Women striving for self-reliance. Diversity of female-headed households in Tanzania and the livelihood strategies they employ
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Female-headed households and poverty: concepts and reflections

2.1 Introduction

The number of studies concerning female-headed households has increased sharply in recent decades. A noteworthy point with regard to this genre is that in only a few studies do authors take the trouble to describe what they mean by concepts such as ‘household’, ‘female head’ or ‘headship’. Most studies deal with these concepts as if they are clear-cut notions. However, the nomenclature does not reflect a universal meaning of these concepts and the diversity of meanings attributed to these concepts is enormous. The negligence of authors in not clearly specifying the meaning of these concepts makes a comparison of different studies of female-headed households cumbersome and sometimes impossible. Moreover, studies compare the results found and postulate new conclusions, thereby ascribing this universal concept of female-headed households to different realities. In this chapter, we will pay close attention to the divergence of conclusions based on these kinds of incompatible studies.

Another concept employed in this study, which needs explanation, is ‘poverty’. This concept has actually more ways of being defined and implemented than the other concepts mentioned above. Many studies, including those in the field of female-headed households that co-relate female-headship with poverty, draw conclusions about ‘the poverty of female-headed households’, without clearly defining the specific dimensions of poverty that are taken into account. Poverty is a relative concept and as such, differences in definition may generate different conclusions due to the complex nature of applying this concept to measurable factors.

It is not the intention of this study to generate new definitions of headship, household and poverty. The debates and considerations mentioned in the literature form the basis of my own considerations. These notions were analysed by taking the various concepts of household (Section 2.2), headship (Section 2.3) and poverty (Section 2.4) into consideration, and we selected the items that are most pertinent to the aim of this study. This chapter describes the considerations and arguments that underlie this selection. The exposure of concepts used justifies a comparative
analysis of the results of this study with previous and future studies. Simultaneously, this study offers a clarification of contrasting conclusions that currently exist on 'poverty' of female-headed households in Tanzania. Section 2.4 further offers the economic context in which female-headed households are placed. Section 2.5 considers the use of the household and/or the individual as the unit of analysis in this study. As the focus in this study is the female-headed household, the household is taken as the unit of analysis and the advantages and disadvantages in choosing this unit are also presented.

The analysis of the theoretical notions associated with these concepts is one way in which to approach the reality underlying them. Concepts may be regarded as vehicles for thought on reality and are projected into reality from the perspective of the researcher. They must never be equated with that reality. 'Head of household', for example, is a term often used by researchers, but this notion does not always correspond with reality. Firstly, a number of people can function as head within one household and secondly, the concept of headship does not necessarily imply a concrete meaning in the realities of either European or African households. This is the only way the concepts in this study should be regarded.

2.2 The concept of household

Scientific research on Africa often considers 'the household' as the basic unit of social analysis. No wonder then, that the concept of household has received considerable literary attention (Kromhout 2000; O'Laughlin 1999; Bryceson 1995; Driel 1994; Kabeer 1994; Zwart 1994; Folbre 1991; Aarnink & Kingma 1990; Moore 1988; Guyer & Peters 1987; Abrahams 1981; Guyer 1981; Spijkers-Zwart 1980; Thomas-Lycklama B. Nijeholt 1980). All these authors agree that the concept of household is rather complicated and that it contains many aspects that are difficult to combine into one clear definition. It is evident from the various descriptions offered that most studies regard the household as a socio-economic unit, which is involved in certain 'household activities' (production, consumption, reproduction and socialisation) in order to survive. This description does not clarify what a household really is. The following paragraphs clarify the concept of household with reference to notions stated in the literature.

*The household as a social unit*

The basic elements of a household are the persons living together within a dwelling place. There is no such thing as a household without persons. This may sound excessive, but most of the time the definitions lack direct correlation to the individuals who form that household. In the literature, this omission is striking. The household is a term sometimes used to refer to the basic unit of society (Moore 1988), a domestic unit (Guyer 1981) or a unit of decision-making (Kabeer 1994). These terms implicitly contain the most fundamental components of a household, namely individuals or persons, but do not explicitly mention them. A unit suggests a level of analysis rising just above the heads of the individuals, *i.e.* it implies an entity that functions as if it were a person itself. Authors apply this term as if households themselves are social actors, who make decisions in the process of their survival. To regard the household as a unit implies that there is internal communal consciousness and that this derives its existence from a singular unanimity. This disregards individual members' internal conflicts and their bargaining power. Whereas the
household is not a person per se, it does consist of persons who each have their own capacities, personalities and interests through which the household derives shape and each of the members have his/her relationships with persons within and outside their own immediate household environs. If the household behaves as a social actor, it does so only on behalf of the activities of its members (O’Laughlin 1999). Tellegen (1997: 146) and Mutoro (1997: 33) state: “Households should not be regarded as unified production units, but existing of individuals who make their own decisions, who often have different goals, conflicting interests and different possibilities and responsibilities.” As Wolf indicated: “The tendency to treat the household as an anthropomorphific entity within the neo-classical literature detracts attention from the reality that the household can neither decide nor think, since analytical constructs are not so empowered. Rather certain people within the household make decisions” (quoted in Kabeer 1994: 107).

There is another reason why the household should not be regarded as a static unit. Insofar as the term ‘unit’ suggests a static whole, it is not fitting to refer to the essentials of a household. The composition of the household is liable to alter during a lifespan. The composition varies during the developmental cycles of life (Guyer & Peters 1987; Fortes 1958; Goody 1958), but high mobility rates also change the composition of any household for a certain time. “People come and go – on business, on visits or for seasonal migration” (Guyer 1981: 98). In this way, I agree with Campbell (1995: 179) in that “a household cannot be understood as a bounded, homogeneous or harmonious social unit, but rather as a set of relationships whose content is continuously being renegotiated by co-resident members”. In the first place and in the most basic sense, a household is an entity, shaped by and existing of individual persons (or even one single individual person).

Zwart (1994; Spijkers-Zwart 1980) was one of the first to analyse the concept of household. She clarifies this concept by dividing it in two parts. On the one hand, it refers to certain activities of one or more persons and on the other, to the persons who perform these activities (Spijkers-Zwart 1980: 69). She sees the household as the group of people performing household activities and introduced the term ‘householding’ to refer to the interdependent complex of activities within the household, such as productive, consumptive and reproductive activities, geared towards the satisfaction of needs. It clearly shows that the concept of household consists of different components to which one must refer to whilst managing this concept.

According to Spijkers-Zwart (1980: 69) there exists a tacit consent in social science “that the household is a co-residential group that shares a number of activities, geared towards its members’ well-being.” She distinguishes three criteria: a locational criterion, a functional criterion and a kinship criterion. These criteria, which refer to the concept of household in its most basic sense, are analysed in order to clarify the notion of this concept. These criteria penetrate the meaning of this concept and help us to understand its real meaning.

The locational criterion refers to the dwelling place in which the members of the household live together. In Tanzania, the dwelling place normally exists of one or more houses, of which each has its own function, such as sleeping, cooking or sitting. These houses are located around an open place where the household activities are performed. Locational proximity is essential in enabling household members to become a household.

The functional criterion, related to the locational criterion, refers to basic activities whose performance causes persons to become members of a household. Persons live together within the same house or houses on one dwelling place, they sleep habitually under the same roof(s) (Bird-David et al. 1998; Caplan 1984; Spijkers-Zwart 1980) and normally eat from the same pot
18

(Appleton 1996; Lindberg 1996; Abrahams 1981). The Demographic and Health Surveys (Gage et al. 1996) manage this criterion as follows: "A household is a person or a group of persons living together, sharing the same housing unit, facilities and a common source of food." A group of people who perform these functions constitute a household and each of them may be identified as a member of that particular household. Co-residence and spatial enclosure are connotations befitting the concept of household. These connotations contrast with those of family and kinship.

The *kinship* criterion is often an element in descriptions of the household. The concepts of ‘family’ and ‘household’ are concepts of a different order. It is not necessary for persons within a household to be related to each other by kinship in order to speak of a household, *i.e.* a boy who looks after the cows or a domestic servant might be a member of the household having no kin relations with other members of that household. However, the biological family generally shapes the household. The core members of that household consist of one or more families. Bohannan (cited in Spijkers-Zwart 1980: 69) defined this as follows, "The household is a group of people who live together and form a functioning domestic unit. They may or may not constitute a family, and if they do, it may or may not be a simple nuclear family." O’Laughlin (1999: 3) states it in the following way: "A family refers to a kin-based, genealogically defined, hence potentially open group; a household is a closed localised group of people." She continues: “Although the household-family distinction is conceptually clear, in reality it is often fuzzy. The boundaries of kinship are culturally and socially defined, so no family is in fact an open biologically defined group. Since living together and sharing resources are important components of this social and cultural bounding of kinship and since people who live together (...) are often genealogically related, the distinction between family and household is not always analytically useful” (ibid.).

Two other criteria are also present in the literature, those of identity and affection. Harris (1981) regards the socially specific units that quantify ‘households’ as sources of identity and social markers (in Guyer & Peters 1987: 209). O’Laughlin (1999) agrees with her. The household exists of one or more persons who live together as a co-resident group. They form a household because they share some joint activities, such as eating from the same pot and sleeping in the same house on a regular basis. Only from these joint activities do these persons derive the status of household member and as such, they derive identity. Harris goes even further and adds the component of affection as a distinctive element in internal household relations. A household as an institution in the private sphere implies co-residence and according to her this carries with it connotations of intimacy and sharing (Harris 1981: 52).

The nuclear or elementary household, defined as consisting of a head, one spouse and their biological children with no other persons present (Gage et al. 1996) is the most common form of co-resident groups, especially for the generation which is involved in the first phase of the developmental cycle (the phase of expansion). The second phase is called the phase of dispersion. The third phase of the developmental cycle, the phase of replacement, includes the older generation, relatives such as grandchildren, brothers or sisters of one of the parents and their children or daughters in law with their children who all live together. Gage et al. (1996) names this the extended household. Chapter 5 (Section 5.2.1) describes the developmental cycle of households in more detail.

Guests or visitors might also be members of the household. In Africa, visiting guests normally stay within a household for a longer period while retaining their own houses elsewhere. Most of the time, guests or visitors are present in Ndala village for several purposes. Some of them might
be visiting family relatives and others might be inbound or outbound patients of the local hospital, such as pregnant women waiting to give birth to their child or sick persons recovering from treatment. These patients may rent their own rooms for a while or stay for a certain period with relatives. Depending on the aim of the research these visitors can be included or excluded from the tally of household members. Decisions about including or excluding visitors as household members can be based on various factors, such as the duration of stay, pooling of resources, sharing household and agricultural duties or the opinion of the household head. According to Pelt (1971), who performed his study amongst the Wanyamwezi, “a guest who stays for some time should take part in the work of the family: Mgeni siku mbili, ya tatu mpe jembe.”

The National Bureau of Statistics of Tanzania (1992c) included boarders, visitors and other persons as members of the household if they pool their resources together. It is quite difficult for a researcher to determine which visitors to include and the choice is often made rather arbitrarily. The opinion of the household head might be relevant to this complex issue. If s/he recognises the guest as a member of the household, they are included, whereas if not, they are excluded. This guideline principle was applied in this study and for all intents and purposes appeared to be a practical procedure. In cases of polygamous marriages in which a husband shares his time between two or more households, he was included as a household member of that household in which he lives at least half of the time.

To summarise, analysis of the household as a social unit clearly demonstrates the importance of the following elements in indicating a meaning for the concept of household: a co-resident group of people, which may or may not have kinship relations with each other, living together in one dwelling place in which they normally eat and sleep all year round. This description denotes exactly what a household is, by whom it is formed and how you can recognise such a unit. These elements allow a person to be identified as a household member.

**The household as a unit performing activities**

A second approach to the household concerns the activities performed by its members. Spijkers-Zwart (1980: 71) introduces the term householding “as the interdependent complex of activities directed towards the satisfaction of needs”. To describe a group of people performing these activities, she uses the term household. A distinction between the concepts of ‘household’ and ‘householding’ brings us closer to the essentials of a household itself. Householding is a term that says something about the household, i.e. the functions performed by it, but it does not explain what a household actually is. The household, as an analytical concept, is the group of people living together as was formulated in the previous section. It seems that this group of people is organised to fulfil certain functions that meet its members’ needs. These functions and needs differ from one another and vary from emotional, social, cultural and domestic functions to financial and economic ones. The activities of the household are often regarded in economic terms such as production, consumption, reproduction and acquisition or sharing of resources (O’Laughlin 1999; Moore 1988: 54; Spijkers-Zwart 1980: 71). Kabeer (1994) analysed the concept of household, as did many others, in economic terms, but she is very clear in her perspective of its conceptualisation. She uses the term household for “the bundle of relationships in a society through which its primary reproductive activities are organised, recognising that these

1 Literal translation: “one is a visitor for two days; the third day give him a hoe.”
frequently involve principles of kinship and residence. The economy of the household then, refers to the rules, relations and practices which govern household production, acquisition and distribution of the valued resources essential for meeting the needs of its members” (Kabeer 1994: 114-5). The emphasis of her work is concerned with the economy of the household and she conceptualises only in those terms. Her definition separates the economic function of the household from the locational, functional and kinship criteria, as did that of Spijkers-Zwart.

The household has become a fundamental concept in economic analyses in Africa. The household is often directly related to resources and to labour force. The economic model of the household has been greatly strengthened by the ‘new household economics’ of Becker (Evans 1989) and the Chayanovian theory of the peasant household (Chaynov 1925). These approaches take the household as the basic unit of controlling resources and making joint decisions about their allocation (O’Laughlin 1999; Guyer 1981). The Beckerian representation of the household is regarded as an essentially altruistic collectivity; the aggregation of individual utilities into a joint welfare function, of individual incomes into a common budget, of individual family labour into an abstract pool of household labour and of aggregating individual members into a single decision-making unit (Kabeer 1994; Evans 1989). This model treats the household as the economic actor and it ignores individuals who use their power as a means to satisfy their personal interests. This bargaining process might result in an economic ‘picture’ of the household, but it nevertheless continues to be determined by the decisions of the individual persons. By neglecting the individual actors within the household, the very concept of household is construed as an inanimate, domestic unit with decision-making autonomy over production, consumption, allocation of resources and reproduction. In the last thirty years, the household has frequently been the subject of economic studies. Most of the time, the household has been depicted as an important entity in the economic processes at community and national level. Household and economic unit became inseparable concepts at the expense of the multi-functionality of households and the bargaining power of its individuals.

The decision-making autonomy over the allocation of resources as a means to meet economic needs shows, however, that the household cannot be regarded as an economic actor, but rather that individuals are the most basic elements of the economic processes of the household. Within the economy of the household, decisions are made over funds derived from productive activities. Bryceson (1995) includes this aspect in her definition of a household. According to her, “a household refers to the collective identity of a group of individuals unified by commonly held factor endowments and one or more of the following; a common budget arising from greater or lesser degrees of income pooling, common cooking quarters, and/or a common residence. This definition places stress on household factor endowments, which consist of land, labour and/or capital derived from the pooling of individual entitlements by members of the household to form a corporate resource base” (Bryceson 1995: 39). Communal factor endowments are the economic basis of a peasant household. In literature the pooling and sharing of resources to satisfy the needs of the household members are described by others as well (Hardon-Baars 1994; Evans 1989). In our view, however, not all household members’ entitlements over endowments are pooled together, as a simple matter of course, into a corporate resource base. For instance, in Tanzania, land is pooled more frequently for common use to the co-resident group than are labour or capital. In this study, there was no evidence that all money earners pool their incomes, to a greater or lesser degree, into any de facto communal budget. They would rather exchange money than pool
it. The head of the household does not necessarily have command over the other household members’ resources (O’Laughlin 1999; Guyer & Peters 1987). Caplan (1984: 34) puts it this way: “A household is a collection of individuals engaged in reproductive activities, (...) retaining the fruits of their own labour to a large extent. Relationships within a household are characterised by exchange rather than by pooling since ownership is vested in individuals and not in the household as a unit”. Even in cases where no exchange or pooling is conceivable, the money derived by women from income- generating activities can be confiscated by their husbands (O’Laughlin 1999). Lindberg (1996) uses a definition that aims at encapsulating this concept. She defines the household as a pool of resources, of which land, livestock and labour are the most important. It is also defined as a pool of decision-makers. The degree to which a decision-maker has access to, or control over, these different resources in this pool mainly depends on his/her age and sex, as well as on personal characteristics. Ellis (1998) combines the social and economic aspects of a household in his definition of the household, in which he regards income pooling and resource allocation as part of the decision-making process of its members. The household “may be conceived as the social group which resides in the same place, shares the same meals, and makes joint or coordinated decisions over resource allocation and income pooling” (ibid, p. 6).

To summarise, the analysis of the household as an economic unit often excludes the social elements of a household. The household is regarded as an economic unit with decision-making autonomy over the allocation of resources. Most definitions usually reflect in a minor way the bargaining power of the individual household members.

The household reconsidered
Taking the household as the unit of analysis requires a clear description of what a household is, of what constitutes a household and less of how it functions or what activities it performs. The latter is often the case in studies. When the concept of ‘householding’ is brought into the equation, no universal definition can be presented, because the functions of the household differ in range and intensity worldwide. Considering the concept of household, Moore states that the exact nature and function of the household clearly varies from culture to culture and from period to period and that this usually rests on what the people themselves regard as the significant unit of their society (Moore 1988). Gage et al. conclude in their Demographic and Health Survey (DHS) that it is difficult to come up with a structural definition of household, which would fully capture the plethora of household forms that exist (1996). Also Van Driel (1994) concludes that the concept of household cannot be captured by one universal model and that it needs to be defined for each specific context. In the case of Tanzania (specifically of the village of Ndala) and with respect to the aim of this study the approach in which the household is considered as a social unit was the most adequate available. From the joint activities of eating, sleeping and residing together within one dwelling unit persons derive the status of household member and as such, they derive identity (O’Laughlin 1999). It is this identity that facilitates the empirical research; what people themselves regard as their household is that to which they belong. This study takes this description of the household as a starting point for the analysis. By these means, we are able to investigate its activities and its relations to other households or actors in the social and economic field. Normally, members of a household are well aware of which household they belong and who they recognise as the head of their household. How authors have worked with this concept is clarified further in the next section.
2.3 The concept of headship

Different concepts referring to female headship of the household are contained in the available literature, of which the following are the most common:

- female-headed household;
- female, single parent family;
- female-operated household;
- female supported household;
- female maintained household;
- female managed household;
- female only households;
- householder.

Each of these concepts is related to the concept of headship. The different definitions applicable to the concept of headship confound the comparison of available data on female-headed households and may lead to contradictory conclusions concerning the socio-economic position and other issues related to these households.

In analysing the existing literature on the concept of headship, two things become clear. Firstly, when dealing with the concept of headship many authors only describe the different types of female-headed households, while these typologies offer no information on the essential meaning of headship. Dividing female-headed households into different types is indeed important and this study is a plea to make such differentiation. What does it mean, for instance, when a divorced woman heads the household and what does this headship entail in comparison to a single woman heading a household or a married woman with a migrant husband? The concept of headship is used in many different ways and needs to be specified before we can draw general conclusions about female-headed households. We will describe the different dimensions of the concept of headship in the following section.

Secondly, as was the case with the concept of household, not many authors have clarified the concept of headship, not even those who focused their research on these issues (Van Driel 1994; Sender & Smith 1990; Izzard 1985; Peters 1983; Kerven 1979). These authors managed the concept as if it were quite clear what is meant when a woman heads the household. Obviously, in studies of male-headed households this question did not even arise. What is the meaning of male or female headship? Can a household in which a husband is present and the wife primarily supports the members of the household be defined as a female-headed household, as is suggested by Mencher and Okongwu (1993: 4)? Should legally or consensually married women, who are otherwise designated head of the household, be excluded from headship as proposed by Folbre (1991)? Is a household female-headed if the husband is absent from the home half or more of the time (Firebaugh 1994: 89)? Answering these questions might show that a female is in charge of one specific area of the household, such as food production and processing, while at the same time the husband is in charge of another area, such as the allocation of resources. Mbilinyi (1970) speaks of the situational context: in one area the woman is subservient, while in other situations she is definitely ‘the authority’. Harris (1981: 61) illustrates this effectively in her paper when stating that, whatever the ideology, the authority exercised by a male household head is rarely absolute. The conditions under which all powers are vested in the household head should be
treated as the exception rather than the rule. Also Youssef and Hetler. (1983) recommend in defining headship of households, to distinguish the different situations in which a male or female has authority. This consideration brings us to different criteria that are used in literature to define headship and which we will discuss below.

Which meanings can be ascribed to the concept of headship? Some authors endeavoured to elaborate on this concept. Mencher (1993) indicates that fieldwork over the past 25 years has produced answers to the question of 'who is head of the household', normally revealing who makes major decisions or who exercises authority. These answers fail to provide information about who supports the household. Thus, a woman might be the main provider within a household, while her husband retains decision-making power and dominates the household in various other ways. The normal response of a wife in such a household is that the husband can be identified as the household head. This situation shows exactly the difficulty associated with defining and managing the concept of headship. The respondent in the field will identify the household head with reference to the traditional norms and values. In Tanzania, headship of a household was traditionally attributed to men. The respondent will argue that the husband functions as head of the household because of his authority in decision-making processes. Nevertheless, another respondent in this situation might identify the wife as head of the household because of her contribution to the household’s economic resources. Appleton (1996: 1812) offers an example of defining headship that encompasses these two dimensions into one definition. In his analysis of women-headed households he defined the head as “the member of the household under whose authority the activities of the household, including expenditures, are carried out and who is accepted as such by all the members of the household.”

Other authors specify the different dimensions of headship when managing this concept. In financial and economic surveys, headship might be attributed to the main provider of the household resources, whereas in anthropological studies the processes of power and decision-making are analysed and the head of a household might be identified as the person or individual with the highest degree of authority. In the following section we will summarise and analyse some of the dimensions identified in the literature.

According to Mencher (1993) the concept of headship comprises four core aspects:
1. Authority and power (to command ‘respect’, to control someone else’s behaviour, to inflict punishment).
2. Sources of economic support (male only, female supported, common pooling or non-pooling).
3. Decision-making (about household expenditures, external matters and/or children and education).
4. Control over and custody of little children in case of divorce or death (i.e. in case of divorce, does the woman or the man have custody?) (Mencher 1993: 205-6).

The last aspect seems to overlap the preceding ones, but it stresses that decision-making in the event of divorce relates to the question of headship of the household. Who is awarded custody of the children: the mother, who is named the supporter in economic terms, or the father, who makes this decision based on his authoritative power? This example illustrates that the content of the concept of headship varies with each specific situation of the household. It is obvious from the literature that not much attention is paid to the question of headship; but it is equally obvious that most authors who took the trouble to clarify this concept referred exclusively to the second aspect mentioned by Mencher,
namely the allocation of economic resources. Even Mencher and Okongwu (1993) failed in this regard and confined headship to economic aspects when they analysed the issue of what constitutes a 'female-headed' household. In fact, a woman's economic support has emerged as a main definitional issue in delineating households where women take primary responsibility for family maintenance (Blumberg 1993).

Folbre (1991) introduced the term 'householder' instead of 'household head', but she recognises that simply introducing new terminology cannot solve the conceptual problems. Furthermore, this term did not satisfy her, because it oversimplifies relations among family members by defining them in terms of one reference person. “The practice of sorting households according to the characteristics of one reference person reflects a traditional emphasis on households as undifferentiated units and deflects attention away from the welfare of individual household members” (1991: 93-4). She goes further and argues that adequate information on sources of household income from all household members (in her terms 'householders') and patterns of intra-family distribution require provision. The characteristics of only one household member, who might be reported as the household head by other household members, must be seen as representative of the household (Folbre 1991). The economic position of this person is regarded as the only indicator of the entire households' economic situation. The information pertaining to the (reported) head is, in this case, a reference for all household members. This poses problems for households in which two or more members have income sources. Using this interpretation, there might appear to be more householders in one household, but this is unjustified either statistically or empirically. The second and more adequate meaning of reference person is the person who gives information about the entire economic situation of the household, including the income sources of all household members, even when the reference person does not have his own economic resources. In such a case, the reference person is not to be regarded as the head of the household. Again, in her conclusion she evokes the term 'householder' and connects it with the necessity to collect additional economic data, such as intra-family distribution of resources and labour time. We argue, however, for the decoupling of the terms of 'headship', 'reference person' or 'householder' (or whatever the concept used) from the economic situation of the household and its members.

Two of the four aspects of Mencher – decision-making and the sources of economic support of the household – are the ones which are usually found in relation to the definitional issues of headship (Kromhout 2000; Blumberg 1993: 26; Islam 1993: 234; Rosenhouse 1988: 3; Kerven 1979: 1). These aspects are normally used in contrast to each other. On the one hand, the head of the household is regarded as the person who holds primary responsibility in decision-making, irrespective of the issues at hand. On the other hand, the head of household is the main provider of household resources. In the definition offered by Kumari (1989) and Vecchio and Roy (1998) we see a combination of these two aspects. The household head is one who assumes the responsibility of heading the household. As a consequence, s/he takes on all or the majority of the following roles in relation to the household:

- Chief provider, defined as the family member who contributes the majority of income to the household.
- Chief protector, who takes the lead to protect family from interfamilial disputes or tensions.
- Chief bearer, who makes most of the sacrifices for the betterment of the family.
- Chief carrier, who organises financial matters and takes loans during times of economic stress.
- Chief decision-maker, who makes most of the decisions concerning day-to-day, long term and social issues.
Both approaches, however, exclude the complexity of the internal functioning within the household. In some instances, different members of the household make decisions in a more democratic way with one member taking the prime decision after considering all the various opinions offered. In other cases, only one member of the household decides without hearing the views of others. This depends on the issues under discussion. The same applies to the provision of economic resources. The household income might also arise from other members and might even be delivered to the head, who does not earn an income per se. In cases of female-headed households, salaries or remittances might be handed over from household members to the non-earning female adult member of the household, while she is responsible for cultivating the fields and the provision of food. The members of the household defer to the authority of the adult female member in matters of disposal of incomes, which gives her the authority to make all-important decisions concerning household resources.

Islam (1993) defines these issues very clearly. She emphasises control rather than production of resources and states: “The head of a household may be taken to be that member who exercises, directly or indirectly, control over the resources and the earning potentials of the household” (Islam 1993: 234). The crucial determinant of headship is not only the ability to produce the resources of the household, but also the ability to control those resources. A household is female-headed either (a) when the woman is the major earner with control over the income and resources of the household, or (b) when she has control and authority over the resources of the household, including the earnings of other members, without herself directly engaging in income-earning activities. Islam combines the aspects of authority, decision-making power and provision of economic resources in an excellent way and in contrast to other authors who emphasised only one aspect when defining headship. The decision-making process, however, is in her view limited to economic decisions. She neglects other types of decisions in which another member of the household can have the authoritative power. In addition, she again connects the concept of headship with the criterion of economic resources (Islam 1993).

Many more criteria for defining female-headed households have been suggested in the literature. Singh (1993: 244) has ordered them in groups, according to the aforementioned economic and decision-making criteria and authority to make different kinds of decisions. The first group contains female heads of households who are so on the basis of demographic criteria. This refers to marital status and assumes that widowed, divorced and separated women are heads of their households. Unmarried women may or may not be heads, depending on their age and place of residence. The second group is discerned on the basis of legal criteria with headship defined differently according to customary law and the practice of polygamy. The third group defines heads of households on the basis of their relationship to land: in this case the legal ownership or tenancy of agricultural land is the basis for defining headship. The fourth group refers to decision-making criteria: the person who has the highest authority to make decisions is the head of the household. The fifth group includes the customary criteria: cultural patterns and perceptions of deference and authority within the family. A sixth group of heads is defined on the basis of identity: the head is the member of the household identified as such by the respondent. A seventh group is based on the economic criteria: the head is the principal earner. For heads in the last group a combination of the previous criteria is applied to define headship.

This overview of definitional criteria of headship illustrates the array of possibilities for defining headship. Other criteria can be added to this, which Singh (1993) does not explicitly
explain. One is the criterion of seniority: the oldest male or female member of the household is regarded as head. The criterion of allocation and input of labour by the different members of the household might also be added. This overview illustrates the enormous differences in kinds of definitions of headship used in the literature. One uniform definition of headship is not possible, but the concept of 'headship' must be clearly defined in each study in order to make justified comparisons between data of different studies concerning the female-headed households. Peters (1995) also warns for abusing the concept of 'female-headed household' and stresses that it should be used carefully, which means that it needs to be defined in each survey. On the fieldwork level, each individual study should evolve its own definition appropriate to its particular circumstances. Each culture might provide its own definition and even within one culture, different definitions might be operational, depending on the various conditions under which female-headed households became a significant proportion of all households. Social, economic, political or ideological conditions within a society may produce different kinds of female-headed households and its definition may differ accordingly (Mencher and Okongwu 1993: 5; Moore 1988: 63).

Authors or fieldworkers experience first hand the difficulty of defining the concept of headship and the necessity of making a choice between the criteria in order to provide an indicator with which to extract data from households. A problem can arise when the head defined by the researcher is not the same as that reported by the household members. It is possible that they might judge headship with different criteria, of which they are more or less unaware and take for granted in their daily activities. Differences exist in the cultural perspectives of the researcher and those researched. An economic researcher identifies the head as the person with most economic power. When entering the household s/he will ask questions about the sources and allocation of economic resources and define the head accordingly based on his/her data. It is possible that the actual household head differs from this 'defined' person and that members of that household would report another head if they were asked to do so. Islam (1993) defined headship under criteria formulated in advance and thereby her norms were imposed on the household. The head is then the most important member. Instead of using constructions made by the researcher, asking the respondent who they recognise as head of the household meets the perceptions of household members on headship. Reported headship is then the criterion: the person reported to be the head by the respondent is the head (Rosenhouse 1988: 3). This criterion was also used by the Central Bureau of Statistics of Tanzania in the Household Budget Survey: "Head of household will mainly be the person recognised as such by the rest of the members of the household to be the head" (Bureau of Statistics of Tanzania 1992c). This criterion enables the researcher to distinguish between male-headed and female-headed households without using preconceived criteria.

Should one solely take into account the recognition offered by one respondent or that offered by all the household members? This question is related to the bargaining power of the household individuals and their conflicting opinions and decisions, as stated in Section 2.2. The individual recognised by one member of the household as head does not necessarily correspond with the perception of other household members. The household members might manage different criteria, too, when indicating one of the members as head of their household; these are just the same criteria as stated above. The study of Obist van Eeuwijk and Minja (1997) is a good illustration of the notions that underlie the connotations of headship by different household members. One rather pragmatic problem in identifying the head of the collective of household members is that all
other household members have to be asked their opinion and that requires them to be present in the dwelling unit when the interview commences. Most of the time, this is not possible. Asking the respondent to identify the household head neglects the opinions of others and the risk is then that not all household members agree with him/her on the perceived head. However, members of most households agree about the person who heads their household. Disagreement only arises in a few households. The researcher then has to make an independently motivated choice as to who s/he recognises as head. To avoid these problems and in order to ensure consistency, only the respondent was asked about the perceived head. The respondent in this study was defined as the woman as wife of the husband or the woman on her own, in the event that there was no husband in the household. In cases where there were no females in the household, for example households consisting of a male person living on his own (e.g. widowers), the man present was interviewed.

I am aware of the fact that it is not clear exactly what such cases measure. This became apparent after interpreting the data offered by the respondent. In this study, which also has an economic component, no criteria of household economic contributions were used and the data shows that in Ndala village this is not yet a decisive principle between the household members. The concept of headship was only used to classify the households into ‘male’-headed and ‘female’-headed households. The respondent provided us with information about all household members and the household composition was taken into account (see Table 2.1).

Table 2.1
Headship and household composition in Ndala village in 1994

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Household composition</th>
<th>Female-headed households</th>
<th>Male-headed households</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>n</td>
<td>%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Married couple (with/without children)</td>
<td>1*</td>
<td>2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Individual living alone</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>22%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mother or father with children</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>28%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grandmother and adult son/daughter and grandchildren**</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>34%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grandmother and grandchildren</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>12%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total number of households</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Author’s fieldwork; * De facto female-headed household: husband migrated elsewhere and in his absence his wife manages the household for most of the year; ** The three-generational-household-type.

In the society of Ndala village, the husband was usually reported to be the head of the household in the case of married couples. In households consisting of a grandmother living together with her son or daughter and his/her children, as well as in households with a mother or grandmother and children, seniority was the leading criterion in defining headship, even in cases where a son or daughter was the main contributor to the household’s economic resources. The female-headed households with an adult son or daughter, in which a grandmother headed the household, in most cases comprised unmarried daughters who had children and lived in their mother’s household. The adult sons (of 18 years and older) in these households were mostly sons who were not yet married and still lived in the household of their mother. Married sons with their wives and children residing in the household of their mother were classified into the category of married couples.
2.4 The concept of poverty

2.4.1 Introduction

In this section, we address the concept of poverty and the relationship between women and poverty. The concept of poverty provokes all kinds of questions, such as: what is poverty, who is poor, and according to whom are they poor? How can one measure poverty? The concept of poverty becomes relevant in a situation where a person is not able to meet certain demands, which s/he is willing to meet, or was used to meeting. In Box 1 we describe the transformation of the social and economic position of a young woman in a small rural village. From a relatively prosperous young lady, *mama* Isabella changed into a mother who has difficulties to meet financial needs inside a rather short time span. The case of this woman is illustrative for the questions which arise concerning the relationship between women and poverty.

The relationship between women and poverty was studied in greater detail by several authors. According to Buvinic (1997: 39) "women account for a growing proportion of those people who are considered poor on the basis of income, not only in industrial countries such as the United States, but also in the developing world". She concludes that using the level of well-being to measure poverty, women are found to be more impoverished than men. If poverty is measured in terms of income, the gap between the two sexes increases. This global trend is often called the 'feminisation' of poverty (Buvinic 1997; Dutch Ministry of Foreign Affairs 1994; Birdsall & McGreevey 1983). This term has often been used as a catch-phrase for a wide variety of problems, but two phenomena in the relationship between women and poverty require distinction: the feminisation of poverty and the impoverishment of women. Allen (1992: 107) defines the former as an increase in the number or share of women amongst the poor. The latter refers to the worsening state of women's living standards, *i.e.* women in general and poor women, in particular, who are becoming even poorer. The feminisation of poverty has also been closely linked with the rise of poor households, which are headed by women (Buvinic 1997; Risseeuw 1995: 181; Dutch Ministry of Foreign Affairs 1994 and 1992; Mbughuni 1994; Birdsall & McGreevey 1983). Although female-headed households are presumed to be overrepresented among the poor and their number has been rising in recent decades, one should be careful not to equate this term with women who head their own households alone. I agree with the statement of Tellegen (1997: 147) that "the focus on female-headed households neglects the roles and specific situation of women in male-headed households". Women in male-headed households might also be at the same level of well-being as women who live without a male partner. Moreover, as is mainly the case in this study, not all female heads are poor by definition, and there are also plenty of male-headed households that are poor.

Poverty is a multi-dimensional concept and not managed, therefore, in a uniform way either in policy documents, scientific literature or in practice. Despite the many conceptualisations of poverty, there has been a tendency to reduce the concept of poverty to a uni-dimensional issue, *i.e.* an economic state in which lack of income or consumption prevails (Pradhan & Ravallion 1998; Ravallion 1996).
Box 1 Becoming poor: the case of Joyce

Joyce is a woman at the age of 35 years. She has been living in Ndala since 1990 and was employed as a nurse in Ndala Hospital. Before that time, she lived in Dodoma with her mother; her father had already died. During the first years of her stay in Ndala she became acquainted with a man of her age. He was employed as bwana mifugo (veterinary expert). He was held in great respect on account of his capacities and his function within the community of Ndala village. He became her lover and in October 1991 their first child, Isabella, was born. They both earned a regular salary and were able to care properly for their daughter. Mama Isabella and baba Isabella (the mother and father of Isabella), as they were called now, and Isabella herself were doing well. They were well nourished and dressed and also looked healthy. Mama Isabella lived on her own with the child in a room in the nurse houses of the hospital. Only married couples were allowed to live together in these rooms. Mama Isabella was satisfied about the care of baba Isabella, emotionally as well as financially. He visited her quite regularly in her room and looked after his girl friend and his daughter well. A few years later, in February 1995, their second child, a baby boy named Hermann, was born and they started to live together in the house which he had bought for his family. Mama Isabella and baba Isabella continued their jobs, looked after their children with help of her mother, who lived with them from that time onwards. They started making arrangements for a wedding in the dry season of 1996. However, agreement on the dowry was delayed and the wedding was scheduled for the following year. In November 1996 baba Isabella unfortunately had an accident which changed his life completely. He fell off a truck and broke a number of bones. Physically he recovered but he started suffering from psychological problems. He started drinking pombe (beer) and was drunk all day. He was not able to do his job satisfactorily anymore and was dismissed. He became very promiscuous and spent nights away from home. Joyce left his house with their children and her mother. She returned to a room in the nurses' house which is, however, too small for four people. Her mother returned to Dodoma with the two children because Joyce was afraid that baba Isabella would confiscate the children. He was not able anymore to assist her financially. She started to build her own house in 1997 with money she saved for herself, but during the rainy season of 1997/1998 it collapsed because of excessive rains. Baba Isabella could not stand the fact that he was not allowed to have his children with him and he took revenge. During the cropping season of December 1997 till May 1998, he destroyed Joyce's humble harvest of maize. Following these misfortunes, combined with simultaneous macro-economic developments, like rising prices of consumer goods, inflation of the Tanzanian shilling and the stagnating salaries, her financial reserves had been exhausted. She now has to buy all the food and is no longer able to send enough money to her mother and children. School fees can't be paid any longer for her daughter.

In its first Human Development Report, the UNDP criticised this perception of poverty. This report cautions that there is no automatic relationship between income growth and human progress. It also defines poverty not as a state but as a process in which people's choices and the level of the well-being they have achieved are narrowed. This view caused a shift in people's perception of poverty away from viewing it as a uni-dimensional issue towards a multi-faceted phenomenon. Other aspects of poverty alongside income or consumption, which are increasingly gaining importance, include vulnerability, powerlessness, isolation, social inferiority, physical weakness, lack of decision-making power and lack of assets and insecurity (Lindberg 1996; Bagachwa 1994; Chambers in Dixon 1990; Jones 1990). Chambers (1997: xiv) regards poverty as one of the dimensions of deprivation, which he defines as "lacking what is needed for well-being". Deprivation has dimensions which are physical, social, economic, political, and
psychological/spiritual and includes forms of disadvantage such as those mentioned above under the denominator of poverty. He regards poverty as a “condition of lack of physical necessities, assets and income. It includes, but is more than income poverty” (Chambers 1997: xv). These changes in perceptions of poverty have helped to generate additional instructive insights into the understanding and measurement of poverty.

In the subsections below, we will analyse the concept of poverty so that we are able to understand its different meanings and use it in an acceptable way. We will deal with several dimensions of this concept to clarify eventually which dimensions apply most to this study. Firstly, the concept of poverty is analysed in terms of the views of international and national policy institutions. This analysis shows that during the last fifty years the concept of poverty has developed from a rather simple one into the current one with its multi-dimensional meaning. International economic developments necessitated policy institutions to reformulate their development strategies repeatedly and this is also the case for the economy of Tanzania. Each phase of economic development brought new perspectives or dimensions to the concept of poverty, thereby causing the emphasis to shift over time (Section 2.4.2). Secondly, we will consider the concept of poverty as it is used in scientific literature (Section 2.4.3). More specifically, we will analyse some studies on poverty performed in Tanzania and compare and critically review their methods and results. Specific attention will be paid to the divergence in conclusions about poverty. Thirdly, we will elucidate and put together the most common indicators to measure poverty. The multi-dimensionality of the concept of poverty has resulted in a multitude of poverty indicators. Each stage of economic development brought with it a unique perspective on poverty and resulted in an ever increasing number of indicators with which to measure poverty (Section 2.4.4). Finally, we will defend the choice of indicators used in this study on the basis of the information given in this section (Section 2.4.5).

2.4.2 The concept of poverty at policy level

Policy to alleviate the poverty of developing countries

More than one billion people, almost a quarter of the population of developing countries, are affected by poverty (World Bank 2000a). In spite of advances made in the policies of many developing countries in the last decades, poverty remains a major global issue. Local governments as well as several international institutions, such as the World Bank, the International Monetary Fund (IMF), the International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD) and the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) amongst others, have focused their efforts on stimulating the economic situation of the developing countries. The efforts of international agencies started during the colonial period and continued after the independence of former colonies in the 1950s and 1960s. In the 1990s, their efforts were still directed towards improving the economic situation of these countries, but in the period between these decades, the emphasis shifted in different directions. Within the framework of these efforts and policies, the concept of poverty emerged repeatedly and its meaning and interpretation changed constantly. The reports of the international institutions that are concerned with the economic situation of the developing countries show this shift in interpretation and implementation of the concept of poverty.

In the 1950s, this concept was managed in a more uniform way than it is today; poverty was defined as not having enough money to fulfil needs. Industrialisation was viewed as the key to
progress for the underdeveloped countries. Since this period, the divergence in economic situations of developing countries has increased and the concept of poverty has been reformulated and re-interpreted. This resulted in a transformation of the policy of the international institutions. The main views as they prevailed in these periods are briefly outlined below.

In the 1950s and 1960s, economic growth was seen as the primary means of diminishing poverty and some developing countries were able to attain a sustainable economic basis. Roads were provided, along with other forms of infrastructure such as energy provision and irrigation systems. Innovations in agriculture facilitated a modernisation of this economic sector and industries started to develop. During this period of growth, the economy and society of developing countries became neither steady nor egalitarian. Social inequality increased dramatically and in most countries, the social and economic position of women deteriorated as development efforts were only directed towards men. Economic growth proved insufficient in alleviating poverty, improving the income of the poor or dividing growth more equally. During these decades, countries in the South based their development strategies primarily on the model offered by the North instead of channelling funds into strategies based on their own development potential. The cultural dimension of development was insufficiently expressed in the strategies aimed at alleviating poverty (World Bank 2000a and 2000b; Buvnic 1997; Pronk 1992; Koppen 1991; Buvinic & Yudelman 1989; Buvinic et al. 1983; Collier et al. 1986; Haq 1976).

In the 1970s, a shift of emphasis can be observed in policy documents. Instead of encouraging economic growth, which benefits the few, the local governments were encouraged to implement measures designed to benefit the majority of the population and to alleviate poverty. A central theme of rural development programmes was the increase of agricultural production. This production increase was seen both as an aim in itself and as a means of improving the living conditions of the rural population. The improvement in living conditions was assumed to follow the production increases more or less automatically and was further aided by the expansion of community services such as health and education. The process of agricultural commercialisation, as a specific aspect of rural development, received a great deal of attention during this decade and in the 1980s. Agricultural commercialisation, however, did not have the intended effects: producing surpluses over and above farmers' own demands for sale (Hinderink & Sterkenburg 1987; Sterkenburg 1987).

During this period, the concept of poverty took on new dimensions: it included not only the lack of money or income but also of health, education and adequate food supply. It was realised that economic growth, expressed in Gross National Product (GNP), does not automatically benefit the poor. A more sustainable growth requires provisions in the sphere of food security, health care and education for all. From the view of a socially justified development, the policy was directed at economic growth as well as the fulfilment of basic needs for everyone. Integrated rural development projects became priorities for World Bank lending. Smallholder farming and farmers were identified as the target groups. The decisions sought to combine simultaneous and coordinated actions, often by different organisations and departments (Sterkenburg & Van der Wiel 1999). New poverty measures were developed and the basic needs strategy gained popularity in this decade (see Section 2.4.4).

Unanticipated oil price hikes in 1973/74 and again in 1979 by the Organisation of Petroleum Exporting Countries helped trigger a profound economic crisis in many developing countries. Oil price increases set in motion a train of events that has virtually reversed the economic growth and
led to deteriorating standards of living and increased poverty in many developing countries (Buvinic & Yudelman 1989). For African developing countries, this crisis also meant that the North was no longer able to continue their financial assistance at the same level as before. There are two opposing views on the causes of the crisis: the externalist and internalist view. The former regards negative global economic developments, like the decline in international prices, as the major cause of the crisis; these lie outside the influence of developing countries. The internalist view blames economic mismanagement which then results in market distortions in the countries themselves. Whatever the cause, this crisis demonstrated the weakness in the economic structures and development strategies of the developing countries. The resilience of these economies appeared insufficient to absorb the economic shocks (Dutch Ministry of Foreign Affairs 1994a and 1994b).

Most of the developing countries confronted the need to adjust their economies and make them more sustainable. In this decade, an increasing number of developing countries conveyed structural adjustment programmes (SAP), aimed at moulding the economic policy in order to realise economic recovery and growth of a more sustainable nature. According to Chambers (1997), the World Bank, local governments, UNDP and other donors included set conditions for the domestic economic policies to a degree unthinkable in the 1960s and 1970s. These development programmes, however, did not lead to poverty alleviation; programmes failed, partly due to conflicts between the different parties (government and donors) or because less attention was paid to the consequences of this policy for employment and the living standards of the poorest members of the population. During these decades, the macro-agricultural performance reflected severe problems, with negative rates of agricultural output per capita year after year and declines in the volume of exports of some agricultural commodities. The agricultural crisis affected Africa's export position in the world economy and has led to growing food problems and increased food imports. These negative developments contributed to growing impoverishment in rural and urban areas. Generally, little attention was paid to the fact that the poor suffered most during the period of adjustment and that their income situation also deteriorated most (Sterkenburg & Van der Wiel 1999; Lugalla 1995a; Mbilinyi 1995; Hinderink & Sterkenburg 1987; Sterkenburg 1987).

The above concerned only the economic effects and most adjustment programmes were criticised for their lack of social, cultural and gender aspects. By the end of the 1980s, new policies were formulated in which attention was paid to these aspects. In the 1990s, policies changed and the term ‘human development’ appeared. This term relates to two aspects. The first is the development of human capacities in, for instance, education and health care. The second aspect is the use of these capacities in order to embrace the human being. This view differs from the other strategies of development, which stress economic growth of the GNP or the development of human resources. In this view, growth of the GNP is necessary, but not enough for 'human development' and the aim of human development is not only to favour production. The human development strategy sees people as participants and not only as receivers as in the welfare approach: it combines the extension of human potentials with the use of human capacities (Koppen 1991). The UNDP developed a ‘human development index’ in order to measure it (see Section 2.4.4).

In the 1990s, the emphasis of poverty alleviating policies was characterised by self-reliance as the basis of a new development policy: economic growth had to come from the economies of the developing countries themselves. A dual approach, the provision of social services to the poor and the emphasis on growth in which labour is used productively, should diminish poverty in developing countries (Dutch Ministry of Foreign Affairs 1994a and 1994b). During the second
half of the 1990s, poverty alleviation was back on the World Bank’s agenda. Poverty alleviation has always been a key activity of the Bank, but the question raised was whether economic growth was an effective and sufficient way to alleviate poverty in a country. In recent years, insight has grown into the fact that economic growth is not a sufficient condition for the alleviation of poverty, but that poverty alleviation is indeed a prerequisite for sustainable economic growth. The newest vision in the programme of the World Bank is the so-called Comprehensive Development Framework (CDF). In this framework, development is not only regarded as stimulating economic growth, improving education and health care services or equalising the balance of payment, restraining inflation, diversification of production or making space for the market economy. Instead it also acknowledges that development to alleviate poverty can be efficient only when the totality of changes is considered. This holistic view of development attempts to implement different components of development policy together harmoniously (World Bank 2000a, 2000b, 1999).

The World Development Report 2000/01 focuses on actions to combat poverty in the first decades of the 21st century. The Report conceptualises a framework for action to combat poverty based on three pillars:

1. Empowerment: making state institutions pro-poor and removing social barriers to poverty reduction.
2. Security: helping the poor to manage the risks they face in their everyday lives and managing national downturns to minimise their impact on the poor.
3. Opportunity: expanding opportunity for the poor by building up their assets and increasing the returns on these assets.

This framework was proposed as a means for developing country-specific policy and intervention packages for attacking poverty. It was believed that actions to reduce poverty should move broadly on all three fronts. The need to develop this framework was based on the experiences of the last decades and can be summarised as follows. Firstly, different views on poverty have been developed while the common objective remains poverty reduction. This can be attributed to the fact that people differ in their understanding of poverty and its causes. Secondly, in the broader conceptualisation of poverty, the view that poverty is merely regarded as a deprivation of basic capabilities, rather than just low incomes, has led to a broader causal framework and to a broader policy framework. Thirdly, there has been tremendous diversity in poverty outcomes: across dimensions, regions, communities, households and individuals. This differentiation is a central theme within the framework for actions. Differentiated patterns of outcomes indicate differentiated causes and thus differentiated policy responses. The Report ends with a list of principles and actions based on this framework in guiding international development cooperation for the next decades (World Bank 2000b).

Policy to alleviate poverty in Tanzania and its results
This section shows to what extent general developments in international policy aimed at alleviating poverty apply to the situation of Tanzania.

In the 1950s, the British colonial powers stimulated commercial agriculture which was mainly in the hands of a small group of white, Asiatic and prosperous African farmers. They were able to increase their agricultural production to such a degree that crop export became possible. The economic system in those days was based on private enterprise under some form of government
regulation. Agriculture was the country's main economic pillar, that is the production of foodstuffs for domestic consumption and sisal, coffee and cotton for export. The industry was underdeveloped with cotton ginning being the primary activity. Upon its independence in 1961, Tanzania inherited this economic system. In the first years following independence, no major changes were made in the system and policy was guided by a three-year plan developed before independence, in which the state was supposed to play a more direct role in development. Agricultural growth was the main aim of this plan, as this would facilitate the expansion of manufacturing. The economic performance in these years was quite adequate and resulted in rapid growth in exports and manufacturing. No major institutional changes occurred until 1967 (Lugalla 1995a and 1995b; Sarris & Van den Brink 1993; Smith 1989; Sterkenburg 1987; Bryceson 1982; Hyden 1980a).

The period 1967-1973 produced drastic changes in economic and social policy in Tanzania. President Nyerere promoted development for everybody and not just for the few. His Arusha Declaration published in 1967 was the first national policy of an African country in which goals were established for the creation of a socialist state and self-reliance in national development. Socialism was viewed as necessary for the achievement of economic justice and equality. It was deemed important that the state be responsible for meeting basic needs such as health, education and nutrition. Nyerere stressed the importance of agricultural production for the provision of food for the country as well for export. Self-reliance and ujamaa (family hood) were manifested in communal farming practices; farming together in communities that were large enough to establish basic social services like health care and education. Responsibility for agricultural production was given to the regional government. This ujamaa policy formed the basis of the so-called African Socialism (Cranenburgh 1990; Hyden 1989 and 1980b; Omari 1984; Bryceson 1982). Cranenburgh (1990) exposes that ideologies of African Socialism have been subject to divergent interpretations. The Tanzanian case, however, aimed ambitiously towards independence: Tanzania was not supposed to copy non-African models of development which had to be financed with their own resources and without financial help from outside. Tanzania was to rely on its own resources, such as land and people, rather than on foreign capital. At an international level, policy-makers expected a lot to come of this kind of development. The policy of Tanzania which meant developing the country and diminishing inequalities was taken as an example for other developing countries. In this sense, Tanzania was a precursor of international policy. Self-sufficiency in food, however, was not the primary objective of rural households. Priority was given to income optimisation in which a rather high degree of food security existed. The larger the output of agricultural production, the less cash money was needed to buy food. The rural economy of Tanzania experienced little differentiation of non-agricultural production activities in that time (Sterkenburg 1987). Economic performance slowed down during this period. Agriculture grew only in line with population growth and it continued to provide only the countries' subsistence needs. Tanzanian product-export output to Germany, Great Britain and the United States stagnated and imports increased dramatically. The result was that, by 1970, the balance of payments account showed, for the first time, a significant deficit. Economically, the ujamaa policy was considered a failure, but it did have some benefits. The intended responsibility of the state in meeting basic needs brought at least social services within the reach of a large proportion of the population thanks to the formation of villages, with a hierarchical structure of health facilities and primary education at village level as a consequence.

The year 1973 marked the first of a series of crises that were to shock the Tanzanian economy throughout the decade. Drought, a major drop in domestic food supplies and the first oil crisis
necessitated increased imports and resulted in a growing deficit on the balance of payments. Inflation continued to rise and the government devalued the shilling in 1975. The government received aid from the IMF and programme loans from the World Bank and external aid from a variety of other donors. Increases in the global prices of coffee and tea led to sharp increases in exports earnings in 1976 and 1977 and a short revival of the economy. In 1978, Tanzania became involved in the war with Uganda and the government had to import substantial amounts of arms and war-related supplies. In 1979, the government resorted again to the IMF. In 1980, the effects of the second oil crisis of 1979 struck the economy and imports had to be cut due to the foreign exchange crisis. Shortages of consumer goods intensified and prices of scarce goods soared (Cranenburgh 1990). The seriousness of the economic situation led to the first attempt at international adjustment, the National Economic Survival Programme (NESP) in 1981 and resulted in cuts in salaries and social services, increase in taxes for salaried workers and an increase in producer prices. In 1982, this programme was followed by a Structural Adjustment Programme (SAP) advised and funded by the World Bank. The aims of the programme were to limit the public deficit by cutting expenditures without cutting social and economic services. Structural adjustment appeared to have benefited many poor households and has raised a significant proportion of the population above the poverty line. However, the smaller fraction of the population who had extremely low incomes was not able to benefit from the better economic performances due to SAP (Bryceson 2000; Ferreira 1996).

Although these measures were steps in the right direction, they did not seem to alter any of the economic problems. Extensive shortages prevailed and the Tanzanian shilling was continually devaluated each year. Between 1970 and 1980, the average annual rate of inflation was about 14% and between 1984 and 1994 about 33% (World Bank Various annual reports). Due to the economic crisis and the increasing critical attitude towards Tanzania's development policy, most donors curtailed aid, worsening the already severe situation. Figure 2.1 illustrates the Official Development Assistance (ODA) receipts of Tanzania in the 1980s and 1990s (see also Appendix 2).

The general crisis and lack of foreign exchange due to the country's deteriorating terms of trade forced the government to deal with the crisis with help from the IMF. In 1986, the newly appointed Mwinyi Government embarked on a broad-based three year Economic Recovery Programme (ERP), which introduced certain economic reforms. In 1989, a new three year Economic and Social Action Programme (ESAP) was adopted, which stressed the social dimensions of adjustment and poverty alleviation and continued the economic reforms established in the previous years (Semgalawe 1998; Bagachwa 1997; Ferreira 1996; Lugalla 1995a; Dutch Ministry of Foreign Affairs 1994a and 1992; Mtatifikolo 1994; World Bank 1994; Booth et al. 1993; Sarris & Van den Brink 1993). In 1992, this ESAP was replaced by a new three-year Rolling Plan and Forward Budget (RPFB) system. With the ERP, the ESAP and the RPFB system the Tanzanian Government worked to dismantle the system of state regulation and to promote private sector expansion. A state-controlled economy and a state-dominated society transformed into a free market system. The economic reform programmes entailed:

- a sharp devaluation of the already over-valued Tanzanian shilling;
- a change in the foreign exchange allocation system;
- the privatisation of state industries;
- the liberalisation of imports and internal trade;
- the reduction of government budget deficits, resulting in *e.g.* removal of subsidies from agricultural inputs; and

...
- a reform and reduction of the civil service.

**Figure 2.1**
Net ODA to Tanzania of donors (disbursement)

![Bar chart showing net ODA to Tanzania from 1980 to 2000](image)

Source: OECD (2002 and 1999) Geographical Distribution of Financial Flows to Developing Countries

Village economies were stimulated by liberalisation and agricultural production appeared to have benefited. Still, Tanzania is a nation of farmers operating at a low level of technology and characterised by low levels of productivity and structural transformation of the economy into a more industrialised one (Bryceson 2002a, 2002b, 1999; Lugalla 1995b; Mbilinyi 1995 and 1988; Dutch Ministry of Foreign Affairs 1994a). The economy responded to these reforms and began recovering at an annual growth rate of 4% over 1986-1994 (Figure 2.2 and Appendix 2). In the period after the mid 1980s, donors were again able to commit financial assistance to Tanzania and aid flows expanded once again, as is reflected in Figure 2.1.

In the following years, however, Tanzania's progress was jeopardised by a significant deterioration in macro-economic management, partly due to weakened commitment to reform during president Mwinyi's second term. The worsening of the macro-economic situation led to deferment of World Bank and IMF programmes and an interruption in balance of payment assistance from several donors (see Figure 2.1). The Mkapa Government, appointed in November 1995, represented a break with this trend and a new agreement with the IMF was reached. The subsequent adherence of the government to the IMF fiscal programme has resulted in economic growth, although this was adversely affected by the heavy El Niño rains of 1998. The Mkapa Government is making serious efforts to continue policies emphasising economic stability and liberalisation aimed at growth and poverty reduction (World Bank 2000a).
In World Bank Development Reports, Tanzania has consistently ranked among the world’s top four poorest countries since 1990 (when based on GDP) (Mtatifikolo & Mabele 1999). Figures 2.3 and 2.4 illustrate the per capita incomes of some years, as well as the GDPs. These figures show that GDP growth stagnated in the beginning of the 1980s until the first half of the 1990s. Since the introduction of economic reforms, growth of the Gross Domestic Product (GDP) and GDP per capita increased considerably and the country achieved food self-sufficiency (Dutch Ministry of Foreign Affairs, 1994a) (Figures 2.3 and 2.4 and Appendix 2).

Summarising the poverty profile of Tanzania, Mtatifikolo and Mabele (1999) conclude:
1. Poverty is largely a rural phenomenon: the poor represented about 59% of all rural households. Rural villages accounted for 90% of those living in extreme poverty.
2. There had been a significant decline in the incidence of aggregate poverty between 1983 and 1991: in 1983 about 54% of the total population were living below the poverty line as formulated by the World Bank, versus 41.8% in 1991 (a decline of 23%).
3. The incidence of poverty was declining and the number of the poor was decreasing: in 1983, about 11 million people were living in poverty and this amount was about 9 million in 1991 (even though total population had risen significantly).

Poverty at the local level of Ndala village: an initial assessment
In the 1950s and early 1960s, Ndala was a minor village with houses scattered around a small marketplace. The households were mainly self-subsistent and cultivated millet on rather large plots of land, fetched firewood from the nearby woods and bush and water from the wells. Their houses were built with mud, manure, wood and grass. Cooking pots were made of clay. The houses were unlit after nightfall. The people slept on mats on the ground. Only small amounts of money were needed to buy salt, sugar and lighters and for cases of emergency such as medical
services. The economy was rather simple, although some farmers had started cultivating tobacco and cotton as cash crops as stimulated by the colonial regime.

Figure 2.3
Gross Domestic Product (GDP) of Tanzania (in million US$)

Source: World Bank, World Development Reports of various years.

Figure 2.4
Per capita income in US$ for Tanzania

Source: World Bank, World Development Reports of various years.

At the end of the 1960s, the structure of Ndala village changed. The number of people increased, new houses were built and plots of land were subdivided, due to President Nyerere’s Villagisation Programme. The concentration of the population in villages facilitated the extension of communal services such as shops, schools and health centres, but the aim of increasing
agricultural production by communal farming remained in-accustomed. The departure from the ancestral *shamba* (field) meant hardship for many migrants. Those who came from nearby were able to continue using their native *shamba*, but they required more time to travel. Others who arrived in Ndala village from a long way away left their ancestral *shamba* and acquired plots of land in, or nearby, the village’s Local Government Authority. Due to the number of people, the plots were rather small and certainly smaller than those they were used to farming. This had consequences for their food production as well as for the fertility of their land. The fields were more intensively farmed than before and yields decreased as a result (Raikes 2000).

In the 1970s and 1980s, the economy became increasingly monetary-orientated (see Chapter 4) and more diversified. Many peasantry diversified into a number of occupations and non-agricultural income-earning avenues. Households appeared to be incapable of relying on their own harvest of crops and had to be engaged in off-farm activities (Bryceson 2000a; Raikes 2000). In this period, there was a clear increase in the number of household members participating in the labour market and performing non-agricultural activities in the informal sector (Bryceson 1999a and 1999b; Jambiya 1998; Madulu 1998; Mung’ong’o 1998; Mwamfupe 1998; Bagachwa 1997; Bryceson 1997; Koda 1995; Mbilinyi 1995; Aarnink & Kingma 1991). According to Bryceson (1997) this was a reaction firstly to the crisis in the 1980s, secondly to the Economic Recovery Programme and thirdly to the increasing pressure on land resources. In the Ndala village area, this was also a response to the uncertainty of the harvest due to unreliable rainfall. The seasonality of Tanzanian agriculture has permitted the farmers to engage in non-agricultural activities in conjunction with farming. The younger generation or economically active people started to migrate in order to find work. With respect to agriculture, the influence on the farming households of the severe macro-economic circumstances in the second half of the 1970s included (a) a government policy characterised by disregard for agriculture and (b) low producer prices of marketed food crops at the local market due to high inflation of the Tanzanian shilling. For some villagers of Ndala, the living conditions were improved thanks to social services, but the food situation deteriorated. For most villagers this period was characterised by difficulties in meeting their basic needs.

The adjustment programmes in the 1980s and 1990s have had negative effects on households at rural level. However, these programmes did indeed result in higher producer prices for food crops at the local market, due to attempted measures taken in order to devalue the Tanzanian shilling. Inflation, however, raised the prices of consumer goods and the decreasing government expenditures caused the removal of subsidies and had a negative influence on the price of improved inputs (Bryceson 1999a; Lugalla 1995a; Mbilinyi 1995; Dutch Ministry of Foreign Affairs 1994b and 1992; World Bank 1994). Household farming conditions did not improve and household strategies continued to be oriented towards the cultivation of crops on their plots of land. Otherwise the implementation of SAPs has coincided with the rapid expansion of rural income diversification (Bryceson 2000, 1999a and 1999b). For the households in Ndala, village income diversification functioned as a vital coping strategy for the poor and thus as a mechanism for improving their livelihood conditions.

The discrepancy between the international policy level and the local or individual level of policy making is demonstrated in the case of Joyce (Box 1). The case of Joyce shows that despite the views of the international and national policy institutions, each person has its own policy for survival. This policy is often not based on international or national economic developments (as
described in above), but on the customary daily and local developments in their personal situation. However, the crisis in the 1980s also took its toll on the economy of Ndala village: the prices of consumer goods rose sharply due to shortages, official rationing was introduced, inflation rose, incomes decreased and money became scarce. It was during this time that Joyce arrived in Ndala village. She had a salary of Tsh 12,000 per year and had no family to look after. She was able to send money to her mother in Dodoma. In the 1990s, the economic situation changed and inflation was high. In 1996, her salary amounted to Tsh 120,000 per year. Prices of food had increased, however, and her family had expanded as well. Her economic situation was not much better than at the end of the 1980s. Her salary was insufficient to buy the food she needed and she rented a plot of land to cultivate maize in the hours outside her regular working time. She was doing well, but the adjustment programmes of the 1980s and 1990s could not prevent her and her family slipping into the poverty trap. There are a lot of factors in the lives of individual people which, independently of all the policies, can bring the opposite results to those aimed at in policy documents. Joyce is no exception. Women left behind, old widows or widowers, families hit by illness or accidents and so on had fallen or might fall into the same poverty trap as Joyce did, or to put it in more general terms, into an economic situation that is worse than that of their previous situation.

Many inhabitants of Ndala village have incomes lower than the salary Joyce earns. Others have higher salaries. According to Mtatifikolo and Mabere (1999) 61.5% of the population of Tabora Region fell below the poverty line in 1991, as tabulated by the World Bank. The incidence of poverty in this region is associated with low agricultural productivity. Tabora is a region with low rainfall, poor soils, relatively poor road infrastructure and long distances from markets. In addition, most villagers in Ndala live below the poverty line, as formulated by Bol (1999), of Tsh 46,000 (per adult equivalent per year) and a sizeable number are probably also poor in absolute terms (less than Tsh 31,000 per year).

2.4.3 Poverty research in Tanzania

In the last decade, the World Bank ranked Tanzania as one of the poorest countries in the World. For this reason it is not surprising that numerous studies have focused attention on the poverty situation in Tanzania. Only a few of these dealt with the conceptualisation of poverty itself. Most of these studies, however, formulate conclusions about the poor without defining what they mean by 'poor'. In relation to the topic of this study, these studies intended to draw conclusions about the margins of the poverty situation of women, and more precisely those of the female heads of households among them. Many authors tell us that poor female-headed households have a disadvantaged position, especially in agriculture. Empirical research has not often been the base of their conclusions. Moreover, not much empirical research has been carried out on the poverty of women and/or the female heads of households in Tanzania. A few studies, however, are interesting to review because their conclusions were based on extended field research at household level. These studies pay special attention to gender differences in the financial and economic situation of men and women and are therefore able to clarify the use of the concept of poverty and the conclusions which can be drawn as a result.

An extended macro-economic study was performed by Sarris and Brink (1993), who analysed the impact of adjustment policies on households in Tanzania. Two national household surveys, which were performed in 1969 and 1976/1977, respectively, and a detailed rural income survey performed by Collier et al. (1986) provided the bulk of information for their analysis. Another study was performed by Sender and Smith (1990). The study of Collier et al. (1986) and the study of Sender and Smith (1990) are particularly interesting to analyse in relation to the topic of this study because they concerned rural situations and not the macro economy of Tanzania as a whole, as in the case of Sarris and Brink’s study. The third study that will be reviewed here concerns one performed by the World Bank in 1998 on gender, growth and poverty reduction in Sub-Saharan Africa (Blackden & Bham 1999).

**The study of Collier et al. (1986)**

The study performed by Collier et al. (1986) aimed to provide an empirical basis for assessing the performance of Tanzania’s strategies in rural development. The basic unit of analysis was the household. The population was divided in half, based on household incomes rather than on gender distinctions. Collier et al. analysed two categories of households; the poor and the non-poor, according to whether the household income was below or above the mean household income for the sample as a whole. The authors abandoned the traditional mode of analysis based on the poverty datum line since it is judged as being of limited relevance to Tanzania. They argue that Tanzania is characterised by the preponderance of poor subsistence peasants. Under such conditions, the quantification of poverty assumes secondary importance. Their study pays plenty of attention to questions related to the correlation of poverty and the mechanisms that perpetuate poverty and inequality. Poverty is regarded in terms of income and they further analyse whether a low total household income reflects a shortfall in one particular source of income or in all sources and whether or not these shortfalls are caused by a low input of endowments (like labour, skills, land, assets and education), misallocation of endowments or a low output of endowments. Collier et al. attempted to identify the origins of poverty and connected the differences in various income components with differences in endowments. They were able to explain more than half of the total income gap between the poor and the non-poor through differences in endowments. Among these is the inequality in ownership of livestock, which accounts for 21% of the total income gap. The overall picture that emerged is “that the poor are poor because of low returns to labour rather than because of labour shortage; they are not poor because they use their endowments less effectively than the non-poor, but because they have fewer endowments to use” (Collier et al. 1986: 106).

With its large amount of data on endowments in relation to the poor and non-poor, this study is one of the most extensive empirical studies on poverty in Tanzania. It offers a great deal of information about differences in land tenure, livestock ownership, education, labour resources, access to non-farm employment and income sources, etc. of the poor and the non-poor. It was disappointing, however, that it did not take gender differences into account. The authors derived, however, much demographic data like marital status by age and sex and the composition of households, but in their analysis they refer only to the two categories of poor and non-poor households. They totally neglected gender differences, except for one endowment, namely access to wage employment. Collier et al. add that “access to wage employment is additionally dependent on gender, women of a given educational level having a lower probability of being employed than men of the same level have. However, this does not appear to have a strong influence on inter-household inequalities. The
proportion of female-headed households was only slightly greater among the poor (19%) than among the non-poor (15%)" (Collier et al. 1986: 102). They do not explain which types of households were taken into the category of female-headed households. In this respect, it will not be easy to compare the results of this study with theirs.

The study of Collier et al., however, makes interesting reading for this study in three respects. Firstly, it is an empirical and extensive study on the poverty situation of peasant farmers that was performed on a stratified, random sample in Tanzania. The authors selected 600 households in twenty villages in eight of the twenty regions of Tanzania. Secondly, they took income as the measure of poverty and did this in a rather extensive way. They included different kinds of income sources of the rural farming household and not only those that can be expressed in monetary terms, such as sale of produce or wage employment. They also valued subsistence production and consumption. Thirdly, this study is interesting because their conclusion about the incidence of poverty in female-headed households is somewhat different from other studies, especially from the conclusions of the study of Sender and Smith (1990). This might be ascribed to the use of another indicator to measure poverty.

The study of Sender and Smith (1990)

Sender and Smith (1990) do not give a straight definition of the concept of poverty as they understand it, but out of their survey one can discern that poverty is regarded as a level of material well-being below a certain standard, in which the household is the unit of analysis. They assume that indications about the material well-being of households say something about their socio-economic status. In their view, households with more possessions have a higher economic status and belong to the group of more prosperous households; the opposite is true for households with less possessions. Calculations of possessions were based on pre-formulated items and in this respect the possession index, as a technique for estimating differences in economic situations, is contrasted favourably with alternative techniques used by social scientists to quantify income, wealth and other socio-economic household characteristics. Sender and Smith are rather negative about the attempts of surveyors to measure rural household income. They are convinced that “volumes of output of a range of crops during some previous period cannot be indicated properly by respondents, that it involves crude estimates of the proportion of output sold in different (...) markets, the timing of these sales, and the prices received, arbitrary valuations of output consumed within the households; even cruder attempts to estimate production costs of these commodities, imputations or guestimates of labour costs, and frequently ignoring the systematic variations in the prices paid by different producers for the same input” (Sender and Smith 1990: 29).

Their study summarises the household characteristics of the lowest possession score categories, including inadequate shelter and clothing, illiteracy, the failure of their children to complete primary school, high infant mortality, limited access to high-status types of wage and salary employment, the limited degree to which they inherit and purchase land and their inability to produce the most lucrative crops or to apply much fertiliser and hired labour. Sender and Smith (1990: 63) argue that “the characteristics of the poorest households may be attributed with some confidence to the female-only households” since 68% of the poorest households are female-only households and 92% of all female-only households are in the lowest possessions score categories (Sender and Smith 1990: 63).

3 Their definition of female-only households as opposed to male or female households corresponds partly with the definition used in this study: in cases where husbands were resident and in cases in which husbands were not full-time residents but made regular visits and financial contributions, Sender and Smith defined the household as a
progress for the underdeveloped countries. Since this period, the divergence in economic situations of developing countries has increased and the concept of poverty has been reformulated and re-interpreted. This resulted in a transformation of the policy of the international institutions. The main views as they prevailed in these periods are briefly outlined below.

In the 1950s and 1960s, economic growth was seen as the primary means of diminishing poverty and some developing countries were able to attain a sustainable economic basis. Roads were provided, along with other forms of infrastructure such as energy provision and irrigation systems. Innovations in agriculture facilitated a modernisation of this economic sector and industries started to develop. During this period of growth, the economy and society of developing countries became neither steady nor egalitarian. Social inequality increased dramatically and in most countries, the social and economic position of women deteriorated as development efforts were only directed towards men. Economic growth proved insufficient in alleviating poverty, improving the income of the poor or dividing growth more equally. During these decades, countries in the South based their development strategies primarily on the model offered by the North instead of channelling funds into strategies based on their own development potential. The cultural dimension of development was insufficiently expressed in the strategies aimed at alleviating poverty (World Bank 2000a and 2000b; Buvinic 1997; Pronk 1992; Koppen 1991; Buvinic & Yudelman 1989; Buvinic et al. 1983; Collier et al. 1986; Haq 1976).

In the 1970s, a shift of emphasis can be observed in policy documents. Instead of encouraging economic growth, which benefits the few, the local governments were encouraged to implement measures designed to benefit the majority of the population and to alleviate poverty. A central theme of rural development programmes was the increase of agricultural production. This production increase was seen both as an aim in itself and as a means of improving the living conditions of the rural population. The improvement in living conditions was assumed to follow the production increases more or less automatically and was further aided by the expansion of community services such as health and education. The process of agricultural commercialisation, as a specific aspect of rural development, received a great deal of attention during this decade and in the 1980s. Agricultural commercialisation, however, did not have the intended effects: producing surpluses over and above farmers’ own demands for sale (Hinderink & Sterkenburg 1987; Sterkenburg 1987).

During this period, the concept of poverty took on new dimensions: it included not only the lack of money or income but also of health, education and adequate food supply. It was realised that economic growth, expressed in Gross National Product (GNP), does not automatically benefit the poor. A more sustainable growth requires provisions in the sphere of food security, health care and education for all. From the view of a socially justified development, the policy was directed at economic growth as well as the fulfilment of basic needs for everyone. Integrated rural development projects became priorities for World Bank lending. Smallholder farming and farmers were identified as the target groups. The decisions sought to combine simultaneous and coordinated actions, often by different organisations and departments (Sterkenburg & Van der Wiel 1999). New poverty measures were developed and the basic needs strategy gained popularity in this decade (see Section 2.4.4).

Unanticipated oil price hikes in 1973/74 and again in 1979 by the Organisation of Petroleum Exporting Countries helped trigger a profound economic crisis in many developing countries. Oil price increases set in motion a train of events that has virtually reversed the economic growth and
led to deteriorating standards of living and increased poverty in many developing countries (Buvinić & Yudelman 1989). For African developing countries, this crisis also meant that the North was no longer able to continue their financial assistance at the same level as before. There are two opposing views on the causes of the crisis: the externalist and internalist view. The former regards negative global economic developments, like the decline in international prices, as the major cause of the crisis; these lie outside the influence of developing countries. The internalist view blames economic mismanagement which then results in market distortions in the countries themselves. Whatever the cause, this crisis demonstrated the weakness in the economic structures and development strategies of the developing countries. The resilience of these economies appeared insufficient to absorb the economic shocks (Dutch Ministry of Foreign Affairs 1994a and 1994b).

Most of the developing countries confronted the need to adjust their economies and make them more sustainable. In this decade, an increasing number of developing countries conveyed structural adjustment programmes (SAP), aimed at moulding the economic policy in order to realise economic recovery and growth of a more sustainable nature. According to Chambers (1997), the World Bank, local governments, UNDP and other donors included set conditions for the domestic economic policies to a degree unthinkable in the 1960s and 1970s. These development programmes, however, did not lead to poverty alleviation; programmes failed, partly due to conflicts between the different parties (government and donors) or because less attention was paid to the consequences of this policy for employment and the living standards of the poorest members of the population. During these decades, the macro-agricultural performance reflected severe problems, with negative rates of agricultural output per capita year after year and declines in the volume of exports of some agricultural commodities. The agricultural crisis affected Africa’s export position in the world economy and has led to growing food problems and increased food imports. These negative developments contributed to growing impoverishment in rural and urban areas. Generally, little attention was paid to the fact that the poor suffered most during the period of adjustment and that their income situation also deteriorated most (Sterkenburg & Van der Wiel 1999; Lugalla 1995a; Mbilinyi 1995; Hinderink & Sterkenburg 1987; Sterkenburg 1987).

The above concerned only the economic effects and most adjustment programmes were criticised for their lack of social, cultural and gender aspects. By the end of the 1980s, new policies were formulated in which attention was paid to these aspects. In the 1990s, policies changed and the term ‘human development’ appeared. This term relates to two aspects. The first is the development of human capacities in, for instance, education and health care. The second aspect is the use of these capacities in order to embrace the human being. This view differs from the other strategies of development, which stress economic growth of the GNP or the development of human resources. In this view, growth of the GNP is necessary, but not enough for ‘human development’ and the aim of human development is not only to favour production. The human development strategy sees people as participants and not only as receivers as in the welfare approach: it combines the extension of human potentials with the use of human capacities (Koppen 1991). The UNDP developed a ‘human development index’ in order to measure it (see Section 2.4.4).

In the 1990s, the emphasis of poverty alleviating policies was characterised by self-reliance as the basis of a new development policy: economic growth had to come from the economies of the developing countries themselves. A dual approach, the provision of social services to the poor and the emphasis on growth in which labour is used productively, should diminish poverty in developing countries (Dutch Ministry of Foreign Affairs 1994a and 1994b). During the second
half of the 1990s, poverty alleviation was back on the World Bank’s agenda. Poverty alleviation has always been a key activity of the Bank, but the question raised was whether economic growth was an effective and sufficient way to alleviate poverty in a country. In recent years, insight has grown into the fact that economic growth is not a sufficient condition for the alleviation of poverty, but that poverty alleviation is indeed a prerequisite for sustainable economic growth. The newest vision in the programme of the World Bank is the so-called Comprehensive Development Framework (CDF). In this framework, development is not only regarded as stimulating economic growth, improving education and health care services or equalising the balance of payment, restraining inflation, diversification of production or making space for the market economy. Instead it also acknowledges that development to alleviate poverty can be efficient only when the totality of changes is considered. This holistic view of development attempts to implement different components of development policy together harmoniously (World Bank 2000a, 2000b, 1999).

The World Development Report 2000/01 focuses on actions to combat poverty in the first decades of the 21st century. The Report conceptualises a framework for action to combat poverty based on three pillars:

1. Empowerment: making state institutions pro-poor and removing social barriers to poverty reduction.
2. Security: helping the poor to manage the risks they face in their everyday lives and managing national downturns to minimise their impact on the poor.
3. Opportunity: expanding opportunity for the poor by building up their assets and increasing the returns on these assets.

This framework was proposed as a means for developing country-specific policy and intervention packages for attacking poverty. It was believed that actions to reduce poverty should move broadly on all three fronts. The need to develop this framework was based on the experiences of the last decades and can be summarised as follows. Firstly, different views on poverty have been developed while the common objective remains poverty reduction. This can be attributed to the fact that people differ in their understanding of poverty and its causes. Secondly, in the broader conceptualisation of poverty, the view that poverty is merely regarded as a deprivation of basic capabilities, rather than just low incomes, has led to a broader causal framework and to a broader policy framework. Thirdly, there has been tremendous diversity in poverty outcomes: across dimensions, regions, communities, households and individuals. This differentiation is a central theme within the framework for actions. Differentiated patterns of outcomes indicate differentiated causes and thus differentiated policy responses. The Report ends with a list of principles and actions based on this framework in guiding international development cooperation for the next decades (World Bank 2000b).

Policy to alleviate poverty in Tanzania and its results
This section shows to what extent general developments in international policy aimed at alleviating poverty apply to the situation of Tanzania.

In the 1950s, the British colonial powers stimulated commercial agriculture which was mainly in the hands of a small group of white, Asiatic and prosperous African farmers. They were able to increase their agricultural production to such a degree that crop export became possible. The economic system in those days was based on private enterprise under some form of government
regulation. Agriculture was the country's main economic pillar, that is the production of foodstuffs for domestic consumption and sisal, coffee and cotton for export. The industry was underdeveloped with cotton ginning being the primary activity. Upon its independence in 1961, Tanzania inherited this economic system. In the first years following independence, no major changes were made in the system and policy was guided by a three-year plan developed before independence, in which the state was supposed to play a more direct role in development. Agricultural growth was the main aim of this plan, as this would facilitate the expansion of manufacturing. The economic performance in these years was quite adequate and resulted in rapid growth in exports and manufacturing. No major institutional changes occurred until 1967 (Lugalla 1995a and 1995b; Sarris & Van den Brink 1993; Smith 1989; Sterkenburg 1987; Bryceson 1982; Hyden 1980a).

The period 1967-1973 produced drastic changes in economic and social policy in Tanzania. President Nyerere promoted development for everybody and not just for the few. His Arusha Declaration published in 1967 was the first national policy of an African country in which goals were established for the creation of a socialist state and self-reliance in national development. Socialism was viewed as necessary for the achievement of economic justice and equality. It was deemed important that the state be responsible for meeting basic needs such as health, education and nutrition. Nyerere stressed the importance of agricultural production for the provision of food for the country as well for export. Self-reliance and *ujamaa* (family hood) were manifested in communal farming practices; farming together in communities that were large enough to establish basic social services like health care and education. Responsibility for agricultural production was given to the regional government. This *ujamaa* policy formed the basis of the so-called African Socialism (Craneburg 1990; Hyden 1989 and 1980b; Omari 1984; Bryceson 1982). Craneburg (1990) exposes that ideologies of African Socialism have been subject to divergent interpretations. The Tanzanian case, however, aimed ambitiously towards independence: Tanzania was not supposed to copy non-African models of development which had to be financed with their own resources and without financial help from outside. Tanzania was to rely on its own resources, such as land and people, rather than on foreign capital. At an international level, policy-makers expected a lot to come of this kind of development. The policy of Tanzania which meant developing the country and diminishing inequalities was taken as an example for other developing countries. In this sense, Tanzania was a precursor of international policy. Self-sufficiency in food, however, was not the primary objective of rural households. Priority was given to income optimisation in which a rather high degree of food security existed. The larger the output of agricultural production, the less cash money was needed to buy food. The rural economy of Tanzania experienced little differentiation of non-agricultural production activities in that time (Sterkenburg 1987). Economic performance slowed down during this period. Agriculture grew only in line with population growth and it continued to provide only the countries' subsistence needs. Tanzanian product-export output to Germany, Great Britain and the United States stagnated and imports increased dramatically. The result was that, by 1970, the balance of payments account showed, for the first time, a significant deficit. Economically, the *ujamaa* policy was considered a failure, but it did have some benefits. The intended responsibility of the state in meeting basic needs brought at least social services within the reach of a large proportion of the population thanks to the formation of villages, with a hierarchical structure of health facilities and primary education at village level as a consequence.

The year 1973 marked the first of a series of crises that were to shock the Tanzanian economy throughout the decade. Drought, a major drop in domestic food supplies and the first oil crisis
other household members have to be asked their opinion and that requires them to be present in the dwelling unit when the interview commences. Most of the time, this is not possible. Asking the respondent to identify the household head neglects the opinions of others and the risk is then that not all household members agree with him/her on the perceived head. However, members of most households agree about the person who heads their household. Disagreement only arises in a few households. The researcher then has to make an independently motivated choice as to who s/he recognises as head. To avoid these problems and in order to ensure consistency, only the respondent was asked about the perceived head. The respondent in this study was defined as the woman as wife of the husband or the woman on her own, in the event that there was no husband in the household. In cases where there were no females in the household, for example households consisting of a male person living on his own (e.g. widowers), the man present was interviewed.

I am aware of the fact that it is not clear exactly what such cases measure. This became apparent after interpreting the data offered by the respondent. In this study, which also has an economic component, no criteria of household economic contributions were used and the data shows that in Ndala village this is not yet a decisive principle between the household members. The concept of headship was only used to classify the households into 'male'-headed and 'female'-headed households. The respondent provided us with information about all household members and the household composition was taken into account (see Table 2.1).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Household composition</th>
<th>Female-headed households</th>
<th>Male-headed households</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>n</td>
<td>%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Married couple (with/without children)</td>
<td>1*</td>
<td>2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Individual living alone</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>22%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mother or father with children</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>28%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grandmother and adult son/daughter and grandchildren**</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>34%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grandmother and grandchildren</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>12%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total number of households</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Author's fieldwork; * De facto female-headed household: husband migrated elsewhere and in his absence his wife manages the household for most of the year; ** The three-generational-household-type.

In the society of Ndala village, the husband was usually reported to be the head of the household in the case of married couples. In households consisting of a grandmother living together with her son or daughter and his/her children, as well as in households with a mother or grandmother and children, seniority was the leading criterion in defining headship, even in cases where a son or daughter was the main contributor to the household's economic resources. The female-headed households with an adult son or daughter, in which a grandmother headed the household, in most cases comprised unmarried daughters who had children and lived in their mother's household. The adult sons (of 18 years and older) in these households were mostly sons who were not yet married and still lived in the household of their mother. Married sons with their wives and children residing in the household of their mother were classified into the category of married couples.
2.4 The concept of poverty

2.4.1 Introduction

In this section, we address the concept of poverty and the relationship between women and poverty. The concept of poverty provokes all kinds of questions, such as: what is poverty, who is poor, and according to whom are they poor? How can one measure poverty? The concept of poverty becomes relevant in a situation where a person is not able to meet certain demands, which s/he is willing to meet, or was used to meeting. In Box 1 we describe the transformation of the social and economic position of a young woman in a small rural village. From a relatively prosperous young lady, *mama* Isabella changed into a mother who has difficulties to meet financial needs inside a rather short time span. The case of this woman is illustrative for the questions which arise concerning the relationship between women and poverty.

The relationship between women and poverty was studied in greater detail by several authors. According to Buvinic (1997: 39) "women account for a growing proportion of those people who are considered poor on the basis of income, not only in industrial countries such as the United States, but also in the developing world". She concludes that using the level of well-being to measure poverty, women are found to be more impoverished than men. If poverty is measured in terms of income, the gap between the two sexes increases. This global trend is often called the 'feminisation' of poverty (Buvinic 1997; Dutch Ministry of Foreign Affairs 1994; Birdsell & McGreevey 1983). This term has often been used as a catch-phrase for a wide variety of problems, but two phenomena in the relationship between women and poverty require distinction: the feminisation of poverty and the impoverishment of women. Allen (1992: 107) defines the former as an increase in the number or share of women amongst the poor. The latter refers to the worsening state of women's living standards, *i.e.* women in general and poor women, in particular, who are becoming even poorer. The feminisation of poverty has also been closely linked with the rise of poor households, which are headed by women (Buvinic 1997; Risseeuw 1995: 181; Dutch Ministry of Foreign Affairs 1994 and 1992; Mbughuni 1994; Birdsell & McGreevey 1983). Although female-headed households are presumed to be overrepresented among the poor and their number has been rising in recent decades, one should be careful not to equate this term with women who head their own households alone. I agree with the statement of Tellegen (1997: 147) that "the focus on female-headed households neglects the roles and specific situation of women in male-headed households". Women in male-headed households might also be at the same level of well-being as women who live without a male partner. Moreover, as is mainly the case in this study, not all female heads are poor by definition, and there are also plenty of male-headed households that are poor.

Poverty is a multi-dimensional concept and not managed, therefore, in a uniform way either in policy documents, scientific literature or in practice. Despite the many conceptualisations of poverty, there has been a tendency to reduce the concept of poverty to a uni-dimensional issue, *i.e.* an economic state in which lack of income or consumption prevails (Pradhan & Ravallion 1998; Ravallion 1996).
Joyce is a woman at the age of 35 years. She has been living in Ndala since 1990 and was employed as a nurse in Ndala Hospital. Before that time, she lived in Dodoma with her mother; her father had already died. During the first years of her stay in Ndala she became acquainted with a man of her age. He was employed as bwana mifugo (veterinary expert). He was held in great respect on account of his capacities and his function within the community of Ndala village. He became her lover and in October 1991 their first child, Isabella, was born. They both earned a regular salary and were able to care properly for their daughter. Mama Isabella and baba Isabella (the mother and father of Isabella), as they were called now, and Isabella herself were doing well. They were well nourished and dressed and also looked healthy. Mama Isabella lived on her own with the child in a room in the nurse houses of the hospital. Only married couples were allowed to live together in these rooms. Mama Isabella was satisfied about the care of baba Isabella, emotionally as well as financially. He visited her quite regularly in her room and looked after his girl friend and his daughter well. A few years later, in February 1995, their second child, a baby boy named Hermann, was born and they started to live together in the house which he had bought for his family. Mama Isabella and baba Isabella continued their jobs, looked after their children with help of her mother, who lived with them from that time onwards. They started making arrangements for a wedding in the dry season of 1996. However, agreement on the dowry was delayed and the wedding was scheduled for the following year. In November 1996 baba Isabella unfortunately had an accident which changed his life completely. He fell off a truck and broke a number of bones. Physically he recovered but he started suffering from psychological problems. He started drinking pombe (beer) and was drunk all day. He was not able to do his job satisfactorily anymore and was dismissed. He became very promiscuous and spent nights away from home. Joyce left his house with their children and her mother. She returned to a room in the nurses’ house which is, however, too small for four people. Her mother returned to Dodoma with the two children because Joyce was afraid that baba Isabella would confiscate the children. He was not able anymore to assist her financially. She started to build her own house in 1997 with money she saved for herself, but during the rainy season of 1997/1998 it collapsed because of excessive rains. Baba Isabella could not stand the fact that he was not allowed to have his children with him and he took revenge. During the cropping season of December 1997 till May 1998, he destroyed Joyce’s humble harvest of maize. Following these misfortunes, combined with simultaneous macro-economic developments, like rising prices of consumer goods, inflation of the Tanzanian shilling and the stagnating salaries, her financial reserves had been exhausted. She now has to buy all the food and is no longer able to send enough money to her mother and children. School fees can’t be paid any longer for her daughter.

In its first Human Development Report, the UNDP criticised this perception of poverty. This report cautions that there is no automatic relationship between income growth and human progress. It also defines poverty not as a state but as a process in which people’s choices and the level of the well-being they have achieved are narrowed. This view caused a shift in people’s perception of poverty away from viewing it as a uni-dimensional issue towards a multi-faceted phenomenon. Other aspects of poverty alongside income or consumption, which are increasingly gaining importance, include vulnerability, powerlessness, isolation, social inferiority, physical weakness, lack of decision-making power and lack of assets and insecurity (Lindberg 1996; Bagachwa 1994; Chambers in Dixon 1990; Jones 1990). Chambers (1997: xiv) regards poverty as one of the dimensions of deprivation, which he defines as “lacking what is needed for well-being”. Deprivation has dimensions which are physical, social, economic, political, and
psychological/spiritual and includes forms of disadvantage such as those mentioned above under the denominator of poverty. He regards poverty as a “condition of lack of physical necessities, assets and income. It includes, but is more than income poverty” (Chambers 1997: xv). These changes in perceptions of poverty have helped to generate additional instructive insights into the understanding and measurement of poverty.

In the subsections below, we will analyse the concept of poverty so that we are able to understand its different meanings and use it in an acceptable way. We will deal with several dimensions of this concept to clarify eventually which dimensions apply most to this study. Firstly, the concept of poverty is analysed in terms of the views of international and national policy institutions. This analysis shows that during the last fifty years the concept of poverty has developed from a rather simple one into the current one with its multi-dimensional meaning. International economic developments necessitated policy institutions to reformulate their development strategies repeatedly and this is also the case for the economy of Tanzania. Each phase of economic development brought new perspectives or dimensions to the concept of poverty, thereby causing the emphasis to shift over time (Section 2.4.2). Secondly, we will consider the concept of poverty as it is used in scientific literature (Section 2.4.3). More specifically, we will analyse some studies on poverty performed in Tanzania and compare and critically review their methods and results. Specific attention will be paid to the divergence in conclusions about poverty. Thirdly, we will elucidate and put together the most common indicators to measure poverty. The multi-dimensionality of the concept of poverty has resulted in a multitude of poverty indicators. Each stage of economic development brought with it a unique perspective on poverty and resulted in an ever increasing number of indicators with which to measure poverty (Section 2.4.4). Finally, we will defend the choice of indicators used in this study on the basis of the information given in this section (Section 2.4.5).

2.4.2 The concept of poverty at policy level

Policy to alleviate the poverty of developing countries

More than one billion people, almost a quarter of the population of developing countries, are affected by poverty (World Bank 2000a). In spite of advances made in the policies of many developing countries in the last decades, poverty remains a major global issue. Local governments as well as several international institutions, such as the World Bank, the International Monetary Fund (IMF), the International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD) and the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) amongst others, have focused their efforts on stimulating the economic situation of the developing countries. The efforts of international agencies started during the colonial period and continued after the independence of former colonies in the 1950s and 1960s. In the 1990s, their efforts were still directed towards improving the economic situation of these countries, but in the period between these decades, the emphasis shifted in different directions. Within the framework of these efforts and policies, the concept of poverty emerged repeatedly and its meaning and interpretation changed constantly. The reports of the international institutions that are concerned with the economic situation of the developing countries show this shift in interpretation and implementation of the concept of poverty.

In the 1950s, this concept was managed in a more uniform way than it is today: poverty was defined as not having enough money to fulfil needs. Industrialisation was viewed as the key to
agricultural production by communal farming remained in-accomplished. The departure from the ancestral *shamba* (field) meant hardship for many migrants. Those who came from nearby were able to continue using their native *shamba*, but they required more time to travel. Others who arrived in Ndala village from a long way away left their ancestral *shamba* and acquired plots of land in, or nearby, the village from the village’s Local Government Authority. Due to the number of people, the plots were rather small and certainly smaller than those they were used to farming. This had consequences for their food production as well as for the fertility of their land. The fields were more intensively farmed than before and yields decreased as a result (Raikes 2000).

In the 1970s and 1980s, the economy became increasingly monetary-orientated (see Chapter 4) and more diversified. Many peasantry diversified into a number of occupations and non-agricultural income-earning avenues. Households appeared to be incapable of relying on their own harvest of crops and had to be engaged in off-farm activities (Bryceson 2000a; Raikes 2000). In this period, there was a clear increase in the number of household members participating in the labour market and performing non-agricultural activities in the informal sector (Bryceson 1999a and 1999b; Jambyia 1998; Madulu 1998; Mung’ong’o 1998; Mwamfupe 1998; Bagachwa 1997; Bryceson 1997; Koda 1995; Mbilinyi 1995; Aarnink & Kingma 1991). According to Bryceson (1997) this was a reaction firstly to the crisis in the 1980s, secondly to the Economic Recovery Programme and thirdly to the increasing pressure on land resources. In the Ndala village area, this was also a response to the uncertainty of the harvest due to unreliable rainfall. The seasonality of Tanzanian agriculture has permitted the farmers to engage in non-agricultural activities in conjunction with farming. The younger generation or economically active people started to migrate in order to find work. With respect to agriculture, the influence on the farming households of the severe macro-economic circumstances in the second half of the 1970s included (a) a government policy characterised by disregard for agriculture and (b) low producer prices of marketed food crops at the local market due to high inflation of the Tanzanian shilling. For some villagers of Ndala, the living conditions were improved thanks to social services, but the food situation deteriorated. For most villagers this period was characterised by difficulties in meeting their basic needs.

The adjustment programmes in the 1980s and 1990s have had negative effects on households at rural level. However, these programmes did indeed result in higher producer prices for food crops at the local market, due to attempted measures taken in order to devaluate the Tanzanian shilling. Inflation, however, raised the prices of consumer goods and the decreasing government expenditures caused the removal of subsidies and had a negative influence on the price of improved inputs (Bryceson 1999a; Lugalla 1995a; Mbilinyi 1995; Dutch Ministry of Foreign Affairs 1994b and 1992; World Bank 1994). Household farming conditions did not improve and household strategies continued to be oriented towards the cultivation of crops on their plots of land. Otherwise the implementation of SAPs has coincided with the rapid expansion of rural income diversification (Bryceson 2000, 1999a and 1999b). For the households in Ndala, village income diversification functioned as a vital coping strategy for the poor and thus as a mechanism for improving their livelihood conditions.

The discrepancy between the international policy level and the local or individual level of policy making is demonstrated in the case of Joyce (Box 1). The case of Joyce shows that despite the views of the international and national policy institutions, each person has its own policy for survival. This policy is often not based on international or national economic developments (as
described in above), but on the customary daily and local developments in their personal situation. However, the crisis in the 1980s also took its toll on the economy of Ndala village: the prices of consumer goods rose sharply due to shortages, official rationing was introduced, inflation rose, incomes decreased and money became scarce. It was during this time that Joyce arrived in Ndala village. She had a salary of Tsh 12,000 per year and had no family to look after. She was able to send money to her mother in Dodoma. In the 1990s, the economic situation changed and inflation was high. In 1996, her salary amounted to Tsh 120,000 per year. Prices of food had increased, however, and her family had expanded as well. Her economic situation was not much better than at the end of the 1980s. Her salary was insufficient to buy the food she needed and she rented a plot of land to cultivate maize in the hours outside her regular working time. She was doing well, but the adjustment programmes of the 1980s and 1990s could not prevent her and her family slipping into the poverty trap. There are a lot of factors in the lives of individual people which, independently of all the policies, can bring the opposite results to those aimed at in policy documents. Joyce is no exception. Women left behind, old widows or widowers, families hit by illness or accidents and so on had fallen or might fall into the same poverty trap as Joyce did, or to put it in more general terms, into an economic situation that is worse than that of their previous situation.

Many inhabitants of Ndala village have incomes lower than the salary Joyce earns. Others have higher salaries. According to Mtatifikolo and Mabele (1999) 61.5% of the population of Tabora Region fell below the poverty line in 1991, as tabulated by the World Bank. The incidence of poverty in this region is associated with low agricultural productivity. Tabora is a region with low rainfall, poor soils, relatively poor road infrastructure and long distances from markets. In addition, most villagers in Ndala live below the poverty line, as formulated by Bol (1999), of Tsh 46,000 (per adult equivalent per year) and a sizeable number are probably also poor in absolute terms (less than Tsh 31,000 per year).

2.4.3 Poverty research in Tanzania

In the last decade, the World Bank ranked Tanzania as one of the poorest countries in the World. For this reason it is not surprising that numerous studies have focused attention on the poverty situation in Tanzania. Only a few of these dealt with the conceptualisation of poverty itself. Most of these studies, however, formulate conclusions about the poor without defining what they mean by 'poor'. In relation to the topic of this study, these studies intended to draw conclusions about the margins of the poverty situation of women, and more precisely those of the female heads of households among them. Many authors tell us that poor female-headed households have a disadvantaged position, especially in agriculture. Empirical research has not often been the base of their conclusions. Moreover, not much empirical research has been carried out on the poverty of women and/or the female heads of households in Tanzania. A few studies, however, are interesting to review because their conclusions were based on extended field research at household level. These studies pay special attention to gender differences in the financial and economic situation of men and women and are therefore able to clarify the use of the concept of poverty and the conclusions which can be drawn as a result.

An extended macro-economic study was performed by Sarris and Brink (1993), who analysed the impact of adjustment policies on households in Tanzania. Two national household surveys, which were performed in 1969 and 1976/1977, respectively, and a detailed rural income survey performed by Collier et al. (1986) provided the bulk of information for their analysis. Another study was performed by Sender and Smith (1990). The study of Collier et al. (1986) and the study of Sender and Smith (1990) are particularly interesting to analyse in relation to the topic of this study because they concerned rural situations and not the macro economy of Tanzania as a whole, as in the case of Sarris and Brink’s study. The third study that will be reviewed here concerns one performed by the World Bank in 1998 on gender, growth and poverty reduction in Sub-Saharan Africa (Blackden & Bham 1999).

The study of Collier et al. (1986)
The study performed by Collier et al. (1986) aimed to provide an empirical basis for assessing the performance of Tanzania’s strategies in rural development. The basic unit of analysis was the household. The population was divided in half, based on household incomes rather than on gender distinctions. Collier et al. analysed two categories of households; the poor and the non-poor, according to whether the household income was below or above the mean household income for the sample as a whole. The authors abandoned the traditional mode of analysis based on the poverty datum line since it is judged as being of limited relevance to Tanzania. They argue that Tanzania is characterised by the preponderance of poor subsistence peasants. Under such conditions, the quantification of poverty assumes secondary importance. Their study pays plenty of attention to questions related to the correlation of poverty and the mechanisms that perpetuate poverty and inequality. Poverty is regarded in terms of income and they further analyse whether a low total household income reflects a shortfall in one particular source of income or in all sources and whether or not these shortfalls are caused by a low input of endowments (like labour, skills, land, assets and education), misallocation of endowments or a low output of endowments. Collier et al. attempted to identify the origins of poverty and connected the differences in various income components with differences in endowments. They were able to explain more than half of the total income gap between the poor and the non-poor through differences in endowments. Among these is the inequality in ownership of livestock, which accounts for 21% of the total income gap. The overall picture that emerged is “that the poor are poor because of low returns to labour rather than because of labour shortage; they are not poor because they use their endowments less effectively than the non-poor, but because they have fewer endowments to use” (Collier et al. 1986: 106).

With its large amount of data on endowments in relation to the poor and non-poor, this study is one of the most extensive empirical studies on poverty in Tanzania. It offers a great deal of information about differences in land tenure, livestock ownership, education, labour resources, access to non-farm employment and income sources, etc. of the poor and the non-poor. It was disappointing, however, that it did not take gender differences into account. The authors derived, however, much demographic data like marital status by age and sex and the composition of households, but in their analysis they refer only to the two categories of poor and non-poor households. They totally neglected gender differences, except for one endowment, namely access to wage employment. Collier et al. add that “access to wage employment is additionally dependent on gender, women of a given educational level having a lower probability of being employed than men of the same level have. However, this does not appear to have a strong influence on inter-household inequalities. The
The proportion of female-headed households was only slightly greater among the poor (19%) than among the non-poor (15%)” (Collier et al. 1986: 102). They do not explain which types of households were taken into the category of female-headed households. In this respect, it will not be easy to compare the results of this study with theirs.

The study of Collier et al., however, makes interesting reading for this study in three respects. Firstly, it is an empirical and extensive study on the poverty situation of peasant farmers that was performed on a stratified, random sample in Tanzania. The authors selected 600 households in twenty villages in eight of the twenty regions of Tanzania. Secondly, they took income as the measure of poverty and did this in a rather extensive way. They included different kinds of income sources of the rural farming household and not only those that can be expressed in monetary terms, such as sale of produce or wage employment. They also valued subsistence production and consumption. Thirdly, this study is interesting because their conclusion about the incidence of poverty in female-headed households is somewhat different from other studies, especially from the conclusions of the study of Sender and Smith (1990). This might be ascribed to the use of another indicator to measure poverty.

The study of Sender and Smith (1990)

Sender and Smith (1990) do not give a straight definition of the concept of poverty as they understand it, but out of their survey one can discern that poverty is regarded as a level of material well-being below a certain standard, in which the household is the unit of analysis. They assume that indications about the material well-being of households say something about their socio-economic status. In their view, households with more possessions have a higher economic status and belong to the group of more prosperous households; the opposite is true for households with less possessions. Calculations of possessions were based on pre-formulated items and in this respect the possession index, as a technique for estimating differences in economic situations, is contrasted favourably with alternative techniques used by social scientists to quantify income, wealth and other socio-economic household characteristics. Sender and Smith are rather negative about the attempts of surveyors to measure rural household income. They are convinced that “volumes of output of a range of crops during some previous period cannot be indicated properly by respondents, that it involves crude estimates of the proportion of output sold in different (...) markets, the timing of these sales, and the prices received, arbitrary valuations of output consumed within the households; even cruder attempts to estimate production costs of these commodities, imputations or guestimates of labour costs, and frequently ignoring the systematic variations in the prices paid by different producers for the same input” (Sender and Smith 1990: 29).

Their study summarises the household characteristics of the lowest possession score categories, including inadequate shelter and clothing, illiteracy, the failure of their children to complete primary school, high infant mortality, limited access to high-status types of wage and salary employment, the limited degree to which they inherit and purchase land and their inability to produce the most lucrative crops or to apply much fertiliser and hired labour. Sender and Smith (1990: 63) argue that “the characteristics of the poorest households may be attributed with some confidence to the female-only households” since 68% of the poorest households are female-only households and 92% of all female-only households are in the lowest possessions score categories (Sender and Smith 1990: 63).

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3 Their definition of female-only households as opposed to male or female households corresponds partly with the definition used in this study: in cases where husbands were resident and in cases in which husbands were not full-time residents but made regular visits and financial contributions, Sender and Smith defined the household as a
necessitated increased imports and resulted in a growing deficit on the balance of payments. Inflation continued to rise and the government devalued the shilling in 1975. The government received aid from the IMF and programme loans from the World Bank and external aid from a variety of other donors. Increases in the global prices of coffee and tea led to sharp increases in exports earnings in 1976 and 1977 and a short revival of the economy. In 1978, Tanzania became involved in the war with Uganda and the government had to import substantial amounts of arms and war-related supplies. In 1979, the government resorted again to the IMF. In 1980, the effects of the second oil crisis of 1979 struck the economy and imports had to be cut due to the foreign exchange crisis. Shortages of consumer goods intensified and prices of scarce goods soared (Cranenburgh 1990). The seriousness of the economic situation led to the first attempt at international adjustment, the National Economic Survival Programme (NESP) in 1981 and resulted in cuts in salaries and social services, increase in taxes for salaried workers and an increase in producer prices. In 1982, this programme was followed by a Structural Adjustment Programme (SAP) advised and funded by the World Bank. The aims of the programme were to limit the public deficit by cutting expenditures without cutting social and economic services. Structural adjustment appeared to have benefited many poor households and has raised a significant proportion of the population above the poverty line. However, the smaller fraction of the population who had extremely low incomes was not able to benefit from the better economic performances due to SAP (Bryceson 2000; Ferreira 1996).

Although these measures were steps in the right direction, they did not seem to alter any of the economic problems. Extensive shortages prevailed and the Tanzanian shilling was continually devalued each year. Between 1970 and 1980, the average annual rate of inflation was about 14% and between 1984 and 1994 about 33% (World Bank Various annual reports). Due to the economic crisis and the increasing critical attitude towards Tanzania’s development policy, most donors curtailed aid, worsening the already severe situation. Figure 2.1 illustrates the Official Development Assistance (ODA) receipts of Tanzania in the 1980s and 1990s (see also Appendix 2).

The general crisis and lack of foreign exchange due to the country’s deteriorating terms of trade forced the government to deal with the crisis with help from the IMF. In 1986, the newly appointed Mwinyi Government embarked on a broad-based three year Economic Recovery Programme (ERP), which introduced certain economic reforms. In 1989, a new three year Economic and Social Action Programme (ESAP) was adopted, which stressed the social dimensions of adjustment and poverty alleviation and continued the economic reforms established in the previous years (Semgalaawe 1998; Bagachwa 1997; Ferreira 1996; Lugalla 1995a; Dutch Ministry of Foreign Affairs 1994a and 1992; Mtatifikolo 1994; World Bank 1994; Booth et al. 1993; Sarris & Van den Brink 1993). In 1992, this ESAP was replaced by a new three-year Rolling Plan and Forward Budget (RPFB) system. With the ERP, the ESAP and the RPFB system the Tanzanian Government worked to dismantle the system of state regulation and to promote private sector expansion. A state-controlled economy and a state-dominated society transformed into a free market system. The economic reform programmes entailed:

- a sharp devaluation of the already over-valued Tanzanian shilling;
- a change in the foreign exchange allocation system;
- the privatisation of state industries;
- the liberalisation of imports and internal trade;
- the reduction of government budget deficits, resulting in e.g. removal of subsidies from agricultural inputs; and
• a reform and reduction of the civil service.

Figure 2.1
Net ODA to Tanzania of donors (disbursement)

Source: OECD (2002 and 1999) Geographical Distribution of Financial Flows to Developing Countries

Village economies were stimulated by liberalisation and agricultural production appeared to have benefited. Still, Tanzania is a nation of farmers operating at a low level of technology and characterised by low levels of productivity and structural transformation of the economy into a more industrialised one (Bryceson 2002a, 2002b, 1999; Lugalla 1995b; Mbilinyi 1995 and 1988; Dutch Ministry of Foreign Affairs 1994a). The economy responded to these reforms and began recovering at an annual growth rate of 4% over 1986-1994 (Figure 2.2 and Appendix 2). In the period after the mid 1980s, donors were again able to commit financial assistance to Tanzania and aid flows expanded once again, as is reflected in Figure 2.1.

In the following years, however, Tanzania’s progress was jeopardised by a significant deterioration in macro-economic management, partly due to weakened commitment to reform during president Mwinyi’s second term. The worsening of the macro-economic situation led to deferment of World Bank and IMF programmes and an interruption in balance of payment assistance from several donors (see Figure 2.1). The Mkapa Government, appointed in November 1995, represented a break with this trend and a new agreement with the IMF was reached. The subsequent adherence of the government to the IMF fiscal programme has resulted in economic growth, although this was adversely affected by the heavy El Niño rains of 1998. The Mkapa Government is making serious efforts to continue policies emphasising economic stability and liberalisation aimed at growth and poverty reduction (World Bank 2000a).
Figure 2.2
Gross Domestic Product (GDP) growth rate of Tanzania (in %)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>GDP growth (in %)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1971-75</td>
<td>5.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1976-80</td>
<td>4.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1981-85</td>
<td>3.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1986-90</td>
<td>2.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1991-95</td>
<td>3.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1996-00</td>
<td>5.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2001</td>
<td>4.8</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


In World Bank Development Reports, Tanzania has consistently ranked among the world’s top four poorest countries since 1990 (when based on GDP) (Mtatifikolo & Mabele 1999). Figures 2.3 and 2.4 illustrate the per capita incomes of some years, as well as the GDPs. These figures show that GDP growth stagnated in the beginning of the 1980s until the first half of the 1990s. Since the introduction of economic reforms, growth of the Gross Domestic Product (GDP) and GDP per capita increased considerably and the country achieved food self-sufficiency (Dutch Ministry of Foreign Affairs, 1994a) (Figures 2.3 and 2.4 and Appendix 2).

Summarising the poverty profile of Tanzania, Mtatifikolo and Mabele (1999) conclude:
1. Poverty is largely a rural phenomenon: the poor represented about 59% of all rural households. Rural villages accounted for 90% of those living in extreme poverty.
2. There had been a significant decline in the incidence of aggregate poverty between 1983 and 1991: in 1983 about 54% of the total population were living below the poverty line as formulated by the World Bank, versus 41.8% in 1991 (a decline of 23%).
3. The incidence of poverty was declining and the number of the poor was decreasing: in 1983, about 11 million people were living in poverty and this amount was about 9 million in 1991 (even though total population had risen significantly).

Poverty at the local level of Ndala village: an initial assessment
In the 1950s and early 1960s, Ndala was a minor village with houses scattered around a small marketplace. The households were mainly self-subsistent and cultivated millet on rather large plots of land, fetched firewood from the nearby woods and bush and water from the wells. Their houses were built with mud, manure, wood and grass. Cooking pots were made of clay. The houses were unlit after nightfall. The people slept on mats on the ground. Only small amounts of money were needed to buy salt, sugar and lighters and for cases of emergency such as medical
services. The economy was rather simple, although some farmers had started cultivating tobacco and cotton as cash crops as stimulated by the colonial regime.

Figure 2.3  
Gross Domestic Product (GDP) of Tanzania (in million US$)

![GDP in million US$](image)

Source: World Bank, World Development Reports of various years.

Figure 2.4  
Per capita income in US$ for Tanzania

![Per capita income in US$](image)

Source: World Bank, World Development Reports of various years

At the end of the 1960s, the structure of Ndala village changed. The number of people increased, new houses were built and plots of land were subdivided, due to President Nyerere’s Villagisation Programme. The concentration of the population in villages facilitated the extension of communal services such as shops, schools and health centres, but the aim of increasing
higher and lower levels of the terrain differ in height by an average of about 100 metres, with maximum heights of up to 300 metres. Most parts of the region comprise a regular sequence of vegetation zones. The lower ground consists of open grass fields covered with thorn bushes, which are locally referred to as *mbuga*. *Mbuga* areas are often liable to flooding in the wet season but these areas have to cope with a low groundwater level at the height of the dry season. Due to this and partly owing to the dangers of flooding during the rainy season, these areas are largely uninhabited. They are used for pasture and sometimes for agriculture. During the rainy season the flooded fields are especially suited for rice cultivation. In the 1980s, the government of Tanzania placed a great deal of emphasis on rice production, initially to reduce imports and afterward to establish an export base. About one third of Tabora Region comprises low-lying seasonally flooded *mbuga* land, much of which is potentially suitable for rice cultivation. The proportion of fields actually planted with rice varies considerably from year to year, due to uneven and inconsistent rainfall. Although most farmers prefer planting maize, rice is cultivated in small amounts for subsistence needs as well as a cash crop. Particularly in urban centres, consumer preferences have switched in favour of rice, which is now becoming a more acceptable staple diet in Tabora Region (Silva 1989). In the rural areas, however, the bulk of cultivation is centred on maize tillage, due to uncertainty of rainfall making rice cultivation a risky business.

The thorn bush and grass fields lie adjacent to the higher levels of park fields, which consist of grassland interspersed with trees and bush. The most settled and cultivated areas are relatively well irrigated. The main crops such as maize, cassava, groundnuts and sweet potatoes are cultivated in these areas. The village of Ndala is situated in this type of area. Lastly, on the upper levels of the tableland there is dry woodland and forest (*miombo*). As these forest grounds do not yield groundwater, this type of area is highly unsuitable for cultivation (and settlement as was shown above). However, one crop is well suited for the natural conditions of this type of area, namely tobacco. The sandy soil and poverty of nutrients make tobacco cultivation advantageous, as it allows the precise regulation of nutrient levels through the application of fertiliser. This is necessary to achieve the required quality especially of the most common variety, the fire-cured Virginia tobacco. In addition, the *miombo* forests provide abundant land for shifting cultivation, the easiest way to avoid various diseases and pests in the tobacco crop and deterioration of the soil structure. The supply of huge quantities of firewood needed to cure the tobacco makes the *miombo* area perfect for the cultivation of tobacco (Geist 1997; Misana 1988; Boesen 1980; Hyden 1980a and 1980b; Wilde 1980; Boesen & Mohele 1979; Bear 1974). The predominant tendency towards tobacco production in Tanzania is of smallholder production and only a quarter of the production was cultivated by larger farm holdings. In the post World War II period, the British colonisers started tobacco schemes and in the 1960s and 1970s the volume of total output of tobacco increased rapidly. By the end of the 1970s, nearly 60% of the tobacco production in Tanzania took place in the Tabora Region. During the 1980s and 1990s, Tabora Region produced most of the flue-cured tobacco achieving rates of 52% to nearly 70% of the total production of this kind of tobacco in Tanzania. The total production of flue-cured tobacco in Tanzania amounted to 20,000 tonnes in 1996. Tabora Region still contributes most of this tobacco (Geist 1997; Waluye 1994).

This region should not be regarded from a static viewpoint. Changes in the landscape took place almost imperceptibly as time moved on over the decades. Tobacco cultivation, the necessity of fresh firewood for cooking, on-going processes of settlement and resettlement combined with a continued need for fields for cultivation have resulted in activities, which have led to rapid deforestation. Tracts
of tree-less countryside now exist where forest vegetation once covered the landscape. Until recently, the deforestation problem was officially denied, but in recent years competent authorities took the initiative of offering solutions in order to combat this development. Afforestation and reforestation programmes near the tobacco centres are now being implemented. This is but one of the dynamics in this area that is altering the landscape described above. Another dynamic is the alternation of the ‘dry and wet’ season during the year. The country’s overall appearance during the rainy season differs dramatically from that of the dry season. The cloudy skies, muddy roads and green coloured, lush fields give way to bright skies, dry dust and yellow coloured vegetation. The on-going resettlement process further affects the transformation of this area. The city of Tabora is constantly expanding and most houses now being built involved the use of cement. In contrast, villages are also expanding but the new houses are made of mud-based stones, constructed by inhabitants with a view to replacing their old dwellings or to starting a family. These transformations in the construction methods can be observed particularly well in and around the village of Ndala. The study area consists of many such areas depicted above. At this point, the reader might have a clear picture of the region in which we performed the fieldwork. We will therefore now introduce the reader to the village of Ndala and attempt to paint a vivid picture of this area and the environment in which the inhabitants lead their lives and are trying to survive as best as possible.

3.3 The village of Ndala

3.3.1 Missionary history

At the end of the 19th century, in 1896, the first Catholic missionaries arrived in the village of Ndala. At that time, Ndala village was no more than a place with some dispersed settlements with relatively large distances in between. To understand why missionaries chose to settle in these desolate places, we need to know more about the historical background of their presence. There are two reasons, in particular, why we should regard the role of the missionaries as vital to the character of Ndala village. Firstly, it gives information about this village as it stood upon their arrival. Literature on Ndala village is scarce and most scripts concern the Missions in Ndala village. No other literature is specifically dedicated to the village of Ndala. Secondly, and more importantly, a century after their beginning in 1896 the Missions left an indelible mark on the lives of the Wandala (the villagers of Ndala ward), their beliefs, their way of life, the gender relations, the development of the village and so forth.

The first missionaries arrived in Tanzania, on the Bagamoyo coast, in 1878. From there they spread out across Tanzania and one delegation of missionaries departed from Bagamoyo, heading for the un-chartered territory of Tabora. Exhausted after a three month safari (journey) on foot, and after much deprivation they arrived in Tabora, and were soon followed by another delegation. They started to build a settlement. This delegation carried out observations and after a short rest in Tabora various groups continued their safari heading off in different directions. One delegation of Catholic missionaries travelled to the north to Mwanza. All the delegations travelled on foot and passed through the area of Ndala, which was totally unknown to them at that time. The text as it was written by Van Vlijmen and Ngulukulu. (1993) is cited in order to give the impressions of the missionaries at that time:
A decade after their initial missions and after having established a base, some missionaries embarked on a new safari at the beginning of the 1890s. The aim of the Shirika la Wamissionari wa Afrika (the Coordinating Organisation of African Missionaries) was to spread the Catholic faith to the entire area of northwestern Tanzania. The impression they had after 20 years of travelling across the region was that of a habitable country and it was this image that guided them to Ndala, where they arrived in 1896. By that time Ndala had become a small kingdom and was ruled by Queen Ntabo. The impression of the missionaries was that this kingdom was inhabited by *watu kwa amani, utulivu na utengemano* (people of peace, peacefulness and settlers) instead of vagrant cattle farmers. The settlement density was very low: within a circle of 4 to 5 kilometres a total of 50 houses were found, scattered over the area. It was said that Queen Ntabo herself invited the missionaries into her kingdom. Without her permission they would not have been able to stay in Ndala village. However, the circumstances under which they arrived were fortunate and by the time the queen and the missionaries met, the rainy season had started and travelling became difficult. They were invited to set up camp in Ndala village. Once they had settled for a while, they realised that Ndala village was situated just along the road the missionaries had followed on their journey along the coast to Ushirombo, the headquarters of the Shirika la Wamissionari wa Afrika at that time, and from there to Uganda and Zaire. A mission post on that road could be very useful for those missionaries travelling from the coast to Ushirombo, Uganda and further on to Zaire. The intended place of settlement, Tabora, was then at the centre of the war with the Arabs, but Ndala was situated at a range where the consequences would not be felt (Vlijmen & Ngulukulu 1993; Nolan 1977).

The queen is said to have been very delighted that they had arrived in her area, but for personal reasons in the first place. The authors recorded that her benevolence stemmed from the fact that a number of people in her kingdom had bad intentions towards her. At that time, the queen herself was an aged woman who could use the missionaries as a shield against her. Therefore, she offered them two houses in her neighbourhood (Vlijmen & Ngulukulu 1993). This was the beginning of an era of missionary activities, which continues to this day. They have had great influence on the lives of people and on the development of this village and country, as will become clear during this study.

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3 Literal translation: On the 22nd of November 1878 they have walked for three hours through a huge forest and later they passed through cultivated land to reach Ndala at the end. Crops like peanuts and millet appeared to be abundant in this area, as well as large herds of cattle, which gave a lot of fat milk. From here they continued their journey; first they passed through open spaces, then they penetrated thick bush and they entered Tumbi on Saturday morning at about 11 a.m. On the 24th of November, which was on Sunday morning, they woke up early in the morning, but they could not attend the Holy Mass, because they were not able to listen, being too exhausted. They left one hour later leaving for Nkinga where they arrived after a journey that took four long hours, all of them in a bad state, in distress! (Translation by Anna Makulukulu, 2001).
3.3.2 *Ndala village: its population*

Strictly speaking, Ndala village consists of four villages, namely Uhemeli, Mabisilo, Kampala and Wita, of which Uhemeli is the central village. Ndala village is formally the name of the rural ward as an administrative part of Nzega District. The language of the *Wanyamwezi* names the village of Uhemeli as Ndala. In most cases the name of the ward is comprised of one of the names of the villages belonging to that ward. In the Ndala ward, this was not the case and this might be the reason that the name of Uhemeli is hardly ever used. The fieldwork for this study was limited to the village, strictly spoken of as Uhemeli. This is the village where we have lived in for four years. The name of Ndala ward is used to refer to the ward containing the four villages; the name of Ndala village is used to refer to Uhemeli.

Ndala ward is located on a plateau at about 1,200 metres above sea level. Ndala village is located on the grassland parts of the park fields and borders the thorn bushes (*miombo*) that surround half of the village. Open fields dispersed with trees and smaller settlements surround the other half. Ndala ward comprises an extended area with a low population density (see Table 3.2). Land is not scarce and most households have their fields close to their houses. The total ward had 9,675 inhabitants in 1978 according to the National Population Census 1978 (Central Statistics Office of Tanzania 1978) and 8,800 inhabitants in 1988 according to the National Population Census of that year (Bureau of Statistics of Tanzania 1992b). In 1988 nearly 2,800 inhabitants lived in Uhemeli (Ndala village). The population is growing as Vlijmen & Ngulukulu (1993) mentioned a figure of nearly 3,000 people in Ndala village in 1991. In Table 3.3, the subdivision of the number of inhabitants over the different respective villages is shown, as well as the gender and age of Ndala population.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Table 3.3</th>
<th>Populations in Ndala ward in 1988</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Village</td>
<td>Gender</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Uhemeli</td>
<td>male</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>female</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>total</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wita</td>
<td>total</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kampala</td>
<td>total</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mabisilo</td>
<td>total</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Inst.pop.</td>
<td>total</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Total ward</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Source: Population Census 1988 (Bureau of Statistics of Tanzania, 1992b).*

This table shows that 16% more females than males live in Uhemeli (Ndala village). In the 0-4 years age group, 15-44 years and the age group of 65+ years this percentage is even higher. The difference in the age group of 0-4 years suggests that more girls than boys are born; which is probably a mere coincidence. In the 5-14 years age group, the difference in number between girls and boys has almost disappeared, indicating a possible higher rate of infant mortality among girls. In the age group of 15-44 years, there are again more females in Uhemeli than males. Ndala village
offers educational opportunities which means girls are especially attracted to this village, such as the Teacher’s Training College, the Noviciate of the African Sisters and employment opportunities in the local hospital for nurses and nursing aids. Migration of male youth and young males to towns in order to find work might also explain this difference. Section 3.4.4 analyses labour migration in more detail. The age groups of 45-64 years and 65+ years also show a majority of females due to the higher life expectancy for women than for men.

**Size of the households in Ndala village**

According to the Chairman of Ndala’s Chama cha Mapinduzi – the ruling party at that time – the number of households in Ndala village numbered about 400 in 1992. The size and composition of male-headed and female-headed households differ. The mean number of household members is 5.4 for male-headed households and 4.08 for female-headed households. The number of males living in female-headed households is lower (Table 3.4), but so too is the number of children, which accounts for the difference of 1.32 members between the male-headed and female-headed households. In general, the households consist of one or two parents, a grandparent and two or three children of the parents and others. Comparing the size of households in Ndala village (4.85 persons) with those of households in Tabora Region (7.1 persons a household), Tabora Region (rural areas) (7.2 persons) and Nzega District (7.0 persons), and comparing it with the household size of Rural Tanzania (5.8 persons) according to the Household Budget Survey 1991/92 (Bureau of Statistics of Tanzania 1992c) the household size in Ndala village (4.85 persons) is rather small.4

**Table 3.4**

Size and composition of male-headed households (n = 70) and female-headed households (n = 50) in Ndala village in 1994

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type of Household</th>
<th>Number of adult males</th>
<th>Number of adult females</th>
<th>Total number of children*</th>
<th>Number of children of hhms**</th>
<th>Number of children of other***</th>
<th>Total number of hhms</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>All households (n = 120)</td>
<td>0.98</td>
<td>1.48</td>
<td>2.39</td>
<td>2.01</td>
<td>0.38</td>
<td>4.85</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Male-headed households</td>
<td>1.44</td>
<td>1.37</td>
<td>2.59</td>
<td>2.38</td>
<td>0.21</td>
<td>5.40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Female-headed households</td>
<td>0.34</td>
<td>1.64</td>
<td>2.12</td>
<td>1.52</td>
<td>0.60</td>
<td>4.08</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Source:* Author’s fieldwork. *Children: age of 18 years or younger.* **A difference is made between children of household members (hhm) and children of relatives who are not a member of the household.

Not all children live in their parents’ household. Adults in about 36% of the female-headed households and 14% of the male-headed households care for children who are not their own. In female-headed households, these children are usually the grandchildren of a grandmother living with her unmarried or separated daughter and her children after whom the grandmother is looking as well (the three-generation household). In some female-headed households, the female head takes care of a child of a sister or another relative. In male-headed households children of other parents were supervised, but also the household head’s brother’s or sister’s children. In all households, the mean number of those children amounted to 0.38 children, for male-headed

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4 The Population Census of Tanzania 1988 makes no distinction between children and adults, but it uses 5-year-age-groups. The Household Budget Survey of Tanzania regards persons of 14 years and less as children.
households 0.21 children and for female-headed households 0.60 children (see Table 3.4). The mean number of children born (and living) in male-headed households is 4.81 compared to 4.12 in female-headed households. The total mean number of children still living in the male-headed household is 2.59, compared to 2.12 children in female-headed households. An average number of two children are living elsewhere for reasons such as marriage, attending secondary school or professional education or labour migration.

3.3.3 Ndala village: its performance

The main road from Tabora to Igunga crosses the village of Ndala and Ndala functions as one of the few larger stopping places along this route (see Map 2 and the map added in the end of this book as Figure A).

Walking through the village, it is clear there is a division between the mission part of the village and a more village-like part. Although no marks are placed to indicate the boundary, the buildings in the different parts tell their own unique story. The mission area consists of buildings made of cemented bricks and corrugated iron roofs, while the mud houses in the village with thatched roofs vary only occasionally, with few houses having cemented stones and iron roofs. In the mission area (see Figure A) the buildings testify to the past and present activities of the mission. The church with its impressive walls, made of small, yellow-red coloured bricks, the extended surface area of the corrugated iron roof and stately extension to the front provide room for a thousand people. This magnificent building along with the rectory, with a characteristic porch adjacent to it and the churchyard with trees, grass and sandy footpaths to the front, marks the boundary of the mission area. The primary school and the adjoining teachers’ houses are situated to the east of the church proper. Further east, the airstrip marks the boundary of the mission compound. North by northwest of the church lie the hospital, the Teacher’s Training College (TTC) and training facilities for postulants, all connected by the sandy road where white-dressed nurses, red-skirted teaching trainees and blue-dressed postulants cross each others’ paths. Southeast of the church lies the Catechist School which is also worth mentioning. It is a training facility for catechists or those who wish to become one. Every year around 20 families from all over the region move into this school and live there for 10 months, each having their own house. Men are trained in religious matters; women are taught about hygiene, food preparation, childcare and crafts, while children attend day care centres or school in the village. To the south-westerly part of the mission lies the missionary cemetery and fields with crops providing for the people of the catechist school. Surrounding the mission area are houses built for missionaries and hospital workers. This area is further typified by numerous rain tanks that collect water from the corrugated roofs, which are used widely in the mission area. To the west, north and east of the mission area lay the outskirts of the village of Ndala, where only a few houses and cultivated fields occupy the majority of the area; a few kilometres further the miombo forests take over.

A village road passes through the mission area heading south in the direction of the village of Ndala (see also Figure A). The main centre of the village is at a distance of some 200 metres from the centre of the mission area. Walking away from the church, the catechists’ and nurses’ houses make way for shops, some bars and houses of villagers. The village road crosses the main Tabora-Igunga route and ends near the market place. The market place is the centre of the village part and
is, apart from the hospital grounds, the most vivid area with people trading fruits, maize or sweet potatoes, people waiting at the bus stop, market women selling their wares, some people shopping and other people lazing about the streets and chatting to each other, making arrangements for new business matters, or just going about their daily affairs. Around the market place are the buildings of the ruling political party and the Village Committee, some small shops owned by Wanyamwezi proprietors and bigger stores owned by Indian and Arab shopkeepers. From here various footpaths meander in different directions and pass along the houses of the villagers. The mosque, the central football field and some maize-grinding machines are characteristic elements in this built-up landscape. This area is densely populated and only a few acres are used as fields; the picture is the same for another 500 metres or so to the other side of market place. The main centre of Ndala village, with both divisions included, comprises around four square kilometres. Beyond this centre lies a region with lower population densities. The outer circle of the village consists only of fields and there are hardly any houses. The miombo forest and bushes demarcate the physical boundary of human settlements.

3.4 The people of Unyamwezi

3.4.1 Habitation

It is impossible to state how long Unyamwezi has been inhabited by people. Abrahams, who studied the Wanyamwezi in detail, recorded from traditions of the people themselves “that most parts of (...) Unyamwezi were uninhabited about three hundred years ago, and that the ancestors of many of the present (...) families began to move into the area about that time” (Abrahams 1967a: 24). From traditions of the people who inhabit Unyamwezi nowadays most areas within the region have since then been divided among a number of dynasties, each of which arrived in the country in its own way with each ruling its own area and having its own ethnic origin. Each dynasty claimed separate origins. Thus, one Nyamwezi dynasty claims to have come from Uganda, another from Kenya, a third from Sagara area of eastern Tanganyika (the mainland Tanzania before independence), and a fourth from the region of Lake Tanganyika in the west. In addition, some Nyamwezi dynasties claim to be of Kimbu origin while another may say it has Nilohamitic Tataru ancestors (Abrahams 1967a: 25; Roberts 1968). The literature does not state clearly why these people chose this area but as they came into the area as hunters, the extended forests and the uninhabited area must have been the main attraction to their ancestors.

The ruling families of a number of chiefdoms claimed common descent with one another as members of what can be called a ‘dynasty’. In many cases the chiefdoms of a single dynasty form a territorial cluster (Abrahams 1967a: 13). So the dynasties of the Wanyamwezi claim to have come from various different ancestors. The members of these dynasties have found the country uninhabited or have taken over the territory of similar immigrant groups already settled there. In such cases, the territory was sometimes divided after an initial period of settlement and expansion. In addition, members of a dynasty sometimes moved away to found new chiefdoms. This happened in the 17th and 18th century (Rothlach 1975; Abrahams 1966).

It was only in the first half of the 19th century that the name of the Wanyamwezi, as a reference to the people occupying western Tanzania, was found in the literature. It was by travelling to the
coast that the Wanyamwezi acquired their name. When the first travellers from the far western hinterland arrived at the east coast to trade, they were called ‘people from the moon’, because the new moon (*mwezi*) is normally first seen in the west. Etymologically, the name of the Wanyamwezi means ‘people of the moon’ and is often translated as ‘people of the west’. To the coastal people, the land of the moon suggested remoteness from the civilised delights of their towns both in geography and in culture, and so the name was used to distinguish the travellers originating from far inland from the immediate western neighbours. This name is still used by the Wanyamwezi but only as a concession to outsiders (Nolan 1977: 22). In pre-colonial times they preferred to identify themselves by the group of chiefdoms to which they belonged.

Current traditions suggest that these hunters and later cultivators have long practised moving from one area to another periodically, as a result of invasion or in search of new land in which to hunt or to cultivate. As the population expanded, it was easier for them to colonise new areas of woodland for cultivation than to cluster together in large communities (Roberts 1968: 118). Perhaps it is such movements over larger areas that explain the trading expeditions made by these peoples to the coast and to other areas. The Wanyamwezi are widely known for their trading activities, which often encompassed enormous areas and the long distance journeys associated with such trade. It is certain that the most important theme in the history of the Wanyamwezi in the 19th century was their involvement in trade and especially in the international ivory trade. These trading activities have had important influences on the Wanyamwezi and might have moulded their identity as well as their social relations, to what they are now. These influences are further clarified in Sections 3.4.2 and 3.4.3.

### 3.4.2 The caravan trade

Throughout western Tanzania, the Wanyamwezi have long been involved in trade of local products like salt, ironwork, livestock and pottery. The Wanyamwezi owed the long-distance trade with the coast to their geographical position and by 1800, the Unyamwezi was intersected by trade routes for various valuable commodities. Exchanging their own produce, they acquired wealth with which to continue their trade. Salt, iron hoes and metal wire, as well as beads and cloth imported from the coast, were used as currency and input for barter. It provided the Wanyamwezi with the capital needed to mount long-distance trading expeditions. Roberts (1968: 125) states that it is unclear whether it was in fact the arrival of the Wanyamwezi at the coast which stimulated the coastal traders to press inland to the far west. Increased trade with Zanzibar in the early 19th century resulted in more journeys to the interior. While local people made journeys to the coast, Indian and Arab traders, too, reached Unyamwezi from the coast for the first time. Tabora was established as an Arab settlement in the 1840s. During the subsequent decades foreign traders, explorers, missionaries and others frequently visited this area, while local people continued to make regular journeys to the coast and elsewhere in order to trade goods: first cloth, later ivory and slaves (Rockel 2000; Abrahams 1981 and 1967a; Rothlach 1975; Bennet 1971).

The Wanyamwezi were one of the first people from the interior of East Africa to venture into the coast on a regular basis. Roberts (1968) dates the first Nyamwezi contact with the coast as being as late as the first quarter of the 19th century. Trade in salt and metal goods, like hoes, began at this time and was followed by cloth and ivory (Nolan 1977: 28). In terms of wealth and manpower, a
much more important object of trade was cloth from India, which was purchased mainly using ivory and slaves. The motive for trading was cloth. Although cotton was cultivated all over Unyamwezi in those times and domestically woven cloth was widespread in central Africa, cloth imported from India proved to be more popular. The cotton cloth had some deficiencies such as not being resistant to rain and wind and being heavy and uncomfortable to wear, expensive to buy, and so on. On the other hand, imported cloth was very attractive and so worthwhile that it caused many thousands of porters to make the trek to the coast over a thousand miles on foot and lasting ten weeks. According to Nolan (1997: 27): “It represented a universally acceptable form of currency and was a convenient form of storable wealth. It was a means of paying wages and gave social recognition to work values.” The high value attached to cloth made long-distance trading a worthwhile occupation, even for small amounts of barter capital. Up to the middle of the 19th century, trade in coastal cloth was one of the most vibrant economic activities, alongside trade in salt, grain, livestock and copper. Coastal cloth had once been a rare luxury, but by the third quarter of the century, it had become an article of popular attire in Unyamwezi. Among the trading activities of the Wanyamwezi the involvement in the international ivory trade has to be borne in mind.

The plains of Western Tanzania were inhabited by large herds of elephants, but ivory had no essential commercial value for the Wanyamwezi. It was only used on a small scale as a token of chieftainship; chiefs wore ivory bracelets as a status symbol and were sometimes buried between elephant tusks. Only when they were exposed to the growing demand for ivory in India, Europe and America and the consequent rise in prices of ivory at the Zanzibar markets in the middle of the 19th century, was ivory to become a trading merchandise of the Wanyamwezi. People began to hunt elephant herds for their tusks. Large herds of elephants were wiped out during the middle part of the century. The ivory trade stimulated rapid expansion and total reorganisation of the Wanyamwezi’s trade and commercial activities. The pattern of trade changed so as to facilitate popular participation on a mass scale. Much larger caravans, sometimes numbering two thousand people or more, trekked their way to the coast and back.

As elsewhere in eastern Africa, trade in ivory and slaves went hand in hand. For a long time, slaves had been an important commodity in regional trade within Unyamwezi. Slaves were sought for domestic employment and especially for cultivation. For the Wanyamwezi, possessing slaves meant considerable prestige similar to that associated with owning cattle and they were, for example, often included in dowry payments. The ivory trade brought the Wanyamwezi into contact with the slave markets of Zanzibar and the east coast. By 1840, slaves from Unyamwezi were being taken to the coast. Such slaves were probably seldom Wanyamwezi, but obtained elsewhere. Many Wanyamwezi traders bought slaves to the slave market in Tabora (which at the time was part of the Unyamwezi chieftdom). They were seldom used to carry ivory, but were instead a commodity bartered in order to obtain ivory (Roberts 1968: 127). Carrying elephant tusks weighing 100 lb. or more was considered a skilled task and caravan leaders often preferred to assign it to fit and experienced free men (Roberts 1968: 128), rather than to slaves. Caravan leaders and ivory porters were mainly Wanyamwezi. The expansion of trade had important social consequences for the Wanyamwezi. Porters commanded high prestige and, as Roberts (1968: 129) remarked: “No young man could really gain respect at home and find a wife until he had seen the sea.” Many young men used their porters wage, usually paid in imported cloth, to begin trading activities on their own account and would try to combine with others to form a caravan of their own. Roberts (1968: 129)
found that in 1890 it was estimated "that the number of porters away from home amounted to a third of the male population of Nyamwezi land". In order to offer the reader some idea of this historically important Wanyamwezi heritage, a description is offered below, based on a description offered by Roberts.

"A Nyamwezi caravan taking ivory to the coast must have been a splendid thing to see and hear. At the start of the caravan trade the guide came, often dressed as a monkey. Then the band came, beating away the wild animals on small drums or blowing on huge trumpets, followed by a long line of porters, sometimes counting up to several hundreds (!), carrying tusks or other goods for buying food along the way. They wore headdress made from the manes of zebras and feathers of ostriches and cranes. On their arms they wore bracelets of ivory and around their necks bangles of brass or copper; they also carried weapons for self defence. As they walked, they chanted songs, probably about the sights and events of the long march. Behind them there might be a number of women and children, and there was always a diviner, whose advice was sought on the right time to start and stop, and the right paths to take. Last of all came the leader, who ever watched for lousy porters and runaways" (Roberts 1968: 128).

Most of the time, traders took their families along with them to the coast. It usually took about ten weeks for such a caravan to trek from Tabora to the coast. Caravan trade was concentrated in the months between March and November – the dry season – when no essential agricultural tasks could be done. It was possible for subsistence cultivators to spend this time of the year on safari. They had built their own houses in the coastal area. In this respect, the caravan trade became a constituent of the Wanyamwezi way of life. During these months of the year a Nyamwezi porter lived in a different society to his own, with its own economy (a wage economy) and its own culture (Nolan 1977; Roberts 1968).

The caravan trade continued until the end of the 19th century. Some developments owe themselves to its disappearance. Firstly, by that time the international trade of ivory had collapsed. Secondly, several chiefdoms involved in caravan trade were at war with the Arabs. Thirdly, German colonisation made caravan trade for Wanyamwezi increasingly impossible. Other minor developments might also have induced the collapse of caravan trade. In the period during which trading activities grew in importance, chieftainship changed from a largely ritual office into a more active participation in public matters. Chiefs took a very active interest in the organisation of trade and gained considerable wealth whether by mounting trading expeditions themselves, by supplying ivory to others, by the collection of tolls from passing caravans or simply by raiding them. Mirambo was by far the most outstanding of the new style chiefs of this region. At the same time (in the early 1860s) Arab influence began to play an important role in local politics in and around Tabora and during his rise to power Mirambo engaged in a struggle against the Arabs. His political career began when he gained control over some chiefdoms in the present-day Tabora District and during the war against the Arabs that followed in 1871 many neighbouring chiefs rallied to his alliance. However, this war was only partly intended to be a way of gaining power. With hindsight, it appears that his interests may have been broader in that he was aiming to expand trade to the entire region and also to ensure that this expansion would be controlled by him, and not by the Arabs. By his demise in 1884, he had established a sphere of influence extending well into other areas. He gained unprecedented power and was widely acknowledged as a leader. It should be noted that he was a leader of a confederacy of chiefdoms, bound by an alliance of chiefs, rather than a ruler of a centralised, united Nyamwezi empire. This confederacy did not, however, survive his death and it re-emerged as a number of small chiefdoms acting independently of one another (Bennet 1971 and 1963; Gottberg 1971; Abrahams 1967a).
3.4.3 Social characteristics of the Wanyamwezi

It is important to remember that the enormous population movements of the caravan traders to the coast, and later back home to Unyamwezi as well, had a considerable effect on Wanyamwezi society and for this reason the social effects of this economically important activity have to be emphasised. In this section, we will highlight the social effects of the caravan trade, leaving the economic and political effects aside, such as the neglecting of the tasks of the dry season and the Wanyamwezi-Arab rivalry over the control of coastal trade.

Many social characteristics of contemporary Wanyamwezi have their origin in the events of that time. We have made an effort to elaborate a characterisation of the Wanyamwezi as the ethnic group as it exists today. This analysis is also based on our own observations of the people of this ethnic group during our stay in Tanzania: about their way of living, social relations, ties with the past, values and customs.

A Nyamwezi can derive his or her ethnic identity in two ways. Firstly, one can inherit it from one’s father and secondly by living in or coming from the Nyamwezi area and speaking Kinyamwezi (the language of the Wanyamwezi). So a young man born in Dar es Salaam and growing up speaking mainly Kinyamwezi can be classified as a Nyamwezi if he lives or had lived in the Nyamwezi area and the same is also true for long-term residents of the Nyamwezi area who return to their own father’s non-Nyamwezi origins. For this reason it is true that such persons and their descendants can easily begin to characterise themselves as Nyamwezi if they wish to do so. Even people who were born outside the area of the Wanyamwezi, who came there as children or who resided there for many years may describe themselves as being Nyamwezi. This shows the open nature of Nyamwezi society. Related to this is the very important fact that ethnic identity is normally not of great practical significance in the internal social system of the Wanyamwezi (Abrahams 1967a: 5). In this situation of fluidity and openness, the Wanyamwezi have been developing a very sociable and hospitable character in their dealings with others to whom they feel they can relate to on friendly and roughly equal terms. This type of character is clearly demonstrated in their customary greetings to each other when they meet. Politely everyone asks about one’s state of mind (habari gani?), the home situation (habari za nyumbani?) and family members (habari za watoto?). Abrahams (1967a: 6) classifies this behaviour as contributing “to orderly and productive relationships between parties who are seen to demonstrate a mutual respect and voice a mutual concern for each other”. Forms of institutionalised joking practices are common given this tolerant background. Some of these practices arose due to people travelling to towns and rural areas outside the Nyamwezi area. On such occasions, people might have sought help from other Wanyamwezi, and if they were absent, from comparable groups with which they may engage in forms of joking that are customary between them.

Openness to (new) people is one effect of these trading activities, but openness to new ideas and customs is another. In this atmosphere of tolerance, it was possible that, in spite of the many Unyamwezi chiefdoms and villages, a substantial degree of customary uniformity has emerged as a natural development from the interactions between their members (Abrahams 1981). During the trading activities and missionary influences of the 19th century, the Wanyamwezi had broadened their horizons considerably. They gained knowledge and experience with the culture of other peoples and modified their own customs and institutions to take account of these new contacts. This
is totally in accordance with Abraham’s’ portrayal of what he called “the atmosphere of tolerance” (Abrahams 1981: 6).

Roberts (1968: 144) observed that “social relations and customs were increasingly regulated by considerations of personal merit and economic gain rather than kinship and traditional status.” This remark is interesting when analysing the force of Nyamwezi customs. Their customary heritage was not only influenced by economic gain but also the fact that the people as a whole were drawn more and more into the Tanzanian nation. It is worthwhile analysing what local customs mean to the Wanyamwezi nowadays. Moreover, what does it mean to be a Nyamwezi? Firstly, for the Wanyamwezi, as for most ethnic groups of Tanzania, ethnicity is not a disruptive issue, as is nowadays the case in many countries. Members of the Republic of Tanzania have usually been able to combine the membership of their own cultural and linguistic subgroup quite comfortably with a strong allegiance to the nation (Abrahams 1981). People in the Nyamwezi area derive their identity partly from being Nyamwezi and partly from being Tanzanians. These two sources of identity are not conflicting; on the contrary, they complement one another. Roberts (1968) characterises the Wanyamwezi as having little feeling of unity as a tribe, except when they club together in towns far away from home. There is no common myth of ethnic origin and they have no customs or institutions that are specifically common to them. Even their name was assigned to them by outsiders. Consequently, it is sometimes even unclear, either to outsiders or to the Wanyamwezi themselves, who are Wanyamwezi or who not (ibid.: 117). This was also something we experienced during the fieldwork for this study when questions about ethnicity were asked. Often the respondents gave no clear answers or made no straight statements like “I am a Nyamwezi”, as for instance the Wasukuma or Maasai tend to. The many chiefdoms and lack of common myth did result, however, in the absence of a feeling of being a Nyamwezi nation. In the course of the last century, however, many peoples occupying western Tanzania have acquired a kind of unity by virtue of being party to major historical trends and events, partly described above in previous sections, such as the growth of caravan trade, the intrusion of Arab and other ethnic groups, the rise of the legendary leader Mirambó and also the founding or transformation of villages as a result of the Villagisation Programme of President Nyerere. The memory of these shared experiences has been an important element among all people who designate themselves Wanyamwezi.

Secondly, to be a Tanzanian alongside a Nyamwezi brings about a variety of processes that might act to erode the more locally based Nyamwezi element in some situations. The spread of Kiswahili could have an effect on the use of Kinyamwezi, especially if children are not educated to take pride in this language as part of their personal and local heritage. The same is true for the status of locally based law and custom. National law might overrule customary law; however. In practice, Primary Courts administer a mixture of these laws. Abrahams experienced, however, that local custom is to be perceived by the Wanyamwezi as a valuable possession; as a symbol and source of identity. It enables them to assert their identity in relation to the wider nation. It is theirs and equips them with their own special dignity and authority (Abrahams 1981).

Thirdly, as a combination of the first and second item, erosion of the locally based customs might result in an erosion of dignity and authority of the Wanyamwezi themselves. This means that changes within local custom, if this change is not substantially generated from within, are not liable to work efficiently. In this sense, custom is a weapon of defence against the outside world, but also an instrument of domination between parties within the subgroup of the Wanyamwezi as a whole,
like the older generation over the younger generation or in gender relations (Abrahams 1981: 129-136).

Another feature of the Wanyamwezi that might be related to their origin and their history of trade and travel concerns their kin relations. Kin ties were never very strong among the Wanyamwezi. A person’s kinsfolk is currently often spread over a wide area. Wanyamwezi villages are not kinship units. Even today, sons frequently move away from their father’s homestead. In addition, even when they do not, brothers often separate from one another after the death of their father or after separation or divorce of their parents and frequently reside in different villages. Furthermore, during the trading period, many spent much time away from their elders and beyond the authority of their chiefs, a social practice in which kin relations were continually undermined. The link between men and their homelands was and remains weak. Men, as well as women, tend to take their spouses from outside the village (Abrahams 1967b; Nolan 1977; Berger 1976). While language and culture are similar over a large area, the dispersal of kin relations creates a very scattered family circle. That the Wanyamwezi do not cluster together with their kin in their home country shows something, too, of their relatively small sentiments and feelings of unity as an ethnic group.

3.4.4 Migration patterns

The people of Unyamwezi have long been famous as travellers and workers outside their own area. During the period of the caravan trade, many Wanyamwezi were employed as porters. Their considerable experience and excellent reputation as travellers and porters undoubtedly helped them to compete well with others as a source of potentially reliable labour in the migrant labour market. As the caravan trade declined, the European-owned sisal plantations in Tanga opened up new opportunities for contract labour. Mining and railway building also provided work for them. However, work on the sisal estates diminished and became less popular among the Wanyamwezi. More profitable and more pleasant work was found on the clove estates of Pemba and Zanzibar and work as hired labourers for Sukuma cotton-growers (Abrahams 1981 and 1967b). Several reasons contributed, however, to the trend that present-day labour migration has become a less attractive option than in the past:

1. Some of the labour migrants only went away to work during the dry months, but many others stayed for a number of years and a considerable number settled permanently in the coastal areas.
2. The cotton-growing activities in the Sukuma area stagnated unfavourably and labour migration to the cotton fields diminished as a consequence.
3. The development of cash crops as well as trading activities with cash crops in Tabora Region became an alternative for labour migration of the Wanyamwezi.

Today, labour migration still takes place but the nature of the labour has changed. Children in search of educational opportunities tend to work less on their father’s farm. Boys, in particular, prefer to acquire some form of education or find a salaried job, rather than work at their father’s place. If a boy is able to obtain a salaried job, he is assured of a regular income, which also amounts to more than his father might earn on the farm (Konte 1980 and 1977). These children are no longer members of the household in their native village, but start a family near their place of work. If possible, they send remittances on a regular base to their parents. It appeared that 67% of all
households in Ndala village, especially those households with grown-up children, have children who live and/or work in another city or village in Tanzania. Children from Ndala families left their homesteads for the places mentioned in Table 3.5 for a variety of reasons.

Table 3.5

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Region/cities</th>
<th>Number of households</th>
<th>Percentage of households</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Tabora Region</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Tabora Town</td>
<td>56</td>
<td>47%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Other towns</td>
<td>9</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Ndala ward</td>
<td>24</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Other villages</td>
<td>15</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dar es Salaam</td>
<td>39</td>
<td>33%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mwanza</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shinyanga</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dodoma</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Morogoro</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other cities of Tanzania*</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Foreign countries</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Author’s fieldwork. * As Arusha, Moshi, Iringa, Tanga and Zanzibar.

For women or daughters, the first and foremost reason for migration is marriage, after which they start making a living in the village or urban centre where their husband lives. This may be his parent’s village or it may be another place to which the husband migrated to find work. A second reason is labour migration of both sexes to urban centres. Education elsewhere in Tanzania is the third main reason for migration. Children up to 20 years of age move to other places in order to attend secondary school or to follow some kind of professional training. If there is no boarding school, the children have to live with relatives near school. Normally the parents pay the educational expenses and money is sent to the relatives to cover board and lodging.

A fourth reason for children to leave home is parental divorce or separation. If a divorced man decides to live with another woman, some of his children may remain at their mother’s house. In most cases, the mother returns to her parents’ homestead. Sometimes the father pays for the children’s maintenance, but more often than not mothers receive no financial assistance at all for children of former husbands.

There is also immigration to Ndala village, but at a lower level than out-migration. Immigration occurs for three major reasons. Firstly, it can be attributed to attendance at the Teacher’s Training College and the Noviciate of African Sisters in Ndala village. Immigrant students number a few hundred per year. However, this is mostly temporary in nature because, on completing their studies, students seek employment elsewhere in Tanzania. Secondly, labour immigration of employees at Ndala Hospital occurs in some areas of skilled labour, but this involves only a small number of people. Thirdly, there is immigration of spouses from other regions following a marriage with someone living in Ndala village. No figures for this type of immigration were available.

Immigration of refugees from Rwanda or Burundi could very well have been expected, as these countries are geographically proximate, at a distance of 200 kilometres. The violent situations in both countries during the 1990s did not, however, have a major influence on the study area. People
who left the problem areas in these countries settled temporarily in refugee camps alongside the main transport routes to Kahama and Singida in Tanzania. We have seen in Section 3.2 that these routes do not pass through Tabora and for this reason the study area is situated too far away for this migration to have had an impact.

We planted the new seed
In the fertile soil of our land,
Full of hope and confidence.

We planted
And danced and sang,
The dance of hope in harvest
The song of confidence in victory.

Weeds, Richard S. Mabala

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5 See note 2, Chapter 1.