arriving to Kassala state – most of them are young, seeking asylum because they are avoiding military service in Eritrea (www.unhcr.org/news).
2- Problem Statement:

Since the 1950s development projects and programs have been designed to improve the quality of life of the target communities. Regardless of human and financial resources, many projects failed to meet the fundamental needs of the target group, outcomes and impact were not provided, outputs were not achieved or, if achieved, not sustained. These failures are ascribed to poor project management, such as inadequate opportunities for beneficiaries to participate in project identification, and ultimately a new input on their future and sustainable development. The different roles between gender (women and men) should be recognized and understood in beneficiary communities, as well as the special challenges faced by disadvantaged groups to achieve sustainable development. (FAO, 2001)

Micro and small organizations have the main and important role of developing livelihoods in developing countries. They do so through supporting community development by creation of employment opportunities and contributing to family income. Indeed, lack of funding is considered the most important reason for the failure of many micro-credit projects, like the case of Kenya. A complicated process to access credit has been the main factor preventing people from obtaining loans. As such, if it is difficult for the government to improve bank lending to facilitate the credit process, it will prevent the development of education, infrastructure and hinder sustainable development. (Akoten, Sawada & Otsuka, 2006)

3- Main Purpose of the Study:

3.1- To investigate and produce knowledge regarding the challenges facing attributes of sustainable development – more specifically, why development projects in Eritrean refugee camps in Eastern Sudan are not sustainable?
4- Sub-Questions:

4.1- What are the challenges facing development projects in Eritrean refugee camps?
4.2- Are development projects in Eastern Sudan sustainable for refugees?
4.3- How development projects have influenced the lifestyle of local communities (Eritreans refugees)?
4.4- Are these projects participatory? If so, how does the Eritreans refugee community participate in the decision-making process?
4.5- How will ARAHA move from grant projects to sustainable micro-credit projects?

Chapter Two: Literature Review

1- Introduction:

The concept of sustainable development has been evolving for more than 30 years. The 1972 United Nations (UN) conference on the Human Environment in Stockholm, Sweden, contributed to this evolution by emphasizing that protection of human environment is a crucial element in the development agenda. As a result of that conference, the UN Environment program Secretariat was established to promote international environmental cooperation. 2002 At the World Summit on Sustainable Development, heads of state and world leaders decided to increase partnerships between countries to consolidate sustainable development. In under to make sustainable development an important concept that concerns everyone. Moreover, development that is sustainable affects all aspects of life, encompassing political, social, and economic development (Rogers, Jalal, and Boyd, 2007).
People of all generations can hope for a brighter future – a hope that is intrinsically linked with sustainable development. To achieve sustainable development from the foundation, there is a sub-goal of promoting structural transformation. This process must develop productivity from lower to higher output so that countries can create a sustainable economy to improve the quality of life for the community. It was found that poverty is one of the primary contributors to environmental harm and reducing natural resources in developing countries. Therefore, alleviation of poverty may protect and sustain the environment, preserving it for future generations (Weaver, Rock, and Kusterer, 1997, pp. 11, 13, 34).

The Development Assistance Committee (DAC) of the Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) in 1996 presented a group of goals of sustainable development to improve progress in countries; the UN approved all the goals. The last decade has concentrated on many factors that are significant to achieving sustainable development: education, children, environment, human rights, population, social development and women. (UNDP, 2002)

2- **Objectives of Micro Credit Projects:**

CIRDAP has defined microcredit as “the name given to extremely small loans made to poor borrowers. A typical microcredit scheme involves the extension of an unsecured, commercial-type loan at interest to a poverty stricken borrower.” Furthermore, the key objectives of microcredit projects are: reducing poverty for the participants, improving all components of a livelihood that components can be divided into five types of capital. These are: human capital, natural capital, financial capital, social capital, and physical capital. Increasing income and production of the beneficiaries and increasing participation in local economic activities (Mahmud, Mohamed and Mansor, 2007).
The Secretary-General in UN further argues that the objectives of microcredit projects are: empowerment of the poor, strengthening local institutions and the growth of the financial system, mobilization of funds, and management of assets in developing subsectors. Empowerment is supporting disadvantaged people to improve their income and participate in local businesses. Growth of the financial system contributes to developing country capital by building the capacity of beneficiaries to have an effective role in management of the country’s market. Mobilization of the funds is the circulation of capital to provide more new participants in the project. Management is enabling beneficiaries to involve themselves in microcredit projects that lead to success in sustainable development goals. (UN, 2002)

The following passage is an excerpt from the message presented by Kofi Annan, Secretary-General of the United Nations to the Microcredit Summit of the UN in 2002. It serves as a statement of commitment and endorsement for the microcredit movement and also a strong support for this type of project to promote sustainable development around the world.

“Microcredit is a critical anti-poverty tool and a wise investment in human capital. Now that the nations of the world have committed themselves to reducing by half, by the year 2015, the number of people living on less than a dollar a day, we must look even more seriously at the pivotal role that sustainable microfinance can play, and is playing, in reaching this Millennium Development Goal.

The global effort launched in 1997 to highlight the wide-ranging benefits of microcredit has found strong resonance in the United Nations General Assembly, which declared 2005 to be the “International Year of Microcredit”. The last five years have also seen grassroot community development organizations and the financial services sector working more
and more closely together, creating partnerships that provide the financial services the very poor require to work their way out of poverty and move towards self-reliance, while ensuring that successes and failures are quantified.

The phenomenal growth in the number of microcredit beneficiaries represents the combined achievements of thousands of innovative institutions around the world, the tens of thousands of their dedicated staff…” (UN, 2002)

3- Impact of Microcredit Projects:

In developing countries, poor people have limited access to microcredit and donors. A number of surveys have found that the impact of microcredit programs supported by NGOs efficiently reduced poverty, increased income, improved production and consumption, and increased saving deposits among the poor community (Mahmud, Mohamed and Mansor, 2007).

Grameen Bank of Bangladesh (GBB) in mid 1970s was the first institution to introduce the innovative concept of microcredit. It provided the poor with small loans in order to provide an opportunity for them to be involved in economic activities. Ever since the GBB found an effective strategy for poverty reduction and empowering women, it has been adopted as a method to reduce global poverty. The first summit of microcredit projects was held in 1997, resulting in $20 billion USD in support from the United States over the coming decade. In the 1990s, political leaders and donors concentrated on microcredit projects as an effective instrument of achieving sustainable development and reducing world poverty. (Lont and Hospes, 2004)
4- **Elements of Successful Microcredit Projects:**

In 2002, the consensus of Monterey Conference on Financing for Development (MCFD) stated that successful microcredit projects depended upon sufficient and suitable infrastructure, health plans, insurance policies, economic environment, capital stability and civil society participation. (UN, 2002)

5- **Community Participation in Implementation:**

“Participation is process through which stakeholders’ influence and share control over priority setting, policy-making, resource allocations, and access to public goods and services” (Duraiappha, Roddy, and Parry, 2005)

The participatory approach is the belief that development is a bottom-up approach, and that the beneficiaries play an important role in decision-making in the development process. Participation enables beneficiaries to have a voice and become part of the project implementation process that will affect their lives. A project participant gains confidence in relation to the project’s goals, and their involvement encourages others in contribute to the development process as well. Moreover, the beneficiaries bear responsibility for the decisions made, making them stakeholders and also a force with whom power must be shared (Duraiappha, Roddy, and Parry, 2005).

6- **Community Empowerment:**

“Empowerment is the process by which people in general, and poorer segments in particular, acquire the capability to understand, analyze and effectively respond to situations affecting their lives and livelihoods.” (Adimihardja & Hikmat, 2008)

Part of the community empowerment process is to involve all people equally to work toward sustainable development to contribute to poverty alleviation. Using participatory approaches applies a scheme of mutual views and information, as well as understanding
between governments, civic organizations, development organizations and the community (Adimihardja & Hikmat, 2008).

Goetz and Gupta (1996) asserted that the ability of women in implementing credit is a valuable and productive resource to improve their position within the family by playing a significant role in generating a sustainable source of income.

7- Women’s opportunities in the development process and Gender Equity:

Microfinance Institutions (MFIs) supply business and supporting financial services to the poor in the community to improve livelihoods and reduce poverty, particularly among women. Furthermore, microcredit projects contribute to women’s empowerment by enabling women with a means to obtain poverty reduction assets and share in decision-making. In most cases, MFIs fund programs concentrating on women as the Grameen Bank found that 90 percent of its beneficiaries are women. There are two reasons that MFIs choose to subsidize primarily women. Firstly, women have the confidence of donor institutions because they are considered the key to poverty reduction. Secondly, MFIs found that women are least likely to default on their loans (Richman and Fred, 2010). Furthermore, the UN has found that women’s responsibility for the household’s overall well-being means that their betterment results in the economic amelioration of her entire household. (UN, 2011)

Enhancing gender equality and women’s empowerment in sustainability policies is one of the founding factors of successful development. Enabling women to participate in economic and social activities leads to their being effective members of society and changing their lives for the better. Increasing women’s capacity of participation in the development process enabling women to solve problems that helps them overcome problems of limited resources and marginalization in society.
8- Challenges Facing Development process:

Disadvantage people need for develop of effective strategies for both the microcredit programs and other organizations working for change to ease the challenges of donor pressure. Furthermore, they need to address macro-level constraints to increase the impact of microcredit programs on the target community regarding the issues of poverty reduction and improved quality of life. Since the 1970s, developing countries have faced many challenges in the development process; microfinance stability and government’s policy in founding better microfinance programs are important steps to take to move forward in the path of sustainable development (UN, 2006).

African countries in urgent need of international support in developing microfinance programs hope to reduce poverty improve consumption and production manner and manage natural resources. Reducing the gap between the rich and the poor will further strengthen the middle class and reduce the gap between developed and developing countries, leading to greater security and stability. Other challenges facing development include the climate change, natural disasters, pollution, potable water, et cetera. Globalization presents a new challenge to sustainable development, as its evolution often disadvantages developing countries due to the mobility of capital and investment and integration of markets in developed countries. (UNDP, 2010)

The liberalization of the economy lies in the hands of developed countries and large organizations, namely three UN agencies: the International Monetary Fund (IMF), the World Bank (WB), and the World Trade Organization (WTO). These three organizations effectively eliminate any effective role developing countries might play in controlling their own economy, as the developing economies depend on the IMF, WB, and/or WTO. Relying mostly on systems of social insurance and health has led to the formation of social classes in the developing societies. The minority rich occupy influential, decision-making
positions while the majority of the poor and needy form a class that represents half of society living at subsistence levels. The remaining population composes the middle class, a class representing the main pillar of society, consisting of a majority of people who work for government institutions, earning incomes that barely fulfill the basic demands of life. (Kanaan, 2006)

Chapter Three: The Organization of ARAHA and its Project Implementation

1- Introduction:

This chapter will give an orientation about ARAHA (American Relief Agency for the Horn of Africa) and the implementation of its projects in the Horn of Africa during my Reflective Practice Phase (RPP). All information can be accessed at www.araha.org, including implementation projects’ documents, annual reports, strategic plans, documents and brochures. In this chapter I simply summarize the organization and implementation projects’ documents and avoid giving my opinion.

2- The Organization:

ARAHA is a nonprofit, charitable organization dedicated to improving the economy and helping the needy people in the Horn of Africa. ARAHA was found by East African immigrants in Minnesota in the United States in order to socialize the Horn’s immigrants and support their people in Africa.

Due to the humanitarian crisis in the Horn of Africa, people are in urgent need of food and humanitarian assistance. ARAHA holds relief campaigns and, with the help of donors,
implements projects for those in urgent need, including ones focusing on food distribution, medical supplies, and digging wells. Another huge humanitarian crisis that ARAHA focuses on is the Eritrean refugees in eastern Sudan. With many people crossing the border into Sudan daily, the number of Eritrean refugees in Sudan had reached half a million in 2008. This half million is resides in more than 26 camps, and ARAHA grants emergency relief to some economically disadvantaged families.

2.1- ARAHA’s Vision:

To empower poor people in the Horn of Africa socioeconomically with the aim of self-reliance and to minimize grants or charities support.

2.2- ARAHA’s Mission:

ARAHA aims to improve the economic and social life of people in specific refugee camps in the Horn of Africa to combat hunger, illiteracy, diseases and poverty, in addition to implementing sustainable development projects.

2.3- ARAHA’s Goals:

ARAHA as a nonprofit humanitarian organization plays an important role by focusing on the following objectives and goals in the Horn of Africa;

- Implement development projects by using technology through partnerships from local and international organizations
- Develop market and sustainable projects
- Continue to broadly diversify funding streams to extend the number of beneficiaries from development project
• Create a stronger and more effective volunteer program to improve ARAHA strategies and goals
• Build a stronger relationship with the immigrant community in Minnesota, as this community contributes a large proportion of funds for projects
• Create a project monitoring and evaluation mechanism to develop work process of implementing projects in the future

2.4- ARAHA’s Programs and Services:

ARAHA focuses on six areas of need. (1) Food: distribution program, Audhia project, Zakat al-Fitr project, Iftar in Ramadan; (2) Water: community wells; (3) Education: school supplies program, student sponsorship, teacher sponsorship project, computer labs for high schools, building schools; (4) Health care: medical supplies program, medical student sponsorship, cholera outbreak in Somalia; (5) Orphan sponsorship and (6) Income generation.

Because ARAHA believes that education is central to the development process, empowering women, strengthening the community, and attaining development goals, ARAHA aims at assisting the refugee community in their effort to reduce poverty and increase capacity building among higher education. ARAHA’s project on education is focused on females in Eritrean refugee camps in Eastern Sudan and giving them the opportunity to access higher education. Also, ARAHA encourages children to attend school. However, supporting the education process at all stages yields a high cost, so ARAHA offers what it can to maintain education in camps.

2.5- ARAHA’s Implementation Strategies:

ARAHA’s main strategies are as follows:

• Examine process improvement practices and set goals for efficiency.
• Dedicate more resources to day-to-day work.
• Increase staff capacity.
• Work with other organizations, inventors, and service providers to create synergistic partnerships to implement innovative solutions.
• Continually improve upon locally-used solutions by using modern materials and technologies.
• Share ARAHA’s successful methods of resource distribution with other organizations.
• Create opportunities for international governmental and non-governmental organizations (NGOs) to union around issues related to the Horn of Africa.
• Strengthen ARAHA’s partnerships with other relief and development organizations.
• Provide education and improve understanding about issues common to the Horn of Africa.
• Widely publicize ARAHA’s intention to shift its focus from relief to sustainable development.

Chapter Four: Research Methodology

1- Introduction:

This chapter evaluates in depth the study topic for relevant study area, data collection, time dimensions, limitations of data collection, selecting sample and technique of selecting, analysis and findings.
2- Study Area:

This study based in Eritrean Refugee Camps in Eastern Sudan, where ARAHA implements projects. See chapter three for more information.

3- Data Collection:

3.1- Primary Data:

The primary data was collected via questionnaire that consists of open and closed-ended questions, emails and interviews via the internet program, Skype.

3.2- Secondary Data:

The secondary data gathering came from the organization and project documents. The research was an extensive research and data collection process. It includes a literature review of scholarly information on the subject documented. Journals, websites and the latest books on the subject were utilized. Results of the study were analyzed and compared with the impact of ARAHA development projects in the area.

4- Time dimensions:

The questionnaires and interviews took almost five weeks to collect, spanning from April 19th to the June 5th, 2011. The documents and observation to the beneficiaries’ responses were gathered during the RPP from September 3rd to March 3rd, 2010.

5- Limitations of data collection:

The topic proved to be somewhat limited in scope, as communication in the study area was underdeveloped. Despite using all available tools (internet, phone and ARAHA’s partner assistance), the geographical distance and lack of security in the region became
difficult challenges to overcome. On many occasions, dropped calls or weak internet signals disrupted discussions. Also, attendance of participants at the scheduled time was less than predictable. Furthermore, language was another constraint as Arabic is not widely spoken; specifically, most of the refugees were proficient in either Tigrigna or Tigre, or both, as these are the two languages most commonly spoken in Eritrea. Discussions were aided by an interpreter, one who works for ARAHA in my study area and also translated my questionnaire from Arabic to the local community language, but the simultaneous communication between all three parties hindered the flow of conversation.

6- Selecting sample and sampling technique:

A total of one hundred families received the questionnaire. These families represent the poorest of poor, selected from a target population of thirty thousand Eritreans refugee camp in eastern Sudan. The selecting of families was chosen due to their priority in development projects according to ARAHA organization strategic plans.

A total of ten from the area were interviewed via phone or Skype through collaboration with the ARAHA field office.

The sampling was done to choose the poorest beneficiaries of poor Eritrean refugees due to receive emergency aid from ARAHA according to lack of basic needs of life to be included in the future organization’s development projects.

7- Analysis:

Data gathered from the questionnaire of sampling was both quantitative and qualitative. The qualitative data rated in terms of percentages. The percentage of respondents for each alternative was analyzed. The data collected was analyzed by using the computer
software known as Statistical Package for Service Solution (SPSS). Also, questions sent by emails and interviews via Skype were coded and displayed in diagram format.

Chapter Five: Data presentation

1- Demographic Characteristics:

Name of the camp:

![Shagarab Camp](image)

Figure: 1

In the above figure, the residents gathered in Shagarab camp rate reached 98.0% while 2.0% of participants did not respond.
As for the distribution of respondents by gender the opportunity of interviewed males was greater than that of females due to traditions and stereotypes within the community. Women do not have equal opportunity, hence the unbalancing of numbers represented on the chart above. The dominance of males interviewed points to unequal opportunity that could also be an issue for women’s participation in future development projects. The lack in offering women an adequate opportunity to participate is a weakening factor for improving the role of women in the development of society and improving the level of family income from microcredit projects.
The illiteracy rate is low at 28% according to the results shown by above data. However, most participants only attended school to learn the most basic skills of reading and writing. Through the graph, we can see that only about 6% of participants attended university. The low rates of higher education matriculation could prove to be an affected element of social development. These rates refer back to a lack of basic education, including factors like a lack of schools, books, and teachers and a lower family standard of living.
Participants were refugees; therefore, logically, the participants live in a highly unstable environment. To further compound this situation, Sudan is a developing country experiencing a host of problems like civil unrest and economic sanctions just to name a few. If the host country is a nation where internal strife and instability are issues that have yet to be resolved, it is highly unlikely that refugees will find an ideal situation in which to settle down.

The results show a compelling insight into the lives of the refugees, as a high proportion claimed to live in homes. However, upon deeper investigation, the majority of these people actually live in dwellings made from mud and straw, called durdor. These residences are simple, small spaces whose only criteria being that it is designed to hold two adults. In reality, these basic structures held at least four people and had to protect them from rain, sun, heat, and sandstorms.

The vast majority of refugees in the camp rely on caro (a water tanker tugged by a donkey or a horse) as a major source of water. 26% of the participants depend on Sudan’s government water network, which has reached refugee camp from the outset. However, these people must pay for their water. The study shows that the Eritrean refugees suffer from water shortages as well as not knowing whether the water is clean or contaminated.
Through the above graph, we can see that 36% of respondents lack any source of lighting. In addition, pluralities of refugees depend on wood as a means of illumination, and about 23% of them rely on lanterns. The possibility of providing camps with power generators is improbable now, especially with high oil prices and the absence of a potential sponsor.

2- Family Composition:

In this graph, we see that children compose the largest portion of the family. With so many children under the age of 15, the economic burden placed in the family is also greater.
The demands of education that come alongside children also increases the strain placed on already limited resources in the educational process. Furthermore, statistically speaking adult females and males should be equal. However, in the graph we see that females outnumber the males. This can be attributed to the young men who lost their lives during the war and while they were crossing the Sudanese border.

![Marital Status Chart](image)

Figure: 8

The above results show that 75% of the participants are married. Despite the challenges of poverty and unemployment, families live in social cohesion, with conservative traditions and complying with social mores. Results showed social stability at the same time, as most of participants are married with very low rates of divorce. In addition, some residences house extended family as well, such as grandparents and aunts.
3- Family Properties:

Here, we see a high proportion of participants choosing not to respond, pointing to their desire for privacy, social beliefs, and anticipation of benefits from future projects. Although the participants own simple tools of living, these tools help to generate sufficient income to live with daily basic needs. Participants who own livestock suffer from drought in most seasons and the cost of fodder can add to the burden on financial capital. To explain why most of the participants have less than 5 livestock and one horse or donkey, I concluded that the dry environment and the high cost of maintaining a healthful environment for the animal to live in affects participants capability to maintain their livestock.
The data, in relation to the previous table, shows that participants’ experience focuses on farming. Thus, they prefer to engage in farming activities due to their background. However, the drought area and a lack of water source, good seeds and land ownership are restricting factors to practice farming. The teaching profession experiences the lowest rates of selection, most likely due to the lack of higher education and the primitive schooling process and overall educational condition.
Most participants would prefer to work in trade and grocery as well as livestock, depending on the needs of the people in the camp in order to earn more income in a short period of time for their families. Women’s interests focus on sewing, as it is a project that can be undertaken at home where they can simultaneously take care of other domestic chores. Furthermore, it is a task that falls within cultural norms. Females’ work could be more effective in increasing the level of income to support family. A woman’s income might more effectively better the condition of the family, as a man might spend the money to address more personal needs like those of cigarettes. Women in the refugee camp believe that sewing would be a very effective profession in combating poverty and achieving economic well-being in refugee life if they were provided with a sewing machine and training.

![Figure: 12](image)

All participants are confident about the success of their project, as it is a project that they selected themselves. They believe that the project will contribute to the community and fulfill a need that has thus far been unmet. 98% percent of respondents were certain of project success, which depends on the rate of participation in the selection process in conjunction with their need for additional income. Therefore, refugees live in exceptional circumstances for basic needs of life that may be enough reason to pursue, sustain and expand the project.
The majority of refugee families depend on daily wages as a major resource of income and some families do not have any source of income aside from what they receive from relief organizations. However, there were a portion of refugees who maintain monthly paid jobs. Nevertheless, the salary is a small summation that does not meet the needs of family. Moreover, refugees in both cases face instability in their jobs. The refugees’ work is confined to simple jobs and crafts that do not require capital such as vegetable seller, broker, handwork, peddler, etc. This data could be closely interconnected as income is rather low, thus contributing to the complexity of the problem compounded by of population growth. The population growth itself stems from insufficient knowledge and access to birth control, furthered only by a lack of higher education and media awareness that would work to inform the international community and the refugee population itself.

4- Participation Process and ARAHA’s projects:

4.1- Community Participation:

All participants heard about ARAHA as the study meeting point on microcredit projects that improve directly beneficiaries’ life. According to a lack of basic needs of life, higher education and clean water source in beneficiaries’ camps, the people, feeling a sense
of responsibility for their community, argued for a sustainable country in their area. Their demands were heard by ARAHA, whose response is reflected in the level of community participation and awareness of establishing sustainable projects that are beneficial for all in the community. As a result of beneficiaries’ calls for sustainable projects, ARAHA established a high school for females and water wells. Both of these projects were built by refugees themselves, and the refugees received payment for their work. The relief agency looks forward to establishing more sustainable projects for the refugees, but a shortage of capital limits ARAHA’s ability to make these projects available for all refugees.

![Figure: 14](image)

Most of the participants agree that the projects are important for their area but at the same time argue that relief projects are the most important. The sustainable projects were few when compared to the large numbers of refugees in various areas and countries. However, given available funding, the sustainable development projects were limited to education and water wells among the community area. The largest number of beneficiaries benefit from the all-female high school and water wells, while a small number of families benefit from dairy cow, goats and animal carts. Women were hopeful about the all-female high school, and they hope that NGOs will continue to establish different sustainable development projects. Among these, there are hopes especially for economic and social empowerment of women.
Sustainable programs focusing on these issues are the foundation of reducing the number of women and families living in poverty, which also affects women’s access to education and equal rights. Most of the participants argued for training sessions regarding sustainable development projects concentrating on females to enable women to acquire knowledge and become self reliant.

4.2- Field Office of ARAHA Activities:

Participants have different views of the field office activities, from selecting beneficiaries, representing the community, monitoring the distribution of relief, ensuring fair and efficient delivery of relief, to evaluation activities and field visits. However, beneficiaries think that the field office defaulted in visiting people in their place of residence.

The highest percentage of participants found the field office equitable in distributing relief to families. 93% of participants think the main role of selecting beneficiaries to utilize relief is related to the field office.

5. Data from Phone and Using Internet Tools Discussion:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Indicators</th>
<th>First Discussion</th>
<th>Second Discussion</th>
<th>Third Discussion</th>
<th>Fourth Discussion</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
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<td>Sustainability of projects</td>
<td>Only in Education and Water Wells</td>
<td>There is a need for big organizations</td>
<td>There is a need for big organizations</td>
<td>There is a need for big organizations</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sustainability Challenges</td>
<td>NGOs focus on relief projects</td>
<td>No Idea</td>
<td>NGOs focus on relief projects</td>
<td>Limited movement of Refugees</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Implementing in Microcredit projects plans</td>
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<td>Not Available</td>
<td>Not Available</td>
<td>Not Available</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mass Media</td>
<td>No focus</td>
<td>No focus</td>
<td>No focus</td>
<td>No focus</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
5.1- Discussion:

Through discussion with participants, I concluded that the goals of sustainable projects that are implemented by ARAHA have high effectiveness on the lives of the poorest families where there was no income prior to project implementation. However, the sustainable projects were limited in general. The majority of participants argued for reflective research work on Eritrean refugees situations. They hoped to increase this type of work in the area through the use of mass media and the attention it would generate. Furthermore, they hoped that the increased international attention created from the media would draw international organizations and agencies to implement sustainable development projects. Also, the participants indicated a need for refugees to participate in projects in order to develop the community process, as participation motivates participants to be a part of the project’s ethos.
From the above table, we can see that women’s empowerment projects currently experiences a lesser status, and participants want pioneer projects for women that will contribute to the sustainable development of their community. The indicator receiving the least attention overall was that of the role of media in covering Eritrean refugee conditions in Eastern Sudan and in other countries.

Chapter Six: Findings and Discussion:

1- Introduction:

The research has one major theme and four specific themes. To begin, this chapter will discuss findings of the four specific objectives and the main topic findings will be discussed in the conclusion.

2- Discussion:

2.1- Assess sustainability of development projects in the problem statement, challenges facing sustainability and microcredit projects’ implementation.

According to collected findings, the evaluation of sustainable projects varies among the participants. A high level of participants presumed that development projects implemented were not sustainable except in the educational process, clean water source and a few small projects for some families. In addition, the community has a lack of knowledge about the objectives and essence of sustainable development projects in the course of microcredit programs as a tool of development community.

The majority of participants considered factors of limitation in broadening the establishment of sustainable projects. The participants also wanted global organizations to
work in the field in order to understand the reality of the living conditions in which these refugees find themselves. Another factor that correlated with sustainable development projects to refugee is the lack of media focusing on Eritrean refugees’ issue. The key factor is the weakness of educational and awareness sectors on the part of Eritrean refugees, which contributed to their inability to present their issue to international organizations. The last factor to consider is that refugees are not landowners, as they live in a foreign, bordering country that suffers from a paucity of water source and agriculture technology.

A high percentage of participants considered the core challenges facing sustainability to be the high budget cost of sustainable projects. These high costs potentially deter donors who choose to contribute financially to relief projects instead – projects that provide services directly to the beneficiaries without need for a protracted implementing strategy (research, monitoring and follow-up). The limited movement of refugees and purchasing power is an additional part of challenge. It has been found that the lack of accurate research and statistics on the situation of refugees and community’s basic needs is a further element of the challenges of successfully implementing a sustainable development project.

From the research outcome, we see that microcredit projects are essentially unavailable in the target community. Knowledge of the microcredit development strategy is considered fundamental in increasing the impact of refugee poverty reduction. Eritrean refugees are being denied the possibility of benefitting from a microcredit establishment, in spite of living in extreme poverty, urgent needs and environmental risks. The participants have reservations regarding the idea of microcredit projects in the belief that all kinds of funding undergo profitability analysis on the part of the donor organization. At this time, even if participants believe in the benefits of microcredit projects, the availability and accessibility of microcredit does not exist because absence of international donor organizations.
2.2- Asses various effectiveness of sustainable projects on refugees livelihood with a scope of community participation in all projects stages.

The research results concluded that real effectiveness is realized in projects that dealt with establishing something for the entire community (education and water wells) and were held at the family level. But the impacts of sustainable projects were limited to few benefiting families and were, furthermore, fragile because the lack of participation of beneficiaries in selecting the project and the correlated diminished funding. The standard of socio-economic levels of participants remains low because establishment projects lack sustainability. This lack is due to feeble donor institutions’ financial resources which reflect on the organizations’ capability to increase the community’s economic growth, provision of employment opportunities and reduction of poverty.

According to the findings from the collected data, participation was considered nonexistent in all stages, whether in selecting a project or any other stage of implementation. From the findings, two indicators can be distinguished that affect the success of a sustainable development project. These factors are reflected through participation on the one hand and the low level of education and participation on the other hand. All participants considered poverty and low education within the community in addition to a lack of knowledge about the project to compose the main challenge facing their participation. The community’s low levels of participation could also be attributed to the need for greater willingness within the community before implementing projects. This can be addressed by holding knowledge workshops, improving skills through training, gaining community trust and orientations about NGOs that will work within the community. Carrying out sustainable development projects hinges on garnering solid community support through all stages of implementation.
3- Conclusion:

Sustainable development can provide opportunities for the enhancement of livelihoods, improvement of the quality of life and reduction of poverty through community participation during all project implementation stages. Additionally, microcredit projects not including any kind of interest can carry out significant utility to poverty reduction strategies. Sustainable development projects among refugees is quite low to when compared to the size of the entire community, particularly when indicators of their vulnerability regarding economic, social, environmental, physical infrastructure as tools for achieving sustainable development in refugee camps is taken into consideration.

However in regard to the above, the lack of sustainable projects boils down to a greater lack media focus on the Eritrean refugee issue, leading to the nonexistence of large global donor organizations in the area as well as the low number of graduates from higher education. Building capacity for refugee in eastern Sudan is difficult because of the rigid living conditions over many years of Eritrean refugees. The community desires sustainable development projects to be established in the camp areas but there are obstacles facing their argument; these obstacles are the massive number of refugees and domination of relief projects (over sustainable projects) which most of the people and organizations preferred. There were no considerable projects implemented regarding the empowerment of women in the camp areas, as women still face challenges in all sectors, particularly given cultural factors that discriminate against women working, their employment, and their wages.

Microcredit as one of the sustainable development tools needs to be utilized in terms of its impact on reducing poverty of poor community. The cause of the lack of the implementation of microcredit projects is in these camps unclear; it could be due to a general lack of focus on microcredit project effectiveness in regard to people’s livelihoods. ARAHA as a nonprofit relief agency does not have enough knowledge about microcredit projects but
they are working on a strategy to shift relief projects to microcredit without interest because of the extreme poverty of refugees.

4- **Recommendations:**

For future ARAHA projects and other organizations that intend to implement sustainable development projects for refugees, the following recommendations should be taken into consideration:

- From the concept of interlacement and overlapping challenges of sustainable development to each other that is required, a modern approach and methodological teaching and learning to achieve infrastructure of sustainable development should be adopted.

- Create sustainable local economies, focusing to generate new employment opportunities through productive projects implemented in cooperation within local communities.

- Unity of public, private sectors, nongovernmental organizations and international institutions under the team spirit with beneficiaries to achieve sustainable development projects goals in intend to reduction poverty of poor communities.

- Using local experts to assist in designing projects and training manuals compatible with culture and nature of local community.

- Dealing directly with beneficiaries to preserve communication open through planning for development projects that intended to establish by giving community the opportunity of participation in all project stages (broad participation).

- Women are considered the center of family, so empower women by focusing on pioneer development projects and taking in account the issue of gender equity to underline the important role of women to be producer and an effective member in the community.
The relief organizations should shift its strategies from relief to sustainable microcredit projects.
Bibliography:


Appendix:

Annex 1 Questionnaire:

Sustainable Development Projects for Refugees

Case Study: Measuring the Scope of Sustainability of Sustainable Development Projects and Microcredit in Eritrean Refugee Camps in Eastern Sudan

1- Demographic Characteristics
   a- Name of the camp b- Gender c- level of Education c- Residency d- Water Source
e- Lighting Source

2- Family Composition:
   a- Family Composition b- Marital Status

3- Family properties

4- What skills do you possess?

5- What type of project would you establish in the event you receive funding?

6- What is the likelihood of success for your project?

7- What is the family main source of income?

8- Are development projects sustainable in your area?

9- Why the development projects are not sustainable micro-credit projects in Eastern Sudan for Eritrean Refugee?

10- What the challenges are facing development projects in Eritrean Refugee camps?

11- Are development projects in Eastern Sudan sustainable for Eritrean Refugee?

12- How have they influenced the lifestyle of the local community (Eritrean Refugee)?

13- Are these projects participatory? How does the Eritrean refugee community participate in decision making processes (I.e. selecting and managing their projects)?

14- What do you suggest to shift the grants from relief to become sustainable projects?
15- Do you know sustainable projects were established for Eritrean Refugee? If yes, what are those projects?

16- What are the projects that you think could be established to empower Eritrean women?
Annex 2

Eritrean Refugee Camp’s Map

Source: www.docstoc.com