

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

1.1 General Background

As an agricultural country, Fiji depends on the primary sector to expand domestic and external trade for foreign exchange earnings. All efforts are concentrated on utilizing available natural resources to boost its small economy and provide the people with some opportunities of improving their living conditions. It also helps to generate revenue and capital for future development. A key factor of development and socio-economic growth is the effective commercialization of potential farming land.

In recent years, much emphasis has been placed on regional development (Overton 1987, 40), particularly during the past three development plans (DP 6 - 8, 1971 - 85). The present Ninth Development Plan, 1986 - 1990 emphasizes on more localised projects under the integrated rural development approach (CPO, 1985). These are the responsibilities of Local Task Force Groups rather than the national planning office. A lot of headway has been achieved in terms of decentralization and rural development. The scenario is completed by continuing industrialization and urbanization including manufacturing, processing and other secondary industries.

Within the space of three decades, since the Land Development Ordinance of 1961 (LDO), most of the potential farming land (mainly Fijian-owned) has been commercialized. About 55% of it is leased to Indo-Fijian tenants (Chandra 1983, 19). The majority of the remainder, generally unsuitable for intensive commercial agriculture, is found in hilly and mountainous regions. About 22% of it is in Native Reserves. The assumption that Fijians still hold under-used potential farming land is no longer valid today. Greater commercial awareness and exposure in recent years have increased Fijian interest in Indo-Fijian leased land. It has resulted in evictions on the expiry of their leases. This development implies a desire of Fijians to utilize their own land and not to lose control of it. In spite of the on-going political rhetoric, Fijian land ownership has been safe and protected by the Independent Constitution of 1970. What should be of concern today is the increasing use of marginal land for commercial development. This is exemplified in the Seaqaqa Cane Scheme, Dreketi Rice Irrigation Scheme, and the reclamation of mangrove swamps for urban industrial purposes.

Although the role of the rural economy in national development is now fully recognized, it had an inferior place in government planning before 1960. The emphasis was concentrated on productive rural industries (sugar-cane, bananas, copra and gold-mining) to supply overseas markets [criticized by George (1976) in Chapter 2]. National planning did not become a major tool of development until after 1945. Pre-war colonial bureaucrats and economists had neither a coordinated approach nor a plan of action for tackling the then existing problems and utilizing potential rural resources. Myrdal (1973, 45) mentioned

that this was common amongst economists of that period in most developing countries. In colonial Fiji, government policies and guidelines were established by Sir Arthur Gordon, maintained with little change and strengthened by later bureaucracies. Being conservative, the colony functioned for the maintenance of the status quo in terms of traditional authority, ownership of resources and communal ways of life. The government was reluctant to change those protective policies. Export incomes were supplemented by the British Colonial Office's financial and capital grants. The impending curtailment of this support in the 1960s could be another reason for the urgent need to develop the country's natural resources.

Formal national planning began with DP 1, 1946 - 1950 in Fiji. Myrdal (1973) regards it as the best available approach for national development during the post-war years. Similar to other developing countries, it was based on the 'growth pole' concept. Moseley (1974, 4) states that this approach promotes growth at centres or regions with perceived growth potentials with its impact spreading through various channels to other areas. The rationale of this approach is that with limited resources, it is inefficient and ineffective to spread development investments throughout the country. The first two decades (DP 1 - 4, 1946 - 65) witnessed the growth of urbanization and secondary industries, particularly in sugar production.

Unfortunately the approach is less effective in raising rural living standards. Its usefulness is limited in geographical extent with an urban or regional bias and few spread effects. Most rural areas have remained under-developed with under-

utilized potential resources. The LDO (1961) signified the shift in focus, objectives and goals of government planning towards effective rural development. These occurred via the application of the land settlement strategy to open up Fijian land despite strong opposition from the Council of Chiefs and certain quarters of government. Policy changes were made to counter the strictly conservative land ownership system. Out of these changes was the creation of the LDA's settlement programme through which Lomaivuna settlement was established.

1.2 Background To The Problem

Land settlement is widely used throughout the developing world as a means of providing individuals with land (see Chapter 2). It helps to open up unused, under-utilized or even marginal land, encourage economic development and extend the hegemony (or privilege) of a particular social or cultural group. All of these functions could be applicable in the Fiji situation.

Fijian mobility out of the village community to urban-wage labour began in trickles in the 1930s despite the restrictive Fijian administrative regulations. Similar movement occurred to 'galala' (isolated, independent or away from the village) farming, which gained momentum during the two decades after 1945 (Lasaqa 1984, 104). The government policy, through the Agriculture Department, was to assist interested individuals with equipment and planting materials, but limited funding. This support, given particularly to returned servicemen, further boosted the movement and the interest in individual farming

(Sofer 1987, 2). The 'galala' farmers lived on a block of their own 'mataqali' (landowning unit) land or that borrowed temporarily from relatives under the 'vakavanua' (traditional) tenancy or the tenancy-at-will. Both were handicapped by insecurity of tenure (see Chapter 2 and 3).

Land tenure strongly affects development in Fiji in terms of its impact on all productive and economic sectors. It determines the nature of land use in that the tenurial system and the type of land a farmer (or entrepreneur) uses influence on-farm (or business) decision-making (Chandra 1983, 19). Most available land was inaccessible because it was held under the Fijians' traditional ownership system and controlled by the NLTB. Such writers as Spate (1959, 3), Ward (1965) and Watters (1969) regarded the system as a hindrance to economic advancement. This made it difficult for non-Fijians to obtain Native Land. Typical of most Fijians, Lasaga (1973, 306 - 309) opposed such views, stating that little attempt was made to understand the complex interrelationships surrounding the Fijians, their land, culture and traditional institutions, which are embedded in the roots of their very existence and survival. Lasaga (1973, 303) was prompted to declare;

...the land is the people; you break up the
land, you break up the people...

Land-rush and colonization, with its impact on the native population of other countries provide some evidence for this view. It is the researcher's opinion that both views have their merits and the policies now used in Fiji are the best possible compromise for that nation's situation.

Spate (1959, 9) suggested that communities of independent farmers be set up to cater for both communal living and commercialization. This was probably desirable to enable access to the economic use of Fijian land. The advocates of change had to, first of all, contend with the conservative traditional Fijian land ownership system. Fortunately the move for individual farming came from enterprising Fijians in the form of 'galala'. Its productivity was higher than traditional village farming but not enough to make any impact on the economy (see Chapter 2).

1.3 Statement Of Problems, Objectives And Hypotheses.

The research study has a number of questions to answer. The focus is on the impact of the scheme on the farmers, the extent of local area development and Fijian participation in commercialization or agricultural modernization. Another issue is whether or not the achievements and changes made justify the establishment of the scheme. From the list of questions below, a number of related questions arise which the research also hopes to answer.

- a) How has the scheme performed since the failure of the government-backed banana-production system ?
- b) What had motivated individual farmers into the scheme ?
- c) With what sort of essential services and assistance were the farmers provided ?
- d) What are some of the advantages/disadvantages/ problems faced by the leaseholders and the scheme ?

7.

e) Whose interest was the scheme aimed to serve :
government, land-short outlying islands or the
nation's landless?

f) Was the scheme established as a surrogate to
agrarian reform, a show-piece project to substitute
for the impending changes to land policies?

g) What are the objectives and goals of the
Lomaivuna farmers today?

The 'working hypotheses of the research are :

a) To collect data on the returns earned by
Lomaivuna householders from farm, non-farm and off-farm
activities.

b) To explain the differences in returns between
households by reference to relevant independent variables
e.g. age of the leaseholder, origin of the leaseholder,
period of entry to the scheme, and the amount of labour
input from the household.

1.4 Rationale Of Study

The primary rational basis of this study is the lack of
exerted attention and concern given to the Lomaivuna
Scheme once the government withdrew its support in 1969.
Although under the

supervision of the DAF's extension officers, there has never been any definite strong attempt to understand the needs of farmers or to alleviate their problems.

Another reason is the absence of interest in the scheme as a focus of in-depth study by local people. Recent study of Lomaivuna is on a piece-meal basis. No one has attempted to make a detailed study despite its proximity to the country's capital and accessibility to markets. With the exception of Overton (1987 - 88) or Thaman, R. (USP) who uses the scheme for field trips with university geography students, it seems to be deemed of little academic importance to local students.

Finally, it is the researcher's view that the scheme has much to offer in terms of planning and designing of future settlement programmes. Furthermore the study can serve to create and develop public awareness or insight into government programmes, especially now with the expansion of development into marginal land. The approach is still favoured by bureaucrats, politicians, planners and decision-makers in Fiji.

1.5 Outline Of Study

First in Chapter 2, a discussion of the concepts of 'development' and 'rural development' is made. Following this is a review of the literature on land settlement as a strategy of rural development in Third World countries. The chapter provides some insight into the strategy of land settlement schemes, their assessment and evaluation, post-war experiences and scope for

future programmes. Also discussed are the essential general features of development in Fiji.

In Chapter 3, the Lomaivuna Settlement Scheme is explained in closer detail. This chapter covers the geographical background of the place, planning and implementation, and the development of the scheme during three separate periods (the 1960s, 1970s and the present). The presentation is aimed at comparing the management during those periods and examining the essential aspects of the scheme.

An outline of the methodology used in the study is given in Chapter 4. The discussion revolves around the research, sampling and questionnaire design, and methods of data collection. Arrangements and procedure of the field survey, problems and limitations of the research and design are also looked at in this chapter.

The first part of the study findings is provided in Chapter 5. These include all aspects of the scheme in terms of development, performance and practices. The chapter reports on the Fijian leaseholders' survival rate, productivity, motivational factors, labour and equipment, crops and their viability, farming patterns and returns.

Chapter 6 discusses the impact and problems of the scheme including a review of major advantages and disadvantages.

Finally, the last chapter looks at the results of the study and relates them to the research problems and hypotheses. A summary

of the whole study is discussed. To complete the work, a number of considerations relating to the future application of the land settlement approach in Fiji is discussed.

CHAPTER 2

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

2.1 Introduction

This chapter covers land settlement as a strategy of rural development. It includes the use of the approach in Fiji and some basic features of organized settlement for effective landuse. Preceding these issues is a review of the concepts, 'development' and 'rural development'.

The definitions of development and rural development vary depending on a number of factors, namely; the writer's perception, academic background and purpose of writing. Many economists have followed Rostow's growth theory (1960). It argues that a society develops in stages along a linear path from a primitive (or traditional) to a highly developed (or industrialized) state. They regard development as 'economic growth' implying national revenue and per capita income increases. Baldwin (1972, 24), Angelopoulos (1972, 11), Meier (1970, 7) and Adelman (1961, 1) define development as a dynamic process which may bring about those increases,...multi-dimensional encompassing the whole economic and social systems (Todaro, 1977, 50)...involving a series of continuous changes (Angelopoulos, 1972, 11)...and the creation of the environment for realizing human potential (Seers, 1972, 21).

A country's development requires the improvement of the production of goods and services, people's level of living and an increase in the capacity of the economy to deliver needed goods and services [Angelopoulos, (1972, 10)]. These efforts may reduce poverty, unemployment, inequality and other related problems in society (Seers, 1972, 21). Angelopoulos (1972, 10) also states that economic development is a very complex phenomenon and some of its determinant factors are hard to measure quantitatively.

Hayami and Ruttan (1971, 15) declare that rapid growth alone may not be enough to prepare a society for economic expansion. This was exemplified in some developing countries of South Asia and Latin America during the late nineteenth century. In India, increased production and growth only benefited the rich, property owners and businessmen (Chambers 1983, 31).

Schumacher (1973, 16) argues that one of the fateful errors of our age is the belief that the problem of production has been solved, an illusion arising from our inability to recognize that modern development consumes its very basis, the environment. This shows Schumacher's concern for the resource management aspect of development. The utilization of natural resources as raw materials of modern development not only degrades the environment but destabilizes its natural systems. This stresses the importance of thoroughly understanding development issues and problems. It may help us to see the possibility of evolving a new lifestyle with new methods of production and patterns of consumption.

George (1976, 17) criticizes the political side stating that development is a password for imposing a new kind of dependency. It designs Third World societies to meet and enrich commercial and political needs of developed societies. The problem is that no society can exist in isolation. World-trade participation ensures the inflow of capital, export incomes, imported goods, development aids and economic growth.

Like development, the definition of 'rural development' is still a matter of discussion. The rural areas were regarded as sources and suppliers of farm commodities, other raw materials and cheap labour for the urban industries. Any approach to modernize agriculture was regarded as rural development and projected to boost urban industrial growth and trade, as in the Green Revolution of Asia.

Today rural development is recognized as referring to improving and satisfying the needs of the rural poor. Chambers (1983, 147) and Lele (1975, 20) define it as improving the living standard of the low-income rural population. Lele recommends that the approaches used should concentrate on producing a self-sustaining development process. Similar definitions are provided in Crittenden and Lea (1989, 2 - 4), Singh (1986, 16), Maheshwari (1985, 17), Mehta (1984, 14), Bryant and White (1984, 2) and Abeyrama and Weber (1983, 2). Cohen (1987, 23) adds that rural development is multi-sectoral including agriculture and industrial development, and the improvement of social facilities.

That interrelationship prompted the use of an integrated approach to rural development. By the early 1980s, it was not so successful for promoting rural progress (Cohen 1987, 15). It was due to the failure of professionals, donors and governments to think carefully through the underlying strategy of development innovations. Cohen advises that its usefulness has not been fully examined and requires a sustained debate based on empirical evidence.

Government planning organizes development via projects and programmes aimed at distributing capital, material resources, aids and other forms of assistance effectively. In the process, problems usually arise, one of which are frequent biases (Chambers 1983, 13 - 23). Policies and programmes are designed intentionally to be intercepted and exploited by certain groups in society. In Bangladesh, BRAC (1983, 1 - 2) describes 'the net', made up of rural elites and government officials. With positions of authority, power, government connections and the use of threats or actual force, they have been able to trap and exploit development efforts aimed for the poor. These are not uncommon in conservative societies where the elites take advantage of their traditional authority, people's ignorance, customary respect and submissiveness to exploit and accumulate resources.

The interest in more effective rural development approaches arose out of the failure of earlier strategies to improve rural problems. Little of the industrial and urban-based development trickled down to the periphery (Mehta 1984, 11). The disparities between the rich and poor, and urban and rural areas continued

to widen. Hulme (1984, 1) has identified the major strategies since the end of World War II as rapid urban industrialization (manufacturing and processing), intensification of the existing agricultural systems and land settlement. Most governments incorporate all of these approaches for a widespread impact.

2.2 Land Settlement

The World Bank (1978, 14) uses the expression 'land settlement' to define projects in which a group of people moves permanently or semi-permanently to occupy an area of unused or under-utilized rural land. This is usually done under the guidance of an agency external to the settler community. The agency provides assistance and advice to bolster the participants' efforts. The term is similar to 'directed colonization' in Latin America, 'transmigration' in Indonesia or 'resettlement' which is often used as the substitute term. This definition excludes 'spontaneous' settlement because of its unorganized and irregular development. Spontaneous settlers rely mostly on their own resources without any direct assistance from private or public agencies.

Resettlement can also mean the rehabilitation of people to make way for bigger and capital-intensive projects. Searle (1987, 51) exemplifies it in a World Bank-funded hydro-power project in Central India. Village people close to the site had to be moved away. This also occurs in agricultural land settlement but the original inhabitants can be given the option of being incorporated into the scheme. A good example of a long-existing

land settlement programme is 'transmigration' in Indonesia. It dates back to 1905 under Dutch colonial rule (Searle 1987, 118). Its initial objective was to relieve population pressures in Java and Sumatra. Today transmigration stands for agricultural expansion and provision of employment opportunities. Another possible objective is the 'Javanization' of outer Indonesia making political control by the Central Government more easy.

2.2.1 Major Elements Of Land Settlement For Success

The success of this approach depends on a number of basic considerations. Primarily the beneficiaries have to be provided land, a reasonably developed infra-structure and services. Success is also dependent on adequate planning and supportive background work before and during implementation. Hulme (1984, 28) lists the following as the elementary factors of success : choosing the right settlers; choosing the right place; the proper physical preparation of the site before the settlers move in; settlers' capital input; conditions of tenure; acreage per settler and organization of group activities. Generally these factors are similar to those suggested by Lea and Chaudhri (1983, 17). They also state that the involvement of an external institution or outside support is a catalyst for development.

The World Bank (1978, 10 - 12) recommends that careful attention should be given to the following: settlement costs and design; land development costs and recovery; target incomes; organization and staffing; housing and social services; employment generation; research needs and phasing of settlement.

Abeyrama and Weber (1983, 6 - 8) add that the mobilization, support and participation of the local people are critical to project success. Prior consideration should be given to them.

2.2.2 Project Assessment And Evaluation

There is no generally accepted method for project study, analysis and evaluation. Researchers use techniques which are best suited to them and the research situation. The methodology can be determined by the researcher's academic discipline or political ideology. Hulme (1984, 27 - 40) reviewed three major approaches: Conventional Evaluation; the Social Consequence Approach and the Radical Approach.

2.2.2.1 Conventional evaluation: This method requires careful observation and experiments through surveys and field studies. It works on the theory that first-hand experience is the best source of data and knowledge. Thus practical observation is essential. The data and findings have to be analyzed and evaluated to give strong supportive evidence to any conclusion drawn, from which reliable recommendations can be made.

Most evaluators, in the process of making their assessment, put greater emphasis on the problems and how to tackle them. As a result, the researcher is drawn away from studying the processes and relationships existing within a project environment. This approach's main priorities are the economic issues of development; inputs, outputs, returns and productivity, profit

or loss and national growth. Social and other impact are of secondary importance, being viewed as out-growths of economic success.

2.2.2.2 The social consequence approach: Contrary to the Conventional Approach, this method is more concerned with the social and cultural issues of a project. It tries to assess the impact of a scheme on the welfare of the beneficiaries and community relative to the family, household and existing institutions. Proponents of this approach maintain that development programmes are biased towards economic growth. They question the merits of economic development without considering social satisfaction with a better life, and maintain that this could be the reason rural life is generally impoverished.

2.2.2.3 The radical approach: This method seems to have similar objectives to the previous approach but its priorities are the political aspects of a scheme. It considers a project from the viewpoint of the world economy with the assumption that it is capitalistic, manipulative and exploitative. A project is studied according to its position and role in the economy. It is based on the dependency model which is promoted by the centre-down development paradigm's unbalanced growth approach (Hansen 1985, 15). The emphasis is on the role of external linkages and socio-economic processes in the functioning of a scheme. Basically it aims to explain that a development project is meant to satisfy the requirements of the external markets. This is achieved through fulfilling the country's commitments to

external governments and market forces at the expense of local beneficiaries [note George (1976) in this chapter].

Although each of these approaches has its merits, their use in project evaluation needs greater rationality and impartiality. This may help to produce a neutral and unbiased assessment of overall impact; economic, social, cultural, political and environmental. The dilemma is that every researcher, in one way or another, is influenced in making judgement by personal biases arising from environmental and other external factors.

2.2.3 Post-war Experiences

The World Bank (1978, 5) assesses that the global rate of settlement is about 4.5 million hectares per year, less than 1% of the cultivated area in developing countries. Spontaneous settlements make up about 75% of the total. It also shows that settlement projects' economic rates of return are well below appraisal estimates. There is no difference in the success rate of government-assisted projects and spontaneous settlements. Success and governmental investment per beneficiary do not seem to correlate. However, infrastructural development is still necessary to assist the participants in settling on the land.

2.2.3.1 Settlement versus intensification: The relative importance of these two approaches vary from country to country. The World Bank (1978, 13) shows that those with large areas of sparsely inhabited land, particularly in Africa and Latin

America, tend to employ the land settlement approach. Government-assisted schemes are needed to tackle the increasing number of rural landless, squatters and spontaneous migrants. However, the programme can only be successful if it is directed at those who are really in need. The justification of its use depends on social, economic or political consideration of individual countries. In Third World societies, the incentives rest on continued rural population growth, greater demand for food, other agricultural produces and raw materials.

Intensive production in already cropped areas is emphasized since, in most cases, it caters for export demand. It is often adopted by the better-developed or land-scarce countries using higher-yielding technologies. With efficient or productive techniques and mechanization, crop yields per hectare are greater. In developing countries, domestic food production plays second fiddle to export commitments. Intensification has boosted economic returns but unlike land settlement, it causes minor changes to the land ownership pattern and rural income distribution. It also promotes area bias by the location of projects in agriculturally-favoured regions with higher population density and under-employment. Land settlement, on the other hand, usually transfers land utilization or tenure and demographic problems from one area to another. It is a short term solution to socio-demographic problems.

2.2.3.2 Project performance: The perspectives taken by evaluators in studying projects are varied [refer Hulme (1984) and the World Bank (1978)]. Project reviews have shown a range

of performance in developing countries [see Searle (1987), Cohen (1987), Lea and Chaudhri (1983) and Lele (1975)]. During the past decades, over 40,000 families had received government assistance for land settlement purposes in Latin America (World Bank 1978, 18). Searle (1987, 82) estimated that the number of migrants for resettlement in the North West Development Programme (Rondonia Settlement Region, Brazil) reached 1.8 millions by 1985. The subdivision work was not fast enough to satisfy the demand. The World Bank (1978) assessed that only about 2% (500,000) of the world's rural population growth of 25 millions were involved in resettlement. This may indicate the insignificant contribution of this approach to rural welfare.

Hulme (1984, 28 - 38) shows the importance of looking at a settlement programme from an organizational point of view; the danger of evaluating land settlement in isolation from government plans, policies and projects; the merits of spontaneous settlement; the lack of concern for social impact and consequences; and the opportunities for land speculation. Chambers (1969), on schemes in Africa, suggests that success depends on the competence of administrators and management. On colonization in Latin America, Thiesenhausen (1971) argues that settlement projects only act as substitutes for the necessary institutional changes in the rural areas. These are a government's responsibilities and should be consistent with national planning and objectives. This is why Dozier (1969), on colonization in Latin America, stated that land settlement cannot be studied in isolation.

Some doubts have also been raised on the merits of promoting agricultural development through colonization. This is exemplified by Farmer (1974) in the poor economic results of post-independence colonization in India. He prefers production intensification of already cultivated land despite its disadvantages (refer Chambers, 1983). Gosling and Abdullah (1979), on schemes in Africa, Asia and Latin America, disagree arguing that greater investment for intensification does not necessarily mean greater success. A more economical approach with just the provision of infrastructural facilities has been suggested by Higgs (1978) and Nelson (1973). This allows the spread of spontaneous settlements and avoid high-cost projects. They also maintain that spontaneous settlers are just as productive as government-assisted settlers. This would be more relevant in Brazil with a high migrant in-flow to the settlement areas and very costly site preparation due to the thick tropical vegetation (Searle, 1987).

Scudder and Colson (1982), Curle (1971), Robertson (1975) and the Valentines (1979) feel that settlement planning has not given due consideration to the social aspects of projects. Policy-makers disregard the harmful effects of forced relocation. These are exemplified in its consequence on the Chakma People of Bangladesh (Curle, 1971), FELDA settlers in Malaysia (Robertson, 1975) and scheme settlers of West New Britain, Papua New Guinea (Valentine and Valentine, 1979). Major social features of concern are the likelihood of rising morbidity and mortality, breakdown of traditional social units, poor water supply, lack of compensation for loss of resources and livelihood, and unsatisfactory housing. It seems that the

emphasis on economic production and subsequent unbalanced regional growth have encouraged the move for integrated rural development.

Searle (1987, 82) identified serious shortfalls in the original objectives of the North West Programme (Rondonia and Mato Grosso in Brazil) by 1984. Since 1981, it has been suffering from insufficient services and infrastructure, poorly maintained or incomplete access road network, inadequate health and educational facilities, rudimentary farming practices, difficult access to farm fertilizers (ibid, 66), extension services, marketing, storage and transport (ibid, 61). The difficult weather and very thick vegetation causing development delays are exacerbated by the rapid in-flow of people at the rate of about 70,000 (Rondonia) and 20,000 (Mato Grosso) a year since 1977. The many people without land, either squatting or working as labourers and share-croppers resulted in a land-market exchange system. By 1985, about 50% of the INCRA settlement farms were not held by their original owners. The programme, however, has enabled many to have their own land (average of 100 hectares) and employment for the other migrants to earn a living.

Lele (1975) reviewed some African projects. Included were SODENKAM and ZAPI of Cameroon (197 - 201); CADU and WADU of Ethiopia (202 - 204) and LLDP of Malawi (214 - 216). The Ethiopian projects were also reviewed by Cohen (1987). The Cameroon Projects (1966 - 67) were too ambitious and lacked local support despite their low-cost nature. Other constraining factors were the lack of training and motivation at the local level, embezzlement by officials, the management's distrust of

the settlers, inefficient marketing system and insufficient technical support. In Ethiopia, the projects were faced with the shortage of staff and financial resources (despite SIDA's capital assistance).

However, WADU (cash cropping and livestock) had provided a livelihood for about 7,000 farmers. Cohen (1987, 110) found that six years of CADU presence had made the Chilalo district the most productive in the country by 1973. The smallholders and tenants' progress was short-lived with the expansion of large-scale mechanized commercial farming. By 1973, some tenant farmers had lost their land. An estimated 550 tenants were evicted in Northern Chilalo in 1971. In 1974 (after the Revolution), private land ownership was abolished without compensation.

In Kenya, the livestock and tea projects did not operate to expectation. About 1,500 settlers were set up to raise cattle but semi-nomadic rearing practices continued. In tea growing, 66,500 small farms were established by 1971. Their unsatisfactory performance was due to poor design (limited objectives and emphasis on export production by the smallholders) and reliance on limited knowledge of technological possibilities. It was hard to improve the situation because national policies could not be changed to cater for it. The extreme scarcity of trained local manpower was often experienced. In Malawi, the LLDP cash-cropping programme had had some success.

Indonesia's Transmigration programme, according to Hardjono (1983, 55 - 57) and Tjokroamidjojo (1979, 52) has been facing a number of problems. In the Way Abung Project, the settlers were frustrated by the lack of supportive services, poor sites, prevalence of epidemics, management inefficiency, inter-agency jealousies and inexperience in a totally new environment. Many settlers had to return to their home islands. Searle (1987, 139) states that since 1949, the costs of the programme have continued to rise due to improved standard of planning and expensive infrastructure but with some improvement on performance.

Transmigration has brought some benefits to the population. Previously-landless farmers have become self-sufficient in food. During Repelita III (Third Five Year Plan), 700,000 new jobs were provided through the programme. In 1985, 500,000 hectares of new land were cultivated. Improvement has been made in educational and health services for the transmigrants. These facilities have drawn spontaneous settlers to the project areas. The political implication of the programme is also important, as resettling people from Java and Sumatra in the outer islands and West Irian helps to strengthen and maintain the central government's influence throughout the country.

In Malaysia, FELDA has shown a certain degree of success. About 800,000 hectares were developed in rubber and oil palm between 1961 - 75 (World Bank 1978, 17). Providing two-hectare holdings, FELDA has become a major source of employment in the agricultural sector (100,000 new jobs for settler families between 1971 - 75). Despite this, about 30,000 families were

still on the waiting list by 1975. Majid and Majid (1983, 76) argue that FELDA is capital intensive, costly and expensive. The cost of resettling a family by 1976 was \$26,500, but the programme was better organized with a flexible loan repayment scheme.

On the Sri Lanka Freedom Party's colonization programme of 1957, Swan (1983, 57) stated that it had some success in alleviating the problems of landlessness and under-employment. The more enterprising farmers with better land had managed to make some headway generating income from cash-cropping and were no longer dependent on rice farming. The main problem was the non-repayment of loans and many had to be written off under the Amnesty to Defaulters of 1966. Also common were fraud, bribery and the practice of politicians intervening on behalf of debtors.

On a study of post World War II settlement projects in Africa, the World Bank (1978, 16) concluded that their progress was discouraging in social and economic terms. Serious implementation problems affected all types of projects including individual smallholding schemes. The World Bank exemplified this in an extensive study of 24 projects made up of spontaneous, highly-planned and directed schemes. It examined their economic viability and effect on employment. Only eight were classified as 'dynamic' and seven as 'just acceptable'. Three of the eight dynamic projects were spontaneous settlements. The other five were either private ventures or those that received limited government assistance. The dynamic group had no extensive government-assisted projects which on the other hand, made up

six of the nine projects rated as 'poor'. Probably this was due to inadequate technical and administrative capacity (ibid).

2.2.4 Scope For Future Land Settlement

The key determinant of whether or not land settlement would be an appropriate plan of action is the extent of under-utilized and unused land in individual countries of the developing world. This is hard to estimate precisely because of incomplete knowledge or record of both land and soil types. The settlement approach's suitability or relevance of use depends partially on available farming technologies. These may vary depending on research and development efforts which are essential to find the best possible farming methods to suit available land and soil types. FAO data provided by the World Bank (1978, 20) shows that under-utilized potentially-arable land is found mostly in Latin America.

The area capable of sustained production can only be speculated, maybe 15% in the Amazon Basin and mostly in the world's largest tropical rain-forest regions. The World Bank (1978) states that nearly 75% of the total under-utilized and unused land (some 800 million hectares) is found in the humid tropics. There is little scope for further land settlement in South Asia, South East Asia, the East Mediterranean region, North Africa, the Andean region of South America and the West African Savannah. It is highly likely that future agricultural development in these regions has to be satisfied by farming intensification methods.

An important consideration that may affect land settlement programmes in Third World countries is the current concern for the environment and the green-house effect. These issues can restrict future settlement expansion in terms of deforestation, logging and land clearing for farming. Searle (1987) exemplifies this in Rondonia and Mato Grosso (Brazil). A conflict of interest arises between environmental concern and the need for greater resource utilization by developing countries. The question is how far this increasing world-wide awareness will affect projected future land settlement planning and programming.

Despite its varied performance, land settlement has played a major role in more effective land utilization and economic growth in the developing world. It has brought rural people into the limelight of national development and has instigated changes to land policies. The problem with most development schemes is that the basic requirements for success have not been given careful consideration. Many had been implemented without proper planning. The management and support agencies have tried to do too much in too short a time and did not seriously consider the support and participation of the local inhabitants. Chambers (1983, 31) found that some schemes were expensive, had created privileged settler groups with dependent attitudes, were disappointing in farming production and represented a misallocation of resources. He also criticized pre-1975 settlement projects as 'total institutions' providing too many services and subsidies for settlers (ibid, 32).

2.3 Land Settlement In Fiji

Before land settlement in Fiji can be discussed, it is necessary to understand the context in which schemes have been established.

2.3.1 Geographical Background

Fiji is a small country of over 300 islands varying in size from over 10,000 square kilometres (Viti Levu) to very tiny islets. These are scattered over 230,000 square kilometres of ocean. The total land area is only about 18,000 square kilometres, approximately half of which is steep and mountainous. The two main islands, Viti Levu and Vanua Levu make up 87%. About 90% of the population live on these two islands. A map of the Fiji Group is given in Figure 2.1.

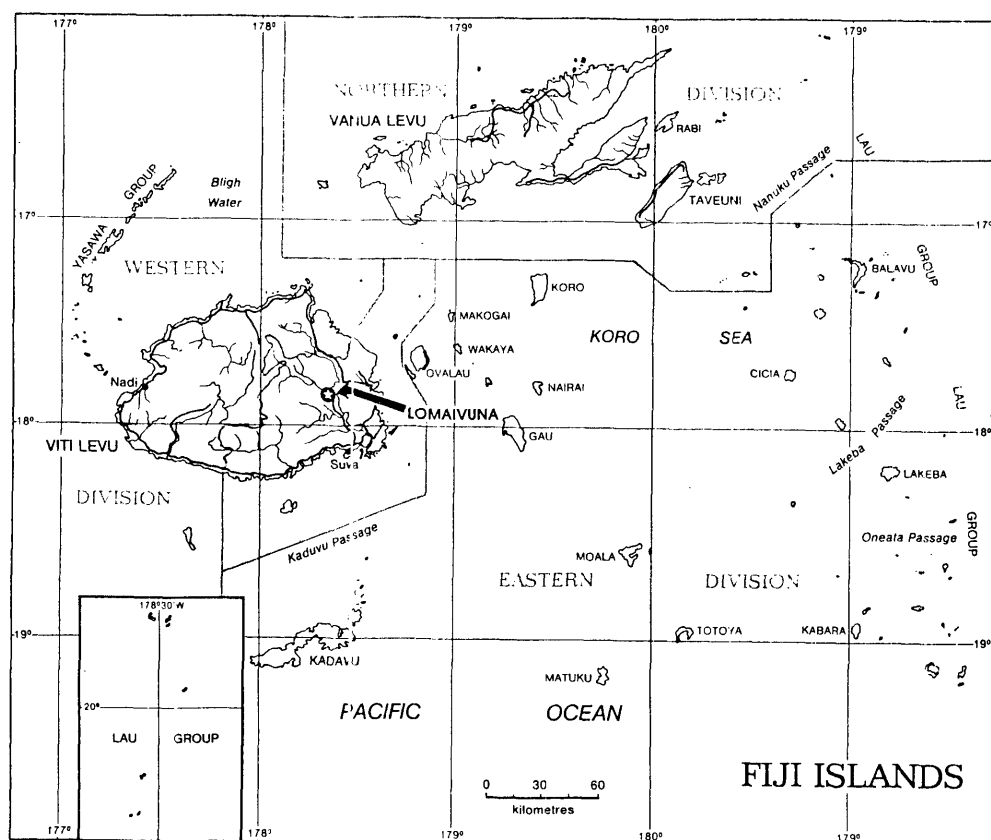


Figure 2.1: Lomaivuna in Viti Levu, Fiji Islands.

2.3.1.1 Demographic characteristics: The country is multi-racial with a population of over 700,000 (1986 Census), an increase of nearly 50% from the 1966 figure of 477,000 (BSF, 1989). The average annual growth rate has been fluctuating but declining gradually; 2.6% (1966), 1.7% (1976) and 2.0% (1986). The population density has risen; 26.1 (1966), 31.1 (1976) to ³⁹ persons per square kilometre in 1986. The labour force rises at the average rate of about 3.0% per annum. In 1986, it was slightly over 246,000, 20% of whom were females. The projected 1989 figure was 265,000 (CPO 1985, 27). The population is relatively

young with about 38% under 15 years of age. Rural-urban migration is a problem for which Lasaga (1984, 10) was concerned with its impact on rapid urban population growth.

2.3.1.2 Economic setting: Most of the country's economic problems can be attributed to its small size, physical build, the islands' scattered location, rising population and inaccessibility to resources. Limited domestic raw materials restrict products which can be made locally. Traditionally agricultural, Fiji depends too heavily on the sugar industry but the growth of tourism since the late 1960s has helped. This is why the government has concentrated on agricultural diversification during the past four development plan periods. Tourism and sugar export remain the main generators of foreign exchange. In terms of employment, they benefit only a small section of the rural sector, particularly in Western Viti Levu and Northern Vanua Levu. Tourism also benefits the urban population, industries and service sector, especially on the main islands (note Chambers' biases).

2.3.1.3 Employment: The number of people in paid employment has grown at the rate of 4% per annum since 1970. There is a high growth rate for salaried employees which is attributed to the expanding service sector including the government services. Government service expansion in the past two decades is of great concern with the added pressure it has put on the struggling national economy. The RFMF's post-coup expansion is counter-productive to national economic growth despite its positive

impact against unemployment. The employment rate in agriculture, forestry and fishing has declined steadily from 7% (1971) to 3% (1980s). Unemployment has continued to rise; 4% (1966), 7% (1976), 8% (1982) to 10% (1986) (CPO 1985, 3). It would be higher still if those in subsistence (17% of the labour force in the 1980s) were included (BSF, 1989). However, subsistence farmers do not suffer from extreme poverty like in some other developing countries. Fisk (1971, 368) states that in a condition of subsistence affluence, most farmers are able to produce as much as they can consume, although there is always an element of vulnerability. They can sustain an adequate level of living (by their traditional standards) at the cost of as little as 15 - 20 hours labour a week (refer to survey result in Chapter 5 for comparison).

2.3.2 Development Planning

Fiji's economy is mixed and open. The government is responsible for providing essential infrastructure or social services to boost socio-economic growth. Development planning provides the framework for guiding sector resource allocation. Since independence in 1970, the government has emphasized the improvement of rural people's standard of living. It seems that, in the government's view, the existing demographic, social, urban and unemployment problems should be tackled from the rural areas. There has been a shift in planning emphasis since 1970 reflecting the changing circumstances and requirements of development in Fiji. Both DP 6 (1971 - 75) and DP 7 (1976 - 80) recognized growth as a necessity but in itself, was insufficient

for a meaningful form of development. As a result, DP 8 (1981 - 85) stressed the strengthening and diversification of the country's economic base. The sugar slumps of the 1970s brought to the fore the risks of a mono-cultural agricultural economy. With the same objectives as DP 8, DP 9 (1986 - 90) is committed to the achievement of economic recovery, a diversified economy, greater employment opportunities and maintaining financial and economic stability.

Today there is a move away from regional planning at the national level to more localized projects. Regional planning is now the responsibility of local task force groups. It is being implemented through rural development programmes and extension of welfare services. The main objectives are to lessen rural-urban disparities, exploit development potential of each region, promote harmonious growth and integration of all regions into the country's socio-economic system. However, much depends on the availability of and accessibility to essential resources for developing the rural sector, especially in agriculture.

2.3.3 The Rural Sector And Agriculture

Although it is the largest sector in the economy (over 60% of the total population), the rural sector is the most depressed economically in terms of employment and income distribution with the least social opportunities (Chandra 1983, 34). Nevertheless, it is the most important sector for generating the GDP of Fiji. The rural sector has to be developed if progress is to continue. The rural population, made up mainly of Indo-Fijians and

Fijians, has a standard of living generally well below that of the urban dwellers. Their perception of a better life, according to Chandra (1983), is to break out of the rural poverty trap and go to towns where regular wage employment is available.

2.3.3.1 Farm area, population and labour: The total farm area is over 277 square kilometres representing a large proportion of the agriculturally-usable land in Fiji (ibid, 35). It consists of some 66,000 farms, over 55% of which are owned by Fijians. The farms are very small for nearly 60% are less than 0.50 hectare in size with only 1% over 50 hectares. These large farms (40% of the total area) are mainly used for coconuts, beef cattle or dairying and are mostly owned locally today. Sugar-cane farms, representing nearly 26% of all the farms, are operated largely by Indo-Fijians. The average cane area per farm ranges from 2 - 4 hectares. Fijian village gardens, mainly under 0.50 hectare in size, are for subsistence purposes and make up 43% of all the farms. The rest is composed of commercial and semi-subsistence farms. This reveals the small proportion of the farmed land which is devoted to the cultivation of other commercial crops as ginger, cocoa and coffee.

2.3.3.2 Strategies of development: The main strategies advocated at present by development planners are diversification, intensification and expansion through land settlement. According to Chandra (1983, 41), these techniques assume the availability of a considerable stock of land. This could be wishful thinking as the agricultural base has been greatly limited by variable

resource endowments and opportunities (ibid). Much of the unused land is scattered in isolated pockets and inaccessible without roads or government services. Marginal land can be used, as is presently done, but would require relevant inputs of technology.

Intensification is restricted because of the need to sustain and improve the present levels of farm technology. Rural labour does not have the experience and know-how to operate at the level of technology required for increased production. Land tenure is another handicap because it constrains future plans of farming expansion. This concerns Fijian-held land reserved for subsistence purposes which are mostly marginal agriculturally. There are also cases of land close to the urban areas which have been earmarked for urban development but are suitable for farming. Individual Fijians in the villages also find it difficult to lease land now because Mataqali members sometimes disapprove. Such disapproval is often supported by the NLTB for reason of subsistence maintenance.

The small size of the domestic market is also of concern, restricting the extent of production for local sale. The expansion of infrastructure and government services is essential but investment priorities are often given to the non-agricultural sectors. This typifies the urban bias of resource planning and allocation explained by Chambers (1983). Furthermore, surpluses and savings generated in the agricultural sector are more likely to be invested elsewhere (the mobility of resources to the urban areas), most probably in the services, manufacturing and processing sectors.

2.3.4 Land Capability, Availability And Farm Planning

The Ministry of Primary Industries (MPI) in its Fiji Agricultural Sector Study agrees that less than 20% of the country is suitable for sustained arable farming [see Chandra (1983) and McGregor and Macartney (1985a)]. The rate at which land has been put into use since the 1960s is greater than both rural population and agricultural production growth. More marginal land is being brought into use. The problem today is related to under-utilization than idleness and it transcends land tenure arrangements. Fertile arable land, including that on alluvial flats, is being misused particularly for beef cattle rearing and dairying. Most of this land was once used for both cash-cropping and subsistence farming. This change can be directly attributed to the government's promotion of cattle-rearing with the provision of easy access to loans and material assistance.

Not much can be done because the tenants (usually members of the Mataqali) have legal titles to the land as approved by the NLTB and their landowning units. As a result, crop cultivation has been pushed onto poor, practically inaccessible slopes. This is very common in Eastern Viti Levu, particularly on the lowlands of the tributaries of the Rewa River. McGregor and Macartney (1985a) found that the NLTB did not have a comprehensive land-use plan and implementation schedule. It could not programme in advance the release of specific areas of land. Consequently, it has been forced to respond to ad hoc uncoordinated demands, often involving small parcels of land.

Specific areas with available land are found mainly in Viti Levu (ibid, 3 - 15). This is mostly Class A (fertile and suited to intensive arable farming) and Class B (of average fertility but suitable for grazing, subsistence farming or other forms of land-use) land. Class A land exists in the upper Sigatoka and Ba Valley, mostly in Native Reserves. A similar class of land in the Nadrau Plateau is good for high-value temperate horticultural crops. In the Serua and Namosi hills is suitable grazing land and some pockets of Class A land used for root crops and 'yaqona' growing. Some Class B land, good for arable farming, also exists in Tailevu and Eastern Naitasiri Province. However in the Rewa Delta, unused Class A and B land (fit for arable farming) cannot be utilized because it is inaccessible and swampy.

Areas of 'Talasiga' or dry-land soils (marginal and unfertile) found in North West Vanua Levu are susceptible to erosion and need high fertilizer inputs. Some of these areas have been used for pine reforestation. Pockets of good Class A arable land also exists in other islands (Taveuni, Gau, Koro and Kadavu). The problem is that it is inaccessible (inland location and lack of roads). Furthermore, It is found mostly in Native Reserves (land put aside by the NLTB for the Fijian landowners' subsistence use). Dereserving, which is rarely done except for essential development purposes, is the prerogative of the landowners (Mataqali) and the NLTB. Future expansion of land settlement may depend on the active participation as leaseholders of more individual Fijians, leasing land from their own landowning units for economic production.

2.3.5 Land Tenure And Ownership

Land tenure affects the development of agriculture and other productive sectors. It has direct influence on farm operation in terms of on-farm decision making. This affects productivity level and subsequent returns. The Fijian land issue is always very sensitive because the Fijians identify themselves strongly with their land. Chandra (1983, 19) advises that their feeling has to be considered if agricultural development is to take place.

The country's 1,800,000 hectares are composed of Native (82.4%), Crown (9.4%) and Freehold (8.2%) land. Freehold land, bought by Europeans prior to the Deed of Cession (1874), can be leased or sold. Crown land is that whose traditional owners could not be traced, or none had survived. This land was unclaimed after Cession, and today can be leased but is reserved for public purposes. The use of Crown land is more restricted by the mountainous nature of much of it (Watters 1961, 163). This also limits the government's direct contribution to land settlement for agriculture. Large areas of Crown and Freehold land are in copra estates, and these are under-utilized. Copra estate freeholders are reluctant to sell or lease their land although they are rarely good arable farmers. Not much has been done to improve or maintain the estates, and the coconut palms are aging and less productive. The situation is worsened by declining copra prices. The government has to do something to get such land into effective use. As this is generally good arable land,

beef cattle rearing in the estates is not the most appropriate form of landuse.

Native land can be leased but is not for sale. Native leases have been the best available alternative for extending agricultural land settlement. Whatever the cause might be, the Fijians are faced with the problem of unequal distribution of land among the landowning units. The size of land does not coincide with the units' population. The Burns Report (1960) commented that there is no natural relationship at all between the members of a unit and the total land available to them.

2.3.6 The NLTB And Native Leases

A statutory body established in 1940, the Native Land Trust Board is Fiji's largest landlord and the sole leasing agent of Native land for the Fijian 'mataqali'. The Board provides a uniform leasing system through which the best possible arrangements are made to satisfy all parties. It receives application for leases, negotiates terms, sees that both sides fulfil their obligations, collects rents and after making a service deduction, distributes the balance to the landowners.

Any lease issued by the Board is a legally binding instrument and a firm guarantee of security for a tenant. Leases may be sold or transferred. A leaseholder may sublease all or part of his leasehold. All such dealings are subject to the approval of the NLTB. Outside the Board, informal tenancy arrangements persist in the villages. The NLTB cannot do anything because

that is the prerogative of the landowners. The Board can only act if a block of land approved by the landowners for lease is later used under 'vakavanua' tenancy. This type of tenancy has withstood modern laws but its usefulness is fast diminishing as Fijians increasingly become commercially conscious realizing the economic value of their land.

The NLTB's system of rent collection and distribution is affected by bureaucratic and traditional influences. Rent is levied at the rate of about 6% of the unimproved capital value (UCV) or fair market value (FMV) of the land. These are determined by schedules of land quality, accessibility and suitability for economic production (NLTB, 1989 and Overton 1987, 139). Today re-assessment of rent is made every five years. Basically the rate is far below current market value. Even rents from informal tenure arrangements are higher and can be ten times the official rates in the sugar-cane areas.

The proceeds from rent collection are paid to the landowners via the traditional social hierarchy. The distribution is as follows: 25% to the NLTB for costs and fees; 5% to the high chief (one person) of the 'Vanua' (a tribal region of many Mataqali); 10% to the high chief (one person) of the 'Yavusa' (a larger clan unit made up of a number of Mataqali); 15% to the head or chief of the Mataqali and 45% to the members of the Mataqali. For these Mataqali members, the size of their individual share depends on the number of people in the unit. In fact, 30% of rent returns go to only three individuals but the first two chiefs get the same percentage from other Mataqali with leased land in their chiefdoms. In contrast, the Mataqali

members usually have only a single source of rent income. This can be taken to exemplify the 'net' (BRAC, 1983) where the policy is deliberately formulated to benefit the elites. In Fijian society, the practice is accepted as a form of tribute. All Fijians understand the land-rent policies since their land was obtained via their chiefs' leadership and prowess in battle during the tribal-war era.

In 1957 only about 10% of Fijian land was in production, mostly under shifting cultivation. The post-war demand for land came mainly from the Indo-Fijians. Of particular concern to them was the Native Reserve Policy of 1940. Reserve land cannot be leased but Fijians can cultivate it for economic purposes. Spate (1959) had criticized the policy as an over-protective device, merely the static defence of an inert garrison.

However, his findings and the Burns Report recognized the insecurity of tenure provided through the unregulated 'tenancy at will' and the 'annual licence to farm'. These systems could not satisfy the requirements of commercial farming. Tenants with informal leases could not plan ahead or invest beyond a single crop. The result was the occurrence of low levels of production and land maintenance.

In 1966, the Agricultural Landlords and Tenants Ordinance (ALTO) was introduced providing a minimum 10-year lease for leaseholds of over one hectare in area (see Appendix A). Tenants could also renew leases for two further periods of 10 years. Later, further improvement was made through the Agricultural Landlords and Tenants Act (ALTA) of 1976. It provides a minimum lease term of

30 years and renewal for another 20 years on the approval of the landowners. Compensation is to be paid to tenants for improvement on the land as determined by NLTB valuation and assessment. Tenants also have the right of appeal to the Agricultural Tribunal. Most of the current leases under ALTA should expire by the turn of the century. By October 1982, there were over 14,000 native land agricultural leases, more than 11,000 (78.6%) of which were held by non-Fijians, predominantly Indo-Fijians. This increased to over 16,000 by 1988 (NLTB, 1989). Overton (1987, 139) states that most of the best Fijian land has been alienated and leased, and there is no ethnic imbalance in landholding at present. These leases do not include those for residential and commercial purposes (60 - 99 year term), or industrial and special development.

Rapid commercialization and the Fijians' growing interest in cash-cropping may present a problem to non-Fijian and migrant-Fijian leaseholders. The trend should forewarn the tenants of possible conflict of interests over land with the landowners. This has already happened in land-deficient areas (in terms of the landowning population) such as in South East Viti Levu especially around the Rewa Valley where Indo-Fijian tenants have been evicted or refused lease renewal. Some contributory factors are the landowners' interest in using the land themselves, low rent returns and their attraction to the infrastructural services of scheme communities.

2.4 The Land Settlement Approach

The previous discussion not only explains the circumstances in which land settlement began but also tries to show its applicability and viability in the future. The rising population with its impact on the limited natural resources and unemployment have always been issues of great concern. The government has tried to compromise between the interests of the landowners and the landless. Changes have been made to permit greater accessibility to land and provide the essential lease security.

Planners of the 1940s - 50s were more concerned with industrial growth and urbanization to boost national development. The assumption was that the benefits would trickle down to the rural areas. Priorities were given to the sugar and copra industry, urban manufacturing and processing. As experienced in other developing countries, the strategy was not very successful. The worsening rural under-employment, low standard of living and limited opportunities mobilized many enterprising individuals to do something for themselves. Some migrated to the urban areas for paid-employment while others turned to independent landholding and farming. Returned servicemen, assisted by the Agriculture Department, made up a fairly large proportion of the individual 'galala' farmers.

This was the start of the 'galala' trend despite the opposition from the Fijian Administration since it interfered with traditional village life, obligations and responsibilities. It

was boosted by the relaxation of the regulation restricting village out-migration. Probably the move was a reaction against the long-standing conservative, over-protective and over-bearing policies of the colonial government and Fijian Administration.

2.4.1 The 'Galala'

According to Overton (1988, 194), 'galala' or 'tu-va-galala' are Fijian words loosely translated as 'free' or 'independent' or 'out of the village'. It involves Fijians settling on a piece of land belonging to their own or other 'mataqali' but, still attached to the village and participating in all its functions. Most of them had small huts in their gardens for storage and over-night stay. By the 1946 Census, about 22% of Fijians (including those in urban areas) were living away from their villages on a longer-term basis. Perceived as a threat to traditional chiefly rule, village life and social order, the Fijian Administration tried to regulate the movement before 1948 but to no avail.

The 'galala' farmers had to meet certain conditions, which indirectly, were aimed at discouraging individuals from the movement. They were required to pay an Annual Commutation Tax of \$2.00, apart from the normal Provincial Tax. Application was lodged at the local Provincial Office where permission had to be sought every year for exemption from village community work. These bureaucratic requirements, once successfully completed, qualified settlers officially as 'galala'. The government, once convinced of the strategy's usefulness, later recognized the

movement as a suitable approach to rural development and land utilization. Lasaqa (1980) notes the government's open support of 'galala' after the release of the Spate and Burns Report. Spate (1959, 89) and Sofer (1987, 2) estimated that there were 1,300 registered independent farmers in the mid-1950s, about 5.5% of Fijians engaged in agriculture by the 1956 Census.

The migration of Fijians to individual farming also happened in groups. The best example today is the Waibau Settlement established in 1955 by twenty Fijians from Lau Province. Without any formal assistance and following the traditional form of supplication, they were granted land by the Fijian landowners of Sawani village. The condition was to use the land under the 'vakavanua' tenancy provided that the tenants participated in Sawani village communal activities. With government assistance, the Waibau tenants were granted Annual Licence to Farm in 1959. Other examples were Lauans who took up land in Ovalau (in Lomaiviti Province), Taveuni and probably in Seaqaga, Vanua Levu.

2.4.2 The Land Development Authority (LDA)

Government support of the land settlement strategy materialized in the creation of policies to institutionalize it as a national approach to development. It seems that the reports of Burns and Spate had provided some impetus for the LDA's creation. In August 1961, the Land Development Ordinance (LDO) was passed and soon after, the Land Development Authority (LDA) was established to manage the programme (refer to Appendix B). It was given the

necessary powers and authority to fulfil its functions. These included consultation with government and landowners; management of its own fund and a reserve fund; borrowing and overdraft from any bank; borrowing by the use of bonds, debenture stocks and shares; and the making of rules in these connections.

To give it extra power, the LDA became a 'Fijian' by law which enabled it to acquire land for settlement. As its agent to manage the field work, the LDA formed the Land Development Company (LDC). The programme was seen as a combined operation of a number of participant-agencies; the District Administration, NLTB, Department of Agriculture and the LDA. The programme suffered from a lack of manpower resources and expertise to operate the programme nationwide. Personnels of the first three agencies were sometimes relieved off their official duties to concentrate on the settlement programme.

2.4.3 The LDA Programme

Most of the projects were established in the 1960s beginning in 1963 with the Lomaivuna Scheme, the only one run solely by the LDA. Apart from those set up in Viti Levu, such as in the Sigatoka Valley (arable farming) and Verata, Tailevu (beef cattle), others were established in Taveuni and mainland Vanua Levu, but not in the Lau Group. The LDA ensured security of tenure, adequate infrastructure, assured markets and technical advice (Sofer 1987, 3). In some other parts (such as Lomaiviti, Kadavu, Tailevu and Ra Province), spontaneous land settlement occurred. In the Northern and Eastern Division, the 'coconut

planting/replanting scheme' was absorbed into the settlement programme. The only problem with this move was that the people, interested only in getting the coconut subsidies, did not maintain their coconut groves once they received them.

In 1963 - 64 three schemes were set up in the Sigatoka Valley for the production of vegetables, root crops, passion-fruit, bananas and tobacco. Root crops and 'yaqona' were the main crops in the three Taveuni schemes. In 1963 subdivision plans were drawn for 600 blocks in Koro Island, 150 in Kadavu and also in Moala. The overall plan was to subdivide 10,000 blocks in the Eastern Division alone by 1967. The plan was aborted, probably due to the unsatisfactory progress of Lomaivuna and lack of funds. Few of those which were established survived. The Taveuni schemes, later revived in the 1970s, are the most successful of the lot. Recent subdivisions are geared towards sugar-cane and rice production. The best examples are Seaqaqa (sugarcane) and Dreketi (rice).

By 1967 there were some 37 schemes in the country with more than 2,000 farmers. Those in the smaller islands were unorganized and fragmented in nature. By 1965 the programme was hampered by poor management, lack of agency coordination, manpower resources and expertise, and misuse of funds. The NLTB noted that some schemes were set up without any plan for approval or development (no application lodged). The situation had gotten out of hand by 1966. In reality, these outer island schemes were more spontaneous in character.

2.5 Conclusion

Land settlement arose out of the need to develop rural areas and utilize the resources for greater production, national growth and subsequently a better rural life. It could be an attempt to rectify the handicaps of past development plans. The people in the rural areas provided the initiatives for changes to improve their lives. The government had its role to play by providing the essential infrastructure. Fiji is a typical case where the land tenure system was a constraint to commercial utilization. The rural social and economic environment badly needed a catalyst to tackle such problems as lower living standard, under-employment, unemployment, urban migration and even poverty.

Land settlement is still very much in use today but it is encroaching on marginal lands. Even if the best possible land use methods and technologies are used, such areas can easily degenerate into permanent and irreversible destruction. Dereservation of Native Reserves is another area to consider to lessen the use of marginal land. Furthermore, Fijians with surplus suitable land should be encouraged to develop it more effectively.

Land settlement, however, has brought not only social and economic but also cultural changes to the rural areas since the 1950s. Although the LDA had become bankrupt by the late 1960s with some settlers returning to the traditional security of their villages, it left its legacy on rural development. Those who have gone back to the villages have continued to be involved

in a higher proportion of commercialization than before the land settlement programme. A diffusion of the individualism precipitated by the LDA has spread throughout the Fijian village communities. Traditional tenancy has been declining because the landowners want their land for market-gardening (cash-cropping). Today the expansion of independent individual farming in Fiji seems to depend on two factors; available land within the landowning units and an efficient support mechanism.