

**WOMEN, GENDER AND DEVELOPMENT IN A  
KWAZULU-NATAL RURAL NEIGHBOURHOOD:  
TOWARDS ESTABLISHING A SOCIAL  
DEVELOPMENT PRACTICE MODEL**

By

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## DECLARATION

I declare that "*Women, gender and development in a KwaZulu-Natal rural neighbourhood: Towards establishing a social development practice model*", is my own work, and that all the sources I have used or quoted, have been indicated and acknowledged by means of complete references.

Signed: 

## **DEDICATION**

This work is dedicated to my friend and mentor the late Ceceil Muller, former Professor and Head of the School of Social Work and the Centre for Social Development at the University of the Witwatersrand.

## **ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS**

I wish to thank Professor ERV Pakati, my promoter, not only for her valuable guidance and support, but for her interest, and enthusiasm with regard to my chosen area of research, which greatly encouraged my endeavours.

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Finally, to the students of the University of Zululand, who, through teaching, debating and sharing present day dilemmas and case studies with them, I was enriched, and my commitment to the profession of social work flourished through all the changes and developments in our society, particularly in the field of social welfare and development.



## **SUMMARY**

In the context of social development, the developmental perspective on Social Welfare, and gender equality (gender theory and gender analysis), an extensive literature and empirical study was undertaken, to explore the contribution of Social Work to the social and economic development of women as a special population of the poor in rural communities.

Exploratory and descriptive research, using documents, interviews and direct observation, was used to study the rural neighbourhood, the demographic profiles of the general public and decision making participation of a sample of household heads and community leaders.

From both the theoretical and empirical studies, it was evident that women's contribution to development was being systematically undervalued in the rural communities, and within households. Essential to this analysis was that there was an overall socio-cultural framework for stereotyping women's roles in rural communities. Not only were they overburdened by the multiple roles, their practical and strategic gender needs were marginalised, leading to their further subordination.

In addition, as an institution of society, the way both the department of social welfare and population or department of social development and the social service system functioned, was influenced by institutionalized gender in equality actually many considerations of gender in relation to welfare and health tended to remain focussed on women as users or service providers (volunteers), rather than assessing how health and welfare or social services, reinforced gender in equalities and, in doing so undermined social justice while also at times undermining women's and family welfare.

At the local level, it was very apparent that all important decisions were made by men, especially those determining access and allocation of productive resources needed to survive. This study also revealed that local government and other service providers in rural areas often developed projects in a top-down fashion, where local people were informed or consulted, but were not expected to make decisions that would be acted upon. Local economic development (large scale government or heavily funded public works projects) were often treated as technical and administrative issues, with very marginal, if any, political and socio-economic considerations from the viewpoint of the disadvantaged majority, the women and the poor, in particular. In the latter even the tribal leaders were essentially marginalized.

Based on the findings of the study, the thesis proposes a model, which provides a framework that is inclusive enough to serve both the clinical and community - work orientated social workers and generalist social workers. The polarization, where either the personal (individual) or the social (institutional) are emphasized at the expense of a holistic integrated consideration, is rejected. Instead, the feminist perspectives involving the reconceptualization of power, viewing the 'personal' as 'social' and the validation of people's experiences, interalia, are emphasized.

Project planners should ensure the inclusion of multi-disciplinary teams with both males and females at all stages of the research process, that is, the problem identification, the design, the implementation and evaluation. Data must be disaggregated by socio-economic strata and gender, and there must be an examination of inter-household and intra-household processes, particularly in the spheres of decision making, responsibility and labour input. This is important because of the importance of empowerment of the individuals and groups to access resources they

need, and to have a role in the production of personal and public services in order to improve the quality of their lives and that of their communities.

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# CHAPTER ONE

## INTRODUCTION AND OUTLINE OF THE STUDY

### 1.1 INTRODUCTION

Social development and social justice cannot be attained in the absence of equitable distribution of resources for all or in the absence of respect for all human rights and fundamental freedoms. In South African rural areas, particularly in KwaZulu-Natal, where there are limited resources, there are often many unemployed and underemployed men. If you add to the latter the women seeking jobs, you double these numbers. However, one of the things discrimination against women has done, within a framework of limited resources, is to further limit women's access to resources such as time and overburden them with paid work or income generation to earn a living, without removing the burdensome reproductive and domestic responsibilities.

According to the British survey on the value of housework, household chores take mothers an average of 67 hours a week, work that would bring around R224,770.00 per annum (£21,000) if they were paid to do it (Sunday Times, Business Times, April 16, 2000). Although low income mothers and other middle class mothers do different work and even though the time consumed and the monotony may differ -the stress and dissatisfaction will be the same. Even in developed countries where there are labour-saving devices for housework, women still get shortchanged. To complicate matters for the rural poor, is poverty.

Poverty is a devastating condition that affects about seventy percent of the world's poor, who are women (United Nations, The World's Women, 1991). Sixty percent of

these live in rural areas and fifty percent live below the poverty line. In South Africa, women make slightly more than half of the population (White Paper for Social Welfare, 1997). The women that are in rural areas have been especially disadvantaged by isolation with no visible access to social and economic opportunities which could improve their lives (ibid, p.14).

Furthermore, an increasing number of households, not only in rural areas, are now headed by women. Research indicates that most households headed by women are significantly poorer than those headed by men, where the risk of being in a poor household is greater for women and children than adult men.

Pearce (1979) asserted that the price women are paying for achieving economic independence from their spouses by participating in the labour force (often accompanied by divorce) has been their pauperization and dependence on welfare. Bell (1983) argues that the sex of the family head now outweighs race as a predictor of poverty in the USA - and the same can be said for South Africa. To complicate matters, there is increasing evidence that women do not automatically benefit from development policies and programmes, and that some policies may even make life worse for significant numbers of poor women (Hezyer, 1987; Rao, Anderson and Overholt, 1991).

Pearce's term, "the feminization of poverty", is a chilling reminder that poverty has become a women's issue (op. cit.:20) - and this is still the case in the rural areas of South Africa - despite the proliferation of anti-poverty and poverty alleviation programmes.

Social development is premised on the belief that strengthening opportunities and

options for rural women is the key to the solution of the problems of underdevelopment, with its concomitants of hunger and disease. Furthermore, underdevelopment can be eradicated through community based development planning strategies that are gender sensitive. Any attempt to assist and support rural women's development initiatives, requires a recognition of the importance of grounded knowledge which identifies the invisibility and the distortion of their experiences, and then devises strategies to target the latter. In short, any rural development effort should put the social construction of gender at the centre of all enquiry as it affects, shapes and influences the conditions of their lives. Participation of women in policy design, formulation and implementation needs to be promoted, just as should their access to productive resources, their ability to own land and property.

Bryceson (1995:197) based on the proposition on the Malawian experience, argued thus: "If development agencies are concerned with advancing women's development in the impoverished rural areas of Southern Malawi [applicable in rural areas of KwaZulu-Natal], they must take into consideration the socio-cultural factors that shape relations of production between women and men and between women themselves".

Far-reaching policies and large-scale programmes would be needed to provide rural women with skills, and resources they need to overcome the scourge of poverty. Furthermore, project identification, planning, monitoring and evaluation would have to take into account the differential impacts of programmes on men and women, as well as on different socio-economic and cultural groups. Roles to be played by rural people, especially by women, in accessing resources such as land, housing, water and sanitation services, transport, health care, social security and social welfare, energy and electrification for meeting developmental needs, would have to be identified.

It is envisioned in this study that gender planning will ensure that women, through empowerment, will achieve equality and equity with men in developing societies. Gender planning focuses on the inter-relationship between gender and development, the formulation of gender policy and the implementation of gender planning practice (Moser, 1993:1). This gender planning seeks similar goals as those of social development and is a means to an end.

## **1.2 PROBLEM DEFINITION**

It is the primary goal of social development to improve the quality of life of people both on the social and economic spheres. However, many development efforts have unfortunately bypassed the poor and rural women in particular. Part of the dilemma lies in the fundamental approaches to development. In particular, the role of women in decision-making that affects the important aspects of their lives, namely, in political, socio-economic and ecological systems, is not well recognised. Sustainable development programmes which are realistic and which enjoy government support do not take into consideration the fact that men and women have different gender roles and gender needs that must be addressed. Yet many development policies and programmes have different effects on men and women because social roles in various socio-economic activities are frequently associated with gender. Moreover, in most societies women are socially, economically, and politically weaker than men and have less control over resources and influence on decision-making. A gender-responsive national and local development strategy still has to take into cognisance the many and complex links between gender and poverty during its planning process, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of programmes. The question is however can this happen without deliberate intervention, if the broad social institutions and traditional practices



still continue to pose obstacles to women and adversely affect their fundamental legal rights and roles in the sustainable<sup>1</sup> development process (Gebremedhin, 1997).

In spite of women's obvious contribution to the survival and maintenance of the household, and the community there is no correlation with women's status in the household or in the wider community, with consequent powerlessness in most contexts of their lives. Furthermore, the participation of women in existing development programmes and structures is marginal. Therefore the distribution of power and other resources become salient variables just as is the arrangement of social (gender roles) roles within the institutions of decision making may be the 'source' of the problem. Since the core aim of social development and social work is to make an impact on social problems by encouraging the participation of the consumers of the service(s), a central way of strengthening their role is building their capacities to influence the decisions that affect their lives.

The key research problem then on community decision-making and answering the questions: Who are the leaders that speak for rural women and men and determine what role government should play in social development? What resources do women have as individuals within households and in the community for influencing decision-making?

### **1.3 AIMS AND OBJECTIVES OF THE RESEARCH**

The overarching aim of the research is to identify and describe the factors (both

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<sup>1</sup> Sustainable here refers to realistic programmes [that can survive over time and are responding to the felt needs of people with the support of both the people and of government while addressing social, economic and environmental issues.

facilitative and constraining) that are associated with the meaningful and effective participation of rural women in social development.

The research is motivated by a desire to highlight the constraints for women to social development in order to inform social development practitioners and policy makers who may then take steps to develop a practice model that encompasses gender sensitive planning. There are nevertheless two strategic objectives to be achieved, namely:

- a) To investigate the activities and decisions that rural women are involved in within the household and in the local neighbourhood in order to meet their gender needs.
- b) To identify what kind of power and who has it - to access and allocate the productive resources that impact upon women's gender roles and needs.
- c) To assess the level of involvement of rural women and men in community development, and to identify and determine the interventions for promoting effective participation for social development.

In order to achieve the research objectives, the study focuses on the household and the environment which form the context of women's lives. The data to be collected includes one on the nature of the household, its activities, the gender division of labour, and how gender roles are linked to women's gender needs. More so, the environmental characteristics, i.e. the demographic, climatic, economic, social institutional features that play a role in shaping rural women's lives, are examined.

## 1.4 ASSUMPTIONS

The general assumptions are:

- (a) Three major functions lead to women's low-income, and low productive occupations resulting in a lower socio-economic status.
  - (i) First, women's reproductive and domestic role (housework, food preparation, and caring for the young, old and disabled family members) is generally perceived to be their primary function, restricting their time and mobility for productive work.
  - (ii) Second, productive work and remunerated employment are generally perceived to be the preserve of men as family breadwinners. Women's economic role is perceived as only secondary to their reproductive and domestic role and to men's economic role.
  - (iii) Third, although most women earn income primarily from self-employment (agricultural and non-agricultural) for which land, labour, technology, capital, etc. are critical, women do not have equal access to productive resources and services as men, viz.: access to land; access to credit; access to technology, education and training and extension services; access to wage employment opportunities (education and skills) and limited social protection.
- (b) Negotiating capacity (opportunity) and political representation in community

decision making tend to differ for men and women in the following ways:

- (i) Rural women tend to be weakly represented at any level of political structures, and in almost any type of formal organizations such as trade unions and cooperatives.
- (ii) The public sphere is traditionally regarded as men's domain; in many societies, men are considered the public interlocutors.
- (iii) Local administrative and political structures are dominated by the better-off and better educated male members of the community, and, where there are women leaders, by the female elite.
- (iv) Because poor women are engaged in micro-or-subsistence scale activities or in casual, temporary and part-time jobs in the informal sector, they are dispersed, isolated and often lack the means for collective action. The conventional organizational strategies and activities of traditional trade unions and formal organizations elude them.
- (v) A few community residents concentrate their resources (time, money, influence) on community decision making. Importantly, even this decision-making becomes specialized so their influence does not tend to extend over several domains.
- (vi) In many instances, community actions appear not to be in line with democratic principles. The difference between leaders and other people lies in the fact that within communities there exist formal and informal

social groupings which possess the power to influence others, or even make these subordinate.

- (vii) Women are seldom in the community structures consulted about development projects, and gender issues are not taken forward by formal structures that have the power to deal with them.

## **1.5 MOTIVATION OF THE STUDY**

During a research study in 1997/98 using the participatory research model, the researcher observed some of the harsh realities of women's lives in the deep rural and poorest areas of KwaZulu-Natal. The research study was undertaken under the auspices of the Development Bank of South Africa, the Human Sciences Research Council (HSRC) and other provincial government sponsorships, e.g. from the office of the Director-General, KwaZulu-Natal. As a pilot project it raised many key issues around, that although women showed a significant level of knowledge and understanding of their needs, and even of the development issues *per se*, many of those women still did not enjoy basic human rights or improvement in the quality of life.

A closer look at the government's initiative and professional commitment, particularly the social work profession, was called for. It is an established fact that Blacks and women comprise the majority of the poor in South Africa. The Reconstruction and Development Programme (RDP) emphasized that mechanisms to address the disempowerment of women and to boost their role within the development process and economy, had to be implemented (White Paper for Social Welfare, 1997:51). In addition, the Constitution of the Republic of South Africa provided for a variety of formal

channels to support women to access the resources of society and to promote their active participation. Prior to constitutional negotiations in 1991 the gender issues tended to be subordinate to those resulting from apartheid. Gwagwa (1992:122) aptly highlights the fact that the majority of South Africans experienced a common form of oppression, legalized and institutionalized (racial discrimination) by the government. Alongside apartheid, was the manipulation of the family through migrant labour and the homeland system. The family, therefore, should have been one of the key areas targeted by the progressive forces in an attempt to reach a non-racial and unitary South Africa (Gwagwa, 1992:123). This then means that rural women in particular bore the brunt of apartheid, they had the least access to productive resources, and were also subject to a system of gender domination that is best described as patriarchy. Therefore, in the same way that all the people of South Africa should benefit from the transformation of South African society through elimination of apartheid, women would [and they should] benefit from the elimination of patriarchy and gender inequality. The achieving of gender equity through social and economic development policies and programmes should have been one of the critical outcomes of the pursuit of human rights. From the early nineties a number of significant developments have set the pace towards building a non-racial and non-sexist democratic society. Developments with a focus on the status of women included the adoption of a Charter for Effective Equality (1994); the Reconstruction and Development Programme (1994); participation of South African delegations at regional and international human rights, women's and development conferences (including the Fourth World Conference on Women, 1995); and the international instruments such as the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW) in 1995.

Despite all these developments, there is still a raging debate as to what gender equality

means, and to get an indigenous framework for understanding it, is a constant struggle. Nevertheless, the Government's commitment to the promotion of the constitutional principle of equality has been demonstrated by the establishment of the Commission on Gender Equality (CGE) in accordance with Act No. 39 of 1996 (Constitution of South Africa). This is an independent public body which is making explicit a gender framework within which to conduct its work, and it identifies key indicators that will be used to monitor and evaluate progress in achieving gender equality. In this regard, not only is the research to look at the developments countrywide including government initiatives that promote gender equality, but it will assess the profession's commitment and record in relation to gender-sensitive practice.

Despite its history of articulating a concern for the powerless, the disadvantaged, and the oppressed, social work has only recently begun to whisper about the systematic discrimination against women in society and in the profession itself. Yet the majority of the social workers' clientele are women - women in families as mothers or grandmothers, in child welfare and probation services, etc. The statutory responsibilities of the Departments of Welfare, Justice or even Correctional Services, are to a large extent centred on the care, protection and control of children and young people within the family. The assumption behind these laws is that parenting is entirely a private personal responsibility which - because it is women who undertake most of the caring "nurturing" role in families - puts the responsibility squarely on the shoulders of women.

## **1.6 DELIMITATION OF THE STUDY**

Studying women and gender in development is a broad and complex field which cannot

be covered in one study, let alone this one. By far the most pervasive influence on women's lives is the socio-cultural context in which they live. In trying to understand women's lives, and their participation in social development, the "socio-cultural" model according to Murray (1981), is referred to. "Socio-cultural" means the patterns of human behaviour and their products which include, but is not limited to the following: rules governing the ways persons behave; institutionalized norms; religious beliefs; social norms; tools or things seen and unseen. It consists of eight factors, viz. the environment, politics, family, economics, education, work, health, technology, all existing - within the bounds of the socio-cultural framework.

Only selected aspects of some of the eight factors receive some attention in the research. The model is very useful, but priorities for the study have to be made and - because the factors themselves are interconnected in real life - the other factors which may apparently be excluded here, will be referred to if only indirectly, where relevant. The political factor which can be viewed from three major perspectives, is focussed on. The first, is the extent to which women are politically active and/or heard by their governments; the second is the enactment and enforcement of laws which affect women and families; and the third is the way in which major political-economic philosophies determining development approaches, impinge upon them.

The family, one of the eight socio-cultural factors, represented by the household as one of the contexts of many rural women's lives, is analyzed. The intra-household decision making and power relations are not studied in detail, but only the existing role differentiation and allocation of resources are identified, from which inferences are made about gender status relations, power sharing within and outside the household.

In all cultures, but perhaps to a greater extent in those in developing countries, there



is not one socio-cultural context. There are many, existing along a continuum, from the traditional to the emerging or changing cultural contexts. All the elements or stages of the former may exist simultaneously and often with considerable lack of fit, even within individuals or family groups. The cultural factors and the comparison that captures the diversity in more than one context, is not carried out in this study. The result is that there is difficulty in identifying and retaining the positive aspects of the culture while improving those that are of marginal importance and distinguishing which are the positive elements. More so, women's own perceptions of the impact of culture on their quality of life is not directly investigated. Yet the more knowledge there is about a socio-cultural context, the more likely one is to understand how it shapes the lives of those within it.

Thus, selecting only the traditional leadership structure as the major context of political activity for women participating in community decision making, though it makes the study feasible, it is of limited value.

Gender analysis and its uses discussed in some detail in Chapter 4 provides the comprehensive conceptual rationale for studying selected aspects of women's lives. This research makes reference to the ways in which gender analysis is also used, especially in developing a model of social development practice, incorporating gender planning methodology.

## **1.7 RESEARCH DESIGN**

The research design provided a plan which specified how research participants were sampled obtained and what was done, with a view to reaching conclusions about the

research problem (research hypothesis or research question) (Hysamen, 1994:20). This research is an exploratory study which combines elements of a descriptive study, and the explorations attempt to describe in detail phenomena i.e. what is happening, rather than proving or refuting a formal hypothesis. According to Bailey (1987:38) in a descriptive study, the researcher must gather information about specific groups such as who is the leader, how does one become a member, how is discipline maintained, how is the group supported, what is the division of labour, and about individual members that is their characteristics such as age, gender, income, geographical region of birth etc.. The descriptive study involves a case analysis, one that is locality - specific where the unit of analysis is the neighbourhood/community. Case studies can be used to produce typologies which define a social phenomenon (Babbie, 1990:32-33).

### 1.7.1 Sampling

A variety of sampling procedures were carried out depending on the purpose of the study. The neighbourhood under study was selected purposively. The researcher relied on the experience that the rural community was typical of most localities in KwaZulu-Natal (see definition of terms). Next was the sampling of the households as units of analysis. The sampling frame was compiled with the assistance of the Tribal Authority, namely the *Inkosi* (chief) and the Tribal Authority's secretary, who had a record of the household heads in each of the wards (*izigodi*), under headmen (*izinduna*). Determining the sample size was difficult to work on beforehand, but details of procedures that were used are to be found in Chapter 5. Sampling of key informants was done through identifying relevant key informant groups using the snowball method. For the sampling of cases for observation and case analysis, a "judgement sample"

was adopted, for in order to obtain a good case for the aims of the study. The initial task in key informant data collection was the selection of the key informant populations to be surveyed. Key informants for human services and exploratory social research can be defined as persons having direct contact with individuals experiencing “problems of living” (Neuber, 1988).

### **1.7.2 Data collection**

Demographic information and other data on the context was collected from public sources such as the census, public records, available statistical records and through governmental and non-governmental organizations working in development in the area. Information on the power relations within households, and community power structures, in community decision making, was collected from household heads and key informants, through personal interviews. Interview schedules with structured and unstructured, open-ended and closed-ended questions, were used.

Case studies of decisions on selected community issues were carried out using non-participant observation, structured and unstructured face to face interviews with key informants or participants in the decision-making.

### **1.7.3 Data analysis**

Qualitative and quantitative procedures were used for data analysis and interpretation. The bulk of the data collected from the men and women in households, the participants and leaders in community groups and leaders in community decision-making structures, through personal interviews, was transcribed for key punching and later

computer processing. Responses to open-ended items were coded before they were processed by computer. The data was then analyzed using a wide variety of procedures. Frequency counts of responses either for all respondents or for specific sub-groups (e.g. strata, a given group of key informants and so on) was made. Various comparisons on the core variables were made between sub-groups or combinations of sub-groups. Furthermore, comparisons of response's to sets of items were made within a given group of respondents.

Statistical tests were organized to deal with both quantitative and qualitative variables in the data to provide tests of association or of significant differences between men and women.

The following are preliminary definitions and orientations of concepts used in the chapter which will be elaborated on in the ensuing chapters.

## **1.8 DEFINITION OF CONCEPTS/TERMS**

### **African/Black**

African/Black in this study means the natives of South Africa, whatever their ethnic group. In KwaZulu-Natal, the predominant African group is the Zulu speaking people.

### **Power structure**

A concept used by the elitists to describe a hierarchy of social power evident in communities. Leaders form the power structure.

### **Traditional leaders**

These are formal community leaders who are in control of Tribal Authority areas.

### **The rural communities of KwaZulu-Natal**

They are made up of a geographical area identified by the political-administration structure under an Inkosi (chief) and his headmen (*izinduna*) or councillors (known as the Tribal Authority). In the KwaZulu-Natal province there is a House of Traditional Leaders led by the MEC (Member of the Executive Council), Inkosi Nyanga Ngubane - which House is linked to the national level of government. The tribal authority is not part of local government but links rural communities to local government, the provincial and national government levels.

### **Regional (services) council or district councils**

The government has three tiers, namely the national level, provincial and local government levels. The Regional Councils also called district councils, are structures based upon representation from primary local authorities to provide certain bulk services, and to shift resources to less developed areas like the rural areas under Tribal Authority or Traditional Leadership. The area under study falls under the Uthungulu Regional Council.

### **Local government**

Local government is the level of government that is responsible for serving the political and material needs (like, access to basic services of the community in a specific local area).

### **Councillor**

Councillor is an elected representative on a local council.

## **Neighbourhood and rural**

Brager *et al.* (1987:46-52) define the concept 'neighbourhood' as a community. They venture to say that it is a geographical unit composed of primary groups (e.g. families, kin groups, friends) encompassed by institutions that affect relationships among individuals and relationships among groups (Brager *et al.* 1987:50). In this study the rural neighbourhood is the one where the institutions of politics and power are associated with traditional, customary law and order, which is often perceived as a vital instrument for the regulating of local affairs such as land distribution, land disputes, and other civic activities. The Tribal Authority forms the legal traditional leadership or the formal authority at the local level in a magisterial district, which in turn becomes part of the regional level structures such as the Uthungulu Regional.

## **Community**

'Community' refers to any of several means of identifying connections among people. It connotes (a) the relationships among residents in a specific locale, or (b) the relationships and activities of people committed to a particular interest, or a functional community. Alternatively it can connote (c) a particular political unit or power base common to all three types where there is an assumption of some basis of shared concern or shared perception that can draw people together (Well, 1986:188).

The community under study generally has all of the above features including a more or less common "culture" and is used interchangeably with the concept "rural/local neighbourhood".

## **Culture**

A set of shared meanings held by a specified group of people that serves as the social

foundation for their organized way of life. People in the area share the 'Zulu' language as a major vehicle through which other cultural characteristics are shared.

### **Role**

It is a structural component of a social system comprised of functionally integrated sets of norms. The term represents the expected behaviours of the persons enacting the prescribed roles (Norlin & Chess, 1997:90), e.g. the gender roles.

### **Authority**

An expression of social power, the ability of a person to influence the actions of others based on formal/positional status deriving from the legal foundations of formal organizations, e.g. in the Tribal Authority, Regional Authority structures.

### **Local authority**

A structure that is responsible for local government in a specific local area. It consists of officials, who serve the public under the political leadership of an elected council and the elected councillors. Here it would be the uThungulu Regional Council.

### **Ward (*sigodi*)**

This is a smaller unit of a Tribal Authority area (like a suburb) which can have its own councillor or headman *induna*, appointed to represent the residents of the ward on the Tribal Authority structure led by the Inkosi (the chief).

### **Influence**

Influence is conceived as a component of power but not synonymous with either power or its other component, authority. Influence is viewed as the ability to get another's

attention and to be heard; based on being heard one gains the ability to influence (Norlin & Chess, 1997:356). Hence the leaders who are called 'community influentials' are not positional leaders with formal authority, but wield some power in community affairs.

## **Development**

Development is conceived as a multi-dimensional process involving changes in structures, attitudes and institutions as well as the acceleration of economic growth, the reduction of inequality and eradication of absolute poverty (Todaro, 1977). When used with the prefix, "social", development is part of 'sustainable development' which includes: economic, social, and environmental development.

## **Rural development**

Rural development is the same as 'development' defined above. The addition of 'rural' is to stress the significance of understanding the context within which development takes place and the unique characteristics that are locality-specific. Previously, 'rural development' was considered to be synonymous with agricultural output, and statistics of farm production were used as main indicators for measuring rural development. However, James (1995:13) suggests a broader view of rural development as follows:

"Rural development can be equated with far-reaching transformation of social and economic structures, institutions, relationships and processes in any rural area. The goals of rural development are conceived not simply as agricultural and economic growth in a narrow sense, but as balanced social, economic development, with emphasis on the "equitable distribution" as well as the "creation of benefits". Among the goals, are the generation of new employment: more equitable nutrition, and



housing; greatly broadened opportunities for all individuals to realize their full potential through education; and a strong voice for all rural people in shaping the decisions and actions that affect their lives as well as the creation of benefits”.

This definition has many commonalities with that of social development.

### **Social development**

The term in this study is used to refer to a process of planned change designed to promote the well being of the population as a whole in conjunction with a dynamic process of economic development (Midgley, 1995:25). The social development perspective in social work stresses the value of social justice, embraces the value of participation in the community and has developed strategies to ensure the participation of the citizens to be affected by change in the planning and policy development activities (Chandler, 1986:152). Gender equality and the eradication of poverty are some of the goals of social development. Since social development is currently striving to develop new leadership from the disenfranchised and works towards achieving a broad cross section of the community with which to plan and utilize resources, community work/social work methods, are viewed as stimulating social development at a local level, regional, and national levels.

### **Community work / community organization**

Community work or community organization (of which community development is part although community development *per se* is not a prerogative of social work), is a method or form of social work practice in which the geographic community itself is designated as the client system and thus of its own helping efforts (Norlin & Chess,

1997:367).

### **Gender planning**

The term 'planning process' is used generically to describe the three stages, outlined below, in what is essentially a continuous and inclusive process:

- “- Policy-making: the process of social and political decision-making about how to allocate resources for the needs and interests of society, concluding in the formulation of a 'policy strategy'.
- Planning : the process of implementation of the policy often included in a 'plan'.
- The organization of implementation: the process of administrative action to deliver the programme designed, often resulting in a completed 'product'" (Moser, 1993:6).

It is important to realize that there are problems of integrating women or gender in development at different levels in the planning process. To resolve these problems, "gender planning" is therefore not an end in itself, but a means by which women, through a process of empowerment and participation can emancipate themselves (ibid:10).

### **Household**

As is generally observed in most regions of the developing world, a rural household is defined as a common form of social organization. In fact, a rural household is usually defined as a residential unit whose members share 'domestic' functions and economic activities - a group of people who 'eat out of the same pot' (Mackintosh, 1979:147) or who share the same bowl (Robertson, 1984:100) or a group of persons who share residential accommodation and/or responsibilities for production and consumption

within the unit (Engberg, 1990:24). Sometimes a household refers to a man with his wife, children and relatives under the man's care, and staying in the same homestead. The 'homestead' is a larger physical, geographical arrangement, which may consist of separate households with heads related to one homestead head on the basis of kinship or other arrangement. Rural households may not be visible. The most distinctive form of domestic organization is the landholding patrilineal homestead. When there are two or more households present on a homestead, there will be one head of the homestead but more heads of households, one of them being the head of the homestead. The boundaries of a homestead may manifest themselves in a bordered residential area (by fence, bushes or change in vegetation), where people of one or more families have their houses, huts, domestic animals, and sharing the allotted land.

The household is assumed to consist of members of the same kinship group(s) (although this is not necessarily so), and also to have kinship linkages with other members of households in the locality or outside the locality. So what is kinship then?

### **Kinship**

Kinship can be defined as the sum of social relationships which are based on biologically determined relationships, including the meanings attached to them. The relationships are also based on marriage, affinity, and they need to be acknowledged as a kinship relationship, as membership may imply being able to make claims on one another, or just on certain kin members being obliged to offer help in terms of giving resources, exchanging resources and inheriting resources. The kinship network of a person usually extends beyond the nuclear family and is not clearly bounded. It functions as a social security provision that one can fall back on, and provides care takers for people who cannot take care of themselves anymore. This is the reason to

stress the extended family more as form of kinship (Engberg, 1990).

### Assets and resources

Engberg (1990:120) defines resources as the means to satisfy a system's demand or need, be it, human, material or environmental.

### Resource categories

Human resources	Material resources	Environmental resources in physical environment
Cognitive and thinking skills Psychomotor skills Affective skills Skills in interpersonal relationships Physical strength, human energy, endurance	Land Money Financial assets Livestock and agricultural assets Space and facilities (water supply) Processed / semi- processed goods Means of communication Means of transport or hauling	Natural materials (tangible) Nature (intangible, like air) Human built facilities Resources in socio-institutional environment Social organizations Economic institutions Government organizations Political organizations Religious organizations

Source: Engberg (1990).

The rural (farming) household has limited resources available and those resources to which it has access, are also limited. Moreover, access will be unequally distributed among household members. The allocation and use of resources involves social mechanisms, such as decision-making and division of labour or tasks.

According to Lipton *et al.* (1996) resources include: family labour, time and other resources. The first two are not identified clearly in Engberg's category, yet they are the key in the household, determining gender roles and gender needs.

The concept of ('political') resource as used by Dahl (1968) pertains to 'anything' a person can use to influence others. These resources could include among others,

time, access to money, credit, social status, control over information and any other things of value to people being influenced.

## **1.9 SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY**

There is already a growing concern and acknowledgement in both academic training institutions and the field of practice that there continues to be a disparity between social work education and practice, and the realities of the changing needs, priorities, and opportunities of present day clientele. The role of a social development worker in a rural community needs to be analysed and clarified to enable social workers to intervene effectively on behalf of communities suffering from the effects of poverty. The study will increase knowledge for the curriculum content on rural communities, rural women and gender in rural development, and clarify the roles for social development oriented workers or social workers.

In the process of implementing the research project, a close relationship will be formed with the rural community, its formal and informal leaders, which will enable practitioners to work within the values and structures of the society in future. This rapport can be activated in establishing rural community-based field work training programmes for the University of Zululand students and exchange students, depending on existing post graduate collaboration among institutions regionally and internationally. Rural community based social services are going to play an important role in South Africa and KwaZulu-Natal in particular, as attempts to re-direct some of the resources to meet growing needs of rural areas and of rural women take precedence. Thus, data gained will be disseminated as widely as possible to facilitate the governmental and non-governmental development agencies' grassroots consultative processes, aimed at

developing gender-sensitive programmes and policies. Since the people in the area of research will also be 'research assistants' (after training), the empowerment of local people will partly be promoted. Data collected will contribute to knowledge required for developing and strengthening lobbying networks among community based institutions, local government, and related professional and development experts. It will impact indirectly on the process of gender empowerment now underway in the country.

Finally, it will bring into the centre of social work its feminist perspectives, that is, acknowledging that racism, class bias, heterosexism and sexism are major sources of problems of the marginalized and the disadvantaged, and that the focus for professional practice and education should be integrative, holistic and ecological to address individual persons' and community problems. As such, these feminist perspectives can be a synergistic force allowing for the accomplishment of social work's unique mission, i.e. facilitating social change in order to improve the quality of life (Van der Bergh & Cooper, 1994:25).

The study seeks ways to incorporate gender planning into the social development practice model, the social work problem solving model recommended in the study. The development of gender planning as a planning tradition, is of critical importance for a number of reasons. Probably of greatest importance, is the urgent need to inform policy through the formulation of gender policy at international, national and NGO levels, as well as its mainstreaming, that is, its integration with sectoral planning. In addition, it is needed to ensure the development of more appropriate - gender aware - planning procedures. Finally, it can assist in the clarification and the elimination of both technical and political constraints in the implementation of the practice. Gender planning therefore is a tool for social development to be adopted by social workers.

## 1.10 THE LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

The failure to make extensive use of qualitative research methodology - and particularly the participatory methodologies, e.g. the Participatory Rural Appraisal (PRA), and to combine that with gender analysis, and the analysis of difference, was the limitation of the study. Qualitative methods can capture actual behaviour with greater accuracy and can produce detailed information and insights (Scrimshaw, 1990). Bryceson (1995:197) argues that "to capture and assess the socio-cultural factors that shape relations between women and men and between women themselves, a participatory model is the best".

Qualitative research should be directed towards gaining an understanding of the meanings of people's everyday lives from their point of view - as the content is dependent and is produced through social interaction. There is a recognition that people do not construct meanings in a vacuum, but within a socio-cultural environment through interaction and negotiation with others (Chapman & Maclean, 1990). The time frame for doing the research and the funding available were among the major determinants of what was feasible.

Therefore the study only identified the gender roles and gender needs through gender analysis by interviewing the respondents. The advantages gained from using gender role analysis, are best articulated by Kravetz (1979). For instance, gender-role analysis is a process through which women come to understand how, by internalizing cultural values about women, they become co-conspirators in their own oppression (Kravetz, 1989:116). Furthermore, gender-role analysis also encourages women to evaluate the ways in which social roles and norms and structural realities limit or promote female

autonomy and choice (ibid:116). The best way to implement gender-role analysis would be through participatory methodologies, nevertheless.

The other question that remains unanswered in this study is: If women's roles are changing and requiring consideration in equity terms, are not men's roles also changing, and is there not the possibility of even greater discrepancy between men's and women's lives? Although this is not addressed, the assumption that does appear to remain constant in most cultures, is that men continue to retain power and have more control over their own lives than women.

### **1.11 ORGANIZATION OF THE STUDY**

This study is divided into eight chapters. The content is structured and sequenced in such a way that there is a coherent flow from theory through empirical analysis to conclusions.

**Chapter 1** deals with the introduction and outline of the study.

**Chapter 2** deals with available literature on women and development, identifying the theories and approaches in Third World countries by governments and donor agencies. This analysis provides the conceptual backdrop against which gender planning evolves.

**Chapter 3** This chapter looks at the concepts of social development, social welfare and social work and analyses their relevance in determining interventions in social development work with women (and gender). This chapter



identifies components for inclusion into the model which will be recommended, according to the aims of the study.

**Chapter 4** deals with the conceptual framework of the study, describing the use of models, identifying the key concepts leading to identifying the variables being studied.

**Chapter 5** presents data on the setting of the study, the context of women's lives.

**Chapter 6** deals with the research design, administration and implementation of research methods in the study.

**Chapter 7** describes empirically, the participation of women (and men) in household functions and in community development or decision making that impact upon social development. It is about analysis and interpretation of data.

**Chapter 8** deals with the most important findings, conclusions and recommendations emanating from the research investigation.

## **CHAPTER TWO**

### **THEORIES AND APPROACHES TO WOMEN IN DEVELOPMENT**

#### **2.1 INTRODUCTION**

The main thrust of this chapter is to highlight that the issue of women and gender in development can best be understood, if theories and attendant approaches to women in development are clarified. While most of the theories appear to be economic or political they have a variety of dimensions that are largely outside of women's own control, yet they have tremendous impact on women's ability to contribute to their families' well being.

The presentation is divided into two main parts, part one, which deals with the theories, and part two with the policy approaches.

#### **2.2 DEVELOPMENT THEORIES**

A discussion of the concept of social development, which is the focus of this thesis, must be accompanied by an analysis of the pre-existing economic and social situation preceding its adoption in development. Development, for most people, connotes a process of economic change brought about by industrialization (Midgley, 1995:2). A condition of under-development was seen as a pre-existing situation, particularly in Third World countries, which needed to be changed to improve the people's quality of life. Economists defined under-development as an economic situation dominated by a large and predominantly subsistence agricultural sector characterized by low

productivity, under-utilized labour and dependence on primary commodities (Midgley 1995:72). On the other hand, sociologists defined underdevelopment as a condition characterized by traditionalism and backwardness. Social workers and social planners emphasised the low levels of welfare of underdeveloped regions (Ibid.:72).

Development theories subscribed to by the international community and popularized in the United Nations have had powerful influences on the economies, societies, and politics of “new” nations in, the 20<sup>th</sup> century. Those theories have shifted several times since the end of World War II. Three major theories are analyzed, namely, modernization, the dependency and the basic needs theories.

### **2.2.1 Modernization theory**

The earliest theory of development was “modernization”. This theory contrasted the “traditional” with “modern” societies and was modelled along Western industrialization that favoured “trade not aid” (Snyder & Tadesse, 1995; Shiva, 1994). Economic growth, it was argued, would “trickle down” to the poor and this would happen after a certain “take off point” was reached.

There are numerous partial theories and thoughts within this paradigm, each emphasizing a particular aspect “be it economic, social or political”. Whatever the contribution, most regarded capital formation as the key factor and the overall task was to discover fundamental traits responsible for capitalist industrialization (Taylor, 1979). As a result, development as economic growth formed the major assumption on which the modernization paradigm was formulated.

Modernization then refers to a total transformation of a traditional pre-modern society

into the type of technology and associated social organization that characterised the advanced machine power, urbanization leading to ecological changes.

Another central view of the modernization paradigm is the assertion of the dual economy model. Inherent in this dichotomy is the assertion of diffusion of innovation from developed to under developed sectors of society, as a prime motivating force for replicating the Western World (Taylor, 1979). Wealth that accumulated in the modern sector would trickle down to the rural sector of the country. Thus, in modernization theory, under- development is regarded as an initial condition from which developing countries can escape if they follow the path of economic modernization, as embedded in the view on stages of economic growth.

In the area of rural development, women and agricultural modernization, the “trickle down” principle, failed conspicuously. Hohne and Turner (1990:89) point out that in the 1950's and 1960's in the few instances when attention was devoted to women's roles in development, “some inequalities were acknowledged but it was assumed that as modernization progressed, the just and natural order of gender relations would be established”.

The effects of modernization were felt more in the agricultural sector where a majority of rural women are involved. Although some modernization innovations have helped some women in some areas - the success story is not significant. Regarding men as heads of households, it was assumed that women's position would improve, as did the economic prosperity of their husbands. Brydon and Chant (1989:95), add, “if women were considered in development at all, it was at best as adjuncts to their husbands or as daughters or mothers”.

In most cases, induced modernization originated from some form of colonial occupation. Literally, modernization meant a process of 'bringing up to date' what was taking place, in which there was a replacement or exchanging of older things with something new (Coetzee, 1988). Consequently, as men are usually the decision-makers in rural areas, the tendency has been to modernize activities performed by men in preference to women's.

Technological innovation often worked to the detriment of rural women in that it either replaced the work of women, or increased their backbreaking load. As pointed out by the International Labour Organization (ILO) (1980:31), "the introduction of technological and scientific method of farming has often contributed to the marginalization of women ... agricultural assistance schemes, training in modern farming techniques and the acquisition of machines ... have generally been conceived with men in mind".

Modernization therefore, placed women firmly within the family structure and ignored their role in the labour force. The degree of inequality between men and women was accepted as being functionally necessary. As a result "the modernization of agricultural techniques, further created differences in levels of productivity between men and women" increasing the inequality which already existed (ILO, 1980:32).

The negative effects of modernization on women is summed up by Palmer (1977:101) "... these were women's longer working days, their continued employment in labour intensive, low productivity work, and the decline in their control over the family's purchasing power".

Modernization did not contribute to the upliftment of rural women's conditions, but

rather ignored and even increased the problems they faced. Instead, some form of dependency was created for rural women who had to rely on the remittances from their husbands or sons who had migrated to urban areas.

The general idea behind the meaning of development within the modernization paradigm, was the necessity for the application of certain external instigating factors in society so as to introduce change. Even colonialism was regarded as one such instigating factor necessary to activate the Third World Societies to accomplish this process of differentiation and be like or similar to westernized or urban communities.

This latter view has been rejected by rural communities in present day South Africa, particularly in Kwa Zulu Natal, where it has been articulated by people that they do not intend “becoming replicates” of cities “to be developed”, but rather they want their basic needs met and human rights ensured. This pragmatic view has developed because of some negative experiences with “development programmes” instituted in their areas.

### **2.2.2 The dependency paradigm**

The second major approach to the study of underdevelopment, emerged due to numerous failures and the growing disenchantment within the economic theory of development (Todaro, 1977:90).

This approach views Third World Countries as being caught up in a dependence and dominance relationship to rich countries. The explanation of this paradigm was to combine economic, institutional factors into a social system model of international development and under-development (Ibid.:90).

Essentially, the focus of research within this paradigm moved from the role of the capitalist countries in rescuing the poor people of the Third World from underdevelopment, to the critical analysis of the way in which capitalism has historically brought about underdevelopment.

Todaro (1977) mentions two major streams of thought within the dependency paradigm. The first, attributes under-development primarily to the capitalist system dichotomy of “rich country” - “poor country” relationship. Dominated by unequal power relationships between the centre and the periphery, proponents of this thought, render attempts by poor societies to be self-reliant, and independent very difficult, even sometimes impossible.

The second stream of thought attributes Third World under-development to faulty and inappropriate services provided by international expert advisors from developed countries. They argue that the persistence of poverty in the Third World is a result of economic and political influences of First World countries. This is the dependency theory Which rejects the exclusive emphasis on increasing capital as an index of development. Instead, more emphasis is placed on needed structural and institutional reforms in order to raise the general standard of living of the masses of the people (Ibid.:92).

Common to the dependency theory is the notion that as a result of dependency and unequal exchange, capitalist development in some places (the core or the metropolis) continuously and necessarily creates under-development at other places (the periphery or the satellite) in the world capitalist system.

Dependence then arises because of the division of labour, which allows industrial

development to take place in some countries while restricting it in others (Ibid.:91). The most popular line of argument within the dependency perspective is found in the prolific writings of Frank (1978) who offered an explanation as to why in the light of post-war economic expansion, the great majority of poor, newly independent countries were not sharing in economic development. Thus within the dependency paradigm, underdevelopment is analysed as being a historical product of the relations between the underdeveloped society and the penetrative capitalist system. Rather than work towards a new global economic order, however, the reaction of the donor community to the negative impacts of modernization, was to stress the basic needs approach.

### **2.2.3 The Basic needs theory**

Historically, prior to the 1970's, the reduction of poverty was the general goal of (economic) development. As mentioned earlier, policy makers believed that high economic growth was the most effective way of achieving this objective - as advanced in the trickle down theory.

However, by the early 1970's due to the failure of conventional theories to substantially reduce poverty, policy makers decided that it was necessary to look deeper than the aggregate growth figures in their development policies. The outcome was the need for redefinition of economic growth in terms that would include the reduction of poverty (Coetzee, 1988:143).

The basic needs approach (BNA) emerged as an alternative to the shortcomings of economic growth theory. Coetzee (Ibid.:143), argues in this regard that the approach represents a broad outlook on development, which focuses on combining poverty alleviation and raising the productivity of the poorest sectors of society, and thus the



creation of an egalitarian society. Embedded within the basic needs approach is the focus on “man and his welfare” and the recognition that the poor must also benefit from economic growth. Thus the requirement of the BNA is to ensure adequate provision of goods and services to satisfy the basic human needs of the poor strata of society (Natrass, 1980:1).

‘Basic needs’ mean different things to different people and as such is interpreted in several different ways. The International Labour Organization (ILO, 1977) defines the concept to include the following core basic needs:

- firstly, minimum requirements of a family for private consumption such as food, housing and clothing as well as certain household equipment and furniture,
- secondly, public consumption goods and services for the community at large, such as safe drinking water, sanitation, public transport, health and educational facilities.

The declaration of Cocoyoc<sup>2</sup> offers a broader acceptable description (for this discourse) of basic needs and development by stating that: “... any process of growth that does not lead to the fulfilment of basic needs - or even worse disrupts them - is a traversy (limitation) of the idea of development” (in Chai, ILO, 1977:6).

Furthermore, development includes the right to work” ... not simply having a job but finding self-realization in work, the right not to be alienated through production processes that use humans simply as tools” (Ibid.:6).

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<sup>2</sup> The Declaration of Cocoyoc (1974) was a statement issued by a group of Social Scientists, natural scientists and economists at a seminar on “Patterns of Resource Use, Environment and Development Strategies.

The BNA is regarded by Palmer (1977:107) as having two facets for women in developing countries. One is to enable women to contribute more effectively to the satisfaction of their families' needs within the framework of their traditional responsibilities. The other, which is a fundamental need of the women themselves, is to ease their work burden, while furthering their economic independence. However, the approach does not contribute to the reduction of dependency and as a result it can act as a stumbling block for the attainment of self-esteem. Hence, it is generally criticised in that it attacks the symptoms of poverty rather than the causes (Coetzee 1988:153).

In fact, the adoption of inappropriate economic and social development policies under the guide of modernization and the dependency theories has caused many problems in numerous countries (Midgley 1995:77). The least of these is what Midgley calls "distorted development" (ibid.:77).

The phenomenon of persistent poverty in the midst of economic affluence is one of the most problematic issues of development today (ibid.:3). Economic development, even where it occurs, is not accompanied by social progress and is characterized by what Midgley refers to as "distorted development". Distorted development is manifested not only in poverty, deprivation, low health status and inadequate housing, but also by the exclusion of sections of the population from full participation in development (ibid.:5). Midgley continues to identify "the oppression of women and the perpetration of conditions of deprivation for hundreds of millions of women around the world" as another example of distorted development (ibid.:5).

It has become imperative to address the problem of distorted development where measures are needed that promote economic development, and at the same time ensure that social development is given high priority (ibid.:6-7). Most promising, has

been the convening of the World Summit for Social Development in 1995 by the United Nations. This event, through the Copenhagen Declaration and Programme of Action, after a period of neglect, refocused again on social welfare as an important issue for international debate. With the support of the world leaders, the prospect of revitalizing the social development approach seemed better than before (ibid.:7).

Social development as the latest development theory and an approach to promoting development and its relationship to social welfare and social work, will be analysed in the following chapter.

In the interim, the second section of this chapter looks at the policy approaches that have emerged over time and have been used to meet development needs of women in the Third World countries.

### **2.3 POLICY APPROACHES TO WOMEN IN DEVELOPMENT**

Concepts relating to women and development originated in the 1950's and 1960's. They have been influenced by development theories, including in the mid 1970's, influence by feminist theory.

There is now widespread agreement about the fact that women are part of the “vulnerable group” whose access to and control over local, national and international resources must be ensured to prevent the harm to human well being that results. There is and has been less agreement among theorists about the approaches that should be adopted to resolve the problem. The following section identifies and examines five of these approaches, namely the welfare, the equity approach, the anti poverty, efficiency and empowerment approaches.

### 2.3.1 The welfare approach

The approach was introduced in the 1950's and 1960's and is founded on the theory that women are solely passive recipients of development benefits because their major roles are reproductive ones - motherhood and child bearing - whereas men's work is identified as productive (Snyder & Tadesse, 1995:9). To this end, policy seeks to meet practical gender needs, top down, with handouts of food and measures against malnutrition and family planning.

The welfare approach is seen as the oldest and still is the most popular social development policy for the Third World in general and for women in particular (Moser, 1995:58). Its underlying rationale towards women reflects its origin, which is linked to the residual model of social welfare first introduced by colonial authorities in many Third World countries prior to independence (Ibid.:58). This approach is similar to the western social welfare model which works hand in hand with the modernization theory (Snyder & Tadesse, 1995). The creation of two parallel approaches to development assistance - on the one hand, financial aid for economic growth; on the other hand, relief for socially deprived groups - was then replicated in development policy for Third World countries (Moser, 1995:59).

Financial aid for economic growth was aimed at productive work where men participated as breadwinners while "welfare provision for the family was targeted at women, who along with the disabled and the sick were identified as "vulnerable" groups and remained the responsibility of the marginalized ministries of social welfare" (Moser, 1995:59). Writers on women and development also identify population programmes with the welfare approach (Snyder & Tadesse, 1995:9). In South Africa and in particular in Kwa Zulu Natal the government Department of Welfare is integrated with

“Population Development”, essentially targeting childbearing women.

On the plus side, the welfare approach promotes the availability of much needed material and child health care, with a consequent reduction in infant and to some extent, maternal mortality rates. Social welfare programmes have saved millions of refugees, displaced persons and victims of drought and natural disasters from starvation and given them shelter (Ibid.:10).

The major weaknesses in the welfare approach can nonetheless be very limiting because it lacks a developmental perspective. First, it fails to consider women’s productive activities and their economic responsibilities. Second, and this is implied in the term “welfare”, it tends to foster dependency rather than self-reliance. Moser (1995:61-62) highlights the fact that the approach is not concerned to meet such strategic gender needs as the right of women to have control over their own reproduction. In South Africa this is unacceptable, with the introduction of abortion rights for women the domestic violence act, etc. During the Women’s Decade which was declared by the United Nations between 1975 - 1985, the critique of the welfare approach resulted in the development of a number of alternative approaches to women; namely, the equity, anti-poverty, efficiency and empowerment (ibid.:62).

### **2.3.2 The equity approach**

This was the original approach to Women in Development (WID) and was utilized during the Decade for Women 1975 to 1985, 85 (Snyder & Tadesse 1995, Moser 1993). It originated from western women as they exerted pressure on international development. The main thrust of the equity approach, an offshoot of the concern for equality between the sexes, relies on legal methods. Gaining equality for women was

in fact the primary approach of the UN Commission on the Status of Women (CSW) through the 1960's, and it is the strategy of the Convention on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW) today (Snyder & Tadesse, 1995:11). Moser (1993:62) emphasizes that the equity approach not only sees women as active participants in development, but also recognizes women's triple role and seeks to meet strategic gender needs through direct state intervention, giving political and economic autonomy to women and reducing inequality with men. This approach has been criticized and labelled as Western feminism considered threatening and unpopular with governments (ibid.:63). The reaction to the equity approach seemed to have arisen from the general reaction against feminism in the 1970's, including particularly what Smith (1994:45-59) calls "the black feminist movement". Black feminists themselves in the United States, and those in other countries of the world and in the Third World, adamantly believe that feminism provides the theory that clarifies the nature of black women's experience, makes possible positive support from other black women, and encourages political action that will change the very system that has put them down (ibid.:56). Some criticism of the equity approach has been to argue that women in Africa, preferred to spend their energies on increasing their incomes rather than on confronting their men-folk, because their highest priority was providing for their children's well being. This opinion is not justified in the equity approach. The equity approach acknowledges that women must be "brought into" the development process through access to employment and the market place and it therefore accepts women's practical gender need to earn a livelihood (Moser 1993:63-64). In focusing on reducing inequality between men and women in the gender division of labour, the equity approach meets an important strategic need (ibid.:64), and this coincides with feminist thoughts.

In fact politically, the majority of development agencies were hostile to equity

programmes precisely because of their intention to meet not only practical gender needs but also strategic gender needs, whose very success depended on an implicit redistribution of power (Ibid.:65). This approach threatened the *status quo* in a fundamental way. Smith (1994:47) argues that third world men, desiring to maintain power “over their women” at all costs, have been among the most willing reinforcers of the fears and myths about the women’s movement, “attempting to scare us away from figuring things out for ourselves”. Consequently the Plan of Action of the International Women’s year (IWY) in 1975, which firmly reflected the equity approach, was in trouble from the onset. Despite the endorsement of the Plan of Action similar antipathy was felt by many Third World Governments, legitimated by their belief in the irrelevance of Western - “exported” feminism to Third World women. In fact one of the outcomes of the 1975 Conference was the labelling of feminism as ethnocentric and divisive to Women in Development (WID) (Moser, 1993:65). In the meantime, black feminists in the United States among others, were organizing and articulating their views in support of ‘black’ feminism which aptly explains the events in 1975. Smith (1994:47) wrote the following in this connection:

“Feminism is potentially the most threatening movement to Black and Third World people because it makes it absolutely essential that we examine the way we live, how we treat each other and what we believe. It calls in question the most basic assumption about our existence and this is the idea that biological, i.e. sexual identity, determines all, that it is the rationale for power relationships as for all other levels of human identity and action. An irony is that among Third World people biological determination is rejected and fought against when it is applied to race but generally unquestioned when it comes to sex.”

The reaction to the “threat” of such change was then depicted in the antipathy towards the equity approach to policy and more so programme implementation. Like “Black” feminism, equity must be understood and never be seen as a threat to the viability of

the black community but instead as having the potential to enhance the quality of life and ensure the survival of every man or woman and child in the community (Smith, 1994:59).

One aspect of the equity approach that has gained worldwide recognition in the 1990's, is "Women's Rights and Human Rights" or "Gender Equity". In South Africa, priority is given to reforming inheritance laws for widows and children, land ownership, reproductive rights such as access to abortion, health care, prevention of violence against women; sexual harassment and so on. Society must still be conscientized to acknowledge and respect these rights and they must be fought for in order that they be implemented and enforced.

The new constitution and the political climate in South Africa is providing an enabling environment for the equity approach to women in development and all the citizens of South Africa.

### **2.3.3 The anti-poverty approach**

The anti-poverty approach to women in development corresponds with the shift to concern with absolute poverty and the basic needs theories of the 1970's that were promulgated by the International Labour Organization (ILO) and the World Bank (WB) respectively. It aimed at increasing the productivity of women and the poor. ILO and the World Bank respectively saw their poverty as a problem of underdevelopment not of subordination. The emphasis thus shifted from inequality between men and women, to reducing income inequality (Moser, 1993:67). Women became the central focus of strategies to overcome hunger and malnutrition that accompany poverty because they and their dependent children, dominated the poorest groups. Organizations such



as the World Bank targeted women from the perspective of population control, which was key to their anti-poverty mechanism. The pre-occupation with basic needs strategies, and with population control, also resulted in increasing recognition that education and employment programmes could simultaneously increase women's economic contribution and reduce fertility (ibid.:68). However, the latter did not happen since women had no reproductive rights (promoted by the equity approach). Women's reproduction was controlled by men who had the power to decide how many children had to be born, with no duties assigned for their physical day to day rearing and nurturing.

When highlighting the limitations of focusing on income generation projects, Moser (ibid.:69) puts it aptly by saying: "unless an income generating project also alleviates the burden of women's domestic labour and child care for instance, through the provision of adequate socialized child caring, it may fail to meet even the practical gender need to earn an income". In South Africa the Flagship Programme was piloted in selected provinces to effect the developmental approach to social welfare with its focus on employment creation and the promotion of social and economic independence (Department of Welfare Annual Report, 1995-96:5). The intention of the Programme was to address the needs of unemployed mothers with children under five years, and it focussed on capacity building, the economic empowerment of women, while providing child care facilities, early childhood development and social support for single-parent families involved in the programme. Its impact has not been dramatic and it is still to be evaluated in the context of wider social development goals. The point is that the pilot project was never replicated in other communities.

Among the anti-poverty activities put in place by women and by development programmes, are income-generating and entrepreneurship projects. While income-

generating projects for low-income women have proliferated since the 1970's, they have tended to remain small scale and to be developed by non-governmental organizations (NGO's) most frequently composed of all women (Moser, 1993:68), Moser (ibid.:68) has highlighted the problems experienced by anti-poverty programmes in the implementation process, due to the tendency to shift towards welfare oriented projects. Most frequently they aim to increase productivity in activities traditionally undertaken by women, rather than to introduce women to new areas of productive work (ibid.:68).

The traditional activities are often time consuming, domestic in nature, and small scale with very little marketing opportunities. The International Labour Organization (ILO:1997) on key gender issues in entrepreneurship development for women, identifies a number of constraints to women's self-employment, particularly in terms of the initial setting up of their businesses. ILO (International Labour Organization, 1997) summarizes the constraints and barriers that are gender specific as follows:

- Behavioural barriers, e.g. women have little self-confidence and a negative self-image;
- Role barriers, e.g. conflicting role demands and time constraints;
- Social and cultural barriers, e.g. negative attitudes towards women in business, the fact that women are supposed to fulfill their reproductive roles, restrictions as to the choice of sector, lack of family support, lack of mobility, etc.;
- Educational barriers, e.g. women have relatively lower education levels, have received a biased education, usually have limited access to vocational training and opportunities;
- Occupational barriers, e.g. women have fewer opportunities in the form of vocational training opportunities;

- Infrastructural barriers, e.g. access to credit technology, support services, land and information; and
- Legal barriers, e.g. independent legal action is limited for women.

It can be assumed that most of these barriers have a socio-cultural origin and, as such require deep rooted attitudinal changes in the socio-cultural environment, which is in itself a long term process. However, lack of the political will and commitment among the developing societies themselves and the development agencies, perpetuates the problems further. The reaction to the equity approach applies here as expressed by Moser (ibid.:65):

“Productivity programmes for women usually require some restructuring of the cultural fabric of society, development agencies, do not like to tamper with the unknown and unfamiliar social variables. As a rule of thumb they tend to believe in upholding social traditions and thus are reluctant to implement these programmes”.

Despite their limitations, the enterprise projects of the anti-poverty approach made a major contribution to fostering the spread of community revolving loan funds, thus opening the question of women’s access to formal institutions such as banks and co-operatives (Snyder & Tadesse, 1995:12). Some of these projects have grown in scale; others have been replicated and still others went out of existence. In South Africa, some have grown, where women have broken into the male dominated field of construction (although traditionally, women in rural areas have always been actively involved in housing) as evidenced by the growth of NGO’s such as the South African Women in Construction (SAWIC).

### **2.3.4 The Efficiency Approach**

The efficiency approach became predominant, particularly in the 1980's debt crisis, and it developed to ensure that development is efficient and effective through women's economic contribution (Moser 1993:69).

It is based on awareness that structural adjustment policies depend on women's contribution to development and the efficiency approach aim to make women more efficient managers of poverty alleviation programmes. Key interventions, based on the approach centred around both employment creation and productivity increase, so that women can move from low paying jobs, and break the cycle of poverty.

The efficiency approach is development-oriented and does seek to improve productivity in order to enhance the quality of people's lives, rather than solely to achieve economic growth. Since women constitute half of the available labour force and bear heavy economic responsibilities, increasing their productivity would logically lead to economic growth and hasten development activities (Snyder & Tadesse, 1995). However, within a short time the efficiency approach has become exclusively market-oriented. The approach is closely tied to the dependancy reversal theory, which places the responsibility for development solely within developing countries themselves. It is on this ground that the approach is criticised.

Its emphasis lies in the assumption that increased economic participation for Third World women is automatically linked with increased equity and the acknowledgement that women represent an under-utilized and wasted human resource essential for development.

Implemented through the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and the World Bank, and the Structural Adjustment Programmes (SAPS), the approach forced women to change the balance of their time between activities undertaken in each of their triple roles - particularly through the use of their unpaid time (Moser, 1993). As a result, women were forced to increase their labour both within the market and the household. Fundamentally the hours of work have not changed. What has changed is time allocated to different activities. In most cases this approach fails to reach any strategic gender needs and because of the reductions in resource allocation, it also results in serious reduction of resources to meet practical gender needs (ibid.:73).

Inherent in SAPS is the male bias that women's reproductive work in such unpaid activities as caring for children and gathering fuel, to name but a few, must continue irrespective of additional work women must perform, as employees in productive work and as community managers. Moser (1993:72) expresses this point thus: "The need to gain access to resources has forced women to allocate increasing time to productive and community managing activities, at the expense of reproductive activities, which in many cases have become a secondary priority delegated, wherever possible to daughters or other female household members".

Furthermore, the efficiency approach assumes that the intra-household distribution of resources affects all members of the household in the same way, ignoring the fact that women always have less access and carry the extra burden, especially in households dominated by male control over power relationships.

Therefore the emphasis on income generating activities for women is in reality, an extension of women's unpaid traditional work, which is mostly reproductive rather than productive. The rural development programmes and income generation for women

have included sewing projects, weaving, pottery and non-commercial farming. Women are preferred for their “nimble” fingers doing the work favoured for its artistic and tourism value and marketed through agents. The production is very slow and little profit is accrued, and hence no economic independence for women other than mere subsistence is possible. This has kept them out of mainstream economy.

In summary, although the approach, in conjunction with SAP's, is in general developmental at macro level, it promotes the least desirable elements of economic adjustments, whose prescriptions include severe cutbacks in government personnel and operations, reliance on the private sector for growth and participation in the free markets of the global economy. At household and local level women lose income for family support due to retrenchment from the formal sectors of employment, and have to look for incomes in the informal sector, where they face several constraints articulated by ILO under the foregoing discussion of the “anti-poverty approach”.

### **2.3.5 The empowerment approach**

The approach came into its own in the mid 1980's. The empowerment approach acknowledges inequalities between men and women and the origin of women's subordination in the family. Furthermore, the approach holds that women experience oppression differently according to their race, class and colonial history, amongst other things. It therefore encourages women to challenge oppressive structures in society (Moser, 1993).

The approach also acknowledges the importance of women to increase their power as opposed to just the status, with power identified in terms of the capacity of women to increase their own self-reliance and internal strength and not as domination over

others. Power in this regard is according to Moser (*ibid.*:75): is the right to determine one's own choices in life and to influence the direction of change through the ability to gain control over crucial matters and non-material resources.

The best known articulation of the empowerment approach according to Moser (*ibid.*:75) has been made by the Development Alternatives with Women for the New Era (DAWN). The movement argues for the transformation of the "structures of subordination" such as a change in the laws, the systems of property rights, control over women's bodies, and the social and legal institutions that underwrite male control and privilege, as essential if women are to attain justice in society.

Within the process of achieving empowerment, DAWN speaks of personal autonomy for women, the poor, and for nations of the developing world, which means that they are able to make their own choices in the realm of politics, economics and society (Moser, 1993). The approach calls for participation, and seeks to create self-reliance, ensuring that targeted measures reach women through autonomous women's organizations (Snyder & Tadesse, 1995:14). However, the emphasis of the approach on women's organizations, the empowerment approach might appear similar to the welfare approach, which also stressed these in respect of reproductive roles (*ibid.*:14). Yet on the other hand the empowerment approach superficially, recognizes the triple role of women and seeks, through bottom-up women's organizations, to raise women's consciousness to challenge their subordination (Moser 1993:76).

Unlike the confrontative method of achieving strategic gender needs of women used by the equity approach, the empowerment approach utilizes practical gender needs as the basis on which to build a secure support base and a means through which strategic needs may be realized (*ibid.*:77). In summarizing the impact of the approach, it can

be said it is limited because of lack of support by national governments. Despite the widespread growth of Third World women's groups and organizations, whose approach to women is essentially one of empowerment, they remain under-funded, reliant on the use of voluntary and unpaid women's labour and time, and dependent on the resources of those few international NGO's and First World governments prepared to support this approach to women and development (ibid.:78-79).

Women's subordinate status emanating from their powerlessness, resourcelessness and propertylessness, the male attitude, class, race, ethnicity, religion and gender, must be eliminated through empowerment. This is the crux of the goal of gender sensitive development planning. Women can take care of themselves if they are empowered, and if an enabling environment is created for them to gain access to resources, technology and social services, to name but a few.

The term "gender" became popular in the late 1980's as replacement for "women and development: Gender is preferred over "women and development" because gender more easily accommodates class, race, ethnicity and acknowledges male-female power relationships (Snyder & Tadesse, 1995). Feminist theories influenced the latter thinking because power is a central concern with feminist analysis (Van Den Berg & Cooper, 1994:25).

Feminist visions for social work education and practice are much broader and more inclusive, with gender at the centre and do not solely address "women's issues" rather the power relations, patriarchy, and subordination.



## 2.4 CONCLUSION

In conclusion, it can be said that development theories are inseparable from the cultural, ecological, political, economic and spiritual environment in which they are developed and upheld. The increasing interdependence of the economies and societies of the world means that co-operation among these, is particularly crucial to ensure that countries in need of assistance such as those in Africa and other least developed countries, can benefit from the process of globalization. In the early days of the theory of 'underdevelopment' persistent poverty and other development problems of the Third World, were explained and explained using the development paradigms such as modernization, the dependency and dependency reversal. The world has finally recognized and acknowledged the existence of "distorted" development (Midgely, 1995), hence the focus on social development as a global development strategy of the 1990's. The broad-based environmental and economic growth in the context of sustainable development is seen as necessary to sustain social development and social justice (Copenhagen Declaration and Programme of Action, 1995). Consequently for the first time, world nations have committed themselves to the Copenhagen Declaration on Social Development and Programme of Action to create an enabling environment for enhancing social development and ensuring human well being for all. This implies shared responsibility for development at international, national, regional and local levels. Integrating gender concerns in the planning and implementation of policies and programmes for the empowerment of women became identified as one of the critical concerns of the plan of action of social development.

With the enabling environment created through macro and micro policies of social development, the positive aspects of the various policy approaches to women in development, have a chance of implementation and success. In as far as the

development approaches themselves are concerned, it must be remembered that each has dilemmas to be resolved and has different effects on women, and thus choices need to be made to maximise any degree of success in their implementation. The development of rural or poor women calls for a wide range of actions addressing issues of welfare, of equity, efficiency, poverty and empowerment to meet both the strategic gender needs and the practical gender needs of women (the latter are defined in detail in Chapter 4).

In the chapter that follows, social development as a development philosophy of the 1990's, and how it accommodates women's gender needs, will be analyzed. In particular, social work and its relation to social welfare and then social development, are all examined for their potential in promoting empowerment and development that accommodates the gender concerns of the disadvantaged, particularly women.

## **CHAPTER THREE**

### **SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT, SOCIAL WELFARE AND SOCIAL WORK PRACTICE IN SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT**

#### **3.1 INTRODUCTION**

Social development and its relationship to social welfare and the profession of social work are analyzed for their potential contribution in improving the quality of life of people, in particular of rural women, their children and families.

The Copenhagen Declaration on Social Development (1995:3) identified economic development, social development and environmental protection as interdependent and mutually reinforcing components of sustainable development which is the framework for efforts to achieve a higher quality of life for all people.

This chapter first analyses social development as a component of comprehensive or sustainable development. Then, the concept social welfare and the three conceptualizations of social welfare, namely the residual, the institutional and the developmental approaches, are analyzed. Social work, particularly the holistic generalist approach, its traditional methods, particularly community work, and its contribution to promoting social development, will be focused upon.

First, what does social development mean and why or how is it evolving as part of sustainable development?

### 3.2 THE MEANING OF SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT

The theme of social development is hardly new. In the past it has generally been understood with reference to the socio-psychological process of growth in the family system and the environment (Paiva, 1977:327). Social work as a profession whose central purpose is social functioning and which holds the family as the basic focus embraced this early understanding of social development. Today, however, social development is widely used in the context of development processes within and between countries, particularly in association with measures for economic welfare (ibid.:327). In short, people are being placed at the centre of economic development, and development itself is to be people-driven through their own institutions and with their environment taken into consideration.

Time and again the economist has underscored the need for both qualitative and quantitative assessments of the social requirements essential for successful development (ibid.:33). For example Loutfi (1980:1) formulated this clearly by saying that development entailed “more than a passage from poor to rich” or seemingly from “a traditional economy to a sophisticated urban one”. Inclusive within his conceptualization of development, was not only the idea of economic betterment, but also of greater human dignity, security, justice and equity. Another author, Thirwall (1983:81), also offered a comprehensive meaning of development defined in terms of the following criteria:

- “(1) **Life sustenance** - the concern in this category is with the provision of basic needs to people with the aim of raising them out of persistent poverty.
- (2) **Self-esteem** - the focus here is on the elimination of dominance of exploitation and dependence (all associated with an inferior

economic status), to the promotion of self-respect, independence and equity.

- (3) **Freedom** - this refers to freedom to choose and in addition, the right to education and attainment of skills are seen as a necessary incentive to develop and express one's own potential and determine one's destiny."

In respect of the first criterion identified above, two categories of basic needs are distinguished, namely:

- (a) The private needs of a family (e.g. jobs, income, food, clothing, shelter, etc.), and
- (b) Essential collective needs such as clean drinking water, sanitation, health, education, public transport and so forth (Coetzee, 1988:184).

### 3.2.1 Social development emerges

Development therefore is seen to occur where there has been economic progress, the meeting of basic needs, a greater sense of self-esteem for the country and individuals within it, and where there has been an expansion in the range of choices for individuals to participate fully in mainstream culture. Adding to the above definition, Todaro (1977:87) maintained that "... development should be perceived as a multi-dimensional process involving the re-organization and re-orientation of entire economic and social systems. In addition to the improvement in incomes and output, development involves radical changes in institutional, social and administrative structures, as well as in popular attitudes and sometimes even customs and beliefs."

Despite these progressive definitions of development, economic and social transformation did not happen, and the problems of underdevelopment and deprivation persisted. Midgley (1995) argues that in the twentieth century development has at best resulted in “distorted development” and social welfare for all has not been achieved. Although large scale economic development has taken place, the benefits of economic progress have not reached the total population of countries around the globe (Potgieter, 1998:241). In fact, there has arisen an urgent need to address the profound and persistent social problems especially poverty, unemployment, social exclusion and the structural causes and their distressing consequences.

These problems are experienced even in countries where economic structural adjustment programmes are being launched. These programmes are predicated by the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and the World Bank, to help revamp ailing economies and facilitate improved standards of living for the people. Mupedziswa, (1998:39) relates the case of Zimbabwe in Southern Africa, where he argues that while the economic reform programme has recorded some successes at the macro-level, its impact at the micro-level has been negligible. Instead, cutbacks in social spending, particularly in health and education, the removal of subsidies on basic commodities, and the removal of price controls, coupled with high inflation rates, have taken their toll among the general population, and these factors have combined to create an unbearable situation, especially among the poor (ibid.:40). Therefore economic development must not only encompass reform programmes but safety nets for the casualties. Social development, social welfare and social work interventions have to grapple with the resulting chronic socio-economic crises as well as operate in conditions of critical shortage of resources and deterioration of socio-economic circumstances, complicated by variables such as natural disasters, the spread and effects of HIV/AIDS. In South Africa, retrenchments in the public service and in industry

for reasons of ensuring economic viability and to increase cost efficiency, have complicated the already high unemployment situation.

In short, increasing the rates of growth in *per capita* income and in the gross domestic product - including the economic structural adjustment programmes - has not yet succeeded in distributing economic benefit to the vulnerable members of society. However, the good news is that members of the international community have constantly reminded each other of the social, *albeit* moral obligation to the poor and socially excluded.

The countries of the world finally acknowledged that countries cannot rely on the mechanisms of the free market system as the sole solution for social problems, and collectively re-committed themselves to social development at the World Summit for Social Development held in 1995 in Copenhagen. At the conclusion of the World Summit, governments adopted a Declaration and Programme of Action which represented a new consensus on the need to put people at the centre of development. The largest gathering yet of world leaders - 117 Heads of State or government (including President Nelson Mandela of South Africa) - pledged to make the conquest of poverty, the goal of full employment, and the fostering of stable, safe and just societies their overriding objectives (United Nations World Summit for Social Development, 1995:vii). The countries of the world shared the conviction [as well as accountability] that economic development, social development and environmental protection should form the framework for all countries, individually and collectively, to make efforts to achieve a higher quality of life for all people (Copenhagen Declaration and Programme of Action, 1995:40). The Copenhagen Declaration and Programme of Action, in its integrated approach to development attempts to combine many different actions for poverty eradication, employment creation, and social integration

in coherent national and international strategies for social development (ibid.:40). The creation of an enabling environment economically, politically, and legally at national and international levels is fundamental. South Africa, through its constitution, its bill of rights, and policies on human rights, and other mechanisms of government and civil society, has engaged in action to support the objectives of social development. Integrating gender concerns in the planning and implementation of policies and programmes for the empowerment of women has received special attention in the Programme of Action. Thus, it is at the international or global level that the background for social development at macro, regional and local levels (mezzo and micro levels) has been set for implementation in South Africa, and it can realistically begin to be seen as a viable approach to promote development and to achieve a social condition of well-being and welfare. Prior to 1994 there was no political or legal commitment from the government of the day - no constitution, bill of rights or legislation to support the global initiatives - not to mention those of the individual or small group or professional social work, to achieve social development goals.

### **Definition and strategies of social development**

Midgley (1995) links social development with the concept 'social welfare'. He defines social development as an approach to social welfare which offers an effective response to current problems (ibid.:12). The term social welfare is used to broadly refer to a 'social condition', not to the charity given by philanthropic individuals, charities or public assistance provided by government (ibid.:3). This is the social condition which Gray (1997:197) refers to as resulting from development and which comprises " ... human quality, and implies the improvement of social conditions in general and the quality of life of people in society in particular". According to Midgley (1995) social development is one of the approaches for promoting social welfare. However, since the



term “social welfare” is conventionally used to refer to the narrower field of organized social services described as a function of a welfare government department and other sectors and civil society, it should be used cautiously in relation to social development. ‘Social welfare’, it must be recognized, has a ‘broader’ sense, as it relates to the condition of social well-being and quality of life, rather than the narrower sense. In the latter case, the definition of social welfare becomes only a part of social development where social development is part of “sustainable development”. Social development becomes accepted as a philosophy that represents a significant paradigm shift in the global conception of development that has been adopted by governments for all developments at national, regional and local levels. Midgley (1995) argues for a broader notion of social development where it is seen as the possible solution to “distorted development” which only allows a portion of the population to reap the fruits of progress while others, such as women, youth and the disabled, especially those in isolated rural areas, are excluded from full participation in development.

Social development is defined as a process of planned social change designed to promote the well-being of the population as a whole in conjunction with a dynamic process of economic development. In explaining the social development model, Paiva (1979:329) identifies three pre-requirements for its feasibility and implementation. The first, is the political will. In other words, the government of a country must commit itself to the concept of development with due regard for human needs; social justice; and the procurement, development and application of resources for the well-being of all people, especially the most needy (ibid.:329). The second, is structural reform around issues such as reform of the oppressive systems such as the caste system [apartheid], the patterns of population structure and its distribution, the status of women in society, access to services and opportunities - all these being examples of elements of structural change that must be examined for their relevance in a given

situation (ibid.:330). Paiva continues to note that changes in structure are essential for social development either as prerequisites or concomitants of change. The third prerequisite in order to implement and maintain socio-economic integration and structural change, is the development of institutions (Blase, 1973:4-15). In trying to change social structure, therefore, there are three alternatives: to introduce new institutions, modify or restructure existing ones, or foster cooperation - not for the sake of working together alone, but because human needs and aspirations are valued for a better social order. Development cannot stop with increasing the levels of income, but must continue to strive toward social justice goals as well (Paiva, 1977:330). There are core concepts in social development which help to understand its meaning. In developing a conceptual framework, an analytic review of the sources of social development ideas and the body of existing knowledge about social development and its chief features are identified.

### **The core concepts**

The first of the concepts is intersystemic integration or a unified approach in bringing together the necessary components of the social and economic institutions to ensure harmonious development. Secondly, structural change is crucial to development as without it there is no significant impact on the lives of people. A goal of social development is to foster the emergence and implementation of a social structure in which all citizens are entitled to equal social, economic and political rights and equal status roles, prerogatives and responsibilities regardless of gender, race, sexual orientation, or disability (Chandler, 1994:151). Principles of social development include cooperation, participatory planning and decision making, distributive justice, advocacy, and nondiscrimination. In a survey of social development experts in social work, it was found that participation, respect for human dignity, humanism, non-

discrimination, and global awareness, were ranked by these experts as the top five social development values (Falk, 1981).

All the social development efforts at socio-economic integration, social structural change, and institution development have to continuously guard against obsolescence. The true-test of relevance, appropriateness, and timeliness of social development efforts, is a constant process of evaluating social institutions through feedback or other mechanisms (Paiva, 1977:331). This is linked to the goals of social work which include responsiveness to people's needs. Therefore social development can be promoted through a combination of micro and macro level approaches which take note of the specific needs of people as individuals, families, groups and communities (Potgieter, 1998:240).

What is needed for the task of development, is an adequate machinery which must be worked out for performing the core functions contributing to the development process (Paiva, 1977:333). The social work profession has the knowledge, skills and values to provide the required machinery.

Besides the usefulness of a theory or conceptual framework, the goals and approaches offered by social development to deal with the problems of "distorted" development, there are some problems that are identified at implementation of social development programmes. These problems are said to arise from the following constraints: funding limitations; operations and maintenance; inappropriate institutional framework; inadequate cost recovery framework; lack of professional and sub-professional staff; logistics, non-involvement of communities; lack of definite government policies, 'lack of planning and design criteria', inappropriate technology and inadequate or out-moded legal framework (WHO 1986). Therefore, social development can be achieved through

a combination of macro and micro level approaches which take note of the policies, their planning and implementation with continuous monitoring and evaluation of impact, efficiency and effectiveness.

In explaining what social development is, Midgley (1995:102) identifies three major strategies which include:

- 1) an individualistic approach to social development;
- 2) communities and social development; and
- 3) social development and government intervention.

These three strategies are closely connected focussing on two interrelated dimensions; the first being the development of the capacity of people to work continuously for their own and society's welfare; the second, being the alteration or development of a society's institutions so that human needs are met at all levels. In addition to the pre-requirements discussed in the foregoing presentation, it is important to note that nothing less than close cooperation among the various disciplines and human service professions will lead to the successful integration of social and economic dimensions (Paiva, 1977:333).

Social work has a special interest in social development because in its professional philosophy and practice it tries to look at the 'whole' person, group or community and attempts to integrate all that is needed for successful functioning (ibid.:333).

Social work is considered one of the social service professions, within social welfare if, not the primary profession within social welfare. In order to understand how social development is promoted and effected in South Africa, the concept social welfare must

be analyzed first, and then the role of social work in stimulating social development will be easy to identify.

### **3.3 THE CONCEPT 'SOCIAL WELFARE'**

In this section, social welfare is defined and the three different approaches that affect the profession of social work, are identified. Particular attention is paid on how far these conceptualizations have actually contributed to promoting social development. Finally, will be a discussion and a general critique of the social work profession within the developmental social welfare model.

First, in defining social welfare, it is important to understand the relationship between social welfare and social work. The terms "social work" and "social welfare" are often confused and sometimes used synonymously (Thackery *et al.* 1994:3). This needs clarification, as this use is erroneous. Social welfare has a broader meaning and encompasses social work, public welfare and other related programmes and activities (ibid.:3). Friedlander (1961:4) defined social welfare as "the organized system of social services and institutions designed to aid individuals and groups to attain satisfying standards of life and health, and personal and social relationships that permit them to develop their full capacities and to promote their well-being in harmony with the needs of their families and the community". Social Welfare in a broad sense, encompasses the well-being and interests of large numbers of people including their physical, mental, emotional, spiritual, and economic needs (Thackery *et al.* 1994:3). This holistic view is shared with the social work profession, which focusses on the wholeness and totality of a person - as an individual who is part of a family, of groups, organizations and communities - encompassing the personal environmental factors and behaviour - the total person in the total environment (ibid.:8).

Social work and social welfare share some key premises and even the same historical context in their evolution. Social services [social welfare] came first, and the methods of social work emerged within social welfare and it developed into a profession which is a specialized, modern, segment of the totality of social welfare (ibid.:4). This relationship between social work and social welfare means that the government's vision for a new welfare system as articulated in the White Paper for Social Welfare (1997), is very significant to social work.

Although the social work profession, and its links to social development will be discussed in detail later in the chapter, the foregoing comments on the relationship between social welfare and social work mean there will be reference to this connection in the discussion on social welfare. In critiquing social welfare, it is inevitable that social work is mentioned too.

### **3.3.1 The conceptualization of social welfare**

The present social welfare scene is substantially influenced by the past in the form of the two conflicting views of the role of social welfare, namely, the residual and the institutional viewpoints (Wilensky and Lebeaux, 1965).

#### **3.3.1.1 The residual view or model of social welfare**

In this model, social welfare has been described as 'residual' - a gap-filling first-aid role. According to this view, social services and financial aid should not be provided until all other measures or efforts have been exhausted (including the individual's and his or her family's resources (Zastrow, 1993:11). This notion is good in as far as it encourages use of one's own resources and consequently achieving self-reliance. Social work fitted

in here by fulfilling the role of enabler for the individuals, families and communities to improve their social functioning. Financial aid and other formal social services were seen as the last resort for social workers to recommend in their intervention. However, associated with the residual view is the belief that the causes of social welfare clients' difficulties are rooted in their own malfunctioning - that is, that clients are to blame for their predicaments because of personal inadequacies or ill-advised activities or sins (ibid.:11). Under the residual view there is usually a stigma attached to receiving services or funds (ibid.:12). In fact the residual view of welfare when adopted by the South African government, was complicated by the apartheid policy, and it lended its stigma onto social work, which worked within the social welfare system and overlapped with each other at practice (service) level.

The past political dispensation in South Africa enforced the residual social welfare model characterized by fragmentation of services with a focus on rehabilitative services (healing), rather than on prevention or development (White Paper on Welfare, 1997:10). Thus, social welfare did not succeed in addressing the basic human needs, large scale poverty and the social development priorities of all people (Potgieter, 1998:114).

### **3.3.1.2 The institutional model of social welfare**

The residual view co-existed and competed with the institutional approach to social welfare. This view holds that social welfare programmes are to be accepted as a proper legitimate function of modern industrial society in helping individuals achieve self-fulfilment (Wilensky and Lebeaux, 1965:139). Under this view there is no stigma attached to receiving funds or services; recipients are viewed as being entitled to such help (Zastrow, 1993:12). Associated with this view is the belief that an individual's

difficulties are due to causes largely beyond his or her control, for example, a person may be unemployed because of lack of employment opportunities. This then is in direct opposite to the residual view favoured by oppressive governments, social institutions and their policies, which needed to blame the victims and absolve themselves from any responsibility. Zastrow (ibid.:13) further notes that in the institutional view, when difficulties arise, causes are sought in the environment (society), and efforts are focussed on improving the social institutions within which the individual functions. In the Copenhagen Declaration and Programme of Action (1995:69) the United Nations declared that in meeting basic human needs of all, development efforts should ensure universal access to basic social services with particular efforts to facilitate access by people living in poverty and vulnerable groups. This aspect of the declaration acknowledged that causes of poverty and other social problems could not just lie in the individual, group or community, but that unavailable and inaccessible means, opportunities and basic social services, could be a major cause of the problems at national, and global levels. This identification of underlying and structural causes of social problems and their distressing consequences on people, means that for once the onus for change to effect development was also placed on governments (economic, political, social, religious and cultural) structures, in addition to individuals and civil society or communities. The institutional perspective of social welfare is based on the belief that the provision of such services is the price that has to be paid as part of the process of industrialization, but should not be interpreted as a licence for dictation by politicians, bureaucrats, and planners (Booyens in Potgieter, 1998:117). The institutional view to social welfare can only be made meaningful within the new social development paradigm and the changes in South African government and politics.

With the developments in post-apartheid South Africa, a third model of social welfare



has emerged, i.e. the developmental social welfare model.

### 3.3.1.3 The developmental social welfare model

A third way to conceptualize social welfare is called the developmental approach, which assumes that services and programmes should be developed to solve the problems connected with the unmet needs of people (Johnson & Schwartz in Potgieter, 1998:153). The developmental approach to social welfare has evolved during the period when the social development philosophy is being revived to promote a social condition of well-being or welfare for all populations in South Africa. The goals of a developmental social welfare programme as set out in the Reconstruction and Development (RDP:1997) are briefly articulated as follows:

- Attainment of basic social welfare rights for ALL South Africans through the establishment of a democratic, just, and effective social delivery system. So the goals of institutional welfare get embraced in the developmental welfare model.
- Redressing past imbalances specifically for women, children, youth the disabled, rural communities and informal settlements. Empowerment of individuals, families and communities to participate in the determination of the needs to be addressed.
- Recognition and cooperation of the organs of civil society in the welfare system.

Social service and support systems are thus a fundamental pre-requisite for upholding Section 10 of the South African Constitution (Act 108 of 1996) which states simply, yet profoundly, that:

“Everyone has inherent dignity and the right to have their dignity respected and protected.”

The White Paper for Social Welfare (1997) sets out the framework and objectives for a social welfare system that will contribute to meeting people’s expectations of the new democratic government for creating an improved quality of life for all.

The White Paper for Social Welfare (1997) defines social welfare as “an integrated and a comprehensive system of social services, facilities, programmes and social security to promote social development, social justice and the social functioning of people”. Furthermore, welfare services are viewed as part of a broad menu of social services which aim to enhance the quality of life of South Africans and which provide an enabling environment for women, youth, children, families and the aged to achieve their aspirations (Financing Policy Developmental Social Welfare Services, 1999:5).

Based on this, it will suffice to say that the developmental social welfare paradigm has become entrenched in the welfare policy of South Africa today, and consequently the promotion of the social development approach. This augurs well for social work or what is now called “developmental” social work. The White Paper for Social Welfare, (1997) expresses the government’s vision for a new welfare system as “a welfare system which facilitates the development of human capacity and self-reliance within a caring and enabling socio-economic environment” (Developmental Social Welfare Services Financing Policy, 1999:5). In the context of an enabling social developmental paradigm it can be expected that professional effort, the efforts of citizens and other non-governmental service providers, will flourish.

The White Paper for Social Welfare (1997) declares a “war on poverty” which, amongst

other things, aims to restore dignity, encourage empowerment, build self-sufficiency through skills development, and strengthen networks for the groups at risk in society, namely: disadvantaged, displaced, people, women and children, people with special needs, and those living in rural areas, informal settlements and farms. The policy in the White Paper also aims to strengthen and promote family life through targeted family-oriented policies and programmes, and adopts a multi-sectoral and multi-disciplinary approach to community development.

This conceptualization of social welfare has enriched and has been enriched by the social work profession. Social work has, from its early days, been about “helping people to help themselves”, maximizing their strengths and minimizing their weaknesses to cope with all the systems in their environment. This is underpinned by values of respect for human rights to participation and democracy. Human beings are seen to have adequate worth and the ability that can be stimulated to promote growth, social change and development. The developmental model to social welfare and social work, isolates the empowerment of people as one of its important cluster purposes, which should be understood in all its ramifications rather than using the term only as a popular slogan or as a buzz word (Potgieter, 1998:120).

**(a) A critique of the developmental model**

The current developmental approach to social welfare and the social development approach have started to provide an enabling environment for social work. However, not all is working out in practice, because there are a number of economic conditions and realities which dictate what is feasible. Fiscal restraint must be observed by all government departments: South Africa as part of the global economy must become internationally competitive in trade, and the government’s high deficit before borrowing

and debt - *inter alia*, present some of the constraints to developmental social welfare.

The developmental social welfare model has come at a time when the support for social development, as part of sustainable development, is at its peak. At the same time, the Economic Structural Adjustment Programmes (ESAPs) resulting in policies like the Growth Employment Redistribution Strategy (GEAR), which have been launched to remedy the socio-economic ills of the country, have their own impacts. The latter programmes were predicated by the international finance institutions such as the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund (IMF). Essentially, the policy is meant to help revamp the country's ailing economy and to ultimately facilitate improved living standards for the people, particularly the poor. However, while the economic reform programme is recording some successes at the macro level, its impact at the micro level has been negligible. A major negative impact of the restructuring programme has been felt in the area of formal employment. People have been retrenched and thus lost their jobs, effectively forcing them to join the ranks of a category of marginalised people dubbed the "new poor". Many other people who have traditionally eked out a living through informal sector activities, have also been badly hurt, as in most cases the viability of their ventures has been compromised. Low income earners still in formal employment have equally felt the impact of the economic reform programmes, as costs have escalated against a backdrop of reduced purchasing power. The sum total of developments in communities has been a marked reduction in the general standard of living for the generality of the population with severe social and related consequences.

Since social development encompasses social and economic aspects, developmental social welfare has encouraged income generation projects, job creation as part of its social development projects. However, because most practitioners, and especially management in welfare, see social development primarily as a means to combating

poverty, they tend to equate it to both income generation and entrepreneurship only. While income generation is certainly one important aspect of social development, to focus on it exclusively does tend to limit the possibilities for human development embraced in the developmental approach. The existence of this limited perspective on 'development, may be the reason why some observers ask whether there is still a distinction between "social development" and "business". 'Welfare' programmes are minimized and self-help, community-based programmes are promoted vigorously where the poor are expected to run their services in the face of economic decline (i.e. in the face of the harsh reality of ESAP). This has now marginalized the more human people-oriented goals of both development and welfare. Truly effective development practice, costs money, takes time, and critically, does employ specialized skills. For example, in servicing the profoundly mentally and physically handicapped, income generating projects cannot always survive without a subsidy. Therefore, the priority goal for government and NGO agencies to cut costs, has led to the avoidance of dealing with the complex needs and realities of clients' needs, further reinforcing "distorted social development". While practising developmentally and adding qualitatively to the work of the welfare sector through self-help and human development, the basic needs of the poor will still have to be met through social services and the provision of social security, in response to the ever-changing socio-economic circumstances.

The achievements emanating from the application of the developmental paradigm to social welfare have been mainly in the process of engaging the full participation of all stakeholders in determining social policy, monitoring, and evaluating it. The social development perspective embraces the value of participation of the community and has developed strategies to ensure the participation of the citizens affected by the change and policy development activities, for example, through the different financing policy options of the National Department of Social Welfare. During October 1999, the

Department had consultations with communities and NGO's around the country and found that very little impact was being made on poverty and social integration by welfare, and that the department and government had insufficient capacity to address social issues such as HIV/AIDS. Furthermore very few disabled people had received cash benefits, and there was no safety net for children over the age of seven (the ceiling age for the present child support grant - is R100 (one hundred rand only) (Sunday Times, January 16, 2000). A five year "10-point plan" has been drawn as a consequence, to "... restore the ethics of care and to reinforce human development in social welfare programmes" (Sunday Times, January 16, 2000).

Nevertheless, the different financing policy options of social welfare reflect the ultimate attempt at implementation in the developmental approach, through developing leadership from the disenfranchised and working toward achieving cooperation of a broad section of the community with which to plan and utilize resources. An important social work and social development value is that planning should not be done "to" people, but "with" them - that people should be actively recruited into the planning process, and that participation in all levels of discussion should be encouraged (Falk, 1981:67-83).

A nagging question which remains in respect of social welfare, is "how is developmental social welfare and social work respecting the dignity and worth of its clients?" Are social workers tacitly accepting the huge class, race and sexual divide that is still engulfing our society? The privatization of social services, while fulfilling the requirements of operating welfare as a "business" and increasing its cost-efficiency, does however, seem to indicate that much of social welfare and its funding options, reach the hands of middle-class operators, and give the poor away to the some times unethical community "developers" ready to cash in on development funding. In poverty

relief programmes, people who access substantial funding for viable sustainable programmes, are those organized into closed corporations, or who possess tendering and other business and management skills. They are often the better educated, politicized individuals who may not necessarily be scrupulous. Equally, the increase of private practice among social workers, seems to indicate that much of the profession is ready to serve middle-class clients, and give away the unemployed poor to informal helpers or networks or ineffective underfunded services. This latter service must not be confused with that of the natural helpers and self-help groups who possess indigenous helping skills, and exercise them in the context of mutual relationships where the formal social welfare services are inadequate. These are based on African cultural values of 'ubuntu' and mutual aid.

The best part of the developmental model of social work and social welfare, is that society and government in particular, accept the responsibility for services for all its people based on a holistic view of human services (Potgieter, 1998:117). This commitment to social welfare services that are developmental, accessible, efficient, and effective has been made by the South African government and its civil society.

Developmental social welfare therefore still needs at its core, services that are available and accessible to people who need them most, and which services must be implemented by caring, committed, ethical and knowledgeable, albeit well-trained professionals and other civil organizations or public officials.

How then does social work as a profession, fit in within the developmental paradigm to social welfare and social development?

(b) **Social work practice in the context of developmental social welfare**

Many definitions and theoretical models on what social work is and should be or can do have developed over the decades, and more are added every year. Practitioners and educators alike are faced with the daunting task of deciding what theoretical model(s) of social work is/are needed, as well as knowing how to select appropriate ones. Rather than seeing this eclecticism as a weakness, this must be seen as a strength of social work. One of the basic assumptions underlying social work is that as a profession it came into being and continues to develop because it meets human needs and their emerging aspirations as recognized by society (Thackery, et al. 1994:6). So it is adaptable and is static-dynamic.

Before presenting the role of social work as a profession in the developmental social welfare and social development context, it is important to clarify where the “developmental”, as a prefix in social work originates from. The distorted image of social work as “non-developmental” has two origins. One is the socio-political and economic history of South Africa, and the government’s philosophy and policies that promoted apartheid as a way to meet “the diverse human needs and aspirations recognized by society”. The second, is the way social work and community work or community development were defined in the American and British literature. The latter two had a profound influence on the thinking of the trend setters in the South African social welfare and social work spheres. The use of the term “developmental” before “social work” is used to indicate the “new image” of social work, particularly within the context of the post-apartheid developmental social welfare model and social development. It is argued in this discussion that social work has long been committed to “empowerment” and “development” in its goals. The only problem was that there was no enabling political environment to practise it in.



This situation needs clarification because social work as a human (social) service profession must re-discover its strengths, and what it has that can form the building blocks for the emerging paradigm shifts. This exercise can be likened to using SWOT (Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats) analysis prior to any strategic planning. It has actually become commonplace, with the advent of the developmental model to social work and social welfare, to blame (if not reject) social workers as having a narrow non-developmental outlook to practice. This is to be expected in the environment of reform, restructuring and reconstruction, but focussing on labelling social work as non-developmental, to which some social workers will respond by making the assumption a self-fulfilling prophecy, is negative and self-defeating. Where and how does social work get the stigma? In South Africa it started with the philosophy underlying its social welfare system.

Developmental social welfare is justifiable as it links social development and economic development and construes welfare as an investment in human capital, rather than a drain on limited resources (Potgieter, 1998:117). However, to use “developmental” to identify social work, is debatable. One important area to explore in order to understand the nature of social work practice, is the appreciation for how its knowledge base has developed over time. When the social work curriculum was presented to social work students in South Africa, the first world (American, European) theories had to be adapted to the South African context, with positive and negative results. The different role players in social welfare and social work education and practice came from diverse social, political, economic and cultural backgrounds, and represented a wide ranging world view. Hence, there were Black social workers and White social workers with different professional associations aligning members to different paradigms of what social work was, because of their political convictions and life experiences, rather than as a response to all of South African people’s needs. Black

social workers, or those social workers who felt alienated from the South African government-driven welfare system could be identified during the apartheid era, as they continuously sought social work theories that could sustain their professional aspirations and thoughts, from selected foreign literature rather than from “South African social work theory”. In the post-apartheid South Africa, the indigenisation of training material focussing on “South African theory” is very worthwhile, “ ... but even then we must be wary of throwing out the baby with the bathwater while the wheel gets reinvented” (Potgieter, 1998).

Criticism of social work as non-developmental, came from such quarters as those who resented any assistance to the poor, blaming the poor for their condition, and thus inventing or reinforcing the notion that social welfare (and social work) was a drain on the economy. Although social workers were theoretically expected to promote self-help and self-reliance in communities, neither the training costs nor the posts for community work, were subsidized by the state. Yet there were writers like Coetzee (1989:231) who realized that community work (as a specialized method) should be central to social work, but looked to social workers themselves for who to blame for what was happening, and did not scrutinize government policy implications. In advocating for community development, Coetzee argued that for “far too long social workers have failed to recognize that development was their real concern” (ibid.:231). This view seemed to ignore the facts about the meaning of development especially known as “separate development” in South Africa, which entailed a specific context of oppression for black people, and that anything meant to serve them was to be heavily regulated. Lack of an enabling environment for social work was ignored as a constraint. Therefore the residual social welfare approach meant that for social work, there was no “favourable environment” for a development and an empowerment focus. Only those functions that were non-threatening, and which maintained the *status quo* sought by

the establishment (i.e. the government and the voters in strategic powerful positions), were feasible and permissible. There were many social workers who worked in under-resourced, marginalised, and disadvantaged communities, and they worked hard to uphold the vision of their profession even though they were not supported. These social workers would agree with the following assertion in Potgieter (1998:244):

“We want to argue that this oversight was not typical of what the profession stands for [stood for even in the apartheid era], but rather the result of the shortsightedness of many of its practitioners [especially those in privileged management positions]. A close look at the purpose of the profession proves that social work has a pertinent role to play in the field of development, especially when its generic character is emphasized. I believe that more South African social workers many in isolated rural communities, managed to maintain a broad developmental focus, in spite of the fact that policy and subsidies favoured a narrow therapeutic approach in the past. Such efforts were unfortunately never documented and the profession is poorer as a result.”

In fact, social workers referred to above, adapted social work practice and functioned more as generalist practitioners rather than specialist caseworkers. They selected and relied upon the knowledge, the theories and values that are part of the social work profession, and maximized their benefit for their developmental work.

The second reason for the labelling of social work as non-developmental has arisen from the ongoing debate as to the value of generalist social work practice versus specialization, and also the definition of the nature of community organization work in the United States as opposed to that in Great Britain. The influence of the latter can be observed in contradictions evident in the dichotomization of definitions of community work, and community development where casework was a field apart from them.

First, the profession of social work has historically been committed to a process of social change that aims to ensure adequate provisions and opportunities for the needy, the vulnerable, the oppressed, and the underprivileged (Axinn and Levin, 1982). And while most social workers were hard at work developing a professional reputation as caseworkers who assist “individuals” to cope with stresses within their environment, a small cadre of them, starting with such great women as Jane Addams, Florence Kelly and Lillian Wald, were also working to identify and reform the “structural” forces that maintain and perpetuate that stressful environment” (Addams, 1879). Many American nineteenth-century-social workers saw the need to bring about the type of change that involved focussing on the social structure and institutional elements of stress such as unemployment, poverty and discrimination, and removing them from the environment. Little social work activity was organized around examining the problems of the poor, the women as a class of people subjected to prejudice, oppression and discrimination. It was not until the civil rights and equal opportunity legislation of the Great Society’s reforms were under way in the USA in the 1960s, that social workers once again were pushed into the realization that social problems could not be adequately diminished through clinical interventions alone (Galper, 1975; Grosser, 1976).

As these developments took place, some people remained clinically focussed while some adopted a generalist approach based on the general systems and ecological theories. Along with this was the challenge for social welfare and social work, to become developmental with the development cluster of purposes, referring to the empowerment of people, and developing resources, programmes and communities. The selection of models of social work practice became important in determining the types of intervention(s). Therefore social workers who adopted the clinical interventions exclusively or to a greater or lesser extent were seen to be “non-developmental”. The United Kingdom viewed community work as different from social work thus giving social

work non-developmental image, while the United States encompasses community development in its definition of social work.

In the United States “community organization” developed as one of the three primary methods of social work, namely, casework, group work and community organization. Community organization practice was described as consisting of three basic models, namely: locality development (alias community development), social planning, and social action (Rothman, *et al.* 1968). Community organization in this case, has been generally identified with the social work profession, even though this does not mean that social work had a monopoly on all types of community-oriented interventions (Martinez-Brawley, 1982:33). Therefore, social work includes, as its primary and key methods, community organization, which - in all its principles, methods and skills - promotes empowerment, participation and renewal of institutions serving communities. Where then does this persistent image of social work being “non-developmental” come from?

The United Kingdom has a long standing historical influence on South Africa as one of its colonies. In the United Kingdom, community work and social work appear to have developed along more separate lines. Much of the present controversy on social work and community work in Britain is considerably clarified by the historical perspective provided by Baldock (1974), and this has been inherited by South Africa. Community workers in Britain had a philosophical commitment toward deprofessionalization. On the other hand, “locality-specific” and other grassroots activity provided by non-professionals, but supported by rural social workers as a practice-principles in the United States, was particularly appealing to community workers even in the United Kingdom (Martinez-Brawley, 1982:54). Social workers who opted for clinical social work instead of community development saw the latter as a Third World concern, and

clinical social work as a manifestation of a real “scientific” profession. In fact, in the South African context, the explanation for social problems was sought in such a way that the blame lay more on the individual victims (invariably African Black people) instead of being found in societal dysfunctions - and this helped to preserve the *status quo* in the country. The integrated generalist approach to social work was actually labelled as “impractical” and remained marginalized as “just” a theory with no practice value. Thus social workers who adopted the “American model” of viewing community organization as an integral part of social work, indirectly embraced the social development philosophy. To this Estes (1995:76-77) asserts that there is a close relationship between community organization, community development and social development. He argues as follows:

“The social development model has its origins in community organization and community development practice and does therefore promote the fullest possible participation of people in determining both the means and goals of social development. In doing so, the model seeks to provide a framework for understanding the causes of human degradation, powerlessness, and social inequality everywhere in the world. Its ultimate goal is to guide collective action towards the elimination of all forms of violence and social oppression (Estes, 1995:76-77).”

Nevertheless, social work demands multi-disciplinary and multi-sectoral interaction with others in the field of helping and of social development. The wide array of literature available from the United Kingdom on community work (more recently on community social work), provides a major source of core knowledge on theories, processes, and practice skills used by social workers internationally and in South Africa. The argument in this section is therefore that the wheel has not been re-invented in defining developmental social work. Instead the ideas and concepts in social work that could not be pursued or articulated before the social development approach was accepted, along with the Constitution and Bill of Rights., can be publicly declared and enforced.

The developmental social welfare model has been embraced in the country and now South African intellectuals, academics, students, and practitioners can boldly define and affirm social work's commitment to social development goals. What then is the place of social work in social development?

### **3.4 SOCIAL WORK STIMULATES SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT**

This section of the chapter will briefly survey social work knowledge that affirms and asserts its pivotal role as a discipline, among others, in the stimulation of social development.

Social work theory has been developed in a manner that gives a rich variety of approaches to practice, i.e. models or practice theories which have been developed in different situations, based on various underlying assumptions, for use in many types of situations (Johnson, 1995:409). Generally, social work theories and practice models have been identified to fit in with the specific methods of social work such as the theories of social casework, for example, in a book edited by Roberts and Nee (1970); the models of community organization by Jack Rothman in Cox *et al.* (1979); theories of social work with groups in a book edited by Roberts and Northern (1976), etc. In this study a few models are identified for their contribution in deciding on practice to promote social development, particularly in social work with women and their families. Indeed, the ability to combine appropriately and creatively the elements of knowledge values, and skills in the helping situation, is an important characteristic of the social worker (Johnson, 1995:57). This characteristic calls not only for choosing and applying appropriate knowledge values, and skills but for blending the three elements in such a manner that they fit together and become a helping endeavour that is a consistent whole (ibid.:57-58).

### **3.4.1 The nature of social work**

While it is too early to discern the future of practice theory particularly in South Africa, as it develops from contemporary practice, there are some trends that might be considered. One such trend is acceptance of the integrated generalist practice perspective (Potgieter, 1998).

Even without the edge provided by a feminist vision or an integrated generalist perspective in dealing with social development, social work shares the goals and values with social development to make an impact on the social and economic quality of life, through ensuring social justice and empowerment. To make sure that all social workers recognize their role in social development, the traditional methods of social work are examined for their input.

#### **3.4.1.1 Traditional social work methods and social development**

One of the marks of a generalist practitioner is the capacity to choose from a wide variety of possibilities the action that is most appropriate for a specific situation, as in the application of direct or indirect methods of practice, i.e. casework or work with individuals and families; group work and community organization.

Direct practice involves primarily, action with individuals, families, and small groups focussed on change in either the transaction within the family or small group system or in the manner in which individuals, families, and small groups function in relation to persons and societal institutions in their environment (Johnson, 1995:310). Working with individuals, families and small groups in social work, is related to personal social services, and the goals of social development can be achieved. This aspect of social



work is the same as “personal social services”. Accordingly, Estes (1995:76-77) mentions provision of personal social services as a model of social development practice. This model, according to him:

“... seeks to extend to people everywhere a range of social services that are needed to either restore or enhance their capacity for social formation. The model’s primary goals are (a) to provide remedial and preventative services to individuals, families and groups whose optimal social functioning is either temporarily impaired or interrupted; and (b) to extend social protection to population groups threatened by exploitation or degradation. The model also seeks to ensure increased sensitivity and responsiveness on the part of human service providers to the special service needs of culturally diverse groups.”

Referral and interagency cooperation would be one of the functions of social workers concentrating and specializing in this area. The assertion that a developmental paradigm shift or social development means discarding remedial and therapeutic perspectives of social work, is misleading (Neilson and Gray, 1997:18). People need to overcome intra-personal disadvantages in order to achieve reasonable control over their own destiny, and to learn to cope constructively with negative forces in their environment (whether within the family or in the wider community) (ibid.:18).

Individualistic strategies stressing entrepreneurial skills as a way of promoting the individuals’ abilities and rights to take responsibility for their own welfare and to pursue their own self-interests must be seen in the context of broader empowerment which in this study’s context, is women empowerment (Potgieter, 1998:242-243). Neilson and Gray (1997:18) refer to women empowerment as a means of helping women become gainfully employed (whether formally or informally employed), and they advocate for the provision of adequate community child care facilities and ensuring gender-sensitive policies in the workplace, such as maternity leave, equal opportunities, equal pay and

improved status for women as individual clients. These authors further mention what Midgley (1995) referred to as “enterprise or individualist strategies”, also appropriate as anti-poverty measures which include economic empowerment, through the promotion of sustainable small business or micro-enterprise development (popularly known as SMME’s).

The aforementioned strategies closely overlap with those in indirect practice - the interventions at institutional level. This interrelationship points to the purpose and objectives of social work best reflected in the working statement on the “Purpose of Social Work” discussed in Johnson (1995:921).

In looking at the nature of social work, both the generalist practitioner and the specialist community work practitioner, are identified as key players in stimulating social development. Throughout the range of special fields of practice and agencies in which social workers are employed, social workers are more effective [in social development] when they have the knowledge and skills of “community practice” (Zastrow, 1992:223). Before focussing on community work as a specialization, it should be acknowledged that community organization practice or macro-practice is an integral part of social work practice, and many of the skills, and much of the training of micro- and mezzo-practice are also applicable to macro-practice (ibid.:225). Working on a scale larger than one-on-one or group, still involves working with people, and the interpersonal communication skills are indispensable in macro-practice (ibid.:225).

Furthermore, the skills of relationship formation and communication, problem-solving, and working with groups, are as important in community organisation, as they are in working with individuals and groups. However, as there are specific intervention

techniques and knowledge appropriate for these levels, there are also specific skills and knowledge useful in community work practice. These are well articulated in Zastrow (1992), Brager, Specht and Torczyner (1987), Cox, Erlich, Rothman and Tropman (1979) and (1984), among others.

(a) **Community organization/macro-practice or community work as a specialized method of social work practice and its role in social development**

The following is a discussion of definitions and models of community work/ community organization practice. The processes, techniques, strategies and tactics, principles, etc. are not covered in this study. This information is available and significant as part of the “how to” of community work, which makes social development goals reachable, which social workers have had training or may be retrained in.

(i) **Definitions of community organization**

Before engaging in definitions it is important to hear what Brager, Specht and Torczyner (1987:53) have to say about this exercise. They argue that, “defining community organization is a mandatory - if unrewarding activity ... widespread usage prescribes the use of certain words, although the words themselves are imprecise or exist at levels of abstraction for which an empirical referent is lacking”. For example, we use the words “community organization”, “community development” or “community work” interchangeably. Although there are as many definitions as there are practitioners, some definitions are worth mentioning. Ross (1955:39) has given a broadly quoted definition of community organization which still applies to what community organizers are supposed to do:

“Community organization ... is a process by which a community organizer identifies needs and objectives, orders (ranks) these needs and objectives, develops confidence and will to work at these needs or objectives, finds the resources (internal and/or external) to deal with these needs or objectives, takes action in respect to them, and in so doing extends and develops cooperative and collaborative attitudes and practices in the community.”

In fact Ross' definition suggests that the community organizer (social worker) is involved, on an ongoing basis, in a process of planning; enabling the development of community self-awareness and assertiveness; resource finding and mobilization; and social action, primarily that of a collaborative or cooperative nature. In relation to the enabling role, he further states that: "... the task of the professional worker in community organization is to help initiate, nourish, and develop the process, sometimes that process may emerge and be active in the community without the professional workers' presence". Implied here is the notion that empowering the community to gain the capacity to engage in a combination of personal and socio-economic development in order to be self-reliant, is a critical role of a professional. Dunham (1970:4) defines community organization as a conscious process of social interaction and a method of social work concerned with any or all of the following objectives: (1) the meeting of broad needs and bringing about and maintaining adjustment between needs and resources in a community or other areas; (2) helping people to deal more effectively with their problems and objectives, by helping them develop, strengthen, and maintain qualities of participation, self-direction, and cooperation; (3) bringing about changes in community and group relationships and in the distribution of power. The concerns for participation, self determination, collaboration and empowerment can be identified in this definition, and they form the basis for community work. Dunham identifies two major goals of community

organization, viz., to achieve concrete task goals as well as process/relationship goals, and the two are not mutually exclusive (ibid.:4). In fact the achievement of one should (and does) promote the achievement of the other. Brager, Specht and Torczyner (1987) identify two major categories of tasks for a community worker; namely the technical or analytical tasks and the interactional/relationship tasks to achieve the goals. All these tasks are performed simultaneously to achieve community work goals.

Brager and Specht (1973:27-28) observe that community organization is: a method of intervention whereby individuals, groups, and organizations engage in planned action to influence social problems. It is concerned with the enrichment, development and change of social institutions and involves two major related processes, planning (that is, identifying problem areas, diagnosing causes, and formulating solutions) and organizing (that is, developing the constituencies and devising the strategies necessary to effect action). This means pursuing concrete task goals and process/relationship goals. Kettner, Daley and Nichols (quoted in Thackery *et al.* 1994:92) defined community organization in the context of a planned change model. The three components of their model include the change process, arenas for practice, and types of interventive effort anticipated.

Even as attempts have been made to define community organization, they are not exhaustive, and the term itself refers to a range of practices that are too diverse for accurate categorization. Rothman (1968:16-47), for example, has identified three distinct types, which he calls "locality development", "social action" and "social planning". These are referred to as the models of community organization/work.

## (ii) **The three models of community organization (work)**

The three models are associated with the achievement of the three institutional goals of community organization which, Brager, Specht and Torczyner (1987:75) identify as follows: (a) integrative goals which are directed at achieving social stability and the improved juxtaposition of service givers and service users; (b) “socio-therapeutic goals”, whereby agencies seek the improved functioning and increased competence of citizens through community participation; and (c) “environmental-change goals”, which are aimed at improving the environment of some constituent group(s).

Each of the three models will be briefly explained individually for purposes of clarity, although in practice they may overlap and are intertwined. For each model Johnson (op. cit.:418) identified the source, the underlying theories and the practice theories and practice usage, which some other authors refer to as “the targets for change”.

### (1) **Locality development**

Sources of ideas that influenced the emergence of locality development, include the work of the United Nations in underdeveloped countries, experimental and demonstration projects of the Ford Foundation Mobilization for Youth Peace Corps and the work of settlement houses (ibid.:418). The underlying theory in locality development, is eclectic, drawing from sociology, anthropology and social psychology. It sees the community as eclipsed and lacking in relationships. It uses the problem solving capacity of community persons. Locality development seems to have the closest link to community development, which, emerging from an internationally oriented perspective of work in developing countries, carries heavy self-help and capacity building connotations (Baldock, 1980:31-35). A major focus is on the

process of community building. Working with a cross-section of the community, the worker attempts to achieve change objectives by enabling the community to establish consensus via identification of common interests (Brager, Specht and Torczyner, 1987:54). They quote the definition of community development by the United Nations, which is of particular interest here:

“Community development is the process by which the efforts of the people themselves are united with those of governmental authorities to improve the economic, social and cultural condition of communities to integrate these communities into the life of the nation, and to enable them to contribute fully to national progress (United Nations, Administrative Committee on Coordination, 1956).”

Government involvement in community development and the contribution that can be made by community development to national development, are elements which stand out pertinently in this definition. Mention of the utilization of resources does imply state or governmental departments’ resources and this mention of government is in line with the strategy of social development advocated by Midgley (1995).

## **(2) The social planning model**

Social planning, while not denying self-help, emphasizes programme-development objectives and the use of technical problem solving approaches in voluntary or governmental organizations. Effort is focussed primarily on task goals and issues of resources allocation. Brager *et al.* (1987:54) note that whereas the initial emphasis of the approach was on the co-ordination of social services, its attention has been expanded to include programme development and planning in all major social welfare institutions, for example, housing, public health, and education (*ibid.*:54). Heavy reliance is placed on rational problem solving and the use of technical methods such

as research and systems analysis. Expertise is the cherished value in this approach, although leadership is accorded importance as well (ibid.:54).

The source of ideas of the model is identified as conventional community organization used in planning and funding organizations and governmental planning agencies (Johnson, op. cit.:422). Emphasis is on rationality, objectivity and professional purposefulness. It assumes that the power relations are equitable and that the broad section of the community is empowered to participate fully when called upon to do so. It therefore is a model that does not, on its own, lead to transformation and the pursuit of social development goals.

The social planning effort is focussed primarily on task goals and on issues of resource allocation (Brager, et al. 1987:54). In essence it may include the practical implementation of the goals embraced in locality (community) development and social action.

Johnson (op. cit.:422), in what is identified as “practice theory”, actually summarizes the methods, the process and the practice skills involved in the various roles of the community worker as social planner:

“Assessment identifies social problems, their cause, and their possible resolution. The process includes study and assessment of the problematic situation determining preferences and influences relevant to the problem; examining alternative goals, and strategies, and program[mes]; obtaining commitments to desired change, and designing and implementing a feedback evaluative system. Worker is a fact gatherer and analyst, program[me] designer, implementor and facilitator. Consumers tend to be the power structure.”

In terms of tactics, the social planning model can achieve its “integrative goals” through



both collaborative and campaign tactics discussed, in detail in Brager, et al. (1987:75; 341-383).

### (3) **Social action**

This approach is not a new phenomenon. It appears to have been boosted by the more radical movements of the 1960s and is mainly related to the organizing of disadvantaged segments of the community, which look toward power shifts for basic institutional changes. The original proponents of the social action model are Saul Alinsky and Richard Cloward in the 1960s (see Alinsky, 1971, Cox, et al. 1984). The underlying theory is described in Johnson (op. cit.:421) as:

“Eclectic and selective. Little theory development. Concepts used include: disadvantaged population, social injustice, deprivation, inequality. Concerned with power, conflict, confrontation. The community is seen as made up of conflicting interests that are not easily reconcilable and as having scarce resources.”

Social action is employed by groups and organizations that seek to alter institutional policies and to make changes in the distribution of power (Brager, et al. 1987:54).

The weaknesses inherent in community development are addressed through social action or the community action approach in community organization, while social action in community organization, often results in the adoption of similar economic and social development projects that are similar to those prescribed by the proponents of community development. Its advocates believe, however, that social action is a far more effective means for attaining social development goals. Although the population advocated for in social action is often defined as “disadvantaged group” such as African Black people in the apartheid era, the unemployed, the poor, women etc., it is not to

be seen as their exclusive domain. Brager, et al. (1987:54) identify middle class groups engaged in social action with regard to issues such as child welfare, nuclear disarmament, and the environment. The feminist perspective to social work practice embraces the methods, strategies, techniques and tactics of social action. However, the implementation of traditional "community action" and feminist perspectives differ. Traditionally, power has been viewed in terms of the haves and the have-nots, with the strategies of social change focussed on the have-nots organizing and developing enough political power to take resources away from the haves (Alinsky, 1971), on the other hand, whereas a feminist interpretation of power expands the concept beyond and away from one's ability to dominate, control, and influence other persons, towards one's ability to become empowered to achieve one's aspirations (Bricker-Jenkins & Hooyman, 1983). The achievement of one's aspirations occurs non-coercively, collaboratively, and collectively and results in true participation, with the strengths of all participants maximized and liberated (Chandler, 1994:153). By and large, the style of the action will be influenced by the status of the group and their resources for influencing leadership and decision-making (Brager, et al. 1987:54).

In respect of the three models it should be noted that Rothman (1968) recognizes that the three models result in drawing analytical extremes. They in fact overlap, and within each, there is considerable divergence. Thus, any definition of community organization that includes all these approaches must cast a wide net.

Social work can play a significant role in making social development goals a reality because it has a rich literature on social change strategies aimed at achieving equal opportunities for all citizens (Burghardt, 1982; Cox, et al. 1979 and Weick & Vandiver, 1981). Of course, with the history of social work practice in South Africa, new forms of practice are necessary to develop and implement social change that will eliminate

barriers to equal opportunities, achieve social justice, and ensure equitable social policies that enhance rather than impede self-actualization and opportunity for all citizens. The integrated generalist or feminist social work models play a key role.

(a) **The integrated generalist practice perspective**

One of the challenges of contemporary social work since the introduction of the general systems theory and a systems perspective to social work practice, has been a generic integrated practice focus (Potgieter, 1998:11). In this case, social work as an “integrated” process uses a variety of practice models, methods and theories to understand conditions and effect change in the lives of client systems (ibid.:11). Pincus and Minahan (1973) advocated the integration of the traditional intervention methods (work with individuals or casework; group work, community organization; research; administration and education), into a unified framework, and expanded the concept of client system to include all social systems.

These developments in the field of social work fitted well with the holistic approach to social work. A holistic approach to social work and social welfare emphasizes the fact that ‘system’ and ‘environment’ should be seen as interrelated and that people should be treated in the context of the entirety of their environment (Potgieter, 1998:114). He further stresses the relationship between the generic integrated practice focus and the holistic view, where he quotes Du Bois & Miley (1996:86) as follows:

“Generic integrated practice is based on a holistic view of man and environment and the problems that stem from the person-situation interaction. Its knowledge, value and skill base is transferable between and among diverse contexts and target conditions (Tolson et al. 1994:3) and recognises the interrelatedness of human problems, life situations and social conditions” (ibid.:116).

This holistic view tallies with the ecological model which enables social work to focus on three separate areas.

First it can focus on the person and seek to develop his problem solving, coping and developmental capacities (Zastrow, 1992:18). This identifies the role and place of social casework or working with individuals, and the individualistic approach in social development.

Second, the ecological model can focus on the relationship between a person and the systems he or she interacts with and link the person with needed resources, services, or opportunities (ibid.:18). Actions that empower clients and enable clients to use available resources will form the thrust of this aspect of the model.

Third, social work can focus on the systems and seek to reform them to meet the needs of the individual more effectively (ibid.:18). Here, focus is placed on the role of community organization in fostering social development and those that rely on government intervention (Midgley, 1995). This brings us to the indirect practice actions, or to the method of social work, community organization or macro practice, to be discussed in greater detail later.

The ecological model also views individuals, families and small groups as having transitional problems and needs as they move from one life stage to another (Zastrow, 1992:18). An ecological model can also focus on the maladaptive interpersonal problems and needs in families and groups, or it can seek to articulate the maladaptive communication processes and dysfunctional relationship patterns of families and groups. These difficulties cover an array of areas, including interpersonal conflicts,

power struggles, double binds, distortions in communicating, scapegoating, and discriminating (ibid.:18). This analysis is pivotal to a social worker implementing social development, because an ecological model seeks to identify such interpersonal obstacles and then apply appropriate strategies (ibid.:19).

The integrated generalist and the ecological approaches have given social work its holistic developmental nature. Holism also refers to interdisciplinary teamwork that focuses on all the different facets of a system's life in order to "support, maintain or heal" the whole (Potgieter, 1998:114). Potgieter (ibid.:117) further proposes a developmental perspective on social work and social welfare, in which society and government in particular accepts the responsibility for services for all its people based on a holistic view of human services.

An integrated intervention model builds on the assumption that the problems and concerns of people are interactional in nature and are part of a cycle of triggers and responses (ibid.:191). Pincus and Minahan (1973) in their book, worked from a basic premise that regardless of the many forms social work practice can take, there is a common core of concepts, skills, tasks and activities which are essential to the practice of social work, and which represent a base from which the practitioner can build (Pincus and Minahan, 1973:xi). Most important in developing their model of social work, were the criteria they suggested for doing so:

"First, a model should avoid conceptualizing social work practice in such dichotomous terms as person/environment, clinical practice/social action, and microsystems/macrosystems. Secondly, a model should account for the fact that the worker has tasks to perform and relationships to maintain with a variety of people in any planned effort. Third, the worker will often have to work through many different sizes and types of systems (one-to-one relationships, families, community groups) in helping a client.

Fourth, ... [a model] should allow for the selective incorporation of theoretical orientations in working with specific situations. Fifth, while the model should be applicable in analyzing social work in a wide variety of situations and settings in which it is practised, it should account for the skills, tasks and activities at a very specific level ...”.

Finally, Pincus and Minahan note that their view of social work is based on social work practice as a goal-oriented planned change process, which utilizes a general systems approach in organizing the elements of the model (Pincus and Minahan, 1973:xii).

Change strategies in generalist practice are chosen from a repertoire of skills for work with individuals, families, small groups, agencies, and communities (Johnson, 1995:13). Generalist social work practice reflects the theoretical heritage of the profession in relation to assessment, person-in-the situation, relationships, process, and intervention (Johnson, 1995:33). The method of intervention is determined at assessment as well as who the target for change is, the action system, and the client system.

One of the identifying characteristics of the generalist social worker is the worker's ability to respond to both private troubles and public issues (Johnson, 1995:341). Mills in Pincus and Minahan (1973:3), discusses the differences between personal and public issues where he emphasizes the interrelationship and interconnectedness of personal troubles and public issues in the following statement:

“... the polarization of private troubles and public issues cuts off each from the reinforcing power of the other. There can be no “choice” or even a division of labor - between serving individual needs and dealing with social problems if we understand that a private trouble is simply a specific example of a public issue, and a public issue is made up of many private troubles.”

Thus, Schwartz sees the social agency [including the generalist social worker] as not only a means of providing services and resources, but as an arena for the conversion of private troubles into public issues (Pincus and Minahan, 1973:14). Thus, the generalist practitioner must possess knowledge and skills for indirect as well as direct practice and be able to combine the two when appropriate (Johnson, 1995:342). Potgieter (1998:190) defines social work intervention from an integrated generic perspective, highlighting the assumptions underlying it, defining it and proposing its intervention strategies. He presents his model of integrated intervention as follows:

“... intervention strategies [which] fall into two broad categories on a continuum, namely to empower and to develop and that both these categories exist alongside each other without one taking on greater importance, than the other (Potgieter, 1998:192).”

A generalist social worker is trained to assess and treat people (who have a variety of social and personal problems) using an assortment of assessment and intervention techniques (Zastrow, 1992:8). The crux of generalist practice involves a view of the situation in terms of the person-in-environment conceptualization and the capacity and willingness to intervene at several different levels, if necessary, while assuming any number of roles (ibid.:9).

One other model in social work that has been developed by practitioners, is the feminist practice model as an attempt to integrate feminist theory, commitments, and culture, with “conventional” approaches to social work practice (Johnson, 1995:415). A brief discussion of this model is significant, as it links social work specifically with working with women, and involves gender awareness, that would lead to the achievement of one of the key social development plan of action, i.e. to bring about gender equality and equity.

**(c) The feminist practice perspective**

Social work's whole mission has always been about the disadvantaged, the disenfranchised, and the vulnerable members of society, dealing with human rights, legal rights and resources may exist. But it is a proven fact that not all individuals, families, groups, organizations and communities may have access to these and to benefit on the best possible way. Therefore, there is a need to acknowledge that not only are women frequently denied equal access to the opportunity structures of our society, but that they are stigmatised with definitions of inferiority in the very roles and activities that society assigns to them (Chandler, 1994:153). What is more, is that social work practitioners and their clientele are more than men in numbers in the profession of social work, yet there seems to be a lack of interest in the development of a feminist agenda; a disinterest in the gender gap that separates men and women economically, politically and socially; and little enthusiasm to work on solving the real problems that face women (ibid.:151). The conventional theories and methods of social work are seen as neutral and applicable to all human beings or clients, yet they manage to marginalize women's gender issues.

The issue of women and gender in development and focussing on it to empower people living in poverty received special attention in the Copenhagen Declaration and Plan of Action (1995). The empowerment of women would be facilitated by integrating gender concerns in the planning and implementation of policies and programmes and developing, updating, and disseminating specific and agreed upon gender-desegregated indicators of poverty and vulnerability (ibid.:62-63). Therefore, social work is challenged to address gender issues specifically, in order to stimulate social development. Social workers who are concerned with social development must address, for example, the issues arising from the negative aspects or weaknesses of



development approaches to women, such as the welfare approach discussed in the foregoing chapter.

So why is social work literature not as rich in theories that focus on women as a group? The reluctance to highlight the feminist practice perspective can be found in the image of feminism itself.

Spender (1981) reflecting on the years following the 1914-1918 war in Europe, has suggested that every wave of feminism is followed by a period of anti-feminist reaction, in which concerted attempts are made to marginalize, distort, discredit feminist perspectives. Some social workers (women themselves) have “disassociated” themselves from feminist concerns of women, because, they argue, they have not been oppressed or have not been treated as subordinate to men. They feel uncomfortable being associated with women experiencing problems, let alone being labelled “feminists” - the bra-burning, man-hating brigade.

Feminists do believe in and understand human diversity, just like social workers do. The truth is that work with women as a vulnerable subpopulation without considering diversity among them, would be against the social work value of individualization of people. The social worker who works with women can start with the information on the effects of gender on women’s roles and their participation in development, yet still allow the woman her humanity, and similarities with other human beings. However, recognizing differences among women does not preclude the possibility of feminist analysis. Central to feminism is the task of understanding how, within patriarchal societies, women’s oppression is experienced by women who may be simultaneously privileged and/or oppressed by the power structure of race, class, sexuality, age and/or disability, while being oppressed by gender?

Feminism, social work and social development, share the same values and principles and these include cooperation, participatory planning, and decision-making, distributive justice, advocacy, and non-discrimination (Van den Bergh and Cooper, 1994:151).

Falk (1981) surveyed social development experts in social work and found that:

“Participation, respect for human dignity, humanism, non-discrimination and global awareness were ranked by these experts as the top five social development values. Feminism also upholds these broad values and principles. ... the (recent) activism of feminists to curb nuclear proliferation is an example of feminism’s global awareness and breadth of concern”.

This latter concern is in line with involvement in sustainable development focussing on environmental protection (as well as social development and economic development). The critical question then becomes: “How does feminist practice enrich the integrated generalist perspective in working with women in development?” The underlying assumptions and practice theories on the feminist perspective, are summarized in Johnson (1995:415). In the discussion that follows, the application of the practice theory and how social workers work embrace them to help women as individuals, in families, groups and communities are served, is analysed. The five premises of feminist analysis - eliminating false dichotomies and artificial separations (the thrust of generalist integrated practice); reconceptualizing power; valuing process equally with product, renaming, and the personal is political - have the potential to alter dramatically all aspects of social work education and practice (Van den Berg and Cooper, 1994:10).

For purposes of clarity separating direct practice and indirect practice in work with women using the feminist perspective, (or the generalist practice), will be explored in the following discussion.

(i) **Direct practice or clinical practice with women**

Feminist scholarship concerning women and mental health serves several important functions as part of the knowledge base of social work. First, feminist theory and research provide the framework for understanding the relationships between gender inequality and women's mental health problems. This work details a perspective through which social workers can analyse and evaluate how cultural ideology about women, shapes women's reality (Kravetz, 1994:120). In assessing the person-in-situation, it takes into account the fact that women's individual change efforts are constrained and restricted by the powerlessness of women as a group (ibid.:116). In addition, it acknowledges that racism, class bias, and heterosexism are major sources of women's personal problems and psychological distress. To help women change the oppressive aspects of their lives, feminist-oriented therapists recognize that classism, racism, and heterosexism must be eliminated (ibid.:115). They believe that it is growth producing for women to understand the influence of social factors on their personal lives and therefore incorporate gender-role analysis into therapy (ibid.:116). To this view, Greenspan (1983:247) further explains:

"It is vital that women in therapy develop a strong consciousness of the social roots of female emotional pain ... Without such a consciousness, it is impossible for the female client to claim an authentic sense of her own power, both individually and along with others. ... Ultimately, the goal is to help a woman see her own power as an individual is inextricably bound to collective power of women as a group."

That way the worker can begin to realistically identify the strengths in the client and the weaknesses, opportunities and threats - with the client. Together, clients "with" the feminist-oriented therapists can view themselves as social activists, and therapists can encourage their clients to participate in social action, on their own behalf. The

feminist-oriented therapist believes also, that it can be therapeutic for women to engage in social actions to change the conditions at work and in their communities that directly have a negative effect on their own lives. This approach directly links clinical practice to indirect practice and/or community organization and social development.

(ii) **Indirect or macro-practice or community organization**

It is inherent in the agenda of social development to advocate beyond an individual's concerns and examine critically the institutional biases that impede people from achieving equity (Chandler, 1994:59). According to a feminist perspective, two types of social goals for which feminists are striving are identified, namely, role equity and role change (ibid.:159). Chandler described what would be entailed to achieve role equity on the one hand, and role change on the other, and argues as follows:

“ ... to achieve role equity, [strategies used] ... [are] those laws, policies and programmes that provide and ensure for women, political and economic opportunities commensurate with those available to men. ... This type of change also fits in with 'egalitarian' value statements that abhor overt discrimination and decree equal opportunities for all. Role change will entail a basic alteration in the distribution of sex roles in society. It will bring about a movement away from sex-based distinctions that prescribe that women and only women, must play the 'female role', that of primary caretaker, mother, wife, housekeeper - an economically dependant role” (Ibid.:160).

The feminist vision for a different society includes the demand for gender equality as well as a commitment to altering the processes and the manner in which private and public lives are organized and conducted. This vision does not accept the existing competitive, hierarchical and authoritarian organization of decision making and action. (Van den Bergh and Cooper, 1994:1). This is related to the social development

perspective which embraces the value of participation in the community, and has developed strategies to ensure the participation of the citizens to be affected by change in planning and policy development activities. This leads to an important social work and social development value which is that planning should not be done "to" people, but "with" them, that people should be actively recruited into the planning process and participate in all levels of discussion and decision making about the changes that affect them (Chandler, 1994:152).

Because social workers work at both micro and macro levels to intervene and bring about change, they are uniquely able to bring about role equity and role change; to achieve personal change and institutional equity, and fully articulate the interrelationships of such changes to those affected.

Social development - oriented social workers, or social workers embracing feminist perspectives, are acutely aware that macro-level change will affect individuals in a variety of ways. The many laws affecting gender equality, e.g. the rights to an abortion, women's rights to inheritance, etc. need understanding, to be of any practical use to individual women. Social workers can assist individuals to prepare and become ready for the changes that are taking place, and that will take place in their changing social situation.

Fear and resistance associated with role-change strategies can easily be understood by clinical social workers', so that support and encouragement for role equity strategies can be easily generated for social development - oriented social work. Feminists and social workers see the necessity for bringing about both types of change to achieve equality for women and all oppressed people (Chandler, 1994:161).

### 3.5 SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

Social development at international, global levels, has paved way for the social and economic reforms that are people-centered, and people driven, and has been accepted by individual countries, including South Africa. In South Africa today, a major feature of social welfare is the concern with poverty, large scale unemployment, social justice and gender equity. Unlike the residual and institutional models, the developmental model has been adopted to purposefully link social and economic policies and social welfare, in order to empower people to take charge of their own destiny. In this enabling environment, social work is reviving its commitment to working with people as individuals of equal and innate worth instead of focussing on the needs of a powerful minority racial group.

The argument in this discourse is that there is no need to use “developmental” to identify social work’s role in stimulating social development. The literature, both international and South African, the practice experience of social development-oriented social workers, and the lessons learnt, need to be revisited. Furthermore, the ability to combine, choose and apply appropriately and creatively the elements of knowledge, values and skills, is indeed what social workers need to do. Training, re-training and re-orientation is inevitable and desirable, just as much as starting by acknowledging what social work is and always has been, despite the individuals’ limited orientation or the country’s social economic and political agenda. This gives social workers a chance to build on the positive experiences of others and learning from the past, instead of re-inventing the wheel unnecessarily.

The developmental model to social welfare and social work is linked to the holistic view

of people and the means of helping them. It also implies interdisciplinary teamwork which focuses on all the different facets of a person's life in order to "support, maintain or heal" the whole. The generalist practice model of social work is one that lends itself to achieving the social development and developmental welfare goals. In this model, the client and the worker together assess the need in all its complexity and develop a plan for responding to that need. A strategy is chosen from a repertoire of responses appropriate for work with individuals, families groups, agencies and communities. The unit of attention is chosen, considering the system needing to be changed.

The generalist social worker considers that different clients with different needs in different situations require different kinds of action on the part of the worker. In this study, women and their different gender needs within the household or family and in the community (the person-situation/environment configuration) require a variety of actions to achieve social development goals through direct and indirect practice or micro-, mezzo- and macro-practice methods.

The following chapter examines the conceptual framework for analyzing the elements of interest in community work, namely, the characteristics of the participants; the types of problems; and the means to reach desired objectives (Brager, et al. 1987:55).

## **CHAPTER FOUR**

### **THE CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK**

#### **4.1 INTRODUCTION**

In this chapter the key conceptual issues, the operationalization of the concepts raised in the research problem, and the research questions in the study, will be the subject of discussion. Use of models and concepts that identify a frame of reference for gender analysis and gender planning to achieve the goals of social development, will be made.

Since a combination of disciplines is necessary to develop a conceptual frame for policy making and development programmes, the methodology for gender analysis will be eclectic. This in turn means that the framework is eclectic, as it is based on a collection of theories and practical methods that are differentially employed by social development workers or social workers, in response to the needs of the client systems (i.e. individuals, groups and communities). According to Van Velzen (1998:68), any research problem is conveyed through the use of sets of concepts. These concepts are converted into variables. Scientific explanations and predictions involve relating the dependant variables to the independent variables, that is, an attempt is made to establish a covariation.

The aim of this chapter also includes conceptualizing and applying gender-related knowledge to understanding women's lives, and turning gender-aware policy into an



operational reality through adequate methodological tools, procedures, and techniques to achieve equitable gender relations in household and community decision making.

The central theme in the study is 'women and gender', and this needs clarification before other related concepts and models of gender analysis are discussed.

## **4.2 GENDER RELATED CONCEPTS**

### **4.2.1 The meaning of "gender"**

In a biological sense, a "woman" ordinarily is a person whose chromosomes, internal and external sexual organs, and hormonal chemistry mesh in such a way as to warrant the label "female" at birth (Bates *et al.* 1983:174). This biological nature of woman implies she is capable of bearing children. The definition of "woman" is a social construct where even though many women never marry, bear children or nurse them, they are socially defined by their capacity to do so and the "social expectation" that this is a basic characteristic of women's existence (*ibid.*:174).

Social definitions of "women" include many other physical, psychological and behavioural characteristics, the sum of which, for any one society represents the gender label "woman" for that group. Since every society makes a gender assignment at birth, an infant is immediately heir to all these social expectations (*ibid.*:174).

Essential to the social construction of gender is the notion of polarity; there are only two genders (with some rare cultural exceptions), and each is "opposite" of the other. Thus "woman" above all else is "not man". This underlying concept of "otherness" or "opposites" leads not only to lists of contrasting characteristics, labelled as "feminine"

and “masculine”, but also to contrasting adjectives for the same characteristic.

Sceptics or critics of the feminist perspective or of demands for gender equality as a basic human rights issue, would ask what is the problem with gender differences as they are ‘natural’? In each society, whatever socially prescribed characteristics are assigned to the two gender labels, one gender is assigned roles and tasks considered culturally inferior to the other (ibid.:175). This gender is almost always “woman”. No matter what the social tasks assigned and no matter what behaviour is deemed appropriate and these may be reversed in different cultures - cultural asymmetry based on gender remains the same: “woman” is deemed culturally inferior (ibid.:175).

The Commission on Gender Equality in South Africa (1998) on ‘what is gender’, puts it as follows:

“Gender refers to the economic, social and cultural attributes and opportunities associated with being male or female. Relations between men and women in the family, the work place or in the public sphere reflect society’s understanding of what are appropriate behaviour and characteristics of women and men. Gender therefore, differs from sex in that it is social and cultural rather than biological. Gender attributes differ from society to society and change with time. Some of these attributes are shaped by the economy, religion, culture and traditional attitudes.”

#### **4.2.2 Gender equality?**

Gender equality or equality between women and men means the equal employment of socially valued goods, opportunities, resources and rewards by men and women. Because what is valued differs among societies, a crucial aspect of equality is the empowerment of women to influence what is valued and share in decision-making about societal priorities. Equality does not mean that men and women are the same,

but that opportunities and life chances will not depend on their sex (Commission on Gender Equality, 1998). Added to this, it must be said that availability and accessibility of opportunities will also depend on women's ability to make choices and decisions to take control of their lives. One main characteristic of gender is that it assigns males and females roles that are separate and which pre-determine what behaviours are expected of these, thus 'gender roles'. To understand what gender roles are and how they contribute towards inequality, a definition of the concepts, e.g. gender roles and role identification and gender needs and needs assessment, will be incorporated in gender analysis.

#### **4.2.3 Gender analysis**

This study on gender issues, based on the central tenet of gender analysis, which is that the present inferior status of women is produced by socialization and not any biological causes (Mackinnon, 1982). The concept of patriarchy is used in gender analysis to explain how sex, which is a biological fact, becomes gender, which is a social phenomenon that determines what is feminine and what is masculine within a society.

Feminist theory uses gender theory for a specific purpose: to expose the oppression of women at both personal and societal levels, in order to overcome this oppression at both levels. So this study relies on both gender theory and feminist theory in examining social development.

A number of gender analysis methodologies have been developed to address a variety of gender issues in development. Examples of the use of gender analysis which abound in the literature, include gender analysis which was used by the World Bank in

Bangladesh in the design of a gender responsive national development strategy. It dealt with the status and factors affecting the participation of women in the labour force, education, sanitation, as well as credit (World Bank, 1990). Gender analysis is also being used to assess the impacts of structural adjustment policies on women. In South Africa, the economic structural adjustment programme would be represented in the Growth Employment and Redistribution Strategy (GEAR) - whose impact on women has not been evaluated yet. A recent review of structural adjustment programmes by the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) found that women frequently bear an excessive burden during the first stabilization and demand management phase, owing to the following factors (Valedez & Berger, 1995:10):

- Women and members of female headed households tend to suffer relatively more during the economic contraction associated with the stabilisation phase of adjustment. Because women are frequently poorer to start with, reductions in living standards are more critical for them.
- Women act as “shock absorbers” during adjustment, curtailing their own consumption and increasing their work effort to compensate for losses in household income.
- Women are often more dependent on public services because of their child bearing and child rearing roles. The reductions in social spending that accompany adjustment efforts therefore affect them more directly than men. The shrinkage of government services “off-loads” responsibilities to the private sector, usually women.
- Education represents one of the most important factors in women’s economic and social advancement, and it is often a victim of economic restraints.
- Where there is relatively higher representation of women in the public sector, public expenditure restraints may have a greater impact on women than on men.

Gender analysis is also used in the selection and design of projects, and in their monitoring and evaluation. Overholt *et al.* (1991) proposed an analytical framework for this purpose as well as for national and sectoral planning. This framework provides information on four important components of gender analysis:

- Activity profile. Describes the extent and nature of women's participation in the production of goods and services and their role in the reproduction and maintenance of human resources (child rearing and household management).
- Access and control profile. Describes the access that women and men have to the resources required for carrying out these activities and the control they exercise over the benefits produced from these activities.
- Analysis activities access and control. Describes the factors determining who does what and who will have access and control over resources.
- Project cycle analysis. Examines the role of women in project identification, design, implementation and evaluation.

Moser (1993:10) advocates what she refers to as a new planning tradition and its methodology known as the gender planning method and framework - to implement gender analysis. As a new planning tradition the focus of gender planning is on gender as depicted in Table 5.3 (*ibid.*:90). Procedures and techniques including the purpose of the gender principles are clearly stipulated there. Aspects of this new planning framework form the major conceptual framework for gender analysis, or the analysis of key concepts in this study. There are six principles used in gender planning which have methodological tools with which they are associated (*ibid.*:92-93), namely:

- (k) gender roles and gender roles identification (the latter is the tool);
- (l) gender needs and assessment (the latter is the tool);
- (m) intra household resource allocation and disaggregated data at household level - (in terms of ensuring equal control over resources and power of decision making between men and women within the household);
- (n) balancing of roles and intersectorally linked planning;
- (o) the relationship between roles and needs and the WID/GAD<sup>3</sup> policy matrix;
- (p) equality and incorporation in the planning process.

Gender analysis is incorporated in tools and methods used for promoting 'gender equality and participation in agricultural development planning', among other development sectors. For participatory gender-responsive planning, PRA (Participatory Rural Appraisal) and the person-centred approach (Du Toit *et al.* 1998) combined with gender analysis and the analysis of difference, is both powerful and relatively cost effective, because it serves three functions simultaneously:

- it is an efficient method of collecting data on gender and other differences among women needed for gender responsive planning;
- it is an easily learned method that helps fieldworkers rapidly understand the gender, socio-economic and technical issues in [family or decision] farming local farming systems; and
- it is an efficient means of involving different groups of [people] farmers in problem analysis and planning (Social Development Dimensions, FAO, 1998).

Moser's (1993:92-93) gender planning framework is selected to guide the discussion

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<sup>3</sup> WID = Women in Development  
GAD = Gender and Development

on the components for gender analysis.

#### 4.2.3.1 **Components of gender analysis**

##### (a) **The rural household**

Moser (1993:94) identifies one of the principles of gender planning as equal intra-household resource allocation in terms of ensuring equal control over resources and power of decision-making between men and women within the household.

For analytical purposes, most micro-economic studies treat the household as a 'profit-maximizing unit' acting as a single entity with a single set of preferences. Recent literature has emerged that focusses on the intra-household level, trying to explain decision-making processes with respect to resource allocation, given that households are sites of both internal conflict and cooperation (Gebremedlin, 1997:2). The intra-household literature is complemented by a body of work that focuses at the inter-household level trying to assess how households in a given setting relate to each other, and the moral obligations they have to support one another particularly in times of distress (ibid.:2). A further line of research relates to the life cycle of households trying to identify common patterns in the inter-generational evolution of most rural households (ibid.:3). However, although these aspects are not dealt with here this research does not neglect the importance of these different streams of literature, but uses them to explain why, in looking at the roles of women and gender in development, the household receives the attention it does.

Rural households may not be visible entities in terms of buildings or sets of rooms

within residential units, but can be isolable only in terms of specific functions such as pooling of finances, labour or domestic tasks. On the other hand, there may be active inter-household networks of reciprocity and exchange of productive resources which are regular features of extended or multi-family compounds (homesteads) and low income neighbourhoods in developing countries (ibid., 1997:3-4). In this context a rural household would be defined as a social and economic unit on which members are dependent for economic survival, maintenance, and social development. The household deploys its members, female and male, child and the elderly - and how it deploys, depends on its access to productive resources including: the composition and social status of its household members in relation to gender, the quantity and quality of its resource base; the availability of local labour markets and economic opportunities for income generating strategies and diversification activities, the changing environment of government policies and the dynamics of the social ideology of the neighbourhood; and traditional institutions supported and sustained by those in power and with influence (ibid.:4).

A further rationale for the central role of a household is its multiplicity of functions: it is the site of biological reproduction, nurturing and socialization and the focal point for fundamental decision making and economic activities such as labour migration, and of increasing differentiation in wealth, authority, and access to resources such as land, livestock, credit, finance, craft skills, inheritance or property rights (ibid.:4).

Rural households do not act or exist in isolation - they are linked with other rural households in neighbourhood or community systems. The social division of labour and allocation of resources and experiences within the household context vary on the basis of socio-economic class, ethnic group, gender structure, culture, and community ideology. Even the neighbourhood itself is by no means self-contained or self-sufficient



as the base of rural life. Thus, there is a need for a deeper understanding of the heterogeneity of rural households in their local contexts in order to formulate development policies for improving the quality of living and alleviation of poverty of rural populations. Equally important is the need to identify and realize how these households are relating to local institutions/associations and *vice-a-versa* as they adapt to macro-economic changes in pursuit of the goals of social development.

To understand gender relations within and outside of the household, the concepts role and needs identification are explored. First is a look at “social role” and then “gender role”.

**(b) The social role**

Social role, which means shared expectations concerning the behaviour of persons who occupy particular positions, and the mutually understood rights and obligations which go along with these positions, is a significant analytic tool (Brager, Specht & Torczyner, 1987:86; and Ruth, 1980:17). One’s social role is necessarily defined in relation to other people who are in other social roles, in this case men’s roles vis-a-vis women’s, and vice-versa. The concept is particularly relevant for community work because it provides a link between the individual and the social structure (Brager *et al.* 1987:86).

An underlying rationale for gender planning in social development concerns the fact that men and women not only play different roles in society, with distinct levels of control over resources, but that they often have different needs. First, will be an analysis of the “gender roles” which will be followed by that of “gender needs”.

(c) **Gender role**

Moser's conceptualization of gender role provides a useful point of departure for the development of an approach to defining and modelling women's roles and their needs (Moser, 1993). The concept of the triple role is not an arbitrary categorization (Moser, 1993:28). In examining the different roles of women and men, the gender division of labour provides the underlying principle for separating out and differentiating the work men and women do. It also provides the rationale for the link between the gender division of labour and the subordination of women (ibid.:29). There are three types of gender roles of women, namely the reproductive, the productive, and the community management roles.

(i) **The reproductive role**

The reproductive role comprises the child bearing/rearing responsibilities and domestic tasks undertaken by women, required to guarantee the maintenance and reproduction of the labour force. It includes not only biological reproduction but also the care and maintenance of the workforce (husband and working children) and the future workforce (infants and school-going children) (ibid.:29).

A crucial issue relating to women's reproductive work, concerns the extent to which it is visible and valued (ibid.:30). It is unpaid and invisible because of the model of the patriarchal family - the man working outside the home for pay, the wife working inside the home not for pay (Dinerman, 1992:77). The challenges to this conceptualization of women's role, especially the 'caring' part and the obligation of women to reproduce (procreate), are well articulated in feminist literature and in South Africa's campaigns for gender equality and human rights. Organizations such as "Birthright" in South Africa

aim to help women make choices in reproduction. Husbands often wield considerable power over their wife's reproductive decisions (Huston, 1997; Mernissi, 1975). Rape within marriage is seldom, if ever considered a legal offence. Extremely punitive moral sanctions are applied to women who choose not to marry and have children out of wedlock, or worse, wives without children even if it is the husbands' fault. The United Nations, the World Bank, and the International Labour Organization have shown less interest in collecting cross-national data on women's legal and reproductive rights than on their economic position (Folbre, 1986:31).

There are many negative policy implications of stereotyping this gender role, because it further impacts upon the second gender role of women, that is the productive role. Among others, the lack of explicit consideration of women's household labour, which contributes more directly to the satisfaction of the 'basic needs' than any other labour, has actually undermined the viability of the basic needs approach to economic development (ILO, 1979; Palmer, 1977). Despite the fact that the proportion of female headed households in developing countries seems to be far higher than among the advanced industrial nations at comparable levels of development, these households have not been targeted for specific forms of aid (Buvinic & Yousseff, 1978; and Buvinic *et al.* 1983). What then is the issue regarding reproductive work and productive work?

First, women's reproductive and domestic role (housework, food preparation, and caring for the young, old and disabled family members), is generally perceived to be their primary function, restricting their time and mobility for productive work (ILO, 1997). Secondly, productive work and remunerated employment are generally perceived to be the preserve of men as family breadwinners. Women's economic role is perceived as only secondary to their reproductive and domestic role. This is despite a majority of women's reality that they work.

This brings up the critical question: What is women's work? Can the family manage the caring tasks while attaining equity among its members? Can women find equity in the workplace?

(ii) **The productive role**

The second gender role is the productive role. Moser (1993:31) summarizes the productive work as follows:

“The productive role comprises work done by both women and men for payment in cash or in kind. It includes both market production with an exchange value, and subsistence/home production with an actual use-value, but also a potential exchange value. For women in agricultural production this includes work as independent farmers, peasants' wives and wage workers.”

The model of the patriarchal family - the man working outside the home for pay and being the sole breadwinner, the wife working inside the home not for pay, is challenged by the realities of gender roles today and women's life patterns. Many problems associated with establishing family policies have arisen precisely because of the view that only paid jobs in the labour force are work, and that all other home and dependent care tasks that women perform are non-work (Dinerman, 1992:184).

This notion has been reinforced by policies of international agencies and aid organizations which have recently received considerable scrutiny. Rogers' (1979) recent review of gender bias in development planning brings Boserup's (1970) classic critique up to date. Standt (1978) describes a number of agricultural extension programmes that have largely ignored women farmers. A number of studies show that the introduction of new potentially lucrative cash crops tends to be associated with the

exclusion of women from cash crop production (Burfisher & Horenstein, 1983; Beneria & Sen, 1981). This could be associated with women's lack of access to resources such as land, credit and time - after the burdensome reproductive work. On the latter, Beneria (1979) further argues that the focal point of women's economic activities is guided by their special role in the reproduction of the labour force. As a result:

“Women's productive tasks tend to concentrate on activities that are: (a) compatible with reproduction, and more concretely, the care of children; (b) related to class; (c) subordinate to men's work and subject also to age-oriented hierarchical relations; and (d) concentrated in the least permanent and least paid activities” (Beneria, 1979:9-10).

Why then is this a problem or a development issue? Women have long been engaged in productive activities, and women's economic role is hardly secondary for the poor - the poorer the household, the greater the contribution of women to the household income, and the more important and burdensome both domestic and economic roles of women become. Among the very poor, women tend to be the major income earners (ILO, 1997).

Self employment constitutes in many cases, the only opportunity for most women in rural or developing countries to earn a subsistence income, as paid employment is generally out of reach (because of their family responsibilities, lack of skills, etc.). These women face a number of constraints in their access to self-employment or entrepreneurship, particularly in terms of the initial setting up of their businesses (ILO, 1997).

The lack of recognition of women's work and their need to work is further complicated by the social and cultural barriers, e.g. negative attitudes towards women in business,

the fact that women are supposed to fulfil other roles, restrictions as to the choice of sector, lack of family support, lack of mobility, etc. (ILO, 1997).

Furthermore, irrespective of the actual lives of women, there are accepted community organizing principles governing views about the happiness and social correctness of women's lives (Hanmer & Statham, 1988:25). These are:

- 1) whether or not women are living with men
- 2) whether or not women have children and
- 3) whether or not women take responsibilities for dependent relatives.

Consciously choosing not to live with men or not to have children and not to care for dependant relatives, are seen as deviant behaviours (ibid.:25). These ideological responses to and demands on women can be experienced as devastatingly oppressive and restrictive (ibid.:26). This very context within which women live makes their access to social resources often limited. These life patterns can create and are based on women's financial dependency on men and the state. This is why participants on the "Social Service Needs of Women" Courses in Britain, reported that financial needs and housing issues were the problems most often brought to social workers by women (ibid.:26). Cases of child support and the need for child support grants, maintenance grants, dependency grants, and foster care grants are mostly the major caseload of social welfare and social workers in South Africa. Furthermore, at a time when South Africa is growing more and more concerned about a work force that is illiterate - neglecting the care, education and socialization of working parents, is retrogressive. The state of child care facilities in rural areas and their financing is dismal. Child care is essentially considered a private matter to which the state takes minimal or marginal interest. Women and children are the casualties of this neglect. Women therefore

have practical gender needs which require money earned by them to meet these.

A variety of patterns of living, either on a permanent or temporary basis, are the experience of an increasing number of people - which is particularly relevant to social workers. These are summarized according to Hanmer and Statham (1988:24-25) as follows:

- 1) The increasing number of one parent families with dependent children;
- 2) the increasing number of couples who have a period of living together before they marry;
- 3) the increasing number of men and women who experience serial monogamy, that is, marriage, divorce and remarriage;
- 4) the continued reduction in the number of people occupying households;
- 5) the increasing number of married women with children who are in employment;
- 6) the increasing overt challenge to heterosexuality as the only valid form of sexual relationship and way of life; and
- 7) the increasing number of women who live without men because women live longer than men, or women household heads in *de facto* household heads where men are migrant labourers or refugees or are illegal immigrants in other neighbouring countries.

To work effectively with women, social workers need to develop frameworks or assumptions about women that do not pathologise the behaviour of individuals and groups of women simply because they do not fit in with rigid categories of what ought to be. Through information about the life patterns of women and the context in which women live, the tangle caused by confusing social and demographic changes in the lives of women with social problems and or individual deviancy or pathology, can be

unmeshed (Chandler, 1988:23).

Hanmer and Statham (1988:24) observe that women's lives over the life cycle, change and women experience more than one pattern of living. They often begin life in a one- or two-parent family; marry and more often than not have children, and many spend some time as single persons. A number of divorced or widowed women remarry although a significant proportion do not. Finally, at the end of their lives some women may spend their lives alone again or with other adults to whom they may or may not be related. These patterns are not 'abnormal' or even undesirable in and of themselves - it is the social evaluation and expectations placed on people that result in negative value judgements (ibid.:24). Women may engage in productive work or not for any of the above circumstances. The important point is, women must have the opportunity to exercise their choices without covert or overt pressure.

**(iii) Community management and community politics**

The third gender role according to Moser (1993:34) is that of community management and community politics. This is described as follows:

“The community managing role comprises activities undertaken primarily by women at the community level as an extension of their reproductive role. This is to ensure the provision and maintenance of scarce resources of collective consumption such as water, health care and education. It is voluntary unpaid work, undertaken in 'free time'. The community politics role in contrast, comprises activities undertaken by men at the community level organizing at the formal political level. It is usually paid work, either directly or indirectly, through wages or increase in status and power” (ibid.:34).

Recognition that women have a community managing role is still far from widespread,



such that it is still most frequently identified as part of reproductive work (ibid.:35). Helping neighbours in times of need, is women's community management role carried out through mutual aid groups such as: (i) burial societies *umasingcwabisane* in Zulu - the literal translation thereof being 'lets help each other when burying'; (ii) running community non-profit making creches that receive no government subsidies, and most times for no pay at all; and so on. Mobilization and organization at the community level for development through self-help and welfare programmes (based on the welfare approach to development with women), is a common phenomenon in third world countries and rural areas.

It is important to note that men work at the community level too - mainly they are involved in community politics. In organizations in which these two activities overlap, especially in societies where men and women work alongside each other, women most frequently make up the rank-and-file voluntary membership "... men tend to be involved in positions of direct authority and often work in paid capacity" (ibid.:36).

The triple role discussed above is comprised of survival activities which according to Lipton *et al.* (1996), include: (i) agricultural activities (cultivating crops and looking after livestock); (ii) household chores (i.e. cooking, water, fire, washing, nurturing, children, etc.); and the other income generating activities, viz. vending. Community activities, i.e. those carried out in women's group meetings and clubs, also comprise survival activities. Resources required and used for these activities are time, family labour and other resources. Constraints identified in the model are land, credit, extension, and other cultural and legal constraints. ILO (1997) argues that depending on the socio-cultural legal environment, women either may or may not fully control revenues from their economic activities. It must be emphasized that women headed enterprises cannot be envisaged in isolation to the economic and socio-cultural context in which

they evolve. Societal values with a negative impact on women include: undervaluing women's economic role, sex role stereotyping, women's limited access to certain types of vocational training, policies and legislation all impact to some extent, on the conditions for creation, survival or growth of women headed enterprises (ILO, 1997).

Before dealing with the issue of resources needed and constraints emanating from the gender division of labour or gender needs in greater detail, mention of what changes in role performance should be, must be made.

Examined, from a feminist perspective, two types of social development goals for which feminists are striving, that is, role equity and role change, are identified (Chandler, 1994:159). Role strategies to achieve role equity such as the laws, policies, and programmes that provide and ensure for women political and economic opportunities commensurate with those available to men, are described (ibid.:159). At one extreme, these may mean only minor modifications in current structural arrangements, such as opening job opportunities to women in areas from which they had been excluded previously, or preventing overt types of discrimination against women in the work environment as citizens (Chandler, 1994:159). In South Africa the Employment Equity Act, among other things, incorporates gender equity in the workplace. But both feminists and the social work profession must move on now to achieve the more crucial components of equality - that which will be brought about only through role change.

Role change will entail a basic alteration in the distribution of sex roles in society. It will bring a movement away from sex-based distinctions that prescribe that women, and only women, must play the "female role" - that of primary caretaker, mother, wife, housekeeper - an economically dependent status (Chandler, 1994:160). Role change will give people, both male and female, the opportunity to become independent, self-

reliant individuals, without the “expectation” that because they are of a particular gender, they have or do not have “inherent” responsibilities for home making and childcare - an expectation that all too frequently limits choices and opportunities (Chandler, 1994:160).

(d) **Gender needs**

According to Johnson and Schwartz (1994:4) human needs are described as “the resources people need to survive as individuals and to function appropriately in their society”. Needs are highly individualistic, even as they are “common” to all human beings. In other words, they can differ from person to person, because of human diversity. Needs differ from one society to another and are often an expression of culture and the development of people of that culture (Potgieter, 1998). Further to this view, is the notion that human suffering is the result of unmet needs and will always be present in society, and therefore societies need to develop appropriate responses to such conditions in their midst (Morales & Sheafor, 1995). To assist in the development of a better understanding of human needs, the framework is offered which places the needs of the person in the context of his or her interaction with the environment and recognizes the uniqueness of his or her culturally defined needs (Potgieter, 1998:8). Maslow’s hierarchy of needs and Elderfer’s Theory are illustrated. What is important to note is the emphasis in both of the theories of need, is that needs are generated through interaction with the environment, and that needs are often activated or intensified by crisis events in the environment of a system (ibid.:7).

Within the framework used for understanding human needs, a particular model for understanding gender needs is useful as an analytical tool for gender diagnosis in gender planning for social development. For purposes of this study, Moser’s (1993:37)

framework provides a description of the concept of gender interests and their translation into planning terms, as practical gender needs and strategic gender needs. Moser acknowledges not only the diversity of women's interests and needs as human beings, but she also emphasizes that the rationale for gender planning does not ignore important issues such as race, ethnicity and class (ibid.:37). The focus on gender is precisely because it does tend to be subsumed within class in so much of policy and planning, and it has become very popular for policymakers and the media alike to label any gender-conscious policy or programme effort associated with women as "feminist" or "women's lib". Such terms are used by many in such a derisory manner that they provoke a hostile and negative reaction from female and male planners alike. The differentiation between 'practical' gender needs and strategic gender needs provides a critical planning tool which allows practitioners to understand better that planning needs of low-income women are not necessarily 'feminist' in content. Indeed, the vast majority of interventions for women world-wide are concerned with the existing gender division of labour, as wives and mothers. These are intended to meet their practical gender needs of all members of households (Moser, 1993:41).

(i) **Practical gender needs**

Moser (ibid.:40) explains the practical gender needs as follows:

"... [they] are the needs women identify in their socially accepted roles in society. Practical gender needs do not challenge the gender division of labour or women's subordinate position in society although rising out of them. Practical gender needs are a response to immediate perceived necessity identified within a specific context. They are practical in nature and often are concerned with inadequacies in living conditions such as water provision, health care and employment".

Other writers “categorize practical gender needs as those arising from survival and household tasks” (Murphy, 1990:59). Survival tasks are those tasks essential to sustain daily life and are mainly met by increasing the material resources within the household (to deal with the farming and processing of subsistence food crops, fetching water, collection of fuel, manufacturing for home use, and health care - including child care, care giving for the sick and the aged). Household tasks include activities involved in maintaining a home, namely, cleaning, washing, food preparation, food storage and cooking.

Practical gender needs may be said to result from having to fulfill the reproductive and the productive roles and generally fall under the “existence” needs of Alderfer’s Existence, Relatedness and Growth (ERG) needs as well as those defined as Maslow’s physiological and security needs illustrated in Potgieter (1998:7-8). According to the latter framework, needs are met through interaction with an environment and that environment should assume responsibility for the provision of resources, facilities, services and programmes - as well as for their administration, including the policy to put such measures in place (ibid.:9). However to meet the practical gender needs, women must have the capacity and the right (legal and political power) to participate in and have control over the decision making processes affecting their personal, family and community lives. They need to meet their affiliation, esteem needs, or relatedness needs and finally their growth needs or needs for self-actualization. The latter relate more to strategic gender needs. In short, practical gender needs are those that are formulated from concrete conditions women experience deriving from their positions within the gender division of labour - in addition to women’s practical gender interests in human survival (Moser, 1993:40).

For gender planning it is the distinction between strategic and practical gender needs

that is important - providing gender planning with one of its most fundamental planning tools (ibid.:38).

(ii) **Strategic gender needs**

In summary, strategic gender needs are identified as:

“... the needs women identify because of their subordinate position to men in their society. Strategic gender needs vary according to particular contexts. They relate to gender division of labour, power and control and may include such issues as legal rights, domestic violence, equal wages and women’s control over their bodies. Meeting strategic gender needs helps women to achieve greater equality. It also changes existing roles and therefore challenges women’s subordinate position” (Moser, 1993:39).

*Strategic gender needs are formulated from the analyses of women’s subordination to men and their powerlessness and these are often identified as ‘feminist’, as is the level of political consciousness required to struggle effectively for them (ibid.:39). The capacity to confront the nature of gender inequality and women’s subordination means converting their ‘private troubles’ into ‘public issues’ where the ‘personal’ is ‘political’ or ‘institutional’ and becomes the focus of social development. Strategic gender needs, as identified by Molyneux (1985:233) may include all or some of the following:*

“The abolition of the sexual division of labour; the alleviation of the burden of domestic labour and child care; the removal of institutionalized forms of discrimination such as rights to own land or property, or access to credit, the establishment of political equality; freedom of choice over childbearing; and the adoption of adequate measures against male violence over women”.

In support of attending to strategic gender needs, Mallane (1994) argues that it is

important to help women see themselves first as individuals with rights rather than just train them to participate in development, as they might now become more efficient slaves to men and male dominated institutions. In other words, it is just not enough to concentrate on changing some specific forms of inequality and discrimination. Women's situation requires the change of the total structure of society and redefinition of the individual in it regardless of sex (ibid.:103-104). It is the contention of the researcher that women should be seen first as human beings with human rights like everyone and secondly and particularly as women and individuals, even among women. However, to achieve the former, it may mean that first, the realities of the contexts of women and men's lives must be taken into consideration through gender analysis and in gender planning being the very tool to achieve 'human rights'. The right to make choices and the diversity among women must be respected. Cultural oppression must be guarded against as it is most difficult to recognize and/or to eradicate.

Many development policies and programmes have different effects on men and women because social roles in various economic activities, inside and outside of the household are frequently associated with gender. A closer look at the planning process of development programmes reveals that it should utilize the principle and method of gender roles identification and gender needs assessment respectively. The social development perspective embraces the value of participation in the community where the disenfranchised people should be actively and meaningfully involved in participatory aspects of planning in the community, in order to empower them. The concepts and variables of participation, power and influence in decision making for development, are therefore analysed. Gendered participation in the planning process will have to take place with an understanding that mainstream community participation, empowerment, planning and decision making in development, must meet men and women's gender needs.

### **4.3 EQUALITY AND INCORPORATION INTO MAINSTREAM SOCIETY**

In this section the key concepts of participation and empowerment in social development are analyzed. Definitions, the significance of participation and empowerment and how the concepts will be used in this study, are discussed. It is argued here that equality and incorporation in the planning process for development will be achieved through participation and empowerment - as processes and products.

#### **4.3.1 Why social participation?**

The strong interest in participation now spans many fields of activity, from political discourse through to theories of business, management and teamwork. In rural development the interest is also strong (Oakley, 1991; Burkley, 1993; Chambers, 1993; Nelson & Wright, 1995; Slocum *et al.* 1995). In relation to rural development, the need to follow the participatory approach was strengthened following the Rio Earth Summit, where it was agreed that it had to be an integral and inalienable part of sustainable development (Toulmin, 1997).

Whilst in recent years many development practitioners have taken on board the concept of participation, the substance of participatory management is still often ill defined (Dearden *et al.* 1999:95). Clarification is needed regarding "what it is people are participating in ... who is it that is participating" (Toulmin, 1997). People can participate by contributing to different stages and levels of decision making, such as designing policy, agreeing to rules and terms of access, enforcing regulations and distributing benefits (Hoggarth & McGregor, 1997). Despite the 'feel-good' factor often associated with the concept of participation, it must be recognized that it is not a neutral concept, and involves a set of political issues concerning who has decision-



making power and who has access to resources. This then links participation to the social empowerment concept in social work and in policy as articulated in the Social Empowerment Policy laid down by the KwaZulu-Natal Department of Local Government and Housing - discussed later in this section.

Participatory management has been defined as a “process whereby those with legitimate interests in a project both influence decisions which affect them and receive a proportion of any benefits which might accrue” (Dearden, *et al.* 1999). This suggests that a major but not exclusive role for local populations is exercising such responsibilities and receiving benefits. In practice, it involves sharing tasks with other interest groups at micro- and macro-levels, such as district councils, various government ministries as well as NGOs. Toulmin (1997) notes, that in practice the term participation has been used in a wide variety of contexts to span a broad range of meaning (1997:10). Participation ranges from passive participation to self-mobilization. Within the two extremes in the continuum, there is: information giving; consultation; participation for material incentives; functional and interactive participation. In other words, at the one end of the continuum, participation is used to mean: “I tell you what to do and you participate,” elsewhere it implies “much greater exercise of power and autonomy” (Dearden, *et al.* 1999:95-96). This latter form of participation is by group structures of civil society mediating on behalf of others for community decision making and development. Brager *et al.* (1973; 1987) call them institution-relations groups.

Like empowerment, participation takes place at a personal level, i.e. the individual participates as an individual as well as a member in a group. Personal participation depends on personal as well as social power. To determine social participation researchers have studied participation from two perspectives. One is the association

of certain population characteristics with degrees and kinds of participation. The second is the relationship between organizational characteristics and variations in participation. Membership in voluntary associations is positively related to socio-economic-class, degree of education, and geographic residence (research studies on this are cited in Brager, *et al.* 1987:61; 412). Brager *et al.* (1987) argue that the picture of research findings on the degree of participation of the poor in general and particularly among the low income people, is mixed. Some authors have documented a continuing pattern of low participation by the poor in voluntary associations (*ibid.*:66; 412). These studies reflect a serious error in the conception of participation "... [they only] count the individuals' 'voluntary' memberships in organizations, the formal positions they hold, or the number of meetings they attend" (*ibid.*:412). The authors contend that account is not taken of the type of participation which most characterizes that of the poor, that is, "non-voluntary" participation. In the words of Brager *et al.* (1987:66) the "involuntary participation" arises in that:

"... the poor are involved in public schools [in school governing bodies], welfare departments [welfare organizations, NGOs]; departments of public health; the agencies of correctional systems; public housing; and so forth. The participation in such organizations although time consuming, active, and enduring, is ordinarily not "voluntary" in the sense that they make the choice to join or to attend or are elected. Rather their participation is required by law or is mandatory for the acquisition of necessary resources to sustain life."

The marginalization of the poor and particularly of low-income women is evident in rural community politics as well. The RDP developed forums which it hoped would act as correctional mechanisms for power disparities in local government, by providing the disempowered with a platform to work in direct partnership with local government (Ritchken, 1995:213). Ritchken argues that rural politics is characterized by the ability

of certain social forces to dominate both state and civil voices, and since rural women have been historically and culturally denied the right to voice their political views, they are further marginalized in these forms (ibid.:213). Actually Ritchken (1995:213) paints a gloomy picture for local- or neighbourhood-based control of development. According to Ritchken, so long as local development remains 'local', that is, determined by a local balance of power and outside of effective national scrutiny, rural development interventions will probably reinforce the power of dominant local forces and sustain oppressive gender relations.

From the above observations the points raised by Brager *et al.* (1987:66) about the nature of participation of the poor in institutional relations organizations is that "they exercise a relatively low degree of influence or control over organizations in which they participate". This view of participation turns the problem in an important way. Instead of asking "why don't the poor participate?", it becomes "how can their participation be made of greatest use to them?" The issue then is not merely how to get the poor to participate more actively, but how to make their already active non-voluntary participation more beneficial and meaningful to them (ibid.:67).

Despite the foregoing arguments, the study of participation and power in community decision making for development, warrants focussing on in terms of community leadership and the supporters or subleaders. Most investigators would probably agree that leadership refers to a complex process whereby a relatively small number of individuals in a collectivity, behave in such a way that they affect (or effectively prevent) a change in the lives of a relatively large number (Freeman *et al.* 1969:66). But agreement on theoretical details of the leadership process or on how it is to be studied is another matter. Numerous examples of studies of community leadership have each come up with varied research designs too complex to implement or with many sample

errors (see Gibb, 1954; Addison-Wesley, 1958; Polsby, 1959; Wolfginger, 1959; Hunter, 1953). In short, all existing studies of community leadership represent some compromise (Lyden *et al.* 1969:68). According to Lyden *et al.* (Ibid.:68) four types of compromises have been common in studying leadership and include the following.

Some of the most realistic of compromise studies are those based on the assumptions that active participation in decision making "is" leadership. A second approach is to assume that formal authority is leadership. A third assumes that leadership is a necessary consequence of social activity and leads to the studies of social participation. The final approach assumes that leadership is too complex to be indexed directly. Instead of examining leadership as such, proponents of this approach assess reputation for leadership. Their reasoning suggests that all of the more direct approaches neglect one or another key dimension of the leadership process (Freeman *et al.* 1969:68-69). They turn, therefore, to informants from the community itself for identifying reputational leaders, i.e. for locating some individuals who unquestionably meet the criteria of community leadership. This study approaches its identification of community leadership through any or all four approaches that complement each other.

To explain community leadership in decision making, Weber adds economic power and power associated with one's perceived social position in the community to legal or politically based power (Norlin & Chess, 1997:355). Leadership then implies that a person occupies a social position or social status or social class in the community.

Social class or status is one of the most important variables in social research (Miller, 1983). The socio-economic position of a person affects his or her chances for education, income, occupation, marriage, health, friends and even life expectancy (Miller, 1983:275). Occupation has been shown to be the best single predictor of

social status, and overall prestige ratings have been found to be highly stable. A number of factors act in close relationship between occupation and social status. Both individual income and educational attainment are known to be corrected with connected ranks. Education is a basis for entry into many occupations, and for most persons, income is derived from occupation (Miller, 1983:275).

In rural communities where occupations are not as clearly defined as in urban or in developed economies, income sources are from less formal occupations, if at all. Prestige rating of these rural occupations has not been done. Stewart (1986:32) defines family income as gross income from farm operations, 'pensions', and remittances, market input costs for crops were excluded while income from handicrafts and livestock were included. Farm workers using family labour contribute to the household in terms of hours worked there, while wage workers contribute net remitted incomes. The former workers' labour and time, may be sold to or hired from neighbouring households. Nattrass and May (1986:592) cited wage earnings, pensions and farm income as income sources. Other minor sources of income included maintenance grants, and informal income. These forms of income are sometimes seasonal and often difficult to calculate. Most of the rural women and the poor earn income from the occupations referred to above.

Social position and social participation though, are linked when examining leadership, and prescribed kinds of behaviour, or roles, are often thought to accompany given statuses. Yet the range of permissible and alternative roles is often so extensive that one cannot safely predict the roles that will be associated with a particular status (Freeman, et al. 1969:103). Some role behaviour is more oriented around participation in community decision making. This political orientation is referred to as "politicization" (ibid.:103). The extent and variety of politicized roles is of some

consequence in looking at various types of status incumbents in the local/political/government system. Freeman *et al.* (1969) identify three forms of politicization, namely: participation in civic organizations, interpersonal contacts, and advisory activity. Although insight into the community decision-making roles of local leadership is gained by looking at their ties with civic organizations, their role sets and their roles as advisers, it is important to assess their actual involvement and the level thereof in concrete decision issues (*ibid.*:107-108).

Although participation may lead to community integration, and it can be therapeutic for the participants, it cannot by itself, assure institutional responsiveness and change to achieve development goals (Brager *et al.* 1987:10). This happens because 'participation' does not necessarily mean or lead to empowerment. It is, however, an essential ingredient in all meaningful social change because when people participate in actions to improve their world, a positive energy is released. In partnership with the government and civil society, this energy will lead to social empowerment. Furthermore, if as many development sponsoring agencies now believe, participation is about greater effectiveness and helps towards the sustainability of development efforts and activities, then all stakeholders need to participate in the process of development (Dearden *et al.* 1999:96). This implies that during the formulation of development projects, the question 'who is not participating?' must also be asked. Without this intervention, efforts at deliberate participation may compound existing inequalities by giving those, for example, with higher status and/or louder voices a platform for participating (*ibid.*:96-97). To ensure that all key stakeholders participate in the development process requires skilled facilitation and intervention. However, this can challenge the vested interests of existing power holders and perpetrate local conflicts. This then brings the concept of power into the centre of the discussion.

### 4.3.2 Why power and the reconceptualization of power?

The contribution of the power position to social work is evident in two major areas. First, the concept of power provides the community practitioner with an approach to understanding how community decision-making works. In this sense, it becomes an assessment tool. If the worker is to be involved in community change effort, the community power position becomes important in understanding how decisions are typically made in a particular community and what interests may have to be mobilized or at least neutralized for the change effort to be successful (Martinez-Brawley, 1995:539-548).

Second, the concept empowerment is central to the social work profession. Most social work's clients lack power and thus lack control over their lives. Whatever problem clients may face, the helping effort must always focus on client's strengths, and on ways of increasing the person's ability to manage his or her life. The community power theorists have provided a way of thinking about power, the forms it takes and how it is obtained and used. These theorists have provided information for community work practice and have particularly helped social workers understand the process of advocacy and how it should be used to empower those without power (Mickleson, 1995:95-100).

Power operates at various levels within a person, between people and between groups (Cook, 1995:286).

Arendt (1970:44) fully understood this contradictory experience of social and individual power. She observes that:

“Power corresponds to the human ability not just to act but to act in concert. Power is never the property of an individual; it belongs to a group and remains in existence only so long as the group keeps together. When we say of somebody that he [she] is ‘in power’ we actually refer to his [her] being empowered by a certain number of people to act in their name. The moment the group, from which the power originated to begin with ... disappears, “his [her] power” also vanishes” (Kimmel, 1997:238).

The premise of feminist theory supports this view as it warns against a false dichotomization of the personal vs political/or institutional concerns. Max Weber explains in general what is to be understood by ‘power’, i.e. it is the chance of a man [or woman] or of a number of men [or women] to realize their own will in communal action even against the resistance of those participating in the action (Encyclopaedic Dictionary of Sociology, 1986:53-54). In other words, Weber highlights the fact that power can be exercised through the use of both co-operative and conflict-based ‘communal actions’. This distinction becomes important in developing the community power position and later examining conflict theory (Norlin & Chess, 1997:354).

Power is a central concern within feminist analysis (Van den Berg & Cooper, 1994:5). A significant account of discourse has related to ways in which patriarchy can be challenged (Millett, 1973; Firestone, 1971; Mitchell, 1973). Patriarchal processes are characterized by creating power dichotomies - in essence, generating conditions of ‘haves and ‘have-nots’. The concept of patriarchy has most usually been employed to describe situations of male domination and female submission. It can be generalized, however, as a paradigm ‘describing’ all inequitable situations whereby many must lose so that a few can gain (Van den Berg & Cooper, 1994:5). Within a patriarchal mode, power is seen as a finite commodity to be controlled, particularly in determining the distribution of rights, resources and opportunities (Van den Berg & Cooper, 1994:5). In most traditional models, power is viewed as property, analogous to money, involving



control and domination of subordinates to make them subservient. Accordingly, those who control power, manage the environment, and determine goals, information is withheld, and rules are created to censure behaviour (Hooyman, 1982:6). This is what has been happening with racial domination as well. Through control of power, patriarchal modes breed subordination by promoting dependency and not providing persons the ability to have full control over their lives. Powerlessness can be considered an inability to manage emotions, skills, knowledge and material resources in a way leading to effective performance of valued social roles (Solomon, 1976:16). It is through performing in certain capacities such as worker, head of household, partner, parent, spouse and community citizen that individuals derive a sense of purpose and self (Van den Berg & Cooper, 1994:6).

Various theorists have explicated the notion of power and inequality. The material position of women is assumed to be dependent on that of men and therefore the class position of women is also assumed to be dependent on that of their spouses or male relatives. This idea has been critiqued by scholars like Ndinda (2000). A feminist model of power would have to incorporate a gender analysis of power and that is, how internalized oppression creates barriers to equality between men and women and the way in which male violence, conditions women's experiences. This gender identity, created by and supported by socialization and 'culture', becomes the most difficult to change, particularly if it perpetuates inequality and dysfunctional gender relations favouring those in power.

What then is social empowerment? The Beijing conference in 1995, defined empowerment in terms of women gaining control over their lives. The idea of women gaining control over their own lives has been echoed by development feminists such as Kate Young who posits that "empowerment is about people gaining control over their

own lives: gaining the ability to do things, to set their own agendas, to change events in a way previously lacking” (Ndinda, 2000:4). Ndinda further states that empowerment involves the radical alteration of the processes and structures which reproduce women’s subordinate position as a gender. In other words, strategies of women’s empowerment cannot be taken out of the historical context that created lack of power in the first place, nor can they be viewed in isolation from present processes (ibid.:5). The indicators of empowerment, which include positive self-image, self-confidence, ability to think critically, building group cohesion, and fostering decision-making and action are provided here (ibid.:5).

The feminist interpretation of power leads to a broader understanding of empowerment since it goes beyond the formal institutional definitions of power to include the idea of the ‘personal’ as well as ‘political’ power. The interpretation of power as control entails understanding the dynamics of oppression and internalized oppression. According to Ndinda (2000:5) empowerment changes the existing power relations by addressing itself to three dimensions, i.e. material, human, and intellectual resources. Empowerment changes ideology, i.e. the set of ideas, attitudes beliefs and practices in which gender bias or social bias like race and ethnicity are embedded. Addressing ideology is therefore necessary in changing gender relations in the long-term. The pervasiveness of women’s oppression and subordination implies that the process of empowerment has to occur at several levels and includes women gaining the different forms of power. A holistic notion of empowerment includes gaining control, the ability to act and work on one’s creativity, ability to work with others to achieve common objectives and a sense of self-worth, self-confidence, dignity and self-esteem.

Empowerment should lead to resource redistribution, i.e. equal access to and influence over resources. It is not only about service delivery; its about strengthening women’s

self-reliance. Empowerment implies challenging women's subordination in the family and community. Empowerment implies undoing the negative social stereotypes and letting people perceive themselves as having the capacity and the right to act and influence decisions.

Following a solid consensus, empowerment is defined as gaining control over one's life, that is, gaining control over the factors which are critical in accounting for one's state of oppression or disempowerment (ibid.:25).

Social action is a dimension or component of empowerment. It is action in and on the social "and" political environment, and therefore it is citizen action. This collective action is aimed at the socio-economic, political and/or structural changes that will bring about a more just balance of power.

To be empowering, social action must be accompanied by reflection, or involve what Freire (1970) calls 'praxis', i.e. a constant movement from reflection to action back to reflection. It is only through this 'praxis' that the actors own the action and are in control of the action. It is only to the extent that they are conscious and autonomous 'subjects' involved in thinking about and defining their situations, deciding on the actions to be taken, testing their action responses, and then re-thinking and re-defining their situations, i.e. it is only to the extent that "they" make the choices and the decisions *in terms of how to define situations and how to carry out actions*, that they are in control and not merely 'objects' of other people's choices or decisions (Freire, 1970). This is why Longres and McLeod (1980) following Freire declare that action without reflection and reflection without action is unjustifiable. It is unjustifiable in the context *of empowerment, because it is unempowering, and perhaps even disempowering.*

The mass action seen in unions, mass strikes or other activist groups should be action with reflection. Otherwise, action without reflection is not autonomous and authentic action, but rather a “reaction” to others’ ideas, while reflection without action is, for the disempowered, mere teasing or provocation, akin to adding insult to injury. But with autonomy comes responsibility, and empowerment therefore involves people taking responsibility for their choices and their actions.

Political awareness is an essential component of empowerment. To be in a position to choose to get involved and to actually get involved in citizen action, means that one has an awareness of self as a political being, i.e. a person with a right to participate, and to choose how to participate, on the political scene. It also means that one is aware that one’s personal situation is influenced by and related to socio-economic and political forces, i.e. that one is conscious of the interconnections between issues (Rappaport, 1985; Rusman, 1985).

Political participation is broadly defined to include, the apparatus of government (e.g. getting involved with political parties and rating in elections) as well as collective action outside the apparatus of government (e.g. activity in “grass-roots organizations”) (Perlman, 1976).

And, moreover, in terms of the disempowered, it means that one sees oneself as a member of a class, “experiencing problems as a function of [one’s] class status in society” (Longres & McLeod, 1980:273) - whether ‘class status’, involves being a member of an economic class, a racial or ethnic group, or whether it involves a gender-related, a marital status, an age category, or other like status. There is near unanimity in the literature that this process is facilitated through group participation: indeed Longres and McLeod (1980:273) are adamant that the process requires group

participation and is “only possible within groups”. This underscores the role of community organization in social development, best practised as part of the generalist model of social work.

Empowerment involves consciousness-raising, and is a process of liberation from voicelessness or from silence. The right to say means that one has the right “to name the world” (Freire, 1970), that one has a right to name one’s reality (Breton, 1993) and to define one’s own issues (Mullender & Ward, 1991). The right to ‘have a say’ means one has the right to participate in the decisions that affect one’s life and the life of one’s community. Both rights involve self-advocacy, or the power to represent oneself or one’s group. So women have gender needs and rights, like all human beings.

In addition to the above-mentioned forms of empowerment in community organization and social activist social work, empowerment is the process of helping a group or community to achieve political legal authority (Norlin & Chess, 1997:354).

This definition suggests that political influence or power and the attendant legal authority is one dimension of community power. The other dimension of power in addition to the legal authority or power (which comes first), is the economic form of ordering in the community, followed by the social order. Frequently those having the highest social honour (those at the top of the class structure) have attendant power - they frequently have great economic and legal power, their social honour is not to be explained by virtue of their economic and legal power alone (Norlin & Chess, 1997:354).

For the disempowered, it is important to learn to use one’s voice to get a fair share of

resources for as Rappaport (1981:13) has pointed out, "Having rights but no resources and no services is a cruel joke". However, it is to be emphasized that the right to 'have a say' includes the right to participate in defining and creating new resources, or 'co-producing' public services (Sharp, 1980; Sundeen, 1985) as well as the right to participate in the allocation of resources, and not only the right to access existing resources (Breton, 1994).

Thus the process of becoming empowered involves competence: it involves ensuring that the right to speak up becomes synonymous with the right to be heard. This in turn involves the willingness to recognize both one's competence and the limits of one's competence, it involves trusting oneself and one's knowledge and abilities (including one's ability to learn), and being ready to risk demonstrating (i.e. acting on) one's knowledge and abilities.

Competence here is conceptualized as 'ecological competence', whereby it is "the interaction" between abilities and skills, motivational factors (such as attitudes of hope, trust and self-respect, and a sense of one's destiny) and environmental qualities (opportunities, challenges and barriers in the physical, social, economic, political, and cultural environment) that results in competence (Maluccio, 1981; Parsons, *et al.* 1988; Breton, 1994). Becoming empowered means that when the recognition, trust, and acceptance of others (people/institutions) are not forthcoming, motivation is mobilized, and knowledge and skills are applied to put pressure 'to bring them around'. Without the means to put pressure to bring people or institutions around, i.e. in the absence of ecological competence, there can be no empowerment, only the illusion of power.

Using power is significant here where the issue is identifying, understanding, and using

the different sources both of positive and negative power. Sources of positive power comprise, among other things, command over money, favourable legislation and a 'fair judicial system; possession of information and expertise; access to communication channels and to the media; group support and contacts; personal charisma; ability to reward; attainment of positions; titles; and valued social roles; monopoly of essential resources; as well as energy, courage and communication (Wax, 1971).

In explaining the differentials in power among people, Dahl (1961) offers six observations about resources having relevance to community decision-making:

- 8) Many different kinds of resources for influencing officials are available to different citizens',
- 9) With a few exceptions these resources are unequally distributed,
- 10) Individuals best off in their access to one kind of resource are often badly off with respect to many other resources,
- 11) No one influence resource dominates all the others even in most key decisions,
- 12) With some exceptions, an influence resource is effective in some issues - area(s) or in some specific decision(s) but not all,
- 13) Usually no one and certainly no group of more than a few individuals, is entirely lacking in some influence resources.

Types of power, such as knowledge power or skill power, must be recognized and acknowledged as merely being different and not more legitimate than other types of power. For example, interpersonal relationships have much to do with power wielding, as all politicians seem to know, and therefore the personal connections between some of the men of power and those in power in government offices are often close (Hunter,

1953). Hunter develops his point that ties between community influentials and government can be sufficiently strong for local power figures to influence government legislation and to call on government officials for assistance to deal with community issues (Norlin & Chess, 1997:358).

The disempowered can take advantage of relevant positive power by creating and using alliances (i.e. identifying how others need them), learning and applying negotiation skills, understanding the process, structures and limits of decision-making, and developing solidarity within and between groups (among other means). The main source of negative power is the ability to withhold: to withhold consent, support or participation. Withholding should not be construed as passive behaviour in the sense that doing nothing or withholding can involve refusal to participate in social programmes designed by others ('experts') or the refusal to acquiesce to a community's standards of law and order and social control.

#### **4.4 SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION**

Empowerment concerns people who lack power or who are oppressed. Oppressed people are not people who are without personal, moral, or spiritual "strengths" or resources, but rather people whose life chances and choices are significantly curtailed by inequalities in the distribution of social economic and political "power" and resources (Breton, 1994:25). In this study these people are rural women.

Hunter's concern is that community decision-making, in some instances, may not be in accord with democratic principles and may have harsh effects on those with the least power (Norlin & Chess, 1997:358). This concern is shared by social workers and social development workers, and their interventions target this discrepancy. To them,



participation and empowerment, as a process and a product have the potential of democratizing community decision-making and minimizing the negative effect of non-involvement or alienation and conflict.

Empowerment, or claiming personal power is a political act because it allows people control over their own lives and the ability to make decisions for themselves. However, to redefine power does not mean to deny the reality of differentials that exist between persons in terms of knowledge, influence, skills, resources or responsibility (Van den Berg & Cooper, 1994:6). It is likewise a myth to believe that persons are equally powerful or that everyone must have an equivalent amount of power. From time to time certain individuals might be more expert than others and their opinions could weigh heavily than of others (Van den Berg & Cooper, 1994:6). This inequality, nevertheless, if unchecked by means of equity facilities can be problematic.

To relate participation and social empowerment, social empowerment is seen as consisting of three interrelated aspects, namely the:

- increased participation in development;
- generation of opportunities for entrepreneurial and developmental activities;
- consequent transformation of government and civil society (Social Empowerment Policy, undated).

This description of social empowerment relates it to the key strategies of social development (Midgley, 1995).

As an end in themselves, social empowerment and participation can:

- promote the sustainability of development projects;
- promote the successful completion of project targets;
- take advantage of local practices and local human capacities; and
- promote the utilization of sustainable technologies suited to the immediate environment (Social Empowerment Policy, undated).

As means to an end, social empowerment and participation can promote the:

- transfer of skills and knowledge to those who are disadvantaged; and the
- *organization of communities into representative institutions* (Social Empowerment Policy, undated).

The attainment of the process as a means to an end, will facilitate the ongoing process of decision-making by a variety of actors, the ultimate outcome of which is determined by the content of the programme being pursued and by the interaction between decision-makers within a given politico-administrative context (Moser, 1993:7). This will enable men and women to increase their power and according to the Social Empowerment Policy (undated) be able:

- to make more effective demands on government by being aware or being articulate about their situation;
- to structure institutions and developments to serve their needs better; and
- to resist exploitation by groups outside the immediate community.

The foregoing discussion of empowerment will influence any empowerment-oriented practice.

The focus of gender planning or social transformation means that its procedures are concerned with the redistribution of power and resources within households, civil society and in the global system (Moser, 1993). It is this gender planning framework that will be applied in developing the social development practice model in this study. The methodological tools such as the 'triple role', gender needs assessment, the WID/GAD matrix and gender participatory planning can help planners not only to appraise and evaluate, but to formulate and implement gendered proposals at policy, programme and project level (Moser, 1993:96).

*The following chapter presents the research design and the methodology used in this study.*

## **CHAPTER FIVE**

# **RESEARCH METHODOLOGY AND THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE RESEARCH PROJECT**

### **5.1 INTRODUCTION**

The purpose of this chapter is to describe the research methodology - the methods and techniques used to collect data and the procedures that were used to implement the study plan. First will be a restatement of the problem and the key research questions in the study. Then the sampling procedures will be discussed. Interwoven in the latter are the strategies for gaining entry into the community for this research's purposes. Then it will be a summary of both the quantitative and the qualitative methods used. Finally, data analysis will be discussed.

### **5.2 RE-STATING THE PROBLEM AND QUESTIONS OF THE RESEARCH**

The problem definition presented in the first chapter can be re-stated as follows:

What gender roles, needs and resources do women have as individuals, within households and in the community to be able to influence decision-making processes for local social development? Who are the leaders that speak for women and men to determine what role government should play in social development?

This problem is subdivided into several research questions.

### 5.2.1 General research questions

- 1) What are the demographical, climatic, economical, geographical, socio-cultural and infrastructural characteristics of the research area?
- 2) What are the community decision-making structures, local government and traditional leadership that should afford rural women effective participation in social development?

Data presentation on the two questions is contained in Chapter 6.

### 5.2.2 Specific research questions

- What is the composition and the gender of household heads in households where women live? The socio-economic characteristics of these households are identified.
- What kind of resources do these households have at their disposal for performing day to day survival tasks within the household?
- What are the gender roles for women and men and gender needs identified within the households and in the community?
- What responses to gender needs have led to community development in the area?
- What power base - such as expertise, public knowledge, interpersonal contacts

and other capacities - do women and men have that can be associated with effective participation for development?

- What is the nature of community leadership and the level of involvement of women and men (compared to men) in development in the study area?

The questions centred around core variables which are divided into two:

(1) the dependant variables:

- women's roles and needs
- access to and control of resources
- levels of involvement and community leadership for effective participation.

(2) the independent variables which are:

- socio-economic characteristics (gender, age, marital status, occupation, income) household headship;
- dependancy ratio;
- membership of community organizations; attendance at meetings; financial contributions; positions held; sources and levels of public knowledge; interpersonal contacts; issue involvement and advisory activity.

### **5.3 THE RESEARCH DESIGN**

The research design in this study is essentially descriptive. However, the exploratory design was applicable where very little was known about the aspect of the problem (Grinnell, 1988:220). Where more knowledge about the research topic got to be

known, the study used the descriptive research design. The latter also utilized a combination of qualitative and quantitative research methods. Scrimshaw (1990) states that qualitative methods are recognized for their accuracy in terms of validity, whereas quantitative methods are considered to be better in terms of reliability.

The exploratory aspect of study included, a formal literature review in the library and the use of key informants to identify and define the community perceptions and theories and concepts to guide the study of the rural women and men.

This section describes the methods of collecting data used in the study. Methods are hand maidens of designed inquiry (Miller, 1987:71). It is important to distinguish carefully between methodology, situs, methods and techniques (Miller, 1987:71). The discussion of the methods then had to identify the situs (the place in which data was gathered) as well as the techniques used. Although the process of gaining access to the community is discussed briefly under a separate sub-heading, it was a series of continuous activities that began from the initial stages of the research for collecting data as well as developing a working relationship, to the end of the research project. *First, is a look at gaining entry and the sampling procedures.*

### **5.3.1 Gaining entry**

*A number of strategies were combined to gain entrance into the community in order to study the different sub-groups. In as far as the formal local government like the uThungulu Regional Council, the Departments of Agriculture and Welfare, it was easier to receive approval and assistance, because of the investigator's institutional affiliation, easy identification through letters of introduction, and a good reason for conducting the study. Some organizations or sub-cultures are much more open than others, therefore*

the traditional authority leadership needed special attention. Hoffman (1980) observes that in some cases, access may be facilitated through friendship with the person(s) observed. It helped, for example, that the researcher had a personal relationship with a member of parliament (MPP for KZN) who is resident in the area, and who is well accepted by the tribal authority. In the course of the MPPs contact(s) with the *inkosi* in the tribal court, an opportunity to present the goals of the study and the implementation of the research was secured, and it worked well for the researcher. Furthermore, the use of the field assistants who come from the area, enabled that further rapport could be achieved and maintained, as they helped the researcher understand the language, customs, and habits of the persons/community members being studied. It must be noted that although the researcher is herself an African Zulu speaking female, it could not be assumed that she automatically understood the sub-culture(s) of the population and sample.

Besides access to formal organizations, entry into individual households had to be gained. The headmen helped to facilitate acceptance in their wards because initial contact had already been made with them at the *inkosi's* (chief's) courthouse. Use of direct observation as a qualitative (exploratory) method further facilitated the contact making. The direct observation of rural activities has been given the name Rapid Rural Appraisal by Chambers (1982). This technique was found by the researcher to be a good way of becoming familiar with the study area and exposing the leads to the socio-cultural nature of the neighbourhood and the general community concerns. Visual indicators gained by driving or walking through the area were used to assess the physical and socio-economic conditions. Direct observation was used when the researcher attended the chief's (*inkosi's*) courthouse on a weekly (Tuesdays) basis in December 1999, January, February 2000. This was followed by attending the URC hearings on integrated development plans in February 2000. During this period the



researcher also carried out several trips to the study area visiting community projects such as communal gardens and child care centres. On all these occasions, a field notebook was kept to record information relevant to the research objectives. Superficial views of the area were avoided since the researcher resided a couple of kilometres away from the area, and also interacted with the residents by attending to individual members' personal problems presented at the Desk for Abused Women at UniZul in the Department of Social Work. Furthermore, supervision of students' practical work in the local schools, intensified the process. As soon as there was rapport with the community and as part of this entry phase formal data collection started.

From the initial contact making phase in the community it became evident that the rural poor exercise a relatively low degree of influence in or control over organizations and decision-making structures in their communities. The positional leaders, that is, the tribal leadership in the rural community, had themselves a corps of sub leaders to assist them. Thus the research question: "Who are the leaders that speak for the women and who determine what role government should play in social development, required that there should be a special focus on community decision-making (as against decision making within the household)".

Hence alongside studying the rural women and men as participants in local development, through what is called "Sample A", a special sample of individuals' were identified, Sample B. The latter comprised of the community leadership (traditional leadership and community influentials). Data on the leadership was collected separately using a different research instrument. Hence, even the sampling procedures that follow became eclectic in nature in order to access the needed data.

### 5.3.2 Sampling procedures

The sampling process is concerned with: (1) the definition of the population, (2) the size of the sample, and (3) the representativeness of the sample.

The objective of this study is to identify gender-related issues in community development with a specific focus on women in a KwaZulu-Natal rural neighbourhood. Investigating rural women in the whole of KwaZulu-Natal would be beyond the capacity of one individual study, thus it was decided to focus on one specific area in detail. This selected area was the Mkhwanazi Tribal Authority in the Ongoye magisterial district under the uThungulu Regional Council in Northern KwaZulu-Natal. The study area was chosen because it is typical of rural areas in KwaZulu-Natal (Auerbach, 1989).

#### 5.3.2.1 Selecting 'Sample A'

The uThungulu Regional Council (URC) provided statistics obtained from census data, CSS '96 (Central Statistics South Africa, 1996) according to which there are 4 928 households and a population of 34 702 persons in the Mkhwanazi rural area. A generally accepted sample estimation is computed around a ratio of 1:250, for the sample versus the population (Isaacs & Michael, 1983). Therefore an estimated population of 34 702 could yield a sample of 139 respondents. However, for purposes of this study, it was eventually 79 as will be explained later.

The multi-stage cluster sampling was used. This is sometimes called area sampling, and is generally used when it is impossible or impracticable to construct a sample frame in which the sampling units are the sampling elements themselves (Bailey, 1987:91). Simple random sampling was also not possible in the dispersed rural

neighbourhood, because of the impossibility of making advance arrangements or appointments and making certain the sampled individuals are available.

Therefore, the first step of the multi stage cluster sample method was the identification of a sampling frame that lists all the 16 rural wards in the Mkhwanazi rural neighbourhood with a total of 4 000 households.

Selection of a suitable sampling technique proved to be problematic. Conventional sampling techniques were inappropriate as there was no sampling frame with a list of household heads, for example. In addition, available orthophoto maps were old and could not be used to locate the households as the pattern of settlement had changed from the 'deep rural' to emerging urban centres, especially around the University of Zululand, with the establishment of the Esikhawini Township and Richards Bay industrial growth nodes. In parts of the neighbourhood a transitory population of students and workers staying as tenants, was common.

As a rule of thumb, it is useful to divide the population into clusters whenever the clusters have some sort of natural identity so that people in the same cluster are more similar than people in different clusters. The researcher in this second stage selected 5 wards out of the 16 wards, whose leaders, i.e. the headmen were agreeable, able and willing to cooperate in the research. An initial encounter with these was at the tribal court in a meeting where the *inkosi* introduced the researcher to the Tribal-council and the secretary. Contact with these headmen would be possible throughout the duration of the study.

The third step sampled households from a sample frame of all households, contained in the 5 wards drawn in the second stage of the cluster sample which were 1 250

households (out of a total of 4 000 for the 16 wards).

The third stage consisted of choosing the household heads or adults within each household drawn in the previous stage.

From the 5 wards 12 households were selected from each ward - the availability and accessibility of the household heads finally determined the sample. A total of 60 households were sampled, resulting in what one would call a convenience sample. However, the limitations of this sampling procedure exceeds its advantages in that, it would be hard to convince anyone that the results were conclusive or representative. However, since the households could be regarded as case studies, to provide data categorized according to household headship, gender roles, gender needs, social participation and livelihood strategies etc., the sample was relevant to the study.

#### 5.3.2.2 **Selecting 'Sample B'**

The study of women's gender roles and gender needs in the households and their contribution to community decision-making for effective participation in local/social development, was of central concern here. In order to implement this, gaining entry into the tribal authority system, a key rural community leadership structure, was critical. First, it was obtaining permission of the tribal leadership, and identifying community leadership process. Secondly, it was important to develop an understanding of the socio-cultural context of women's lives from secondary data sources (documents), and from key informants. This comprised the exploratory aspect of study which included a formal literature review in the library, and the use of key informants to identify and define theories and concepts to guide the study of the rural women and men.

In identifying and selecting community leaders and community (development) issues around which social participation took place in the rural neighbourhood, the initial question asked was: Who are the key informants and how will community influentials be sampled?

Key informants are defined as persons having direct contact with individuals experiencing problems in living (Neuber, 1988:16). Persons forming a sample of key informants or knowledgeable can be sampled in any number of ways. Neuber (1988:16) suggests that random samples may be drawn from any of a number of relevant informant populations, including headmen, councillors, clergy, law enforcement personnel, medical doctors, nurses, school administrators, school teachers, and social welfare agency personnel. Just as the sampling procedures and the sample differ, so does the purpose or type of information that is collected. In this study the key informants were needed to provide information on the following: (i) community development projects known to them in the area; (ii) to identify community influentials or influential leaders in the community, i.e. those reputed to have had specific roles in initiating decisions or in the defeat of those community decisions initiated by others.

The key informants were sampled through the snowball method. In the first phase of this kind of sampling, a few individuals from the relevant population are approached (Huysamen, 1994:44). These are also known as the 'knowledgeables' (Ayres & Potter, 1989:6). In this study what can be called the first zone key informants were identified, that is, the positional or formal leaders who included the headmen, the tribal authority's secretary, professionals and officials or administrators of different government departments serving in the local area, particularly the URC officials, officers of the Department of Social Welfare and Agriculture. Rather elaborate steps were

taken to ensure that the informants were indeed informed. For example, the positional leaders were questioned in order to develop the second zone key informants, a list of reputed leaders or community influentials *vis-a-vis* local development programmes and issues. Then the reputed leaders or influentials were polled to determine the next top influentials in respect of the same issues. If the name of one person was mentioned more than twice by both the first zone key informants and by the second zone key informants, he or she was regarded as a community influential. Thus both the positional leaders and the reputed leaders or influentials formed the 'community leadership' in "Sample B". In such cases it was reasonable to suppose that the grossly uninformed were ruled out.

A total of 19 respondents who comprised tribal leaders and those attributed as community influentials or reputed leaders according to the key informants, were sampled. The latter qualified according to criteria that placed them at the apex of a status hierarchy termed "perceived influence". They were placed by other people there.

### **5.3.3 Procedures for data collection**

These sources of data using selected procedures were used for collecting data.

#### **5.3.1.1 Use of documents**

The situs for formal literature survey was the library, the internet and selected development agencies including local government. The search was for theory and previous search in books, journals and monographs and for documents with statistical and non-statistical records. Techniques included internet searches, recording of notes, content analysis and microfilm and microfiche searches.

The following topics that were surveyed and analyzed in detail in chapters 2, 3, 4 and 6, are as follows:

- Development theories and third world policy approaches to women in development (Chapter 2).
- Social development, social welfare, social work practice in sustainable development (Chapter 3).
- What is gender and gender equality, gender analysis (Chapter 4).
- Crucial concepts in gender analysis and gender planning - the methodological tools for gender planning and social participation and empowerment for social development (Chapter 5).
- The physical, socio-economic characteristics of and community decision-making in the study area (Chapter 6).

#### 5.3.1.2 **The interview**

In the context of this study, the personal interview/survey dominated. Highly structured questions were used to focus on points highlighted by previous research and theory, but also open-ended questions were used. The problems associated with the 'tyrannical' nature of formal questionnaires were acknowledged. These include imposing an alien theory on data that predetermines results and excludes novel elements that can provide a better understanding of reality (Barnett, Bell & Hoffman, 1982). Because in some cases the use of survey questionnaire has been found to be inadequate when studying rural women (Stubbs, 1984), and because feminist methodological approaches insist on the validity of personal experience (Eagle, 1986), this study relied on quantitative analysis of data, tempered by some qualitative information. This was done: to build a picture of the gender division of work and

unravel the gender stereotypes surrounding gender roles; to identify the socio-cultural context of rural people's lives; the socio-economic circumstances; the constraints and opportunities that are associated with the effective participation of rural women in social development.

Personal interviews using the interview schedules (see Appendices D and E) with fixed response and open response questions, were used. The questions centred around the following factors: the social economic correlates, types and levels of social participation of respondents in both Samples 'A' and 'B'. The forms and degrees of politicization (namely participation in civic organization, interpersonal contacts, advisory activity), and issue involvement were included as items in the schedule for Sample B. The two status groups were compared on selected variables, particularly gender.

The interview schedules were translated into Zulu. They were then retranslated back to English. Discrepancies with the original questionnaire were corrected. Using members of the same community as respondents, a pilot interview schedule had been conducted a week prior to the major survey. Then where required, changes to the interview schedule were made.

The first survey was conducted in December 1999. The three field workers were Zulu speaking young women, two of which were born and bred in the study area. The researcher, as principal fieldworker and facilitator, accompanied the field workers to households in order to carry out direct observation. This proved to be a particularly useful opportunity, as the interviews were often conducted inside the women's homes, more direct observation was then possible. Some key events and issues of community concern, those most talked about could be identified and that gave the researcher better understanding of the socio-cultural environment.



### 5.3.1.3 **Direct observation**

Direct observation which relied on the field experience of the researcher, was applied in planned but unstructured visits to the rural area, attendance of the key meetings such as in the tribal authority court house, and at the uThungulu Regional Council hearings on proposed integrated development plans affecting the study area. The personal interview using the structured interview schedule as a research method was used with the 60 respondents sampled, i.e. 'Sample A' and the 19 respondents in 'Sample B'. The interviewer used detailed schedules with fixed response and open response questions.

During interviews and direct observations some anecdotes were recorded to illustrate certain points in the interview, and were reported where relevant.

### 5.3.4 **Data analysis**

Data was compiled through computer processing of descriptive statistics. The bulk of the data collected through personal interviews was coded, and the responses to the open ended questions were categorized through coding, before being processed by computer. The data was punched into the micro excel spreadsheet, and a wide variety of analyses were conducted. Frequency counts of responses of specific sub-groups of respondents were made as well as cross tabulations. Various comparisons on the core variables discussed earlier were made within and/or between the different sub-groups or combinations of sub-groups of respondents, i.e. women and women who are part of the general rural households and between women and men who were in community leadership.

Some detail on data processing and analysis, centres around coding.

During the interviews and direct observations, notes of everything the respondents said were written. All these notes were transcribed and consolidated everyday to a full report. Consolidation means writing a short essay on the importance of the event recorded to re-interpreting earlier ideas and to frame plans for the next step in the research (Bailey, 1987). The consolidated notes were used for sorting out and completing the data.

Analysing the data was done by open coding that lies at the basis of the “Grounded Theory”. Eriksson (1995) defines “Grounded Theory” as a general methodology for developing theory that is grounded in data systematically gathered and analyzed. Gläser and Strauss (1967) discuss this as focussed mainly on concepts: the inductive method of developing theory; the researcher has to make theoretical sense of the vast diversity in the data, and to do so, develop ideas on a level of generality that is higher in conceptual abstraction than the qualitative data on which the theory is based.

The idea is that theory is grounded in data, and it evolves during actual research, through continuous interplay between analysis and data collection.

Open coding involves the process of breaking down, examining, comparing, conceptualizing and categorizing data. Concepts in this sense are conceptual labels placed on discrete happenings, events, and other instances of phenomena. The concepts that seem to pertain to the same phenomena are grouped, and categorized (Närman, 1995). In this research, for example, the concepts “household chores” and ‘domestic or survival tasks’ or ‘reproductive roles’ belong to the same category as “activities” as well as ‘gender roles’. This is because any unit of data may be coded

with more than one category.

Now, from the different categories that were made, data could be analyzed. When having to answer research questions, the categories were applied there. In this research, for example, the eventual coded categories were applied such as “poverty-related problems”, “decision-making”, etc. With the help of the interview text and observation notes in each category, the data was interpreted. Additionally, literature and information of the key informants were used for completion of the analysis.

This coding procedure, done by hand, was followed by computer analysis. The variety of research methods used in this study to enable the collection of a broad spectrum of information even though desirable, did make the interpretation and synthesis of these data, time consuming and difficult.

#### **5.4 CONCLUSION**

The research utilised an exploratory and descriptive research design. Although the research design in this study is descriptive, it did make use of exploratory research methods to identify crucial variables in the study/problem area. Miller (1983:55) argues for the accumulation of empirical and theoretical knowledge and states that:

“Research progress on a central problem usually proceeds through stages first, exploration of the social setting of the problem, the factors involved, and the criteria that may be used to measure or appraise the problem, then descriptive and diagnostic study may be possible.”

Both quantitative and qualitative research approaches were thus utilised. Under the qualitative approaches, however, no focus groups/participatory methods were used,

which would have led, not only to personal empowerment for the respondents but also to the development of the best social development practice model. In this case women would have come together to explore issues pertaining to culture, traditional values, their identities and roles in socio-economic development and the strategies for gender planning. This proved a limitation of the study, because resources available did not permit the use of the participatory methodologies.

The use of the multiple data collection methodologies, to measure a single concept or construct as a feature of triangulation was preferred in the study. Fielding and Fielding (1986:31) specifically suggest that the important feature of triangulation is not the simple combination of different kinds of data, but the attempt to relate them so as to counteract the threats to validity identified in each. But triangulation can also actually represent varieties of data, investigation, theories and methods (Denzin, 1978).

The field was the situs (site) for collecting data on women and their households, and the community's leadership processes and structures offering opportunities for effective participation in development. The main research methods were face to face personal interviews using structured interview schedules with the rural residents sampled.

The following chapter presents the data collected to answer the two general questions cited earlier in this chapter. The rest of the data is analyzed and interpreted in Chapter 7.

## **CHAPTER SIX**

### **THE CONTEXT AND SETTING OF STUDY: STUDY AREA**

#### **6.1 INTRODUCTION**

The purpose of this chapter is to identify and describe broadly, the rural community's people and the environmental characteristics of their neighbourhood - the context of women's lives. One of the community or social development workers' first tasks in working with a community, is to map out the intricate patterns of economic and social relationships by which a community carries out its purposes and functions (Brager *et al.* 1984:51). The information that needs to be covered includes: social-economic features, population characteristics; physical attributes and natural environment; the spatial distribution of infrastructure and social services; and institutional capacity (local authority and tribal leadership) for getting things done in the area, and participation by women or rural people, which must include participation in local government.

#### **6.2 THE SOCIO-ECONOMIC CHARACTERISTICS OF THE RURAL AREA UNDER STUDY**

In describing the specific socio-economic features of the area, a profile of KwaZulu-Natal warrants a brief mention as the context within which the area falls.

Examination of demographic and socio-economic profiles within the former Natal and

KwaZulu<sup>4</sup> districts, shows that KwaZulu areas clearly have the more needy communities (Schwabe *et al.*, 1995). Specifically, KwaZulu-Natal is a relatively poor region, with a Gross Domestic Product (GDP) *per capita* of R4 070 in 1990 compared to the National average of R6 205 (Palmer Development Group, 1992). Thus, KwaZulu-Natal, and more specifically the districts of the former KwaZulu, need assistance from the national and provincial governments to address the poor socio-economic conditions in the region and to provide services for the basic service needs of the people (Schwabe *et al.* 1995).

### 6.2.1 The people of the area under study: demographic characteristics

The total population in the Mkhwanazi Tribal Authority (obtained from the UThungulu Regional Council and the Census Data 1996) is 20,941+13,761=34,702. This comprises 19% of the total population of the Ongoye Magisterial district (the latter consisting of five other Tribal Authorities). The spatial differentiation of the Tribal Authority lends its population to being divided in two separate sections, viz. the Mkhwanazi Tribal Authority located at the university side, an area of 82,22 km<sup>2</sup> and the Mkhwanazi I Tribal Authority at the Port Dunford side an area of 37 km<sup>2</sup> (see Map of the Umlalazi<sup>5</sup> subregional plan, Spatial Framework Appendix A). It should be noted though that a sense of community and common purpose is firmly established and maintained by the fact that the people are under the same tribal leadership, Inkosi Mkhwanazi and fall under the same local authority which operates as a functional

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<sup>4</sup> 'KwaZulu' is the self-governing state, the so called Bantustan, where African Black people were citizens and continued to - outside South Africa in the era of Apartheid separate development.

<sup>5</sup> 'Umlalazi' is one of the subregions of the uThungulu District Council, under which the Mkhwanazi Tribal Authority falls.

community.

The proportion of male to female is 1 is to 2 but no indication is made of whether all the males are adults residing within households or are migrant workers.

#### 6.2.1.1 The gender composition of the population

**Table 6.1: Gender distribution in population by percentage**

Gender	Number	Percentage
Male	15 585	45
Female	19 117	55
<b>Total</b>	<b>34 702</b>	<b>100</b>

**Source:** Census 1996/GIS uThungulu Regional Council

The total number of households according to data from the GIS uThungulu Regional Council, based on Census 1996 is 4 796. The gender of the heads of households is indicated in Table 6.2.

**Table 6.2: Gender of household heads by percentage**

Gender	Number	Percentage
Male	2 943	61
Female	1 853	39
<b>Total</b>	<b>4 796</b>	<b>100</b>

It is difficult to explain this high percentage of male headed households, 61% reflected in Table 6.2 because when looking at the marital status figures, in the population, it does not seem “marriage” *per se* is a priority relationship that entitles males to

headship in this case.

According to Census '96, 78% of the population has never married. Another 13% is couples that are cohabiting. Nevertheless, the women with men are married either by civil or customary law.

In fact, the 75% of single women, means chances of a higher percentage of female headed households should exist rather than as recorded in Census '96 data, i.e. the 61%.

#### **6.2.1.2 Age profile of the residents**

According to Census '96 the age distribution in the Mkhwanazi population is as follows:



**Table 6.3: Age distribution in the total population of Mkhwanazi rural area**

<b>Age in years</b>	<b>Number</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
0 - 10	9 218	26.50
11 - 20	7 696	22.17
21 - 30	7 595	21.80
31 - 40	3 680	10.60
41 - 50	2 167	6.20
51 - 60	1 374	3.95
61 - 70	1 170	3.37
71 - 80	494	1.40
81 - 90	199	0.57
91 - 100	23	0.07
Over 101	0	0.00
Unspecified	199	0.57
<b>Total</b>	<b>34 702</b>	<b>100.00</b>

Children from 0-20 (49% of the population of 34 702) are regarded as dependents and/or are not economically active, and the persons between 21 and 60 years (comprising 44%) are taken as economically active. Then the over 60s comprising only 7%, could be the pensioners.

This brings into focus the employment, occupation and income issues in the area. According to Census '96, 56% of the population in the area has no visible source of income, particularly 2 400 of the household heads (i.e. 307 out of 1 804 household heads). Out of the 44% of those earning an income, 17% earn below R500. For this population the income level is very low. An analysis of nationwide households in South Africa shows that the majority of the poor are African, and they are situated in rural

areas and that many have female household heads (Whiteford, 1996; White Paper for Social Welfare, 1997).

This is also true for KwaZulu-Natal and those regions which have high levels of poverty where the majority of households are involved in subsistence agriculture and often male members are away in the major metropolitan areas. In the Ongoye<sup>6</sup> district 66% of the total population lives below the minimum living level (MLL)(Whiteford, 1996:24). This poverty trap is linked to the dependancy ratio which is a ratio of people who are employed (including formal employees and those who run very small, in fact, the informal sector/survivalist business) and the rest of the population (which includes children, the elderly and the unemployed). According to the KwaZulu-Natal district based map representation of the data on the dependancy ratio: the number of people dependant on each working person in the Ongoye district is 5.17 (Schwabe *et al.* 1995:30).

A little over 5% of the population in the study area was reported as disabled according to central statistics '96. This estimate includes disability according to sight, hearing, physical, mental and other non-specified disabilities. This percentage rate although small, can have a big impact well beyond the people who are themselves disabled, the carers, because the care of the disabled persons falls disproportionately more on women. This is further complicated by the fact that the burden of unemployment in South Africa is borne most heavily by black people, women, youth and those with lower skill levels or less education.

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<sup>6</sup> Ongoye is a magisterial district with 6 Tribal Authorities, including the Mkwazi Tribal Authority belong and form one Regional Authority (of chiefs), the Ongoye Regional Authority.

### **6.2.1.3 Educational levels in the study area**

According to Census '96, 19% of the population has had no schooling at all. Those with less than Standard 4 or grade 6 make up 37%. The problem could lie in low skill levels rather than literacy *per se*. According to the South African Institute of Race Relations, the officially accepted definition of functional literacy is the knowledge of reading and writing skills necessary to live and work in a particular community. The use of the number of years of formal schooling as a criterion does not give a very realistic image of literacy because persons who have received their education a couple of years before might have fallen back into a state of illiteracy (ibid.:25). The extent of illiteracy is apparently larger than the numbers indicate. With computer literacy gaining a place in the economy the literacy ratios become more complex to determine. A contributing factor to the low literacy rates in the KZN census districts is the poor state of education provision in the region (ibid.:19).

## **6.3 PHYSICAL ATTRIBUTES, NATURAL ENVIRONMENT AND BASIC INFRASTRUCTURE**

### **6.3.1 Topography and its effects on rural development**

The study area falls under the coast lowland which occurs as a belt 15 to 65 km wide along the coast, from sea level to an altitude of 450m. Rainfall is well distributed with the annual figure varying between 850 and 1 400 mm. The average annual temperatures of 20 to 22.5°C are experienced. Few dry months occur. Very little or no frost occurs in winter, with very high humidity during the months of October to March (Le Roux, 1993).

The Mkhwanazi area is semi-flat near the Port Dunford side getting hilly towards the west of the university side. The area, as part of the coastal region, is generally characterized by moderate potential soils (Schulze, 1993). The soils are predominately sandy along the sea becoming clayey towards the mountains. Northern KwaZulu-Natal has a highly diverse land-use potential ranging from maize, wheat, cotton, game and beef production in dry areas to timber in the wetter eastern regions (Quinn & Lewis, 1995). The area under study provides agricultural potential for growing sugar cane, bananas, and timber plantations.

*The topography of the area under study like that of the rest of KwaZulu-Natal, has an impact on development in general. According to Schwabe et al. (1995:14) the topography of KwaZulu-Natal also contributes to the impoverishment of the region, because its characteristically steep slopes and rugged terrain restrict the extent to which land can be used for growing crops. The dominance of the white population in the province and their monopoly of good agricultural land have resulted in the people of KwaZulu being restricted to the more rugged terrain of the province (Schwabe et al. 1995:14). Generally this terrain is unsuitable for agriculture and this has also inhibited the construction of major infrastructure services such as roads, reservoirs and sewerage plants needed to provide basic social services (ibid.:14).*

### **6.3.2 Water supply, electricity supply and sanitation**

The area has six permanent streams and rivers. Despite these water sources there is no formal irrigation schemes for use by the rural farmers. The inadequacy of local water supplies has led to the closure of a water purification plant that supplied the local area, a neighbouring township in particular.

**Table 6.4: Percentage households and source of water supply available and accessible**

<b>Water source</b>	<b>Number of users</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
Piped water on site/dwelling	475	9.64
Piped water off site	157	3.18
Public tap	1 133	23.00
Carrier tank	164	3.30
Borehole/rain water	424	8.60
Dam, river, stream	2 474	50.00
Other	61	1.23
Unspecified	37	0.06
<b>Total</b>	<b>4 925</b>	<b>100</b>

**Source:** CSS '96 Data and uThungulu Regional Council

According to Census '96 (uThungulu Regional Council GIS) the Mkhwanazi area's domestic water comes from three main sources. Fifty (50) percent of the households, the largest group, get their water from the rivers or unprotected streams; another 36% from piped water in taps on the dwelling site, off site and public taps, then 8% comes from boreholes.

To understand the impact of access to the water sources on the quality of life in this area, sanitation needs some scrutiny. The most common facility for human waste disposal is the pit latrine, with 64% of the households using them. Twenty one percent of the households have no toilets. Only 16% of the households have adequate human waste disposal systems.

Access to safe drinking water and sanitary disposal of wastes are not only recognized

as basic needs, but are also intimately tied up with the health and productivity of developing communities (Schwabe *et al.* 1995). According to international norms, the satisfaction of basic needs requires that everyone should have access to twenty to fifty litres of safe and convenient water per day and be able to dispose of excreta without contamination of humans or the environment (*ibid.*). Inadequate water and sanitation provision is regarded as a major cause of high mortality and morbidity rates in many developing countries. The most widespread diseases in developing countries are those transmitted by human faeces, and water is a major medium of transmission. During the period between the months of June and July 2000 a number of deaths were reported in some of the tribal wards of the area under study (this was before the much-publicized cholera outbreak). They were alleged to have resulted from diarrhea believed to have been caused by drinking polluted river water. More people using particular streams and boreholes had stomach pains. Some of the families are presently using the bleach known as Jik to purify domestic water and the local clinic has issued warnings on how to "treat" water before use. It has been shown that improvements in community water supplies and modern sanitation can bring about reductions in mortality rates (due to cholera) of up to 70 percent, and for typhoid fever of between 60 and 80 percent (*ibid.*:79-80). Poor water and sanitation are also widely regarded as important contributory causes of high infant and child mortality rates in underdeveloped rural areas. A UN study, for example, has suggested that the control of water related diseases would add an average of about ten years to life expectancy in the developing world (*ibid.*:90).

There are, of course, a variety of other factors that govern susceptibility to diseases besides the water condition, such as poverty, malnutrition, low levels of education, and literacy, overcrowding, and even fertility (Schwabe *et al.* 1995). With the HIV-AIDS epidemic the vulnerability of developing communities cannot be overemphasized. This

implies then that improvements in water and sanitation services alone, may be largely ineffective in promoting better health unless they are incorporated within a general health and development programme.

The large percentage of households without safe drinking water can be reduced by improving the quality of water supply. The protection of springs near residential areas to ensure a constant supply of clean water and to cater for waste disposal should be considered. The uThungulu Regional Council as local government is working on water projects in the area, and water committees with local residents, are hard at work to provide piped water in the area. These committees together with the resident's capacity to pay service charges (affordability) will go a long way in providing needed clean water in the area.

The availability of a health infrastructure in the area needs to be a developed goal.

### **6.3.3 Health facilities in the area**

In the area there are two health clinics, one located at the Ntuze ward and the other at the Vulindlela township. Access is limited by distance and transport costs and the availability of transport for some residents of the Tribal Authority area. The 24 hour services with maternity facilities have been terminated because of alleged criminal attacks on clinic staff. The Ngwelezana and Empangeni Hospitals some 20 km away are for referral of patients. The clinics are plagued by a shortage of medicines, especially those that are readily available for walk-in patients or crises situations. The services are definitely insufficient where one clinic facility is supposed to serve 10 470 people. What is more likely to be happening is that large numbers of people in this area are making use of the private sector for their primary care. Indigenous healers

play a large role in informal health care in the community where women are just as active “izangoma” or “abathandazi” (traditional doctors or faith healers) respectively.

Rural housing has become a critical development issue as more rural people become aware that they can improve the quality of their life, and it is seen as one of the basic needs.

#### **6.3.4 Housing in the area**

As expected, high levels of informal housing are found in the areas that previously comprised KwaZulu. Most of these districts have high levels of informal housing ranging between 80% and 100% (Schwabe *et al.* 1995). The informal housing enumerated within these districts represents a mixture of shack and traditional dwellings. The latter comprises 60 percent of the housing in the Mkhwanazi area and as Schwabe *et al.* (1995) note, compared to other areas of rural KwaZulu, this is a relatively low level of informal housing. This might reflect the presence of large formal urban areas nearby (e.g. Esikhawini) which has served as a dormitory satellite of the towns of Empangeni and Richards Bay. The people of the area aspire to more solid modern housing rather than the traditional houses or huts, as can be as noted in the emergence of associations of men and women working towards self-help housing. The government policy of ‘social empowerment’ and subsidies in housing has encouraged this development in the rural area, among other things.

However, it is the non-governmental sector, with the cooperation of local people themselves that are active at this point. The South African Homeless People’s Federation, linked to the People’s Dialogue, a national NGO with provincial, regional and local structures is facilitating this process. The relationship between the NGO and



Government has not yet been clarified. There were three organized self-help housing and group saving schemes identified in the area under study, with mostly women as members.

The uThungulu Regional Council recently approved the development of a Rural Housing Policy Framework for the region. The rural area of Mbazwana in Northern KwaZulu-Natal would be used as a test application area for the policy, after several applications for rural housing projects in the region have been received from private developers. All applications would only be considered once this policy framework has been finalized (Ezimtoti, May 2000). Currently there are no formal guidelines to evaluate any rural housing projects, as the Provincial Rural Housing Policy has not been thoroughly tested.

#### **6.3.5 Other social service infrastructures**

There is a general lack of amenities and services (for example, recreational facilities/opportunities for entertainment, creches, local shops) in the area. Formal commercial activity is limited, thus creating a dependency on outside incomes and goods.

The level and type of community organizations in the area has been poorly documented. However, various farmers' associations, community gardens, church groups, development committees exist for social participation, and for accessing other needed resources. Church buildings and a tribal court house exist and are used as venue for meetings - just like schools, and even homes. Detailed information on the spatial infrastructure and social service infrastructure in the area, which data is useful for local economic development and which is not covered in this chapter, can be accessed from the UThungulu website (its Geographical Information System (GIS) in [www.uthungulu.org.za](http://www.uthungulu.org.za)); from the quarterly newsletter of the uThungulu Regional

Council, Ezimtoti; from Integrated Development Plans (IDP) and Land Development Objectives (LDO) of the region or district council.

Most important is the institutional capacity (and structures) in the rural areas through which residents can collectively negotiate for resources for their community's development. Tribal leadership and local authority is then analyzed at this point. The purpose of (social) development must be re-stated - which is - transferring skills to people and giving them access to resources so that they may have greater control over their lives. Ritchken (1995:195) argues that governance is central to this development to achieve this purpose. By governance Ritchken (1995:195) refers to the processes through which power and authority are exercised between and within institutions in the state and civil society around the allocation of resources. Identifying and mobilizing leaders is therefore the first step in kickstarting the process of development.

Within the community, leaders come from a variety of backgrounds each bringing unique resources to make things happen. It is important to reach out to local leaders from all sectors of society and to gain their active support. This could be a group of councillors, officials or a nurture of the two, or even a single person that provide(s) leadership and energy to get things done. This set of leaders will be discussed in the next chapter when the research findings are presented. In the meantime the current (prescribed) mechanism or institutions of leadership and local governance are described.

#### **6.4 PARTICIPATION, POWER STRUCTURES AND DECISION PROCESSES IN THE LOCAL NEIGHBOURHOOD**

Before a description of what local government is in the rural area under study,

traditional leadership needs to be examined.

#### **6.4.1 Rural political-social institutions: The traditional leadership**

Rural households are embedded in the local institutional environment within which they interact dynamically, according to prevailing social structures (Gebremedhin, 1997:13). The traditional customary laws and orders are often perceived as vital instruments for the exercise of regulating local affairs such as land distribution, land disputes, marriage, divorce, inheritance and other civic activities (ibid.:13). Any social development worker needs to acknowledge that local government in rural KwaZulu-Natal, among other provinces, has had to contend with the issue of where to position traditional leadership in local development because of how it is formed, its power and functions in the democratic dispensation. With the introduction of the new constitution of South Africa, the general feeling in many sectors was that some of the functions of traditional leadership did not coincide with the constitutional functions of local government. Therefore, traditional leadership structures could not, as they were, be regarded as "local government". For example, traditional leadership lends itself to judicial functions, and can speak on traditional affairs or act as the custodian of customs and culture even though in some respects, the current responsibilities of traditional authorities, and those of 'local government' do overlap. This has been known to be a source of tension in communities and has hampered development in certain rural areas. Traditional local leadership and local government co-exist. Chiefly (*inkosi's*) authority and support does not depend on recognition by the state. To a number of rural people it is blood, not the vote, that determines people's right to wield authority (Ritchken, 1995:207).

How is the tribal authority (tribal leadership) constituted and consequently operate?

#### 6.4.1.1 **The composition and roles of traditional leadership**

At the head of the tribal authority is the *inkosi/inkosi yesizwe* (the chief). The present *inkosi* in the study area inherited his position. The chiefdom *isizwe senkosi* is subdivided into wards *isigodi* which are administrative sub-units made up of geographical neighbourhoods with recognized boundaries such as a stream, a road, or any land mark. Each ward, i.e. *isigodi* is comprised of *imizi* (plural of *umuzi*), the households/homesteads - originally meaning clusters of thatched huts. The total of the *izigodi*, wards make up the Tribal Authority area. In the Mkhwanazi Tribal Authority under Inkosi Mkhwanazi, there are approximately 16 wards (*izigodi*), with each ward under a headman, known as *induna*. The *inkosi* works with the latter in what is known as *ibandla lenkosi*, i.e. chief-in-council. These men are appointed by the *inkosi* and his closest advisors who are mainly elders - often members of the *inkosi's* (extended) family. Headmen are selected for their leadership attributes and are regarded as loyal, respected and experienced men, often elders (*abanumzane*) in their own homesteads (*imizi*). Depending on the size of the ward, the headmen themselves may subdivide the ward into sub-wards headed by sub-headmen or councillors accountable to the headmen. In implementing their roles, the headmen also have their council known as *ibandla lenduna* accountable to the *inkosi* and his council. The Tribal Authority leadership, in its functions, is guided by customary law, and is guided, to a greater or lesser extent by the policies outlined in the White Paper on Traditional Affairs prepared by the Department of Constitutional Development, by the Departments of Justice (on customary law and courts) and by the Department of Land Affairs (on communal tenure and land trusteeship). In KwaZulu-Natal there is, at provincial level, the Department of Traditional Affairs under Minister iNkosi Ngubane who is himself an *inkosi* (chief) turned politician.

The SA Constitution (Chapter 12) recognizes traditional authorities and states that national legislation may provide for a role for traditional leadership as an institution at local level on matters affecting local communities. This is despite a current debate on the political status of tribal leadership. The functions of traditional leadership can be summarized as follows:

- (i) Presiding over customary law courts and maintaining law and order. The Tribal Authority has a formal courthouse for the hearing of cases held every Tuesday of the week. The cases are heard (tried) by the *inkosi-in-council*, and the process is informal, accessible and conciliatory. It may or may not be effective, depending on whether the parties themselves give it any recognition and are willing to voluntarily comply with the 'judgement'. Otherwise, locals can approach the judicial courts outside the *inkosi's* jurisdiction. Headmen also have the same role of mediating and arbitrating on disputes among residents in their wards, i.e. *izigodi*. If they fail to resolve these they then refer them to the court of *inkosi*.
  
- (ii) Consulting with traditional communities through a public meeting known as *imbizo*. This includes assisting members of the community in their dealings with the state. The *inkosi* communicates with government on traditional affairs through the House of Traditional Leaders (Provincial Level). The tribal leadership is responsible for convening meetings to consult with communities on needs and priorities and providing the information to the relevant development structures. Understanding this role of the tribal authority is very important especially in the negotiation of entry into rural communities by development agencies or individuals in development. These are known to have succeeded or failed based on how their activities fitted in with the tribal leaderships, i.e. if they did not

threaten their authority or added value to it. This has become even more critical with the emergence of political party conflicts of interest, and the threat to personal power of traditional leaders. Being able to enlist the cooperation and support of the latter without compromising development goals and the long term interests of the community members, requires a very sensitive balancing act.

- (iii) The tribal leadership plays a key role in protecting cultural values and providing a sense of community in their areas through a communal social frame of reference rooted in known customary practices. Through the headman-in-council and the *inkosi*-in-council court hearings, - family or marital disputes, neighbours' disputes over land and, other property for example, are settled. The principles that guide how all parties in the cases should act are based on cultural values and customary practices. However, the traditional practices do tend to favour men - where women are expected to be passive recipients of "man's superior position" in the family and in many community situations. Customary laws sometimes do not coincide with equal rights for all, and are being challenged by the proponents of women's rights (human rights). Some of the issues being worked on are reproductive rights, equal access to abortion, violence against women, battering, rape, rights to inheritance, rights to land ownership and so on. How the tribal courts will cope with these developments as well as act as custodians of customs, remains to be seen. The Department of Justice has indicated its intention to establish community law courts, and traditional leadership will enjoy special recognition in the new community law courts in rural areas. This can be expected because the traditional leadership is a symbol of unity in the community, and is a structure that rural people understand and know or because they have hands on experience of making recommendations on land allocation and the settling of land disputes is one of

the key administrative and development roles of the tribal leadership. Tribal leadership has as one of its key power bases, the control and management of communal land tenure system in the rural area. They are the land administrators. Flashpoints exist between land administrators, namely chiefs or *amakhosi* and headmen, and the individual household, as well as along gender lines within the household. The chiefs /*amakhosi* who fear losing their control over settlements sometimes see the struggle over household control of land in communal areas as war, and take aggressive measures to expand their control instead (Mhlanga et al., 1999:6). Efforts by chiefs/ *amakhosi* (and headmen/*izinduna* in particular) to obtain the powers of landlords sometimes reduce the status of families into that of tenants in their own land - as administrators try to cut back the increasing autonomy of their constituents (Mhlanga et al., 1999:6). In addition to that, migration into the area or increase in the adult population's needs for farm land and other needs for land to establish community facilities or for economic development, put pressure on the limited tribal land assets. As Mhlanga et al. (1999) argue, struggles are developing between the alliance of community households and land administrators, against the outside economy ... the tribal authority cannot be dispossessed administratively for development projects by local or provincial government without due process. The current debate on the new municipal demarcation of boundaries is fuelled by fear that interests are threatened. Problems over land arise also at household level, where individual households manage to privatize public natural households at the expense of weaker neighbours. People are known to have been murdered in land disputes over boundaries and so on in the area. The tribal court hearings deal with a lot of disputes over land boundaries. Both the land administrators and male household heads often share a gender interest in upholding patriarchy by

preventing single women getting access to the settlement right, and being able to set up their own unmarried families outside male control (Mhlanga et al., 1999:6). In fact, the polygamous marriages have given men this right to control land, among other things.

Thus the debate over problems associated with polygamy as a marriage/social institution will never be easy to resolve as it is tied up with maintaining men's acquisition of more power and control through land rights - a productive resource. Getting access to land in the rural area is a complex process which involves first obtaining, from the individual who is the owner of the land, permission to occupy it then the headman and the *inkosi* officially recognised the transaction in a recognized traditional procedure. On placement on the plot, for example, a ceremony takes place, where allegiance is demonstrated - 'ukukhonza' and the name of the new landowner, if not tenant, is then entered in the Register at the Tribal Authority Office as a new *mninimuzi* (owner of the house/huts). The process is known to work well, but sometimes cases of fraud and other criminal acts are associated with it. At this point, the Department of Land Affairs is looking at various options of land tenure. Cross (1999:6-11) argues that at present, although government is still trying for a vision for rural development and poverty alleviation that incorporates land, so far, the elements of a workable approach have not been put together into a policy package. The land reform process has floated isolated in policy space. Central questions likely to be raised are, on the role of land options under a bimodal agriculture, and how to promote land rights without further destabilizing the rural communities and their land institutions.

Tribal leadership also functions to ensure that the tribal or rural community participates in decisions on development by contributing financially to the development projects.



There is also a Development Committee in the rural area made up of democratically elected representatives from all the 16 wards in the Mkhwanazi Tribal Authority. The development committee links the local community with district local government (the uThungulu Regional Council). Each ward has a sub-committee or representative to the Development Committee. Last but not least, is the function of linking the tribal authority with other stakeholders in the region. For example, a councillor from the Tribal Authority is elected to represent it in the local government - the uThungulu Regional Council. A male from the area is a councillor for local government, serving in critical committees of the Council. The councillor is thought of as a chiefly councillor rather than as a local government councillor. As Ritchken (1995) observes, with the dispersion of power to local government, the chieftainship looks for ways of consolidating its power under the new conditions by implicitly or explicitly having candidates for local government. Nevertheless, an energetic *inkosi*/chief uses access to local government to access development resources, and employs his ability to convene meetings to be seen as a facilitator of development.

The tribal authority also forms part of the mechanism that considers and makes recommendations on trading licences to the Ongoye Regional Authority. The latter is made up of 6 tribal authorities (*amakhosi*) in the Ongoye district. It holds quarterly meetings where trading licence applications are approved and it meets at Nsingweni near Mthunzini, 20km from the area under study. Nsingweni is where the district office of the Department of Agriculture is located. After these hearings, the applications are then forwarded to the Head Office in Ulundi for finalization.

In concluding this section the final statement for separating tribal leadership and local government to make rural development congruent with national priorities and the new constitution, as presented convincingly by Ritchken (1995:207), needs to be noted:

“... the chieftainship cannot be recognized [as a local authority] working in conjunction with line departments. Nor can the institution be given the status of both administrator and political representative. There needs to be a clear line between institutions in civil society and those in the state ...”

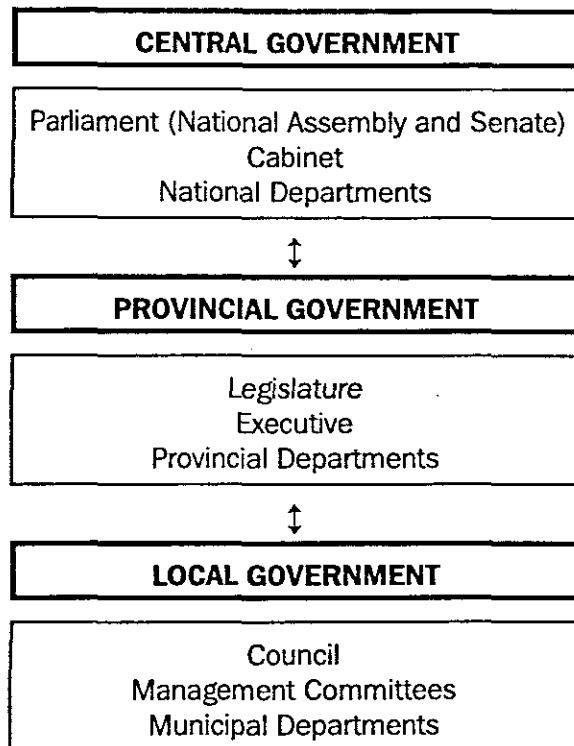
Therefore, also close to rural communities and involved in the provision of services, is not only the traditional leadership, but local government, provincial, and national governments. This is not to mention the parastatal and other non-governmental organizations, the private sector, political and economic structures in the broader society.

In the KwaZulu-Natal rural areas, local government as one of three levels or tiers of government, is formed by the district government represented by the Regional Council, among other structures. In this case it is the uThungulu Regional Council.

Local government therefore should always be seen in relation to the central (national) and provincial levels. The diagram below shows the position of local government in the overall system of government.

#### 6.4.1.2 Local government: uThungulu Regional Council (URC)

**Figure 6.1: Local authorities and the other levels of government**



The uThungulu Regional Council (URC) is serving an area of 209 875 sq. m. with an estimated 1 351 000 people and a budget of millions - all to benefit local communities. Bringing local government closer to the people is a significant concern, if not a key role of any social development worker, in order to access resources needed for development.

The uThungulu Regional Council is one of the seven regional councils in KwaZulu-Natal. It is then sub-divided into four sub-regions namely, the Umlalazi, the Phongola, the Nkandla and the Lower Umfolozi sub-regions (see Map A in Appendix A). The area under study falls under the Umlalazi sub-region (see Map in Appendix B).

How the URC is formed and how it functions, will be discussed briefly, but for details on the council consult the recently launched Internet website which contains useful information which social developers, NGOs, government development officers, farmers and the like, will find very useful (in [www.uthungulu.org.za](http://www.uthungulu.org.za)) (Ezimtoti, May 2000).

(a) **The formation of the URC**

The uThungulu Regional Council consists of two sections: a political section (the elected councillors) and an administrative section (the officials). These two sections have different roles and functions, but they are closely related and supportive of one another.

First, the policy and decision-makers; the councillors, will be discussed. These are the people representing the rural people's development needs to government. After elections the political parties forward their candidates to serve in the Council with a proportionate allocation of seats, and the chairperson of the Council comes from it. In the current uThungulu Regional Council, the IFP has the majority of seats and the ANC, NP, DP and other parties present in the region are represented. Interest groups such as levy payers also have 23 seats approved by the Minister of Local Government and Housing. The already organized structures of levy payers, i.e. shopowners, farmers, etc. nominated their representatives. In the first five years of local government in the URC, levy payers' representatives have been all white. The election process had been democratic and above board, but because Black business was not well organized it could not participate effectively. Women must be represented in the Council as determined by the Minister (i.e. according to a directive from the national government).

The Amakhosi are represented, i.e. from the 67 Tribal Authorities in the UThungulu

Region. The representatives are ex-officio members, and are not voting. There are six *amakhosí* in the URC included according to a formula used by the Minister of Local Government and Housing (Provincial).

The issue of representiveness does not only refer to party proportionality, but extends to wider questions of representiveness such as the gender balance within the Council. Although women constitute more than 50% of the population less than 20% of the Councillors are women. Party lists must therefore contain women's names and the women electorate must be helped to make sure this happens.

**(b) The role of women, the “gender structure” (the uThungulu Gender Working Committee)**

When political party lists are submitted they are bound to have women, but the Council has made a deliberate effort to establish the uThungulu Gender Working Group. The uThungulu Regional Gender Working Group is composed of men and women from the Council itself and the 8 Transitional Local Councils (Richards Bay, Empangeni, Mandeni, Gingindlovu, Mtunzini, Mtubatuba, Inyala, St. Lucia and Eshowe). The following interest groups are represented on the Working Group, should they meet specific guidelines:

- (1) President of the Umbrella Body of Women Organization in the Region: a Regional Representative of Commission on Gender Equality;
- (2) Business Against Crime;
- (3) Chamber of Business;
- (4) President of the Coalition of Non-Government Organizations;
- (5) Disabled People of South Africa; and
- (6) Domestic Violence.

The present chairperson of the Working Group is a woman Councillor serving in the Regional Council and is also in its executive council. She is also chairperson of the standing Committee of the Council, on Economic Affairs and Tourism.

The main functions and duties of the Working Group are set down in its Terms of Reference. Essentially its role is to conscientize the Council on needs and interests of women and engage in developing gender sensitive plans and budgets to impact upon local, social and economic development.

The Working Group has been able to implement training and capacity building programmes to address the qualitative participation of women in local government. The result of its impact have not yet been evaluated.

The latest highlight of the woman-led uThungulu Gender Working Group has been its decision to donate 20 sewing machines to the value of R40 000.00 to ten sewing clubs in the region as a first visible fast track programme (Ezimtoti, May 2000, 3). Another R20 000.00 was earmarked for a Regional Women's Day Celebration and R20 000.00 for training trainees from tribal authorities with regard to giving support to TB and Aids patients.

This again is an indication that the main focus of 'gender' programmes within traditional establishments, is often to entrench women in their traditional roles as "carers" and "nurturers" - this being an extension of their practical roles within the household. The sexual harassment education programme that was being planned began to address the strategic gender needs of women. However, the budgeted amounts do not suggest this was a project that would reach out to all who needed it in the UThungulu Regional

Council (URC).

**(c) How is the district council (the URC) structured for its political, administrative and financial tasks**

The Council meets every three months at the uThungulu Regional Offices located at Richards Bay. It's main functions are policy making and scrutinizing the budget.

**(d) The administration and functions of the URC**

The Executive Committee (EXCO) meets monthly and carries out the delegated functions - which must be ratified by the Council as decided. The Council decides on which powers should be delegated to the EXCO, but Section 160(2) of the Constitution states that the following powers may not be delegated but must be exercised directly by the Council; the passing of by-laws; the approval of budgets; the imposition of rates and other taxes, levies, duties, and the raising of loans. In addition, National legislation may prohibit the delegation of other functions, such as the approval of integrated development plans (IDPs).

Elected local councillors are supported by officials who are usually career public (or civil) servants in their functions. The administration of the local authority is handled through departments. Each department has specific functions. They perform important advisory roles in support of the political decision-makers, but their main task is to implement the Council's policies. The chief executive officer of the URC, Mr BB Biyela, currently acts as the link between the management committee (EXCO) and the departments.

It is important to manage the political and administrative section of a local authority separately, yet also to ensure a good link between them. The specific roles and functions of political decision makers and officials especially with regard to developmental local government goals set out in the White Paper on Local Government (1999), and other documents including the Bill of Rights and a variety of legislative provisions which all social development workers must familiarize themselves with.

The URC's administrative structure is headed by a Chief Executive Officer, a male, assisted in his office by two females as executive secretaries (see Appendix B). The Department itself is divided into three major sections each with its executive director and a special core of technical and professional and clerical staff. Details on the human resource composition of these departments can be viewed in Appendix B or for an update in personnel, in the URC's website.

There are currently (end of 1999) 43 permanent officials at the URC. Most of the work of the URC is done through sub-contracting to consultants, and the URC also keeps a database of these besides using the open tendering system.

Local government is increasingly being seen as a point of integration and coordination for the programmes of all spheres of government and is responsible for forging public-private partnerships for local economic development. It is also clear that the policies and programmes of national and provincial government have wide-reaching implications for local government and can potentially have a positive impact on local government capacity and a strong synergy with municipal programmes. All spheres of government are obliged to observe the principles of co-operative government put forward in the constitution. The provincial government like the national government has stipulated roles, which it does perform in the local government arena. The provincial government,



among other things has a developmental role.

In concluding this section, it should be noted that the way rural local communities are administered for development, i.e. through co-operation and consultation between traditional leadership and local government, i.e. the uThungulu Regional Council is critical for a social worker to understand and work to promote, for the benefit of social development. The rural/local area is increasingly a part of a web of social, economic and political transactions, rather than an isolated homogeneous unit - and therefore transactions transcend its boundaries. The actions of a wide range of civil and corporate players impact on the local economy and society. Resources and capacity are dispersed across different sectors and deployed for a variety of purposes.

Therefore, so long as local development remains local, that is, determined by a local balance of power, outside of effective national scrutiny, rural development interventions will probably reinforce the power of dominant local forces and of oppressive gender relations (Ritchken, 1995:213). This will in turn hamper social development.

## **6.5 CONCLUSION**

The characteristics described in this chapter provide the environmental context in which people in the study area are located. This is the context of women's lives which imposes a number of constraints and opportunities that are relevant to the research focus. Some of these aspects that are related to the study's areas administration, demography, natural resources and infrastructural development are:

- the administration of the rural area by an all male tribal authority structure;
- the high level of poverty in the area;

- the paucity of formal job opportunities available locally;
- the favourable rainfall and arable soils giving the area a high agricultural potential;
- the possibilities for development interventions through partnership with local government with effective provincial and national linkages.

## **CHAPTER SEVEN**

### **DATA PRESENTATION, ANALYSIS, INTERPRETATION AND DISCUSSION**

#### **7.1 INTRODUCTION**

The findings obtained from data collected through methods described in Chapter 5 are presented, analysed and interpreted. In the previous chapter, the socio-economic, political and environmental contexts of the rural people in KwaZulu-Natal were identified and described. This chapter looks at the gender-specific socio-economic circumstances, women's gender roles and needs, and social participation patterns of rural women studied.

The presentation is in three sections. The first is on the households, the biographical and demographic data of head of households as representatives of the households and of the general public or rural residents. The second section will be on gender roles identification and gender needs (community development needs) of women. The third section will then look at women's public life and leadership in community decision making for social development.

#### **7.2 BIOGRAPHICAL AND DEMOGRAPHIC DATA OF HOUSEHOLD HEADS AS COMMUNITY RESIDENTS - THE GENERAL PUBLIC**

The question that is answered here is: what is the composition of the household and the household headship in the families in which women live? Other socio-economic

characteristics of these households are also identified.

### 7.2.1 Gender composition of rural households

The proportion of women and men in the sample was vastly uneven with more women ( $N = 41/60$ ) or 68%, than men ( $N = 19/60$ ) at 32%. The initial assumption or the reason was that it was the women rather than men who were 'available' to participate in the study and that the study was after all, about 'women'. However, the other reality was the alarmingly high level of unmarried women not in formal occupations in the area (as identified in Chapter 6). One of the major causes of this, was related to the power of culture in the area where on the one hand, unmarried daughters with children continued to live in their parental homes, because their boyfriends had not paid 'lobola' (bride price), and on the other hand, when adult brothers got married they were allocated sites to start their own separate households and homes. The family and domestic conflicts in extended families, particularly with relatives by marriage, made it difficult for adult children to live together.

Folbre (1985:6) insists that micro-economic analysis of the household must be situated within a larger structural analysis of gender and age based inequalities and their interaction with class structure and national position within the world capitalist system. Yet when economic analysts do analyze the household, they often treat it as though it were an undifferentiated unit, referring to the households' interests or the 'households' decisions' (ibid.:5). Therefore, treating the household as a cohesive unit overlooks the importance or impact of conflict and inequality between household members.

The number of female headed families has increased in the rural area, where women

undergo a variety of patterns of living, either on a permanent or temporary basis. Hanmer and Statham (1988:24-25) identify and summarize the life patterns of women and the context in which women live, which also apply to the women in the rural area (refer to Chapter 4 of the study).

### 7.2.2 Age distribution of household heads

What were the ages of the household heads? Table 7.1 shows the age distribution of household heads in the study.

**Table 7.1: Age Distribution of Household Heads in Years by Percentage**

Age in years	Number	Percentage
40 and below	9	15.0
40 - 44	2	3.3
45 - 49	7	11.7
50 - 54	12	20.0
55 - 59	4	6.7
60 - 64	11	18.3
65 - 69	8	13.3
70 - 74	4	6.7
75 - 79	3	5.0
<b>Total</b>	<b>60</b>	<b>100.0</b>

The household heads' ages ranged from 35 years old as the youngest to 76 year old, as the oldest. There were more heads in the 50s age group and late 60s, comprising 45% of the respondents.

### 7.2.3 Marital status

**Table 7.2: Marital Status of Household Heads by gender (N=60)**

Marital status	Male		Female		Total	
	N	%	N	%	N	%
Married	14	73.6	2	4.9	16	26.6
Single (divorced, widowed, separated)	2	10.5	25	60.9	27	45
Never married	-	-	14	34	14	23.3
Cohabiting	3	15.8	0	0	3	5
<b>Total</b>	<b>19</b>	<b>99.9</b>	<b>41</b>	<b>99.8</b>	<b>60</b>	<b>99.9</b>

The marital status of men and women was a significant social characteristic of the household heads in the rural area. Men and women after divorce or the death of spouses, or of being deserted, still had their own households as heads, as long as they were economically independent. Sixty percent of women heads were widowed, divorced or separated (see Table 7.2) and were relatively economically independent of men, while more married men were in this married group (see Table 7.2). Amongst the 11.7% of the elderly, i.e. between 70 and 79 years of age in Table 7.1, where household heads represented men and women equally, they had relative authority and power in their households, because they were relatively healthy and fit, earned some steady income of their own, even if it was a pension, and owned the land and houses occupied by the dependants. The proportion of single women to that of single men was much higher. Most single men fell under the category of 'unmarried' but were living without children in their care even though the same unmarried men tended to live with women in consensual unions and as couples, i.e. the 5% reflected in Table 7.2.

Data in Table 7.2 reflects that separated, divorced, and widowed respondents grouped as single, even if they did not include those who 'never married', comprised the largest

percentage of the respondents, at 45%. If the 23.3% of 'never married' are added to this group, household heads without partners made up 68% of the respondents. The heads of household who were female comprised 41 women in the study as per data on the gender composition of the sample. The increasing fragility of marriage in the area has meant living through a new substage in the lives of many was common, i.e. a period when people who were once married, would no longer be part of a couple. Experiences following marital separation varied - some individuals lived alone with children and some entered new long term partnerships and others did not. The majority of single 'never married' women lived in homesteads with relatives or with or without a male household head, but they were essentially expected to be financially responsible for their offspring even when they lived with kin.

Of the 16 married respondents 73.6%, were married male household heads. It will be interesting to have a further look at the implications of marital status on other socio-economic characteristics and on the gender roles and needs of women.

#### **7.2.4 Education and training**

Are women better educated today than 20 years ago? How does their education affect their level of knowledge and the source of information accessible to them? Educational levels of heads of households are reflected in Table 7.3.

**Table 7.3: Educational levels of heads of households by gender (N=60)**

Education level	Male		Female		Total	
	N	%	N	%	N	%
Primary school level	8	42.1	12	29.3	20	33.7
Std 6 - Std 8 / Secondary school level	6	31.6	10	24.4	16	26.6
Std 10 / Matric	2	10.53	7	17.09	9	15
Work certificate	2	10.53	1	2.44	3	5
University degree	-	0	1	2.44	1	1.7
No schooling	1	5.7	10	24.4	11	18.3
<b>Total</b>	<b>19</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>41</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>60</b>	<b>100</b>

Out of the 60 respondents only 18% had no schooling at all. Generally men were better educated, but women too were improving their education and this had definitely improved over the past two years. For example, one of the household heads had a university degree and was a female. It was not possible to interview her as she worked away from the area and her representative, her widowed mother could not give any details on her behalf. The general feeling in the area, partly because it is situated close to a university, with residents also working there, was that education was a key to young people's (men and women) future. It would enable women, in particular, to broaden their horizons beyond child bearing and household drudgery or poverty. Educated women could play a full and active role in development projects and would be better able to manage their families. In the early years of schooling, equal numbers of boys and girls would be enrolled. However, teenage pregnancy and general poverty in most households cut short the girl child's future in education.

Most of the girls dropped out at this level, but most returned to school after pregnancies and kept their children kin. The other factor affecting girls' education was that parents still saw the girls' labour in the house and in income generating activities more appropriate, so that poverty affected girls more as they were the first to be



withdrawn from school or the first to fail to cope with school work because of the burdensome household chores, e.g. collecting firewood, water, etc.

If acquiring Grade 6 to Grade 8 qualifies for functional literacy, over 50% of the women in the study were functionally literate. A large number of Grade 12 youth were unemployed (15%), and unskilled, with little prospect of continuing into tertiary education. They were the young unmarried mothers who would end up in informal work as domestic workers or hawkers - if not prostitutes. The males would end as casual labourers in homes or migrants. Five percent of the respondents had some work certificate or diploma and worked as teachers and/or administrative clerks, more men than women. There were reports that some effort by local influentials serving in school committees in the area, had been made to change the way education at high school level was organized and implemented, in order to make it more attuned to actual employment opportunities and to the needs of the rural poor. Of course, this never got any where as these ideas remained at the school committee levels where they had been mooted, because there were no mechanisms or processes to enable parents' influence in school curricula development. What was required was to first put fundamental changes in national education and training policies, and for training organizations which would give the poor and women better/equal access to education and training opportunities on a sustained and nation-wide basis, to be developed. The advent of the National Qualifications Framework (SAQA's NQF) in South Africa holds some promise for training for relevance in South Africa.

Formal and informal education provides women with greater skills and self-confidence to make decisions and to improve the quality of their lives. The content or subject of any informal education that the respondents were exposed to recently (in the past five years), was asked for. Table 7.4 reflects the extent to which the respondents were

exposed to specific learning that was community-based.

**Table 7.4: Exposure of Household Heads to Community Based Adult Education Programmes by Subject of Programme (N = 60)**

Subject of programme	Heads of households			
	No. Involved	Total in N	Percentage	Total %
Financial Management	2	60	3.3	100
Adult Literacy	7	60	11.7	100
Civic Education	3	60	5	100
Human/Women's Rights	11	60	18	100
HIV/AIDS	31	60	51	100
Any skills training	14	60	23	100

Education is believed to be a basis for entry into many occupations, and for most persons, income supposed to be is derived from occupations, especially for the poor, this was the motivation for young people.

Of the 60 households heads the highest percentage of 51.6 had been exposed to education or information on HIV/AIDS. The lowest exposure was to financial management in both personal or project management with 3.3% only knowing something. Ninety six point seven (96.7%) had never been to any formal training or workshop discussing financial management issues, including the women participating in community groups.

### 7.2.5 Occupations of the household heads

Occupation has been known to be the best single predictor of social status, and overall occupational prestige ratings have tended to be highly stable (Muller, 1987:275). Table 7.5 displays the occupations of the heads of household by gender.

**Table 7.5: Occupation of Heads of Households by Gender**

Type of occupation	Gender of head of household			
	Male		Female	
	N	%	N	%
Service (government) workers	5	26.3	5	12.2
Clerical/Administrative work	3	15.8	7	17.1
Casual labourer	1	5.3	9	21.9
Farmer	4	21.0	8	19.5
Self-employed	3	15.8	6	14.6
Unemployed	3	15.8	6	14.6
<b>Total</b>	<b>19</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>41</b>	<b>99.9</b>

A number of factors act in close relationship between occupation and social status. Both individual income and educational attainment are known to be correlated with occupational ranks. According to the data obtained, 42% of the male household heads were in formal wage employment compared to only 29% of the females. The male farmers (21%) were all in cash crop farming (sugar cane) where they could earn some money, while women farmers (19.5%) also included those engaged in food crops for domestic use and/or market use of surplus. Relatively equal numbers of men and women were self-employed or unemployed. A warning is appropriate: "To link productivity only with paid employment continues to render invisible the enormous amount of unwaged work women do that undergirds and subsidizes all other kinds of work" (Report on World Summit for Social Development, 1995:1). This further affects women's income despite their hard work. To be noted further here is that a serious, though less widely appreciated definitional inconsistency lies in the virtually ubiquitous distinction between 'economic activity' and 'domestic work' of women (Folbre, 1985:13). Household production of goods is far more likely to be registered as economic than household services, yet much of women's labour consists of services (ibid.:13). This view has serious negative consequences for women's recognition as income earners or breadwinners or household heads.

### 7.2.6 Income of household heads

Table 7.6 displays the amount of income earned by the heads of household. Closely associated with occupations is the income level affecting the socio-economic status of men and women.

**Table 7.6: Amount of income earned by household heads by gender (N=60)**

Amount of income in Rand	Gender			
	Male		Female	
	N	%	N	%
100 and under	0	0.0	3	7.3
101 - 200	0	0.0	2	4.9
201 - 500	8	42	11	26.8
501 - 1000	3	15.8	8	19.5
1001 - 1500	3	15.8	11	26.8
1501 - 2000	2	10.5	1	2.4
2001 - 2500	0	0.0	2	4.9
2501 - 3500	1	5.3	0	0
3 501 and over	2	10.5	2	4.9
Uncertain	0	0.0	1	2.4
<b>Total</b>	<b>19</b>	<b>99.9</b>	<b>41</b>	<b>99.9</b>

Most of the household heads, male and female, together at 58%, lived on an income of between R100 and R1 000, i.e. they lived below the poverty datum line<sup>7</sup> (Table 7.6). To understand the incomes of the heads of household, their occupations must be discussed simultaneously because these were closely associated, as noted in the following discussion of income for those working for the formal and informal sectors.

#### 7.2.6.1 Women's income as workers employed in the formal and informal sectors

This section does not attempt to cover all types of occupations of women in the rural area, nevertheless, the sample included examples of how women and households made a livelihood.

##### (a) Working for the government - service workers

<sup>7</sup> The poverty datum line derived from the Indicator Map was the Minimum Living Level, calculated by the Bureau of Market Research as R808.44 per month in 1993 irrespective of the size or age composition of the household (Education Foundation, 1993:11). But for purposes of this discussion the income set as a means test for applicants of the welfare benefit - the child support grant, was used. To qualify for the child support grant from the Department of Welfare, where the income means test is less than R1 100.00, can be used as a margin for a poverty datum line, R808.44 per month Minimum Living Level was applicable in 1993 and that was 7 years ago.

The majority of the men and women workers in this sector (with 25% of the 41 women), were employed as labourers, cooks, cleaners, security personnel, drivers, etc., at the University of Zululand and at the nearby schools. This was the group that earned a steady income of R1500 and over. Most of them had medical aid, study benefits and had access to housing subsidies and a retirement pension. This had improved their quality of life as compared to their less fortunate neighbours not in formal employment. Their houses were the solid buildings of bricks and cement; their children had managed to finish high school, even university or technikon education, and their health needs have been catered for. The latest retrenchments taking place in all sectors have shaken the economic security of many families including those in informal trading or earning money from renting rooms to other workers in the vicinity.

**(b) The non-government workers**

These worked mainly in factories and shops in Richards Bay and Empangeni. Some worked for parastatals such as Telkom and Eskom. These also enjoyed a better standard of living like the government workers. Most of those in parastatals were mainly the younger men commuting between Richards Bay and the local area.

**7.2.6.2 The informal trading and income generating activities**

A total of 7 women (16.6%) of the 41 was a group involved in informal trading. In the area, more than half the hawkers were women. They had small stalls at strategic points like school gates, bus stops, university campus and so on, where they sold vegetables, fruit, sweets, etc. Women did not sell home prepared food in the locality. Formal cafeteria at work sites had taken the business. They no longer sold handicrafts too. The making of the latter did not seem lucrative because the cash income was quickly needed to meet basic family needs, and the making of handicrafts required a lot of labour, and the fruits of the labour had to be quickly realized. Furthermore, the market for handicrafts was much more limited - only tourists on main roads would make an occasional sale possible. Women were also active in home-based dress making, sewing clothes. Income from informal sumvalist trading was not steady, and accounted for the group earning under R100 or between R200 and R500. In general, little money was invested in the business, and what the women made, went to buy family necessities and the remainder went directly to buy some more stock.

The formal sector was itself able to absorb only a small fraction of the workforce from the rural area. Specific disadvantages which women faced in obtaining wage employment were the result of many socio-cultural and economic factors, which employment services and regulatory mechanisms alone could not solve, particularly

through local interventions only. Women's domestic responsibilities and the perception that these were their primary concern posed major constraints to their entry into the wage labour market.

Besides income in terms of cash, what were the household resources used for survival or to meet basic needs? Housing, water sources, sanitation and waste management services, and telephones, were among other resources noted as available for households in the neighbourhood. The intra-household distribution of ownership and control over resources (i.e. labour including women's own labour time, land, financial assets, income, food, medical care, education, etc.) was generally asymmetrical, following lines of age, gender and kinship (gender has been isolated for attention in this study). Therefore, because most women earned an income primarily from self-employment (agricultural and non-agricultural) for which land, labour, technology, capital, etc. were critical, women had to have (equal) access to productive resources and services as were the men.

### **7.3 PRODUCTIVE RESOURCES AVAILABLE AND ACCESSIBLE TO WOMEN (AND MEN) IN HOUSEHOLDS AND/OR FOR COMMUNAL USE BY HOUSEHOLDS**

First, the immediate basic services of water, fuel, housing, sanitation and waste disposal facilities and telephones, and then followed by productive resources such as land, credit, etc., to earn a living, are discussed.

#### **7.3.1 Basic services**

##### **7.3.1.1 Water sources for households**

Seventy percent (70), i.e. 42 of the study sample of 60 households obtained water from stand pipes, on site or communally off-site. These water pipes however, frequently broke down and needed repair work, which was not readily available. On such occasions these households joined the other 18, i.e. 30% households that accessed water regularly from rivers and unprotected streams. Piped water was paid for and water committees were the advisory structures, responsible to local government which managed the monetary and technical aspects of these.

One might ask why was it that the households or parts of the rural area located in such close proximity to a township or other rural households with access to clean drinking tap water, still depended on river water? When respondents were asked if they had made any formal request for water provision and, if so, to whom - 70%, i.e. 42, had never done anything. The 30% who had done something, also knew which organization

or authority to contact with the request. Out of the 42 only fifty percent gave a response that was partially correct, and only 7 percent a correct response on whether they knew exactly who to contact, although they were not sure about the exact procedure and decision-making processes. The group who knew what to do, but had made no move, claimed they did so because they would not afford to pay for the water.

### **7.3.1.2 Sanitation and waste management**

Waste disposal was not the most organized or sanitary in the area. Of the 60 households, 93% used the pit latrine and 7% did not specify the type of toilet system they used. Waste matter was disposed of in the yards outside of the household premises, and some, like animal waste (from carcasses) was disposed of by burying it in short trenches. In connection with the latter, the reason had to do with the local people's belief that this should not be left exposed, for witch doctors would use it against the family. Exposure to knowledge on sanitation from an organized public health resource, had been possible for 35% of the 60 household heads and 65% had had none.

### **7.3.1.3 Housing**

Ninety two percent (92%) of the families owned the house and site where they lived and the rest were tenants. As discussed in Chapter 6, the land administration itself was not progressive, where most of the households had no more than 2 hectares of land. The household heads particularly the poor/women, had no secure entitlement to the property or land. They lived on land that belonged to late or former husbands or were left on the site by parents. Most of the houses near the University were constructed of bricks and cement, with corrugated iron or tiles for the roofing. Over 70% of the houses were traditional structures constructed in daub and wattle.

### **7.3.1.4 Access to telecommunication resources**

Besides the post offices located on the University of Zululand campus, Empangeni town, Esikhawini township, and Mthunzini town, the means of contact used by household heads was the telephone. Ninety three (93%) percent felt they had some access to the public telephone system and 28% also had home telephones or cellphones (mobile phones).

Access to productive resources such as land, capital, and credit, training and technical assistance, access to farming resources, which were crucial to gaining income in the rural area, were also examined.

### **7.3.2 Productive resources**

An example of gender-based differences in access to productive resources came from the investigation on access to land, capital, and credit; access and control of farming resources, i.e. control over livestock; access to technology, training and extension services.

#### **7.3.2.1 Access to land**

Most respondents, 67 percent in the survey, did not feel they had enough land to farm. Customary-bound laws of inheritance, ownership and control of property tend to work against women (Report on World Summit for Social Development, 1995:2). Significantly, half of the female respondents who rented land privately for sugar cane farming did not complain about the inadequacy of the land, but agreed that women had no direct rights over land - only the rights to the produce.

#### **7.3.2.2 Women's access to capital and credit**

Access to loans, like access to formal agricultural training, appeared to be very limited for all farmers (male and female). Only two respondents had ever managed to take out loans from the erstwhile KwaZulu Finance Corporation (KFC), and were still negotiating with Ithala Bank for further loans. The Land Bank had not been approached by the respondents yet, but even where it had been by other farmers outside the area, there had been no successes yet.

One loan obtained by a male farmer had been for a tractor and another for seed and fertilizer. Some of the reasons given by both male and female respondents as to why they could not get loans, were that they did not "qualify" for the loan. Considering the women's multiple household tasks and the restriction on women's time, and hence movement, it was not easy for women to explore other formal credit services located outside the local area. The loan sharks provided respite for working women and men seeking loans, but these were not to buy tools for the farm or housing or for development. The cash was used for food and other household expenses/shortages so the money could not serve as capital for business. Yet, women were likely to be more careful borrowers than men because with the concerns of their families uppermost, they were less likely to take risks.

Formal credit, is not accessible to very poor families and to women in particular. Most women are not aware of the existence of formal credit institutions, and high rates of illiteracy prohibit females from making extensive use of them (James, 1995:179). In



the rural areas lack of collaterals required by finance institutions or having a formal stable job, played a big role in hindering women's access to credit.

### 7.3.2.3 Access to and control of farming resources

What is included here is income or gains derived from what could be referred to as productive resources of the household such as land, livestock, bride price, and claims for damages by the boy/man's family for pregnant unmarried women which was paid to the girls' parents or guardians.

#### (a) Control over livestock

The question, "who owned the livestock, and which type in particular?" Seventy three percent of the total households had chickens and cattle. Seventy percent of the 44 households had chickens only. The 70% of the 13 household head, who owned cattle, owned fewer than five animals. The fact that the households did not have much in the line of livestock, implied that there the head was a "poor man" in traditional terms. Furthermore, this could have limited the ability of the men to pay bride price, *ilobola*, and hence the high percentage of unmarried women in the area. In fact, located within the rural area, near the national road, (N2) the main provincial road, was a cattle kraal where cattle and sheep were sold to the public, for ritual ceremonies or parties. This was indicative of the fact that the households were not 'well-off' in terms of livestock and had to buy to slaughter for ceremonial occasions.

The second question was, "who controls the livestock?" Therefore, data to establish who had control over household resources in relation to selling or disposing of any livestock, was not fruitful. Ninety three percent of the households had neither sold nor disposed of any livestock in the past year. Those who had livestock hung onto it because it was one of the only important possessions of the family - a kind of investment. The 7% that did, believed that both males and females had control and had the right to keep or dispose of livestock - depending on whether it was a cow or a fowl, and depending on whether the household head was male or female. The latter would do so alone or in consultation with another older female or male elder in the kinship system - if it was the most culturally valued asset - the cattle. Fowls or chickens could be disposed off by women, but if it was the only form of livestock available, chickens were reserved for special occasions. The same gendered actions applied in determining prices on livestock if it was being sold.

One other main decision area for households would be in cases where an adult child was getting married (deciding and accepting brides price) or when a child was born out of wedlock and payment for "damages" was being demanded. First, it must be

remembered that the number of unmarried women with children in the study area was high, so that it was not surprising that the question related to decision making on this, was answered by only a few. In the 5% of the sample where there were negotiations for bride price in respect of an adult child, there were hardly any variations in the process, because these were guided or pre-determined by cultural and local mores. In cases where a daughter had made the family 'proud' by getting a man to pay "lobola"/bride price, the males were prominent in the negotiations. Women played some role, but a secondary and supportive one. In cases where a daughter had "disgraced" the family by getting pregnant out of wedlock, the women had to take the lead. They were the ones to face the humiliation of going to a sometimes unco-operative reputed father, who would deny paternity. Actually even if he paid the cow for damages, when slaughtered, this had to happen outside of the premises of the homestead or household yard.

**(b) Access farming to technology, training and extension services**

For women farmers, the lack of credit also denied them access to technology. They often could not afford to buy tools, equipment, and fertilizers to improve their farm output and save themselves time. Hiring tractors for ploughing was expensive for most, and some did not even own the oxen to draw ploughs for larger fields.

Women who worked on nearby commercial sugar cane farms were also at a disadvantage as the introduction of technology favoured men. Jobs formerly done by women, such as harvesting and weeding were now being done by machines operated by a small team of men. No woman owned or drove a tractor in the area. The women used hoes in their own fields and the task was back-breaking.

In some cases, problems would arise because the women were used to working as a group, whereas the new technology required individual work (James, 1995:178). Women also have been known to reject some technology that was introduced without considering pre-existing beliefs, factors, attitudes, and cultures.

Access to other such services extension services designed to help the rural poor, were inadequate. When respondents in the study were asked if they received extension services in terms of gender in the community, the responses were: Fifty three percent of the 60 people got none, be they men or women; then 63% of the 20 people who were sugar cane farmers, and who were men said they received services especially for sugar cane farming from a special unit for cash crops. The 17% of the 41 women said they did get some help in communal gardens not in family owned individual food crop fields.

The other factor that caused limited potential of agricultural programmes was the level of knowledge regarding matters related to agricultural programmes themselves. The level of knowledge in respect of a specific programme of the Department of Agriculture and Environmental Affairs - the Xoshindlala Awareness Campaign, was explored. (Xoshindlala, a Zulu word, means "chase away hunger"). This programme was part of the anti-poverty alleviation strategies in rural communities in KwaZulu-Natal, and was spear-headed by the Department of Agriculture. As poverty was identified as one of the main problems associated with the high level of unemployment in the area, a couple of questions on Xoshindlala were posed. These were as follows: Any knowledge of the anti-poverty programme known as Xoshindlala? Only 22 percent of both male and female heads of households had some knowledge or rather had heard of Xoshindlala. A question on how to access Xoshindlala was asked to obtain clarity from the 22%. Only 3% said they knew how. The next question was on whether the respondent had received any help through 'Xoshindlala'. Again here only 2% said they had received help from Xoshindlala, and they were male. Six percent claimed that they knew of someone who was a beneficiary although, they themselves had not received any help. On the whole, the programme had hardly made any impact on the study sample, although more extensive and targeted evaluation of the programme would be useful. Access to resources impact upon women's roles and needs. On the whole, both men and women felt they had certain rights to get help from the development aid resources, through the national, provincial and the local government.

To pursue this investigation start with and for purposes of the study, it was important to know what the activities and roles of women within households were, and how women participated in community decision-making to get things done for meeting their gender needs and for community development - and probably how they access these resources.

## **7.4 GENDER ROLE IDENTIFICATION**

The findings on women's (and men's) domestic responsibilities as heads (and dependants) of households, are presented in Table 7.7. Then analysis and interpretation that follows, is based on the quantitative and the qualitative data collection through the methods described in Chapter 5.

### **7.4.1 Reproductive and domestic role**

The rural women were responsible for multiple labour-intensive and time-consuming chores both inside and outside their households. On a daily basis, women's activities included domestic activities such as cooking, fetching water, and collecting firewood, household maintenance, and child care. In addition, rural women were heavily engaged

in food cultivation, weeding and harvesting. Each task, in turn, involved a series of minor processes and tasks. What made these tasks and processes laborious, time-consuming, and wasteful, was because of the rudimentary tools that women used; lack of institutional support, and infrastructure problems.

**Table 7.7: Domestic responsibilities and the household chores for survival: Involvement of household members by responses of males and females**

Household tasks/chores	Female (N = 41) Percentage				Male (N = 19) Percentage				Total	
	Yes		No		Yes		No		N	%
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%		
Cooking	39	95	2	5	1	5	18	95	60	100
Collecting firewood	39	95	2	5	1	5	18	95	60	100
Fetching water	39	95	2	5	1	5	18	95	60	100
Cleans the house	39	95	2	5	1	5	18	95	60	100
Child minding (pre-scholars)	38	93	3	7	1	5	18	95	60	100
Child care of school going children	39	95	2	5	1	5	18	95	60	100
Care of the disabled or aged	38	93	3	7	1	5	18	95	60	100
Does laundry	35	85	6	15	3	15	16	85	60	100
Tends chicken and other livestock	33	80	8	20	4	20	15	80	60	100

The breadwinner's role, which involves financial responsibilities within the household is traditionally linked to the productive role which is also associated with men's roles in the economy. On the other hand, the household chores and tasks for daily survival are connected to the reproductive role of women. Hence, the separate discussions that follow - although there was a close link between the two categories of responsibility in households.

#### 7.4.1.1 Cooking

In all 60 households, 95% of the women did the cooking, and the related activities such as collecting firewood. These other related chores included shopping for food, making certain that safe clean water and fuel were available, and that the children and other dependants were actually fed. Hence, fetching water and collecting firewood involved women's labour in 95% of the cases. The five percent of men who did these chores were either single adult males who were unemployed or who did this for their own personal needs in the absence of women or younger children, especially girl (adolescent) children.

Cooking and feeding the family went hand in hand as a responsibility for women. However, food was not only bought with the cash income earned from whatever occupation was formally cited, but was also from women's extra contributions as subsistence farmers - involved in food crop production. Presenting a discussion of this aspect at a later stage will highlight the invaluable role of women in food security and income generation, rather than just feeding and cooking for the family. The latter assumes the availability of food rather than the importance of procuring the food for the cooking before the cooking. This further marginalizes women's contribution to the household economy and its survival. For example, Folbre (1985:13) argues on this point by saying: "there is discrimination in how work done by men and women is seen and evaluated, making for more marginalization of women. Although a male head of household engaged in subsistence production is considered part of the labour force, non-waged family workers are seldom considered part of the labour force unless they are engaged in commercial production".

#### **7.4.1.2 Collecting firewood**

In those households where firewood was being used for fuel, 95% of the collectors were women. The term firewood included a variety of materials used for burning things, leaves, animal/cow dung, 'dead wood', etc. The women worked with energy and considerable courage. Small babies were carried along, and would be shaken at every blow of the axe. Young girls came along to help too. The fittest women climbed up trees, scrambled on steep slopes, often in bare feet and wrestled with shrubs while perched on the edge of cliffs. Falls and injuries from cutting tools and stones were common, and even rape to lone unsuspecting victims was reported.

Firewood was used, even in households where electricity was used for all the lighting and cooking. Fires were used for braaing and cooking large pots on social or ritual occasions or ceremonies and the fire particularly, could be used as the focal centre for evening conversations in extended families.

In the area, women walked long distances of up to 10km for an average of three hours, two or three times per week, to collect firewood. This was an arduous task which women had to undertake in groups for safety as 'rural rape' had been known to occur too often on sole trips to nearby bushes or forests.

#### **7.4.1.3 Fetching water**

In households where water was collected either from rivers/streams or communal stand pipes, 95% of the collectors and carriers of water were women. In 5 percent of the

cases, the men in similar circumstances, as those noted under 'firewood collection', fetched water. Men tended to use wheelbarrows or other mechanical means to collect water, particularly for larger projects like building or ceremonial slaughtering. Most times, they were remunerated for this, while women would do it as part of neighbourly acts of mutual aid or as part of their domestic responsibilities. Collecting water was a tiring and an arduous task, that usually had to be undertaken several times each day. The nearest source might entail walking several kilometres in the dry season with paths to and from springs and other sources, or paths that were steep and treacherous, or women might have to wade thigh deep in mud to reach clear water. The water containers were heavy, some women could carry 20kg or more, in containers balanced on their heads, sometimes with babies on their backs.

In addition to the burden of carrying the water, women experienced difficulty in obtaining it from its sources. The quality of the water was often poor. For example, river water was often also used for bathing while people defecated in nearby pit latrines, animals waded and drank there, and so on. Women were gradually being involved in water projects by development agencies as will be observed in their affiliation to water committees.

Some rural residents believed that water from the streams and the rivers was polluted by chemicals from the fertilizers used in sugar cane farms which were carried by rain (especially the occasional rains after a drought spell). When in early May, of the year 2000, large numbers of people suffered fatal diarrhoea, this was attributed to drinking infected water, at least by some of these residents - a hypothesis refuted by environmental health specialists from a nearby hospital. Later in September 2000 and October, official statements from the Ministers of Health and Water Affairs, announced serious attacks of the disease cholera, in the district, among other districts in KwaZulu-Natal rural areas.

#### **7.4.1.4 Other household chores**

According to Table 7.7, the chores of (a) cleaning the house (95% was formed by women); (b) child-minding of pre-scholars (by 93% women); (c) child care of school-going children (by 93% women); (d) care of the aged and disabled (94% of women); (e) doing laundry (85% of women); and (f) looking after livestock (80% of the instances, were also the domestic responsibility of women).

What were the implications of the extent of this involvement with domestic responsibilities by women? Were they coping? The women's reproductive and domestic roles restricted their time and mobility for productive work. Furthermore,

women were constrained and forced to choose income earning activities which could be combined with child care, household work and being a caretaker of the household property, where the male head of household was absent. The constraints, in addition to the physical demands and the drudgery of such household tasks, included being associated with low status and no recognition afforded to their work as “real” work. Even where women worked as domestic labourers in other households, the pay was very low - and labourers here were not protected by the labour laws.

Women tried to cope by using child labour to assist them or to give them some time to rest. Those who did cope, and did not drop out of the race as carers by migrating or by being alcoholic or abusive to the vulnerable persons they cared for, developed strategies to allow them to cope with this burden of work. They needed the time and energy to earn an income for the financial responsibilities too. One of these strategies was use of child labour. Needless to say that child labour could lead to the violation of children’s rights and of the law, the value of child labour in the low income households in doing domestic work or household chores, cannot be overestimated. This labour was available after school during the week, or on weekends and during the school holidays. The girl child was mostly the one that got involved till later in life. Both sexes worked in the house in their early years, but once males reached adolescence they no longer participated because the tasks were socially defined as “women’s work”.

Child care was the one activity least assisted by children, however, thus emphasizing the need for child care facilities. Other adult women wanted to do it for pay, hence the number of creches growing in the rural area. The labour contribution of children accounted for one, if not, the most important value of children in low income families. The advantage of children’s labour was seen as that it was easily controlled by parental discipline, and the production could be expropriated by the parent (Lwechungura Kamuzora, 1984). The incorporation of children’s labour (particularly adolescent females), facilitated women’s participation in other more productive activities which included agricultural production for domestic or market use.

The participation of children in domestic work led to problems of absenteeism, and where this was not due to truancy in schools, children would be absent because they had to run errands for their parents, e.g. take a sick child to the clinic, while the mother was at work. After-school extra-mural activities and homework suffered because of household labour demands.

#### 7.4.1.5 Use of hired labour

In 45% of the households, hired labour was used now and then to conduct survival/domestic tasks or household chores. Where financial resources were available, hired labour could free women (and children) from domestic work and enable them to engage in more “profitable” activity. Those women who could afford financially, did not have to rely on child labour. Of the households employing domestic and/or farm labour, 67% were females and they paid for it.

Sometimes children and hired labour, worked together in larger farming activities. One female respondent who was a successful poultry farmer, trader and indigenous faith healer, had most of her work carried out by hired labour and her children. Using “ilima”, a mutual aid *ad hoc* group where labour was exchanged by neighbours, had become replaced by paid hired labour in the rural area. Males in the rural area became involved in household tasks when mechanical means could be used, for example, delivering wood by truck or cattle - drawn sledge, or when they ploughed by tractor or if the activity was paid for or commercialized. While young boys earned money by using wheelbarrows or go carts to carry water for old people or those who were no longer capable of carrying water and who had no family to do this task for them, the young girls were supposed to be “diligent” and to help for free. The fact that women were prepared to pay men to carry out these tasks reflected their time-consuming and strenuous nature. Young girls were likely to be too busy with unpaid domestic tasks in their own households to have the time available to carry out domestic tasks for other families for payment.

Cash was therefore of critical importance in running and managing the household and for its very survival needs. The households were examined for ‘who was providing for financial needs of the family’? As has been noted the income of household heads was generally low and therefore multiple sources were imperative, to make a living.

#### 7.4.1.6 Financial responsibilities within the household

What the gender division of financial responsibilities within households were, is presented in Table 7.8. The question on who contributed to the finances of the household, was meant to elicit data on the contributions of all dependants who were able to do so. The gender of the person was identified. The answers to the question were that different members of a household tend to pay for different items or be responsible for particular expenses.



**Table 7.8: Division of financial responsibilities within households by gender**

Responsibility	Gender						Total N at each level
	Male		Female		Both		
	No	%	No	%	No	%	
Pays rent or rates	2	14.3	10	71.4	2	14.3	14
Pays for utilities	17	36	28	61	2	4	47
Buys day to day food	20	33	40	66.7	-	-	60
Pays children's fees	18	32.7	33	60	4	7	55
Pays health bills	19	31.7	38	63	3	5	60
Buys clothing	20	33.8	35	59	4	6.7	59
Pays for household gadgets	20	34	36	62	2	3	58
Pays hired household labour	8	29.6	18	66.6	2	7	27

Financial responsibilities varied in different households where items paid for in others, were not part of the budget at all in others. For instance, not all households paid rent. For example, only 14 out of 60 households paid for the house or site they were occupying, and of these, only 2 (14.3%) were male and 10 (71.4%) were female. In the other 2 (14.3%) both male and female shared the responsibility. In most male headed households, electricity and stand pipes for water, were available and the rates were paid for by male heads of households. Thus making for a better standard of living. Nevertheless, in 47 households paying for utilities 36% were male, 60% females and in 4% of these both males and females shared the costs.

Women were still highly represented in those paying for utilities and those labouring to procure these. The other financial costs in households - namely, paying children's school fees, health bills, buying clothes; paying for household furniture and gadgets; and paying for hired labour to do domestic chores - were borne mainly by women at an average of 62% of the households.

Thirty-three percent (33%) men compared to 67% women paid for food. Feeding the family on a day to day basis required multiple sources of living such as financial contributions as well as agricultural outputs. Migrant remittances have been recorded by Sharp and Spiegel (1986) as being insufficient and irregular, with the result that women could not plan for day to day household maintenance. This also applied to the Mkhwanazi area where women, who retained the traditional female roles of homemaker and child bearer were, through necessity, forced to contribute to the family budget as well. This feature was clearly brought out in the farming activities and other community management roles women engaged in.

The foregoing discussion clearly corroborates the adaptive behaviour of women in the

face of various constraints-behaviour that, although laudatory, appears not to diverge significantly from a pattern of attending to food security and welfare needs (James, 1995:93). This phenomenon holds true because of the dual set of internal and external constraints on women (ibid.:93).

The financial responsibilities identified in the foregoing section, point to the importance of productive work and of remunerated employment for women. Most of the unemployed women or those that indicated that they were occupied in “other” work, earned an income from self-employment or informal trading (agricultural and non-agricultural and from other income generating activities). This brings into the centre of the discussion one of the key gender roles, i.e. involvement of women in productive work.

#### 7.4.2 The productive gender role

In this section, the work of women in agriculture is explored in detail because most women who were interviewed for the study, were involved in farming to a greater or lesser extent.

Women’s productive role in farming, like in “income-generating activities”, tended to be regarded as something they could perform in their spare time - as extensions of their domestic activities. One reason was that it was linked to food production rather than commercial farming. The sexual division of labour in rural areas allocated to women the direct responsibility of feeding the household. This was a responsibility that they shared with women throughout Africa. One way in which women provided food for their families was by the cultivation of food crops.

##### 7.4.2.1 The extent of involvement of households in farming

The question was asked as to who cultivated and managed food crops and sugar cane farming; and then whose name was registered at the sugar mill to obtain the cash payments. Table 7.9 below shows this involvement:

**Table 7.9: Level of involvement in farming by gender**

Type of involvement	Gender of household members		
	Male %	Female %	Both %
Owns and manages sugar cane farm	13	19	11
Registration at sugar mill to collect payment	13	8	-
Cultivating food crops and vegetable gardens	8	90	2

Sugar cane farming by small sugar cane growers rather than large scale commercial farmers, existed in the area. According to data in Table 7.9, both male and female were engaged in sugar cane farming, where 13% were male and 19% were female. The 13% males were also registered at the sugar mill and received the cash payment on the sugar cane produced. On the other hand, only 8% of the females did receive payments and 11% operated smaller farms and had no access to the sugar mill. This meant that they received no income from the farms.

As to who did the work on these farms, 83 percent of the 60 respondents reported that wives and children did the bulk of the work, especially as unpaid family hands: 15 percent said that men worked with women but it was the men who did most of the work, and 2 percent said that men did all the work, with hired labour. In general though, both sexes worked the farms but the gains were allocated by males where they earned the cash and by females, where they earned the money.

Ninety two percent of the households had a vegetable garden or a field around the house. The other 8% did not have farm land, as they were tenants on the land/site. Landlessness was becoming a common phenomenon in the rural area even for people who had lived in the area for more than 10 years. These fields and gardens were cultivated by women in 90% of the households, while it was only 10% of the men in some of the households. Males who were active were found in subsistence agriculture, cleared the land and ploughed and turned the soil, and the women still planted, hoed weeded, harvested, stored and processed the food crops. It was the women who also were mostly responsible for the marketing of agricultural produce that was surplus. But when women market produce, they often must carry it for long distances to the market site on their heads. Therefore the inadequate transportation also directly affects the length and difficulty of the women's working day (James, 1995:179). The other disadvantage for women was in the area of joint family agricultural ventures, where men were in control of the cash gained. Women felt they got very little in return if anything. One husband was complaining that his field crop harvest and sugar cane farm produce were poor, because his wife had decided to leave and work as a live-in domestic worker in a nearby town. The wife had this to say:

“My husband ploughed the fields, I hoed and harvested with other women, but when he got paid for the sugar cane, he gave me only R100.00. I had to go and find work to support myself and my children”.

On the other hand, the husband believed that the farm work was part of her wifely or family duties, and no equitable remuneration was necessary.

As arable land was very scarce in the area, the one other place where women could grow vegetables to feed their families, was the community gardens. Women who wanted to live off farming, wanted more land and access to credit to pursue their farming plans. Although 40 percent of what was produced in the fields was for domestic consumption, the majority (60 percent) reported that food produced was used for both domestic and market purposes. What emerged from these statistics was that despite their involvement in sugar cane farming for commercial purposes, most households depended on food produced by women and children - a proportion of which was sold in the market, to purchase needed domestic items such as kerosene, salt, meat, mealie meal and bread.

Since schooling had become widespread in rural areas, children were away from farms five days of the week, leaving only Saturday free. This meant that the bulk of food production was accomplished by women - this, in addition to their duties other income generating work, and domestic chores such as cooking, cleaning, laundry and collection of fuelwood and water. The women's productive role in agriculture was not just in the area of cultivation. In many households in the area, women also cared for the livestock particularly keeping poultry and tending goats. Large domestic animals such as cows, and the milking of cows was done by males - adult and school going boy children. In the study sample, men accounted for only 16% of those who tended chickens and other livestock, while women accounted for 65%, and the 19% was assigned to both men and women. It therefore stands to reason that women farmers need special attention from policy makers and development planners in order to increase the rural households chances of feeding their families.

James (1995:52) illustrates the point that in developing countries like in the rural area under study, wives are expected to help in farming (harvesting and processing their husbands' produce) but men control the produce. Men are responsible for the food security and clothing needs of their wives and children through (sugar cane revenues), but they are not found to be reliable to fulfilling this obligation (ibid.:52-53). The preceding discussion gives credence to the centrality of gender analysis in designing and implementing interventions to assist farmers.

Notwithstanding the multiplicity of women's productive and reproductive responsibilities, it was noteworthy that the extent and diversity of women's involvement in community management (one or politics) could not be underestimated. This brought the third role of women to attention, resulting in what Moser (1993) refers to as the "triple role".

### 7.4.3 Women's role in community management: affiliation to community groups

In the current economic climate, where low income households were increasingly resolving community level problems through self-help, it was of particular significance to isolate this form of women's involvement (Moser, 1993). Moser (1993:34) further argues for the importance of giving recognition and visibility to this role, rather than seeing it as a natural extension of women's work. In the words of Moser (1993:34-35) mobilization and organization at the community level is a natural extension of their domestic work and showing women engaging in bottom-up struggles manifested through self-help community-based solutions, to obtain food, health and education.

Women's social participation in community organizations and development was investigated in the study. Since the men's participation in community management roles was negligible and the study is about women, the focus here is on women's participation.

The data in Table 7.10 shows membership/affiliation of women in a variety of groups ranging from ones that were directly aimed to improve their reproductive and productive roles to ones that depict on their role in community management and community politics. The women who were involved and those that were not involved in each of the organization are reflected in the Table.

**Table 7.10: Women's involvement in community organizations or groups by percentage (N=41)**

Type of organizations	Women involved		Women not involved		Total	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Sewing/baking clubs	6	13	35	87	41	100
Group saving clubs (stokvel)	21	51	20	49	41	100
Communal garden groups	11	27	30	73	41	100
Sugar cane association	4	10	37	90	41	100
Shool governing body	3	7	38	93	41	100
Water committee	13	32	28	8	41	100
Development committee	4	10	37	90	41	100
Burial societies	12	30	29	70	41	100
Creches committees	13	32	28	68	41	100
Political parties	3	7	38	93	41	100
Trade unions	2	5	39	95	41	100

#### **7.4.3.1 Sewing and baking clubs**

The finding of the study identifies that only 13% of the 41 women were involved in sewing and/or baking clubs. No men were involved in these. Although the project of the clubs involved women in their traditional roles, its aim was related to the women's productive role - to meet their practical gender needs for income and employment. The project covered employment and economic development and reflected an anti-poverty approach targeted to women in development. The problem with the project was that it was hardly profitable. Because the majority of successful women in sewing were lone workers and had to buy material, sew and market their goods themselves, production was slow and not competitive. The women in groups had no proper sewing machines and no reliable places to work at or enough capital to buy material and produce high quality goods for bulk orders. This implied that they could not be able to respond to orders, let alone tenders to supply uniforms to schools or their institutions, for example.

#### **7.4.3.2 Group savings clubs (stokvels) and burial societies**

Twenty one out of the 41 (51.2%) women in the study belonged to group saving schemes. Men also did participate in some of these stokvels, 5 in number. Men were also part of burial societies where women comprised the majority at 65%. Some of the women's group savings clubs were linked to local organizations established under the auspices of the South African Homeless People's Federation, with a regional office located at Esikhawini township, 10 kilometres away. This group allowed the poor, unemployed, homeless people including males to save for housing. The money saved was divided into two accounts, viz., an investment account for a matching fund towards a housing loan, and the other was a kind of savings that afforded members to make loans at an interest of one percent. But the interest also went into the members collective group saving which made this a form of stokvel and not a micro-lender. Some of the groups to which members were affiliated, saved money to buy end-of-the-year bulk groceries; others saved for beginning-of-the-year school fees; others saved to have extra cash at Christmas time. All were mutual aid groups, aimed at accumulating income to meet members' practical gender needs.

The poor, knew they could not get credit or make loans in formal financial institutions like banks. They wanted to empower themselves to be able to access some resources such as housing loans, which required that potential beneficiaries have 'deposits'. More women than men were affiliated in these.

#### **7.4.3.3 Communal garden groups and sugar cane associations**

Eleven women (27%) of the 41 women belonged to communal garden groups, some of which were moribund. In one of the women's communal gardens two men had joined the women and said it was to 'maintain their families too'. The communal gardens were one way to access extra land to grow food crops and vegetables. Agricultural extension officers were involved in some ways in assisting these groups. The fact is that women were a vital part of food security through their role as food producers, but this was hindered by a lack of sufficient land, capital and markets to help them realize a better turnover.

More men belonged to the sugar cane association than women. Only 4 of the 41 women with sugar cane farms belonged to the association. The sugar cane association was to mediate on behalf of the sugar cane growers who processed their sugar cane in the local mill. The members could also have access to special extension services, and other services to convey the sugar cane to the mill.

#### **7.4.3.4 School governing bodies, water, and development committees**

Only 7% of the women attended school governing body meetings although male participation was just as low. Thirty three percent of the women participated directly and/or indirectly in water committees, although in the management of these committees, there were more men than women.

Twenty three percent of the women said they had participated in the development committee activities but more men were represented in the running and management of these committees. The development committees were critical in mediating with external development agencies and to prioritize with development projects to be funded by the uThungulu Regional (district) Council.

#### **7.4.3.5 Creche committees**

Thirty two percent of the respondents, who were women, participated in creche committee meetings. Only 2% of the men had been to a creche committee meeting. Creche committees did have men but had more women in management. The child care workers and direct beneficiaries were all women.

The child minding taking place in the rural creches could not be far removed from the practice of inter-household (resources and labour) exchanges, a system of reciprocity that used to be common in rural areas. These creches are largely unsubsidized by the

government, and in the majority of cases they are nowhere near meeting the government's "minimum" guidelines or standards for child care centres. However, rural women wanted to use the minding of children as a source of earning income for themselves as well. These women were unemployed and needy, but could not find wage employment outside the locality because of family responsibilities. For example, (rural) households had to be managed by someone when some of its members (males and younger women) had migrated into towns. The caring for children and grandchildren, the aged and disabled had always been traditionally women's work.

#### **7.4.3.6 Political party and trade union participation**

Only 7% of the women acknowledged being affiliated to political parties (without mentioning which one). Men on the whole denied involvement and therefore only 2% said they were affiliated. This could have been because of the violence known to have erupted in the community because of conflicts between different political party affiliates. With trade unions, only 2% of the working women were members of NEHAWU (The National Health and Allied Workers Union). These were women in wage employment at government agencies. Nevertheless, the general perception was that more men were in leadership positions in trade unions than women.

The groups, i.e. sewing/baking clubs, burial societies, and group saving clubs, when combined, had a high percentage of women participating. These groups or community organizations can be classified as the informal groups rather than as the institution relations groups that are known to mediate on behalf of the wider community with bureaucracies for development resources. In the institution relations groups, more men were represented in the management of their functions, e.g. water committees, school governing bodies. The functions of the informal groups, on the other hand, were essential for survival and mutual aid, but were almost peripheral to community development at a wider level.

The project and activities of these groups were mainly extensions of women's traditional roles related to their productive roles (Moser, 1993). They met women's practical gender needs for income and employment. They also reflected an anti-poverty approach to women in development and covered employment and economic development. The primary function of these informal groups was to bring about some change in the participants and enrich the group life of the community. But they did not advance the task goal of community work which was to influence organizations to better serve consumer needs. These groups did not advance from the immediate solution of shared individual problems to common concerns with larger social issues and actions, nor did they tackle women's rights issues or their strategic gender needs. It is



important to note that men also worked at the community level.

In organizations where men and women could work alongside each other, women most frequently made up the “rank-and-file” of the voluntary membership. Men tended to be involved in positions of direct authority, and even worked in paid capacity. The male leaders (the chief/*inkosi*), as tribal authority, even the councillor(s) in the URC (the local government), were paid regular salaries and could claim expenses respectively. Even the headmen were entitled to payment “case by case” from members of the community they helped. These monies were not fixed and were referred to as payment for “traveling costs”. Allegiance fees were paid when plot allocations were made. Abuse of this practice was common, leading to bribes. The fact that males were frequently paid for their work was made legitimate by the belief that “a man had to work” while women, by contrast, were expected to be selfless and altruistic and do volunteer work. Women’s participation was justified in their gender-ascribed role of being good mothers, and “real” women, working to improve living conditions for their families. This gender division at community level then became ‘paid men’s work’ and unpaid women’s voluntary work; and this had been extensively reinforced by development agencies from governments to NGOs alike. The cost this has had on women’s time and labour and cash income, cannot be overestimated.

Besides gender role identification, one aim of the study was to examine community leadership and decision making - particularly to meet community needs and women’s gender needs. The main question was: Who were the leaders who influenced decisions associated with local community development? Who spoke for the rural public in determining what role government should play in the community? The data presented in this section was collected from “Sample B” through the methods discussed in Chapter 5. In Chapter 6 the local government and the traditional leadership were identified as the formal leadership in the rural area. It is in relation to these structures that women’s participation could be considered effective for community development.

## **7.5 SOCIAL PARTICIPATION AND COMMUNITY LEADERSHIP/DECISION MAKING IN THE RURAL NEIGHBOURHOOD**

Two paths traditionally lead to decision-making positions in government - political candidacy and a career in the civil service. Both paths were not studied directly, instead participation of community and indigenous leadership around issues that affected the community’s development were focused on. Data collected are presented in three sections: the socio-economic correlates of community leaders; politicization of the leaders (social participation in civic organizations; interpersonal contacts; and

advisory activity); and then the leaders' actual involvement in issues, both major and minor, related to community development.

### 7.5.1 Biographical and demographical data on community leaders

Certain social features have been traditionally associated with particular statuses. The one thing the data confirmed was that traditional leadership was a customary and tribal feature. It was composed of only males, while the 12 attributed or community influentials (the reputed leaders) were ten women and two men. Both groups had lived for longer than 20 years in the area and all the tribal leaders were born there and had lived there all their lives.

#### 7.5.1.1 Educational levels of community leaders

The community leaders' level of education is presented in Table 7.11.

**Table 7.11: Educational levels of community leaders by percentage**  
Number = 19

Level of education	Traditional leaders (N=7)		Community influentials (N=12)		Percentage of total
	No	%	No	%	
None	1	14.3	-	-	5
Primary School	3	42.9	7	58.3	53
Secondary School	1	14.3	5	41.7	32
Matric/Std 10	1	14.3	-	-	5
No response	1	14.3	-	-	5
<b>Total</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>

The data revealed that all the community influentials (100%) had achieved primary education and had a reasonable level of functional literacy. However, as the educational level advanced (secondary, matric and tertiary levels), this group was not represented. This situation reflected the position in the wider community, where although women had made progress, they still lagged behind men in terms of achievement. The educational level of the tribal leaders, however, had always been generally considered low. In the sample 14.3% had no education, and 42.9% had functional literacy (primary education). However, it is in this group that a more advanced level of education, secondary and matric level (28.6%), could also be found.

For tribal leaders, educational achievement was never a criterion for community

leadership since the process of acquiring these positions was inheritance and the power base was positional.

**7.5.1.2 Level of knowledge of community leaders and the sources of information**

Probably linked to the level of education, was the level of knowledge of the leaders. One of the reasons why the community leaders were significant in community development, was that they were knowledgeable or reputed to be, by the community. The knowledge was not necessarily the type acquired through formal schooling, but was nevertheless considered to have some relevance in facilitating effective participation in community development.

**Table 7.12: Knowledge of financial matters of the tribal authority by community leaders by level of correctness. N = 19**

Financial matters of the tribal authority	Percentage of correct answers by level of correctness		
	Correct	Partly correct	Don't know
Total budget of tribal authority/Trust Fund (period 1999 - 2000 financial year)	-	11	89
Expenditure items of the Tribal Authority during the period	-	15	85

According to the data in Table 7.12 only 11 percent of the community leaders who gave answers on the Tribal Authority Fund could be interpreted as “partly correct” answers. The 89 percent had no idea. In terms of Tribal Authority expenditure items, a higher percentage of 15 percent were “partly correct” and 85 percent said they did not know, and hesitated to guess. The simple way in which questions were posed and the answers scored - even with the low figures of the partly correct - tended to err, if it erred at all, on the side of overestimating the percentage of the partly correct answers. Since the partially correct answer meant failure to estimate the amount or to indicate the sources of income, it is indeed striking to note the extent to which the respondents, even after probing, were unaware of this crucial aspect of development, the funding resource, and the budget, and its expenditure.

It is a widespread assumption that the fullest understanding of the process of government resides in the better educated groups, the middle and upper social classes (managers and officials). Nevertheless, it was an underlying assumption of this research that educational attainment and corresponding position in the social

structure, would not adequately account for what community leaders knew about the finances of their immediate indigenous leadership structure. Formal education would undoubtedly increase generalized knowledge, but since the Tribal Authority's role in community development programmes reached across class lines (and therefore educational levels), its functions and achievements, including knowledge of its income and expenditure, ought to have been accessible to all. In other terms, the self-interest of the community leaders and the rural public ought to have overcome educational limitations in the specific instances.

Two simple questions were asked to establish if community leaders had any knowledge of the new structures of the Human Rights Commission and the government initiatives to look out for the special needs of vulnerable groups, viz., the Commission on Gender Equality and the Youth Commission. No detail was required to demonstrate the level of knowledge. A high percentage of 79% had heard of the Gender Commission while 84 percent had heard of the Youth Commission. The information was sourced from the radio. This leads to the analysis and discussion of how the community leaders got their information on key issues affecting local community development.

### 7.5.1.3 Accessing information and sources of data

How did the rural population in the area and the community leaders sampled access knowledge and information about political and development structures, through which development could be channelled? Table 7.13 shows the frequency with which community leaders accessed information from selected sources.

**Table 7.13: Sources of information on community issues for community leaders by percentage of frequency (N=19)**

Source of information	Frequently (%)	Sometimes (%)	Never (%)
Chief/Inkosi	21	79	-
Councillor(s) or headmen	21	79	-
Inkosi's policemen	32	63	5
Colleagues/work mates	58	37	5
Service providers	21	68	11
Friends and relatives	89	11	-
Radio	53	42	7
Newsletters/fliers	16	37	47
Newspapers	32	42	25
Books	-	5	95
Internet (computer)	-	-	100

The chief (inkosi) was cited as a frequent source of information used just like the councillors or headmen, at 21 percent saying “frequently” and 79 percent said “sometimes”. The reason for this equal level of contact could be that it was headmen who dealt with concerns at the ward level and then referred these to the “inkosi”. However, the “inkosi” was a more frequent source because through the very headmen, he executed his work. Moreover, the inkosi had tribal policemen who were his messengers and thus 32% and 63% for “frequently” and “sometimes” respectively could be added directly to the “inkosi” score. This was due in part to the form of local government that had emerged in the rural areas which still gave a privileged position to traditional authorities and generally was itself deeply patriarchal (and even racist), excluding women from the critically important levels of participation in the management of projects.

Service providers were also viewed as an accessible source of information “frequently” at 21 percent, and 68 percent, “sometimes”. Eleven percent of the leaders said they never got information directly from service providers. There was direct evidence that the community did not perceive service providers as a regular source(s) of information.

Actually, those that claimed frequent contact either had personal and family contact with service providers, referring problem cases known to them - as community leaders they acted as brokers for community members as well. The extent of interpersonal contacts with the service providers is described later in the section on “politicization” of community leaders. Friends and relatives provided the most frequent source of information at 89 percent and the other 11 percent of the respondents used this resource “sometimes”. The workmates or colleagues also formed the second largest single source of information of those that had work based (formal or informal) networks.

The radio was cited as a fairly frequent source of information at 53 percent “frequently” and 37 percent “sometimes”. These sources, including the newspapers (32 percent as a “frequent” resource and 42 percent “sometimes”; and newsletters/fliers at 16 percent frequent use and 37 percent occasional use) were impersonal, general resources not directed at the issues of the neighbourhood *per se*. Nevertheless, the latter undoubtedly increased generalized knowledge about processes of development and about government. At best, they could stimulate thinking beyond the local and inspire new ideas for growth. Nevertheless, the level of factual knowledge relevant to the rural area could be considered low from any standpoint. Formal books were used sometimes, by only 5 percent of the leaders who were literate. The new technology, the internet, was unknown to all respondents. Nevertheless, it is necessary to keep in mind that the amount of ignorance which persisted even after personal and family

contact about the processes of government and development was just as indeed immense.

What were the implications of the foregoing socio-economic characteristics on the earnings and their social status?

#### 7.5.1.4 Income of the leaders

Although the tribal leaders were formal positional leaders, they did not get a salary. Only the “inkosi” was paid a salary through the Department of Traditional Affairs. The rest of the members, the headmen and councillors, like the influentials, had to earn their living from other paying occupations or business activities or fees charged for all helping activities to rural people, especially as an entitlement for the headmen and councillors.

The income of both the tribal leaders and the community influentials are presented in Table 7.14.

**Table 7.14: Amount of earnings of community leaders by percentage**

Amount of income in Rands	Traditional leaders (N=7)		Community influentials (N=12)	
	No	%	No	%
200 and under	1	14.3	3	25
201 - 500	3		4	33.3
501 - 1 000	-	-	4	33.3
1 001 - 1 500	1	14.3	-	-
1 501 - 2 500	1	14.3	-	-
2 501 - 3 500	-	-	-	-
3 501 - 4 500	-	-	-	-
4 501 - 6 000	-	-	-	-
6 001 and over	1	14.3	1	8.3
Unspecified				
<b>Total</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>100.1</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>99.9</b>

Data in Table 7.14 shows that only one leader (5%), a tribal authority member was in wage (formal) employment as a government servant. He worked for the university and could be available for urgent tribal authority matters during the week and worked more time over weekends. However, this implied that tribal authority work was an extension of their natural position as heirs rather than personally lucrative full-timework. Casual

labourers, i.e. those employed in local contract work, accounted for 16% of the leaders and 42% (the highest percentage) of the leaders were farmers. The three tribal leaders were in sugar cane farming, but only one earned a substantial sum and the two earned the “middle” income of over R1 500. While tribal leaders (11%) referred to themselves as headmen and not like “unemployed” the influentials said that they were “unemployed” engaged in self-employment, i.e. informal trading (26%). These respondents were either sewing or selling their skills individually and in community groups or were selling in “tuck shops” and other outlets. Most of these community influentials (women) were also in community gardens and saw themselves as farmers. They produced food crops for domestic as well as market use. The employment or occupations of the leaders put them into the low-income bracket which was nothing like that of the professional civil servants whose salary levels were much higher. However, the increasing politicization of the chief’s position, has meant that he not only earned a salary as a civil servant or administrator, but has a “decent” salary (an estimated R6000 per month).

The incomes of both types of leaders were not easy to establish because of the kinds of occupations - which were not open to public scrutiny in terms of remuneration. Therefore, the researcher had to rely on the respondents’ statements.

Generally, speaking, the incomes were low, but not uncharacteristic of the rest of the community. Fifty seven percent of the tribal leaders earned between R100 and R500. Only 2 persons (11%) one a traditional leader, and another a community influential had earnings of over R6 000. These were the successful sugar cane farmers. The other 11% was the tribal leaders who earned between R1 000 and R2 500. No community influentials was represented in this ‘middle income’ group. In fact 58.3% of the community influential also earned between R100 and R500. Therefore the latter earned a little more than the community influentials. The occupations were examined for their link to determining the incomes cited by the community leaders.

#### **7.5.1.5 Occupations of the community leaders**

Data in Table 7.15 shows the types of occupations of community leaders by percentage.

**Table 7.15: Type of occupation of community leaders by percentage**

Type of occupation	Traditional leaders		Community influentials		% of Total Leaders
	No	%	No	%	
Government service workers	1	14.2	-	-	5
Casual labourer	1	14.2	2	16.7	16
Farmer	3	42.9	5	41.7	42
Informal/trading self employed	-	-	5	41.7	26
Unemployed	2	28.6	-	-	11
Other					
<b>Total</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>99.9</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>

The politicization of community leaders was important to investigate as conditions of their level of participation in community development. Women who formed 83 percent of the leadership group (the 12 known as reputed leaders or influentials) would be focused on.

Encouraging women to use their leadership skills, providing opportunities for them to participate in community decision-making and supporting women's organizations are some of the actions communities can take to open up opportunities for poor women (World Summit for Social Development, 1995:3).

### 7.5.2 Politicization or political awareness of community leaders

The basic assumption here is that some role behaviour is more orientated around participation in community decision-making. This political orientation is here referred to as politicization. The three forms of politicization studied in respect of the community leaders included (a) participation in civic organizations (b) interpersonal contacts; and (c) advisory activities.

#### 7.5.2.1 Participation in civic organizations

Civic organizations are the most common types of politicization organizations at the local level, especially where party organizations are weak. Although 95 percent of the leaders belonged to the church and 63 percent were actually pastors or members of the governing church councils, this was not regarded as having a direct influence on community development. However, the active participation of most rural residents in their specific churches, and the opportunities for leadership churches afforded for women and youth, they naturally surfaced as places of community involvement. In



these, they had a high potential as a vehicle for change or development. One thing the church offered the leaders was more avenues for personal prestige and visibility in the community. These were some of the resources necessary to influence public opinion or which afforded a platform to reach some people.

It is interesting to note that direct participation in political parties was denied by the respondents, who apparently feared being labeled partisan, and or of being attacked by opposition. Hence political party affiliation was neither revealed nor insisted upon by the researchers, to avoid being suspected as "spies" themselves.

In the area, the traditional leaders were not members of as many civic organizations as the influentials. At least 75% of the female influentials belonged to more than three organizations - and all belonged to the Women's Group that was known as the regional umbrella body that had input in the formation of the uThungulu Regional Council as discussed in Chapter 6.

The tribal leaders formed 50% of the members of the Farmers' Association. There were more men than women in the sugar cane farmers' group and the 2 males (and only two women influentials) belonged there. The other male dominated groups were the community development committees, the trade unions, the school governing body, and the water committee. The female influentials formed only 30 percent of the affiliates and were not in the management ranks. The creches had mixed membership, but of the 7 affiliated members of leadership, 75 percent were the women and the 2 were the male influentials. All the employees at the creches were female.

The burial society was mixed, though dominated by women, in the larger ones, the position of chairperson tended to be occupied by males (i.e. 50 percent of executive members were male in half of the burial societies). In the stokvel or group savings clubs, 67 percent of the community leaders were represented. The tendency was for males and females to be represented in work based stokvels, and to share the treasurers' role.

In group savings clubs there were more women than men, and the latter were found only in the self-help housing group. Thus, 70 percent of the members of the executive of stokvels and group savings clubs were female - at this point.

The management of community wide/civic organizations, namely, the community development committees, the school governing bodies, the water committees and the trade unions lay in the hands of male community leaders. Although there was a relatively high figure of the tribal leadership [75 percent] in these groups, this did not

necessarily mean that they controlled the organizations (especially those requiring sustained involvement of technical or professional staff). They worked along with the influentials (men and a moderate proportion of women) who played instrumental roles in development programme implementation. It is nevertheless important to note beyond the numbers that, women's representation is a complex matter. For instance, it is correct to say that "it is not self-evident that only women can represent women's interests (Hassim, 1999:13).

Nevertheless, the many challenges that women councillors in local government must face, need to be addressed to enable them to be effective in local government structures. Structures such as SALGRA (South African Local Government Association) a national body, should take responsibility for building the capacity of women to be effective councillors and to develop programmes to challenge both men and women councillors' gender stereotypes and biases, affecting performance. At the local level this has to happen with the Gender Working Group, but not just through one-off 'capacity building' workshops by consultants, but through continuous support. Women councillors like their constituencies, were victims of the pressure of work combined with the traditional roles women play, and the gender prejudice from the majority males both Black and White - councillors affecting them.

There was a general perception of membership in community groups by tribal leadership mainly ceremonial rather than functionally relevant. Their presence made for legitimate power to be enjoyed by other members of those groups. At district council level (of the local government, the uThungulu Regional Council) there was an elected councillor, who was a very influential person linked to the Tribal leadership. Therefore, the personal lack of membership and office holding of the tribal leaders at that organizational level, to them, did not feel like they had no influence there. The frequent interaction between the councillor and service providers or administrators of development programmes, was believed to result in indirect flows of influence by tribal leaders, and those associated with them.

#### **7.5.2.2 Interpersonal contacts**

The 19 community leaders were asked how frequently they had personal contacts with selected individual leaders and development officials or service providers or organizations. Table 7.16 represents the data collected.

**Table 7.16: Frequent contacts of community leaders with individuals and institutional/group representatives by percentage**

Representatives	Contact by community leaders	
	Tribal leaders (N=7) Percentage	Community influentials (N=12) Percentage
Chief/Inkosi	93	80
URC uThungulu Regional Council	40	10
Development Committee Chairperson	83	50
Regional Authority	30	10
Local headmen/Councillors	93	95
Service providers (officials, technicians and professionals)	70	80
Political party leaders	7	20
Members of parliament	5	30
Project Committee Leaders	60	70
Provincial government leaders	30	10
Development organizations (non-government officials)	50	75
Labour union officials	0	8
<b>Mean score</b>	<b>48</b>	<b>45</b>

More of the tribal leaders, 93 percent reported frequent interactions with the *inkosi* and other councillors or headmen, while an equally high percentage of community influentials, 80 percent, interacted with the *inkosi* and moreso with the headmen or councillors, at 95 percent. It was to be expected that the influentials interacted so frequently with headmen, because most of what influentials did, was initiated at ward level.

Contact with the service providers was high at 70% for tribal leaders and 80% for the community influentials. The content of the encounters is important to note for both groups. The tribal leaders were contacted most by different service providers upon entering the community or when initiating projects, a way to gain general acceptance for their projects. On the other hand, the influentials formed the 'corps' of 'followers' that were active and gave the tribal leadership the legitimacy of being "supported by the community". Moreover, both groups, individually acted as brokers on behalf of the local people in cases ranging from personal affairs of inheritance, on providing indigency or destitution in applying for social assistance to presenting a community felt need for a basic service to the URC for example:

The tribal leaders had more contact with the development committee chairperson at

the rate of 83 percent frequency, while only half of the influentials had contact. The chairperson was a male who was very close to the tribal authority and represented the interests thereof in the uThungulu Regional Council. Influentials apparently communicated more frequently with political party leaders and members of parliament than the tribal leaders, which suggested their openness to political participation.

Nevertheless, tribal leaders had everything to do with political parties, as they were controlled by a party affiliated member of the Executive Council (MEC for Traditional Affairs), who was himself an inkosi. Furthermore, there is an ongoing debate concerning chieftainship and local government (the Municipal Demarcation issue) in KZN (and SA) and this is conducted along party political lines.

Because of their positional and reputed power/influence, tribal leaders were in contact with project committee leaders (60 percent frequency) and with development organizations (NGOs) (70 percent). Unlike the tribal leaders, the influentials were the implementors and the doers in projects so that their frequent contact with project programme developers made good sense. The tribal leaders, also had more contact with provincial government leaders, particularly those of the Department of Traditional Leaders (at 30 percent). No tribal leader had contact with labour unions, but the influentials did at 8 percent. When all the frequent interactions are considered together, the influentials had a slightly higher and more varied interaction rate than the tribal leaders. What is most important about these findings is that, with the one or two exceptions noted, the frequency with which this defined role set was activated, was more or less similar for the two sets of respondents "within" the community.

The programmes promoted by the Department of Traditional Affairs were designed 'for' the *amakhosi*, not 'with' them. Moreso, the strategic needs of women were obviously not being addressed. The women in development (WID) approaches in these were "welfare" oriented, the programme approach was targeted (not mainstream) projects (Moser, 1993:151). For example, the Department of Traditional Affairs at provincial level, KZN, reporting on 'Women in Farming', mentioned the establishment of a Chief Directorate of Rural Development Facilitation, which had recently forked out a sum of R140 000 for a Women's Co-operative in a Tribal Authority called Madlebe (Provincial Parliamentary Programme (PPP), News, 2000). There was also a sum of R450 000 paid towards the construction of a handicraft centre to benefit 250 women.

As a result of this relationship between *amakhosi* and the government department(s) in KwaZulu, the interpersonal contacts were more frequent for provincial government at 30% for tribal leaders compared to only 10% for community influentials.

### 7.5.2.3 **Advisory activity**

Advisory activity is another index of politicization, since it often influences community decision-making, and also serves to bridge the gaps promoted by structural hierarchies.

One way of ascertaining the advisory activity of the respondents was to ask them if they had been contacted for advice within the past year, on any one substantive issue of concern in the community: developing the physical infrastructure such as water sources, local elections, planning and starting income generating projects, social welfare (creches), schools and community gardens.

When the advisory activity of tribal leaders was compared with that of the influentials, the pattern was more or less similar. It is worth noting that the overall mean rates of advisory activity for both status groupings were slightly higher for tribal leaders. This suggests that the replies of both status groupings reflected the saliency of particular issues in the area. To inquire further into advisory patterns, all interviewees were asked for the names of the first three people they would consult for advice within each of the selected substantive areas.

Community influentials in 74% of the instances, identified the tribal leadership as the first resource for advice. On specific problems of physical infrastructure, the tribal leadership at 68%, specified the uThungulu Regional Council (URC); and 66% mentioned the provincial government. In 65% of the cases, parastatals like Eskom, Telkom were mentioned, for electricity and telephones respectively. Only 11% mentioned parliamentarians as a resource. Specifically, the officials in the structures which had responsibilities in a policy area, were included among those prominently cited as a source of advice. Designations of advisers were universally referred to by structure represented by individuals, not names. Because the tribal authority was perceived as the gateway to consulting any other resource outside the immediate community, it was referred to by most (74 percent) of the respondents. Tribal leaders were most frequently in contact with community persons in their judicial roles and as mediators in family and community conflicts (not just broad-based community development).

Although insight into the community decision-making roles of community leaders was gained by looking at their ties with civic organizations, and their role as advisers, it was important to assess their actual involvement in concrete issue(s) affecting their communities.

#### 7.5.2.4 Issue involvement

Specific data were gathered about the activities of community leaders in local government elections in the year 1996. This was to get councillors to represent the rural people in the district council (the uThungulu Regional Council). Respondents were presented with a standardized list of activities and asked if they had performed any of them during voting in their community. The following Table 7.17 displays the actual involvement of community leaders in decisions related to voting in the specific election of a representative councillor to the district council (the URC). Then Table 7.18 which follows, shows the actual involvement and action taken by community leaders in respect of selected community development projects.

##### (a) Elections

Specific data was gathered about the activities of the status incumbents in the last local elections of the representative(s) to the district council (uThungulu Regional Council, the URC). Respondents were presented with a standardized list of activities and asked if they had performed any of them in their community.

**Table 7.17: Activities of leaders in election campaigns by percentage**  
N = 19

Actual/Specific form of Activity	Traditional leaders percentage of active involvement (N=7)	Community influentials of active involvement (N=12)
	%	%
Spoke to friends, relatives or work mates	70	75
Urged members of organizations to vote	29	65
Contributed financially	0	0
Helped decide campaign strategy	30	30
Distributed fliers/posters	0	28
Was trained and became a monitor or voting official	0	0

The data in Table 7.17 demonstrates the low activity of tribal leaders in the community. The most common activity identified was just “speaking to friends, relatives, and work associates” at 70% for tribal leaders and 75% for influentials, influentials engaging in slightly more of this. This pattern of communication has critical implications for how and from whom local people effectively learn or share information. There is no doubt that personal networks, experience in the language and cultural contexts of the people, have more relevance in the area. Helping to decide a campaign strategy for elections was an activity of equal importance for both the traditional leaders and the community influentials, at the 30% frequency for each group. Probing for specific activities, yielded little concrete evidence of how this was done. This phenomenon of lack of evidence

may lie in the fact that there were no formal strategic planning meetings, with written records, for most of the social transactions of these groups. Instead, a heavy reliance on the informal personal or face to face channels of communication, as indicated by persistently high percentage of “speaking to friends, relatives and workmates, etc.”, at 74%.

The interesting question would be why was it that a woman was not on the nomination list when the influentials (89 percent women) were active in canvassing? The only other activity engaged in by 29% of the tribal leaders was another low involvement action, i.e. urging members of organizations to vote. The influentials were the more effective contributors as participants in civic organizations hence a high engagement rate in urging them and their membership to vote (65 percent) was to be expected. None of the community leaders reported contributing money or being trained to become monitors or voting officials. Minimal effort was reported in helping decide the campaign strategy. None of the tribal leaders said they were engaged in publicity work by distributing fliers and posters, while 28% of the influentials did. Only two of the (12) twelve influentials reported no activity at all while it was three of the (7) seven tribal leaders.

There are, of course, many explanations for the lower participation of tribal leaders. Constraints against such behaviour were that they could not openly participate in a potentially controversial, political, and indirectly partisan activity. The political party influence in the elections was a hidden but strong determinant of the course of events and of the campaign strategies, etc. In the final analysis, it must be acknowledged that both groups of leaders played a very small part in one crucial area of community decision-making, voting. The problems of women leaders are well articulated by a woman councillor who argues women need help with: understanding the system of local government itself; building capacity and confidence to participate in planning and development strategies; “developing appropriate gender training programmes, and meeting the needs of the communities they serve” (Telele, 2000:44). Women also need help with personal, familial, emotional problems like all women (and human beings). Racism is another issue that needs to be confronted in the URC. This pervasive undermining social evil, co-exists with sexism and makes effective participation in multi-racial organizations even more difficult. South Africans (women and men) need to be free of the psychological fetters imposed by the socio-political, racism, cultural, and gender bias emanating from patriarchy and subordination of women - and white people [women and men], need to be free of the limitations in their mental models (Cook, 1995:292). This need by both parties is well described by Khoza (1989:12) in his discussion of ‘race bound psychological complexes’. Not even the establishment of special units to deal with gender issues or the one-off training

programmes by consultants on gender equity, seem capable of resolving the marginalizing of gender matters in local government. Furthermore, as long as the women mobilized around issues relating to their social cultural sphere (even in political organizations) they could become very powerful, precisely because they did not challenge the nature of their gender subordination. Once they moved into the masculine world of the public, however, confrontations were virtually inevitable. The women who broke into the "male world" tended to have "special" personal identifiable characteristics. They had strong personalities, were energetic with well developed social skills. Most often, they had worked loyally being supportive to men in leadership and organizing women in the community. These women were highly admired by men because as they said, "they behaved like men", implying they imitated men, hence their success.

The inevitable conflicts that arose, were usually personal with women friends as well as political, with male politicians and those women who were not gender-sensitive. Therefore, women avoided conflict by rigidly conforming to their gender-ascribed roles.

Naidoo (1999) conducted research in a major local government institution, where the findings suggest that even within an institution which has established a gender unit (like URC has a Gender Working Group), the organizational culture and perceptions of those who hold authority will finally determine whether or not gender issues can be integrated into the planning process. Moser (1993) identifies four key areas for main streaming gender (as against marginalizing it or even "ghettoising" it into a "women's" section) projects or targeting women. These areas are:

- "integration of gender into mainstream programmes;
- the identification of roles and responsibilities to achieve this;
- the integration of gender planning routines;
- the development of gender training" (Naidoo, 1999).

Therefore the gender planning practice model suggested by Moser (1993) is in this study seen as very important in all social development practice models.



(b) **Actual involvement in community development projects the physical infrastructure (water source)**

**Table 7.18: Activities of leaders in development of physical infrastructure programme(s) by percentage**

**N = 19**

Activity	Traditional leaders (N=7)	Community influentials (N=12)
	Percentage	Percentage
Served on one or both key committees	43	25
Appeared before one or both key committees	43	33
Campaigned for the adoption of the programme	40	70
Contacted by local government officials	60	39
Contacted or contacted by other types of people	62	40

The crucial stages for the water programme consisted of initiating the proposal and determining the precise nature of the technical and financial components in the project for implementation. This was performed by the uThungulu Regional Council and channeled through its processes for project approval. These included its tendering processes and appointment of consultants on the initiation of the project. The development committee and the tribal leaders had a role in presenting to the uThungulu the request for the service and the project initiation had to be supported by the councillor representing the community in the URC (who also happened to be the chairperson of the development committee referred to earlier). The influentials had a moderate personal representation on the prioritization committees, whereas the tribal leaders had more at 43 percent. The tribal leaders also made more personal contacts with sub-regional committee members (Umlalazi sub-region) and appeared more frequently before the committees. Finally, while substantial numbers in both groups campaigned actively for the adoption of the programme, the influentials were more active.

The high rate of activity of tribal leaders was in line with their positional power or authority as the tribal authority. To local government and outside or external agents and consultants (and locals) the tribal leaders had the legitimate power, and were visible in the rural neighbourhood - for easy access. On the other hand, the influentials were more supportive of the tribal leaders in their roles, and acknowledged the symbol of legitimacy these had in the rural/tribal community. In respect of activities in the development of physical infrastructure programmes the tribal leaders were most active in serving on or appearing before key committees organized as consultative processes of development agencies at 43% compared to an average of only 29% for the

influentials. This level of involvement, however, seems to have been linked more to the tribal leaders positional (legitimate) power as a local tribal authority. On the other hand, influentials worked hard for example, campaigning for the adoption of the programme at the rate of 70% compared to only 40% of the tribal leadership. Influentials had to co-operate and co-ordinate efforts with tribal leaders, as the latter were most often the ones contacted by local government officials, 60% of the time compared to the influentials' meagre 39% of the time. Other development agencies find it more convenient to link with the tribal authority as a community entry strategy. This often causes problems when the Tribal Authority is not active in taking the processes forward, or obstructs or opposes certain development. The gender ascribed division of labour could have been the underlying reason why the influentials played a more passive role when the water issue moved into the "world of public politics" - where outsiders, the uThungulu Regional Council became involved. This meant that as long as they remained in their "community management" roles and gave men their place, there was no conflict of interest. In actual terms when money or big money became available and became central in projects, men took a more dominant or active role. The analysis in the foregoing sections has indirectly alluded to the problem areas and needs of rural women.

All the same, a question was included in the schedule to establish specifically what the problems and needs of women were as a gender sub-group. The focus on women's gender needs was based on the important underlying rationale of gender planning, which concerns the fact that men and women not only play different roles in society, with distinct levels of control over resources, but that they therefore often have different needs (Moser, 1993:37).

### **7.5.3 The identification of gender needs**

The following two tables illustrate the nature of priority problems affecting the rural community and those perceived as affecting women more directly. The following table displays the views on types of community development priorities and problems affecting all rural residents, that is both the 60 household heads and the 19 community leaders. The information discussed in this section deals with both data in Tables 7.19 and 7.20 for easier integration. However, the questions specifically on the problems affecting women most only community leaders were asked and hence Table 7.20 contains only those responses.

**Table 7.19: Views on types of community development priorities or problems by community-leaders and the general public**

Development priorities	Percentage of leaders prioritizing the issue (N=19)	Percentage of rural public prioritizing the issue (N=60)
Poverty related problems	47	60
Crime and crime related problems	47	60
Problems related to social integration	58	55
Disease/health related problems	26	12
Problems related to lack of self-development opportunities	16	13
Teenage pregnancy	16	3
Problems related to physical infrastructure	58	55

Table 7.19 depicts the views of community leaders and their followers (the general public).

**Table 7.20: Problems affecting women most in the community according to community leaders' views by percentage (N=19)**

Women's problems (women's gender needs)	Community leaders' views	
	No	%
Constraints resulting from women's reproductive and domestic roles	9	47
Problems related to poverty and affecting productive work	9	47
Problems interfering with personal, social, and legal rights	12	63
Poor self-esteem and social status	6	32
Rape	11	58

Problems affecting women in particular according to the leaders' views are presented in Table 7.20 and the discussion that follows looks at data in both Tables 7.19 and 7.20.

### 7.5.3.1 Poverty related problems

Poverty related problems were cited as a major problem by 47% of the community leaders and by 60% of the general public both male and female. These problems included: lack of jobs, general deprivation, hunger, failure to pay for utilities (inability to afford pay (cost recovery) for water and electricity), and shortage of funding for community development projects and/or lack of knowledge need to access funds. Low paying jobs were cited as a problem, when community leaders identified problems affecting women particularly. In addition, women were said to be oppressed by supporting unemployed husbands and children, alone, burdened and abused economically and in other ways [Table 20]. The other problem related to poverty was also seen as the one where women ended up not pursuing careers or neglecting education as a result of child bearing and child rearing, thus becoming unable to lift

themselves out of poverty. Thus poverty, and women's self-esteem and social status, were intertwined in causation of their problems. Crime and crime related problems were very rife in the area where 47% of the leaders and 60% of the public rated it as high as poverty. Theft, gun toting, land disputes, and serious crimes like armed robbery and murder, were mentioned as examples, particularly committed by young unemployed males. Dagga smoking, rape and domestic violence were rife too according to 58% of the community leaders [Table 7.20]. Of course, to be poor is to be deprived of the means to meet basic survival needs (Report on World Summit for Social Development, 1995:1). But the other problem related to poverty was also seen as the one where women ended up not pursuing careers or neglecting education as a result of child bearing and child rearing, thus becoming unable to lift themselves out of poverty. Thus poverty, and women's self-esteem and social status, were intertwined in causation of their problems.

Dagga smoking, rape and domestic violence were rife as a crime according to 47% of the community leaders, and this affected women most according to 60% of the community influentials.

#### **7.5.3.2 Problems related to inadequate physical infrastructure**

Fifty eight (58) and 55 percent of the community leaders and the general public respectively, identified the physical infrastructure as a priority development need. The following services were either seen as non-existent or inadequate or inaccessible for the majority, viz., roads (poor and unrepaired in some areas), no electricity, no telephones, no communal stand pipes or malfunctioning unrepaired water taps, no work places for projects, no marketing outlets for produce, inadequate unclear, unsafe water supply, shortage of schools, no waterborne toilets, long distances to clinics, irregular and unaffordable transport.

#### **7.5.3.3 Problems related to social integration**

A high percentage of 58% for leaders and 55% of the household heads respectively, also cited a group of problems related to social integration as a priority of equal importance to physical infrastructure. The respondents complained that there was no attention given to community needs by the authorities and developers and the community was marginalized because of its rurality. There was a strong feeling, especially among community leaders, that there were conflicting viewpoints that should be resolved and these made for weak and ineffective collaborative ties among rural residents, and hence the low level of development. A general sense of powerlessness and being marginalized was expressed, and this must be dealt with as it is known to

result in apathy and lack of motivation to engage in change.

#### **7.5.3.4 Disease/health related problems**

Twenty-six percent of both the community leaders and 12% of their followers expressed that health, particularly HIV/AIDS, was a community problem. It is interesting to note though, that this is a low level of concern despite the fact that 52% of the 60 respondents in the study, had been exposed to community-based adult education programmes on HIV/AIDS. There is however, no doubt that women's reproductive health is a critically important gender issue.

#### **7.5.3.5 Problems related to lack of self-development opportunities**

Sixteen percent of the 19 community leaders and 13% of the 60 respondents comprising public, respectively, mentioned the following concerns under this category of problems; lack of knowledge and information relevant to development; lack of marketable skills', limited opportunities for child and youth development; and lack of opportunities for entrepreneurial development.

Teenage pregnancy had the least direct mention by the general public, namely by only 3% of the 60 although with the community leaders, it was cited by 16%. This latter percentage equaled that of problems related to lack of self-development opportunities as key community problems. The consequences of teenage pregnancy for women are implied in this lack of self-development as well as the constraints caused by reproductive and domestic roles for women.

With regard to education, the cost of sending daughters to school, was considered to be higher than that for sons by most poor families, and so the education of girls was more likely than that of boys to be traded off against survival needs (Report on World Summit for Social Development, 1995:1). This often led to girls seeking early marriage or enter undesired unions to escape the burden of poverty at home.

#### **7.5.3.6 Constraints related to women's reproductive and domestic roles**

The majority problem of the rural women, like that of the world's women, is that - they raise families, often single-handedly, they care for children, the sick, the elderly and often adult able-bodied men as well (Report on World Summit for Social Development, 1995:1). They are also responsible for much of the world's food production. In some countries, they work more than 15 hours a day, tilling the fields, fetching water, carrying firewood, cooking (ibid.:1). Yet their contribution goes largely unrecognized.

Forty seven percent (47%) of the leaders identified this as a key problem for women. Included here was women bearing more children than they could afford; pregnancies out of wedlock; and having to manage children and households alone without partners. Most unmarried mothers were receiving no financial support from the reputed fathers of their children, and besides that most of these were themselves dependants. The very status of being an unmarried woman was viewed as a problem for women as it was of a low social status to be without a man. Women were plagued by trying to bring up uncontrollable and workshy youth. Thus, the women bore the brunt of some of the problems mentioned under “problems related to lack of self-development opportunities (such as limited opportunities for child and youth development); and those of teenage pregnancy. The HIV/AIDS disease was also viewed as affecting women more than men. Marriage was viewed as a social religious and cultural obligation for a rural Zulu woman, a reward for a “good” well behaved woman. From the religious point of view, particularly by members of the Nazareth Shembe Church (a common church denomination in the area), marriage was the only role prescribed for women. Only through marriage was a woman supposed to attain the ultimate aim of life: being a wife and a mother. Through marriage, a woman was also supposed to gain a wider kinship network which brought respect and wealth to her father. This being the attitude of society towards marriage, married women were respected more than others. The separated, divorced and unmarried women were looked down upon and could be vulnerable to abuse. Widows receive better treatment but were often subject to exploitative relationships and manipulation by the in-laws.

Tradition works against women, especially in rural areas. Preserved in custom or translated into law, tradition limits their access to such productive resources as capital technology and land (Report on World Summit for Social Development, 1995:2). Though many developing countries recognize women’s right to own land, their actual control of land is rare (ibid.:2).

#### **7.5.3.7 Violations of personal, social, and legal rights of women**

A high percentage of community leaders (63%) identified that most of the women’s problems and needs arose out of this category. The core causes of the problems lay in power relations between men and women within and outside the home. Included in the list in this group of women’s gender problems were domestic violence, particularly physical and emotional; broken promises of marriage, and marital discord. There was a feeling that women were seen as dependant because they had no decision making power, and that even when they did make contributions, their voices were not heard or were underrated or looked down upon and they suffered down right sex discrimination. Some women reported that they could not even participate in

community groups without the permission of the husbands; they had dropped out of self-help groups because their men thought they were unprofitable and brought no cash returns; or they dismissed and berated women's groups as excuses for gossip networks. The long-term goals of development projects where direct benefits to members are not readily visible, and are targeted to self-development rather than to cash, were not supported by husbands, and often ended because the men grew impatient.

#### **7.5.3.8 Poor self-esteem and social status**

This problem, according to 32% of the respondents, affected most younger women. There was a feeling that women were not liberated enough, they were neglecting their education and not pursuing careers because of men. Most of these respondents argued that women needed to stand up for themselves and make a living for themselves and their children without depending on men. Women, because of their lower status, are more likely to fall into the crushing cycle of poverty and to remain poor unless steps are taken to enable them to liberate themselves (Report on World Summit for Social Development, 1995:1).

#### **7.5.3.9 Rape**

Rape was seen as a distinct and serious problem for women and the girl child according to 58% of the respondents. There was actually a very high incidence of child sexual abuse identified at the Desk for Abused Women, and by school teachers in the local area.

Overall sex discrimination as a cause for women's low social status was generally regarded as an issue for women. This could account for why the Gender Commission (and Youth Commission) was well known. Sex discrimination "kept women in their place" and perpetuated the low self esteem. Women in self-help groups felt the sex discrimination was acute in relation to the treatment they received from the tribal leadership. They felt that they were generally ignored and had to struggle for everything. For example, if they wanted to start a project, they had to go to the tribal authority "a thousand times" before getting permission or access to land. They were expected to stay at home and raise children and had no say in the community. These messages were likely to be sent to women in tribal court hearings where the customary laws and cultural values prevailed to resolve conflicts between men and women.

In addition to the foregoing situation, the attitudes of the administrators and the implementors of service programmes, acted as a deterrent for women reporting certain

gender defined problems such as rape and domestic violence. The burden of following on service delivery for the strategic (legal rights) needs of women and children, that is, the implementation and enforcement of the law against domestic abuse, rape and non-maintenance, has been put on a mainly male-dominated largely patriarchal group: the police, the prosecutors and magistrates. Strategic gender needs were not made part of the direct concern of the sectors that worked with women, on day to day practical gender needs.

Likewise, their social and emotional (mental health) problems emanating from the subordination and abuse of power by males in their lives, were not given priority. This was also manifested in the functioning of the gender commission and the proposed gender policies and structures in an audit report (Hassim, Naiker & Nkoenyane presented an audit report on "Women's Policy Machinery in South Africa, HSRC, 1998). This audit evaluated the initial step to engage the premiers' offices (Head of Provincial Government) (where these gender structures were located), to work towards setting up gender structures and programmes in the various government departments. In KwaZulu-Natal it was reported that the difficulties were (a) failure to get the support of the males in the various government departments, since they felt personally threatened; (b) a report submitted to the Director General (in the Premier's office) to look into setting up gender structures had not been responded to, and (c) the funding was very little. Nevertheless, the KwaZulu-Natal legislature, in a special Women's Parliament on the 13<sup>th</sup> September 2000, invited questions from the public on women's issues for each Cabinet Minister to answer in a structured debate of the parliamentary session, open to the public. The proceedings would be available in the Hansard. The translation of policy into practical benefits to women at the grass roots level were not yet visible. Gender analysis and the gender planning practice for main streaming gender issues, seemed crucial in this area.

To carve a way forward in thinking about the community problems, further questions were asked on (a) whether the problems of concern had been forwarded to development workers; and (b) what the respondents' views were on the type of changes and the areas for these changes that could transform and bring about 'real' changes in the community. On the first question, twenty one percent (21%) named the needs for provision of infrastructure; and 2% mentioned programmes to promote self-development (social services). In the former category the following were included: water tap installation; road maintenance; community halls and clinic facility; construction of bridges (local crossings of rivers and rivulets); fencing of schools; housing (promised in the 1994 elections) and even a kitchen facility for a baking club. The self development (social) services were referred to the establishment of a youth centre for counseling and guidance and creches. A total of 35% of the respondents



attested to that “some” of the issues had received attention while 50% said they “did not know” and 15% said “none of the problems” had been attended to at all.

It did turn out that community residents lacked the level of public knowledge of “how to”, and “who”, has the authority and power to effect changes, namely, the decision/political and administrative processes and technical knowledge to manage or challenge these. The expectations had been raised during the 1994 elections that the “new” government would provide “free” basic services (infrastructure) in their areas. Thus the above-mentioned responses were not related to the efforts they had made on their own initiative, but on promises which “mised” them by saying that merely voting was “sufficient” involvement in their development.

The present inquiry brought forth the factors responsible for failure or difficulty in community organizing and development in the rural area. Table 21 presents the information on those areas of community living which when focused upon, respondents believed would bring about improvement and transformation in the rural area.

#### 7.5.4 Areas of community living to be transformed to bring about effective change and community development

**Table 7.21: Areas of community living which needed transformation to bring about effective change and community development by views of community leaders**

Areas of transformation	Community leaders by percentage	
	No	%
Capacitation or capacity building for productive working relationships	17	89.5
Elimination of sex/gender discrimination/inequality	3	15.8
Training and skills development for economic roles (for poverty alleviation)	11	57.9
Provision of accessible physical infrastructure	7	36.8
Management and control of financial matters, communication procedures and partnership	5	26.3

The data reflects that a very high percentage, 89.5% of the community leaders, viewed capacity building for productive working relationships as the key to effective transformation of the rural living conditions and development. These included aspects such as sharing decision-making within and outside the households; conflict resolution and management of violence; commitment and hard work; community consultation and involvement; solidarity and mutual tolerance; and fairness in dealing with people by leaders. These were directed and focused on interpersonal relationships. Elimination

of sex/gender discrimination was raised by 15.8% of the respondents. Training and skills development for economic roles was identified by 57.9% of the respondents. Issues here were those of availability, accessibility of resources to afford select development opportunities to youth, women and men. It is true that a woman's labour is her single most important resource; yet she often does not have the necessary skills to raise her productivity in both household-based and market-based production (Report on World Summit for Social Development, 1995:1). The returns on her labour are lower than for men partly because of imperfections in market forces (ibid.:1). As a result, women are frequently confined to less well-paid and more casual segments of the labour-market (ibid.:1).

Respondents mentioned the following areas of entitlements as necessary: educational resources, technical, business training centres, teaching youth life skills, improving entrepreneurship or small business among women, creating job opportunities through economic development in the area of agriculture, and engaging in joint economic larger-scale ventures to take advantage of labour intensive public works development programmes. Respondents consistently mentioned that the physical infrastructure was at the top of the list of community needs for both men and women (see Table 7.19 and 7.20). Following on capacitation and training and skills development, provisioning of accessible physical infrastructure was seen by 36.8% of the respondents as an area of critical concern for effective community development. Mentioned among these services were: accessible and safe water; buildings to serve as workshops or workplaces; creches; clinics; telecommunications; housing and community access roads. Mentioned below is the payment of taxes and levies so that it would be possible to expect cost recovery for this service.

Finally, it was the management and control of financial matters, communication procedures and partnerships which were cited by 26% of the respondents. Included in this category were the following: the need for appeals or a standing committee to focus on grievances or complaints by community residents, clarifying and ensuring direct and clear allocation criteria and procedures of funding; monitoring available public funds, ensuring due payment of taxes or levies; election and involvement of youth in community decision making (or management); establishing a partnership and coordination of effort between government, the private sector and civil society for the benefit of the community.

## **7.6 CONCLUSION**

Despite the evidence indicating an alarming trend towards impoverishment for the majority of male and female headed households in the rural area, the majority of

female-headed ones were still highly visible in the lowest income groups, with less access to productive resources to improve their economic situation. What also emerged from the myriad roles of women was a picture of women performing a balancing act, juggling activities that required them as child bearers and rearers, income earners, household and other resource managers, to act as a buffer between the economy and the environment. Cultural bias toward women was also pervasive in the households and in the community. In community decision making processes, there was no doubt that the number of women in key positions could be increasing but their influence was quite limited. In cases where women were present as “influentials”, their input was defined in gender terms, and was supportive or secondary to that of male leaders. Women not only suffered from problems similar to those of men in the same socio-economic sphere, including limited resources for development, they also experienced unique and severe constraints on their productive roles because of personal and social disempowerment.

## **CHAPTER EIGHT**

### **SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

#### **8.1 INTRODUCTION**

The main purpose of this chapter is to review the findings of the study, draw conclusions and make recommendations. Richard and Grinnell (1993) suggest that in drawing conclusions about the study, the researcher should indicate the following:

- assessment of change in the dependent variable as caused by the independent variable;
- the extent to which the study accomplished its purpose as developed in the formulation of the research hypotheses;
- what the study means to professionals and what is required of them; and
- if there is need for further research on the subject, this will be shown in the study's conclusion. The researcher will then suggest whether the same research methods or other research designs should be utilized in follow-up studies.

First, will be the summary of findings, and conclusions. Then the general recommendations which will be followed by a model for social development practice in a rural neighbourhood.

#### **8.2 RE-STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM AND THE AIMS AND OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY**

The problem statement centered around the concern that development policies and programmes, do not take into consideration the reality of rural women's lives, and the fact that men and women have different gender roles and gender needs impacting on their socio-economic circumstances. In spite of women's obvious contribution to the survival and maintenance of the household and the community, there seems to be no correlation with women's status, with consequent powerlessness in most situations.

The key research questions then become: who are the leaders that speak for rural

women (and men) and who determine what role government should play in social development? What resources do women have as individuals, within the households and in the community, for influencing decisions for effective participation?

Finally, what model of practice for social development, is appropriate for social development-oriented workers or social workers in the rural neighbourhood.

The overarching aim of the research is to identify and describe the factors (both facilitative and constraining) that are associated with the meaningful and effective participation of rural women in social development.

The research is motivated by a desire to highlight the constraints for women to social development in order to inform social development practitioners and policy makers, who may then take steps to develop a practice model that encompasses gender sensitive planning. There are nevertheless, two strategic objectives to be achieved, namely:

- (a) To investigate the activities and decisions that rural women are involved in, within the household and in the local neighbourhood, in order to meet their gender needs. To identify who has the power for access to and to allocate productive resources associated with effective participation in social development.
- (b) To assess the level of involvement of rural women and men in community development, and to identify and determine the interventions for promoting effective participation.

In order to achieve the research objectives, the study focused on the household and the environment, which form the context of women's lives. The data collected included: the nature of the household, its activities, gender division of labour and how gender roles are linked to women's gender needs in the household and in the community. More so, the environmental characteristics, i.e. the demographic, climatic, economic, social institutional features that play a role in shaping rural women's lives, were examined.

### **8.3 SUMMARY OF FINDINGS**

The socio-economic characteristics of the rural neighbourhood, the availability and accessibility of personal and collective resources, i.e. assets and facilities available to women (and men) and their households, were traced, analyzed, and discussed.

Though women were the unit of study, the men as key actors in the gender-construction of women's situation, were included in the study sample. The data that was collected and analyzed, contributed to gender role identification and gender needs assessment. The problems associated with women's roles in the household, the women's gender needs as individuals, and as members of the wider rural community, were further analyzed in the present work. The purpose of the analysis was to provide information based on the four important components of gender analysis, usable also in the selection and design of projects, and their monitoring and evaluation. These are the same components of gender analysis embraced in the gender planning framework identified in Chapter 4. These components are recommended for inclusion in the project cycle and other interventions in work with rural people, using the social development practice model advocated for in the present study. The socio-economic circumstances of the households in which women live, are discussed in the findings that follow.

### **8.3.1 The socio-economic situation of women in the rural area - the context of women's lives**

Typical of rural areas in KwaZulu-Natal, was that the area had an acutely underdeveloped infrastructure. Adequate educational facilities, health services, electrification, transportation and water supply were lacking or inadequate or inaccessible because they were not affordable. These inadequacies, however, were more devastating for women than they were for men, especially in the areas of water supply and transportation, because the burden of household chores and the domestic and reproductive responsibilities, lay mainly with women.

In the rural area, most households were the site of many different kinds of activity: residence, production and consumption and market production, distribution of resources and output, family life, and socialization of children, care of the elderly, and so on. Different members of the households had different rights affecting access to and control of resources such as land, property, and income often determined by age, gender, and marital status, as well as by the sexual division of labour.

The idea held by most planners and development agencies, who were influenced by the patriarchal view of household relationships that a man was the household head and a breadwinner with the same role or significance as a 'household head' in Western middle class nuclear families of husband, wife and children, was not valid in the rural area - also reflected in the findings on the gender roles and needs of women. Women-headed households had increased significantly in the rural areas, some being "defacto"

and other “*de jure*” household heads. The overall social status and economic circumstances of women-headed households was lower than that of male headed households. Although women who headed households were not a homogeneous group, they tended to have more dependants not contributing substantially to family income, compared to male headed households.

Although the cash income from formal or waged labour was not significantly different for males and females in the area, it was the female-headed households that were worse off.

Poverty was identified as one of the key community problems, as well as a major one for women. The rising unemployment and declining standards of living, because of the general economic climate, had made the risk of being poor even greater for women than for men. The problem was compounded in female headed households where the women were shouldering a disproportionate burden of poverty. This was because of the double burden caused by the gender division of labour and responsibilities for household welfare, with dependant male partners and children.

Among the rural poor, male heads of households, often earned less than 50 percent of the total household income and they needed (and did have) secondary earners, such as women and children to contribute the other half of the income, in order to survive. Similarly, women heads of households were involved in paid wage employment or other income generating activities, but hardly had the support men had in earning the extra needed income.

Women’s economic and financial contribution was constrained by a variety of factors. First, the problem of balancing multiple roles was exacerbated for this group, which situation has policy implications in specific contexts e.g. women with children and no child care facilities to enable them to concentrate on productive work.

Secondly, was the pervasive characteristic of unpaid family labour of women, disguised unemployed labour not only in the agriculture sector, but also in the non-agricultural sector as well. The reason was that women’s participation, their productive work was seen as an extension of their domestic role, and where the organized formal labour market was unable to absorb the majority of rural people, the women were the majority of the casualties. This meant low income, erratic cash flow, and hard and strenuous work for little returns.

Thirdly, education and marketable skills were lacking, and that made for underemployment and unemployment for most rural women - and men. Generally

though, the socio-economic indicators in the present days of economic structural adjustment programmes, presented a grim picture of deterioration in the rural area, affecting both male and female-headed households. The failure to adequately mainstream a gender perspective in economic planning and decision-making by development planners and to access productive resources for women, had made it harder for them to benefit from existing anti-poverty programmes. The demands to increase income through small scale development or income generating projects such as community gardens and handicrafts were overwhelming. The welfare approach to (social) development was under serious threat in the rural area, as women had very little free time for projects that yielded little, if any profit to meet daily needs.

Rural women's need for cash was so pervasive and acute that it had also changed their attitudes about the relative value of specific types of work, particularly those that they traditionally were not paid for when performed. The availability of money had become a critical issue, because some family needs could only be met with cash. Unpaid traditional roles no longer evoked respect, and women - who had frequently assumed an even larger share of these traditional family tasks, had consequently seen their authority eroded within the family. What then was going to happen to programmes of community-based care such as of AIDS orphans, the elderly, the children in need of care, the disabled, the 'welfare' child care services, which depended on women's unpaid family labour or volunteers, or whose service workers were paid very low wages? The welfare and the informal economic systems have been dependent on women's unpaid domestic and reproductive role to service the needy within families and in the community. The other problem not properly addressed was to establish who were the casualties of this pre-occupation with income by women - problems of child neglect and abuse, delinquency, and divorce which have become the norm rather than an occasional "pathology", need examining within this context.

### **8.3.2 Gender roles and gender needs**

In connection with the gender roles, (the activity profile, a component of gender analysis) described in Chapter 4, the study yielded critical findings which clarified gender needs as follows:

#### **8.3.2.1 Domestic and reproductive roles**

Rural women were responsible for multiple labour-intensive and time-consuming chores both inside and outside their households. On a daily basis, women's activities included domestic activities such as cooking, fetching water and firewood, household maintenance, and child care. In addition, rural women were heavily engaged in food



cultivation, weeding and harvesting. Each task, in turn, involved a series of minor processes and tasks. What made these tasks and processes laborious, time-consuming, and wasteful, was the rudimentary tools that women used; the lack of institutional support, and infrastructure problems.

The result of the foregoing situation was that the extent of participation of women in formal labour force activities or productive work outside the household, in order to feed their families, was substantial. This was particularly striking in the light of the fact that women workers generally carried an additional workload of feeding the family and other household survival tasks. Many of the resistances to innovation on the part of women, bemoaned by outsiders who were technical assistants or social development workers, stemmed from the sheer weight of this double (even triple) workload. It takes extra energy to engage in an innovative practice, even if the innovation, once mastered, would be labour-saving. Change programmes themselves can, initially, also place additional burdens on women, rather than help increase their overall productivity.

Therefore, technological interventions that would reduce women's work burden could make an important contribution to releasing the time and energy for progressive actions. These must however be introduced sensitively, considering the socio-cultural idiosyncracies of the neighbourhood.

#### **8.3.2.2 The productive roles and gender needs of women**

Women were critical participants in the household and in the rural economy, and the greater their contribution to the viability of the family, the greater their burden of work. Rural women in poorer households, who were actively engaged in farming and income generating enterprises, made a considerable contribution to the survival of the family. This was the case whether women had spouses or not. The implication of this was that the male headed households were better able to cope with socio-economic needs, compared to the female headed households. Women worked as breadwinners in their own families or worked for men, as well in male kin's farms. In female-headed households the women were primary earners and the children were only there as secondary earners, unless the households were extended to include other adult working kin (living within the same household). These households were among the poorest of the poor.

Total incomes of households where sugar cane was sent to the sugar mill, had generally increased, but decisions in male headed households, remained biased against women. For instance, a substantial share of the extra income was spent on tractors which saved male labour and time - but few households in this group had

changed the means for collecting water or firewood - and/or even hired labour for this purpose. Even where the women enjoyed the increased prosperity and used hired labour - they had the responsibility for preparing food for the increased numbers of hired labour and for other farm management tasks. Furthermore, women's ability to bargain over allocation of household income could be further constrained, when withdrawal from the farm by the woman, could often lead to total exclusion from the farm activities and an increase in the woman's dependence on the man.

Intensive vegetable production was promoted where women did not even have access to sufficient water or fencing to prevent animals or to prevent other local people from vandalizing and stealing, nor were marketing outlets for surplus produce planned. Some social workers, health community programme leaders and agricultural extension officers, tended to encourage actions such as providing milk or eggs for children, using gardening, poultry, farming, etc. - for which the women lacked start-up money, while ignoring women's other alternative income generating and earning activities by failing to support them. There was hardly ever an integrated view taken of women's development needs, based on the realities of their total lives. On the other hand, men were encouraged in sugar cane farming, a cash crop, because a monetary economy always enhanced the power of men, both in society and in the family. However, because women also needed cash - cash for the many household expenses, and some women were now adjusting by shifting to sugar cane production, which they said required less labour from them. This was having negative consequences for the cultivation of food crops required for day to day consumption needs of families.

Despite the fact that all family members, men and women, had to work equally hard within their allotted domains, the scarce resources and immediate needs of individuals and households often resulted in unequal distribution of resources and access to services. Adult males, as traditional primary providers and heads of households, and male children as potential providers, were generally favoured by the families' intra-household and community process of resource allocation.

### **8.3.3 Access to and control over productive resources and the power of decision-making within the household**

The summary findings of the study in respect of the 'access and control profile' of the household heads (see Chapter 4), are as follows:

The idealized model of households - where production, income, and consumption were shared, households seen as having convergent interests, in which all members contributed according to their abilities and then shared the benefits according to their

needs - was found not to be a reality of rural people's lives. In fact, in the data gathered and the observations of the households' functioning, showed that the use of resources and of labour, and the distribution of income and output, had to be constantly negotiated within households and that intra-household relations were often conflictive and unequal.

In different households men and women had different responsibilities in terms of work in domestic or other activities, as well as different obligations to provide food and other resources (water and cooking fuel), and cash income to meet family needs such as school fees, clothing, agricultural inputs, etc. In some households, far from a pooling situation, women would trade food crops/vegetables they had grown themselves, for cash to buy food, clothing and other necessities. In others, women's labour in family farms and agricultural enterprises, gave them no direct rights to cash, and little influence in deciding how that income was to be allocated between competing family or personal demands. In each of these cases intra-household relations could be seen as a form of cooperative conflict - where, although household members might depend on each other in terms of labour and output, there was considerable negotiation and conflict about how such inputs and benefits should be distributed.

As well as these intra-household divisions, the distribution of inputs and benefits were beneficial for some, but sometimes they could systematically disadvantage women. For many households, (especially those on the margins of subsistence, i.e. living below the poverty datum line), women contributed a major proportion of their labour, time and their total income to the needs of the household, particularly their children's needs. In contrast, men tended to have considerable autonomy over how they spent their income. The maintenance laws for support of children have become key in fighting for women and children's rights to a living. While men would spend money to acquire assets (in their names) that were non-perishable, like livestock, homes, cars, tractors and use it on other personal spending, including getting another wife (polygamy which was highly favoured by men in the area), women generally spent their income on day to day feeding of the family, its needs for clothing, schooling, etc. A key source of male bargaining power within the household was that he could determine what proportion of his income to pass on to other household members. The migratory labour patterns, where males worked away from home, had further entrenched the practice of spending money on himself first, then the difference between his (male) income and personal spending, went to family (as remittances). The "good" husband would be one who strictly limited his personal spending, saved what he could for his dependants, although his prerogative to enjoy such spending remained.

#### 8.3.4 Participation in local community or political leadership/decision-making structures and processes

The analysis of factors influencing activities, access and control over resources, i.e. acquired through community management roles was carried out to yield data on women's participation in community decision-making. The highlights of the findings are as follows:

Women's limited political participation hindered their ability to gain access to productive resources. In most cases, formal decision-making, which might determine the goals, orientation, and delivery of development programmes, took place without the input of women. Like in all of women's lives, women's subordination and patriarchal values were at work at the local neighbourhood level, where it was apparent that all important decisions were made by men. Women's participation would be the indirect influence they could wield because of their other personal strengths, such as perseverance in pursuing an idea that did not differ from or threaten the men's views, and that maintained the *status quo*; their social skills; and the unpaid labour they contributed on tribal authority ceremonial occasions that elevated the tribal authority, and added value to their own status.

The traditional authority emerged as of importance in local/rural community affairs, in both judicial and development spheres. Men and women in the area, when asked who they consulted when intending to initiate any community project(s) or group(s), the number "one" response was "the tribal leadership (the *inkosi*/the chief)". Consequently, any change in tribal/rural community organization in order to involve women in project activities, required developing effective relationships with the tribal (community) leadership - all of whom were male.

The latter were the decision makers, men whose primary role over the years, had been to preserve the *status quo*, and who might have a great deal to lose if these structures were altered in any way. For example, they had the primary responsibility for allocating land and resolving land disputes in most areas. Effectively, the tribal leaders' own power was limited in development as the development of bulk infrastructure and economic development, was the competency of local government and other provincial and national government sectors. But whatever community competency was needed as part of the partnership with government, it was from the tribal authority than the women or the general public.

The tribal authority (leaders) was viewed as the custodian of cultural values and customary practices, which were rooted in a deep respect of the family and communal

living. Which in turn formed its main power base, also derived from their inherited position. However, since the traditional practices were based on patriarchy, which is not known to coincide with gender equity, theirs was not particularly helpful, especially when addressing women's strategic gender needs. Several examples of abuse of power by chiefs/*amakhosi* are well-known.

Even though the tribal authority and/or men had more authority and power than women at the local level in respect of the foregoing situations, the role of the tribal leaders in rural development was found to be peripheral, where major decisions affecting their areas were made elsewhere, particularly at district council level. Even the Department of Traditional Affairs which was responsible for the chieftainship and actually advocated for its rights and needs (including upholding its authority and powers in rural areas), showed there was limited direct involvement of *amakhosi* in its rural (project) developments. The programmes promoted by this department were designed "for" the *amakhosi*, not "with" them. It however, made sure that the "feel good" effect of participation was possible by keeping certain traditional, almost ritualistic or ceremonial actions in place in relations with the *amakhosi*.

In addition, the form of local government, that is, the district council still gave a privileged position to traditional authorities by consulting first with them on most issues, and generally was itself deeply patriarchal, excluding women from the critically important levels of participation in the management of projects.

Women's groups or organizations, which were women's main vehicle for social participation, did realize some explicit concrete goals, but could seldom transform the general conditions that relegated them to second place in the first instance. Their primary handicaps were vulnerability to internal conflicts and divisions; a tendency to reinforce sexual segregation; and an inability to penetrate the main channels of political power and policy-making. The constitution of South Africa pledges equality of status and opportunity, justice - social, economic, and political rights - and dignity of the individual, to men and women equally. The constitutional rights, the international instruments, like CEDAW, ratified in South Africa, the legislation for gender equality and equity, have helped to build, if anything, an illusion that women were now liberated, which was very far from the reality of the majority of women. The presence of a few women in high offices, especially at the national government level, had projected an inflated image of women's access to power and dignity. There was growing disillusionment with the political processes and the legislation to protect women's rights, because the implementation and law enforcement, had not managed to benefit women. The small number of women in decision making bodies had not been able to exert adequate pressure on public policies. In the rural area, a local woman who was

a member of parliament, was well known and respected for her previous role as an educator, but less as a pragmatic politician who had “moved and shaken” things to change women’s lives directly.

Women in political parties identified themselves mostly with political ideologies of their political parties, rather than with the specific situational problems of women or gender issues. The illusion was that since women were in parliament gender issues were being attended to. These women were in fact middle class or influentials in support of men and they had greater visibility in the public life, but were also removed from grass-root level women.

Women’s access to land was possible, but it was largely indirect. Women acquired land by means of their relationships to individual males such as husbands, fathers or brothers by virtue of their gendered roles as daughters, wives, or mothers or kin. Men, in contrast, owned land in their own right or by virtue of their lineage membership or other systems of inheritance. This had implications for why some women were not only subordinates of men - but were sometimes victims of domestic abuse or undesirable liaisons. Women therefore, had more limited access to key resources for productive agricultural or income generation activity in the rural area. The lack of reliable, steady and adequate income, for example, made saving difficult and therefore the acquisition of resources needing a cash flow or credit, even more difficult to access. The limited access to land, credit and other infrastructure affected the distribution of wealth and the incidence of poverty in the rural area, particularly among women. Consequently their potential for increasing farm incomes, if any, was very small. At the same time, the opportunities for off-farm jobs were limited, particularly for low-skilled rural people - and women. This further contributed to the vicious cycle in rural poverty.

Observation of the income generating projects in which the rural women were engaged in led to these questions: Did projects perpetuate exploitation or lead to self-fulfillment and viable economic activities? Were they adding onto women’s double burden? The question of appropriateness is even more controversial than the question of feasibility in decisions over which ones of the income generating projects, particularly handicrafts would be both culturally compatible and suitable to the needs and potential for the earning of the desperately needed cash for day to day survival. The public works community-based projects which the government or the URC tendered to consultants, were causing a lot of concern in the rural areas, where the hiring practices of project consultants, favoured men (in tribal authority or outside it). Some of the major development projects at the area under study, such as the Port Durnford Beach Project by the Department of Public Works and the uThungulu Regional Council, were to be

## 8.4 MAJOR CONCLUSIONS

In order to understand how to engage rural women in social development programmes, their gender roles, and gender needs must be identified and addressed accordingly. In order to release women from household routines and channel their energies, economically productive work, their preparation as young children and as women, is crucial. Unless the wide gap in access to productive resources such as land and credit and the gender-assigned roles are studied, constraints removed, the negative influence of such a situation, the negative influence on gender intra-household and community decision making on women's productive work will continue.

Overall, gender disparities in socio-economic circumstances in the domestic, work and community decision making arena, are not a result of chance; they are products of culture and economic factors. To redress the imbalance, therefore, a variety of measures targeting personal and social empowerment must be taken. Social development-oriented workers or social workers should take the lead to help women improve the quality of their lives, make the women's voices heard, and champion the cause of their rights.

Women's productive work and remunerated employment was generally marginalized because the role of breadwinner was seen as the preserve of men, and women seen as only secondary earners. The over-representation of women in the informal trading sector, means appropriate and timely measures, must be taken to enlarge the process of women's autonomy and to expand the range of possibilities for their development income. Therefore, providing for women's independent employment opportunities and property ownership and their greater participation in the economy, is a critical area for social development.

Participation in community decision making, in terms of their political representation in relevant structures and personal power to negotiate, differed for men and women. Rural women tended to be weakly represented at all levels of political structures. The traditional and local government, and in most types of formal organizations for effective participation in development. The public sphere was traditionally regarded as the men's domain, and the men were considered the public interlocutors.

The conventional or traditional organizational processes and activities of traditional leadership and local government, lack the competence, experience, opportunity to influence what affects their lives. Participation must be gendered and so must the interventions in order to be of value to women's lives. Gender analysis, participatory rural appraisal and creation of critical awareness are the key methods that were

identified to promote meaningful people-centered data for the planning, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of social and economic development programmes.

## **8.5 RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE STUDY**

The recommendations are divided into two sections, which although very closely intertwined, are discussed separately for clarity.

The first section is on the general recommendations of the study that address the substantive issues related to women's lives, the socio-economic situation of the rural households they live in, their gender roles and needs and their participation in community decision making. Based on this information priority development issues are to be established, general actions and measures to be taken by all stakeholders in government, non-governmental organizations, community-based organizations, and social development-oriented workers or social workers involved in all the "Resource Systems" referred to in Figure 8.2 on page 313. The second set of recommendations present a model of practice that embraces social development for use by social development-oriented workers or generalist social workers. This model articulates some key principles for social development oriented workers or social workers in working with women and the rural poor using the methods of social work with individuals, groups and communities.

### **8.5.1 The general recommendations**

#### **8.5.1.1 The context of rural women's lives - the socio-economic situation**

- b) Data to be used as the basis for the planning of development programmes must be disaggregated by socio-economic strata and gender, and must include a thorough examination of interhousehold and intrahousehold processes, particularly in spheres of decision-making, responsibility, and labour input. This will be necessary when debating the family policy assumptions that the extended family and community based support systems in Black rural areas offer socio-economic support, and that the "trickle down" theory within households operates, where the earnings of the male head are assumed to benefit the whole family.
- c) The attack on rural poverty must be seen as a multi-faceted operation, spearheaded by local and national development strategies. Therefore, creating an enabling environment to improve access to commercial activities in



agriculture, providing market analysis and planning information facilities and innovations, should be the main concern of social development, at national, regional and local levels. Structural problems like unemployment require more than local effort. Nevertheless, the following activities are important for local social development at local level too:

- (i) Job creation and entrepreneurship should be at the centre of any social development strategy.
- (ii) Any strategy directed at income-generation and at the alleviation of rural poverty, must take into account the fact that access to agricultural land would be a major determinant of rural economic development and food security in households.
- (iii) Collecting data to establish current levels of female participation in agriculture to measure the range of knowledge, skills and resources currently available to rural women and to understand women's felt needs and priorities upon which specific projects are to be based is critical. The community gardens currently promoted for all women were not suitable for most.
- (iv) Creating, where necessary specific projects for women to promote economic and social self-reliance by building on knowledge and skills that the women already possess, or teaching new skills.
- (v) Increasing the productivity of women while reducing the workload of currently burdensome and time-consuming tasks, such as fuel and water collection, food processing, preparation and subsistence agriculture, through the following actions and guidelines: Reducing women's burden of household chores and income generating activities through the development and propagation of improved tools and labour-saving devices. The following specific actions are suggested:
  - d) Establishment of daycare centres, increasing water collection points, introducing light transportation facilities such as carts for crops, water and wood.
  - e) Promoting the discussion of the legal and institutional constraints on and women's access to land and other productive resources at the local, regional and national levels. This would help reduce the discrepancies between males

and females in their access to community resources.

- f) Recognizing that rural women's products are profitable. Adding and attaching value to women's work including household chores is critical. Development agencies must emphasize the economic or market value of home production and housework. In order to lend legitimacy and recognition to the problem of the double (triple role) burden of women, providing a quantitative translation of home tasks may convince international and national organizations, policy leaders and government officials of the magnitude of the problem.
- g) Promoting national campaigns to change traditional attitudes and ideologies that limit women's options in the family, the community and society at large. Government leaders will have to take an unequivocal stand in favour of abolishing existing laws, customs regulations and practices which are discriminating against women and establish adequate legal protection for equal rights of men and women. More importantly, the monitoring of service delivery and implementation associated with the latter, making professionals accountable by setting clear and functional guidelines and processes for dealing with grievances. The professionals themselves must acknowledge the effect of burn-out on their performance and supervisory support, and self- and conflict management must be made available to them.

### **8.5.2 Specific focus on the productive role of rural women**

One of the major skills required of social workers and social development workers is establishing collaborative partnerships to facilitate change. Nowhere has this skill and function been as critical as in this area of social development - addressing the problem of employment and revitalizing the local economy (i.e. stimulating a climate of entrepreneurship).

First and foremost, social workers and other social development oriented practitioners in rural neighbourhoods, should be aware of and develop an entry strategy, for themselves and the communities they serve, into the formulation process and implementation of the integrated rural development plans (the IRD). The three year IRD plan for the district councillor Regional Council or uThungulu (the URC) was completed early in the year 2000, and is available for scrutiny in the uThungulu website. The bulk of the funding and budget of the district council, is channeled for programmes identified in the plan - which reflects the multi-dimensional nature of development and the interplay of forces and sectors, to promote local economic development. Accessing this process is also critical for the rural poor themselves and community leadership

(their influentials, tribal leaders, i.e. other than the Councillor(s) representing the locality in the URC). Of course, the consultants do arrange for consultations, through group interviews, meetings and hearings in the community involved, but there are many constraints to effective participation for many rural people, especially on a continuing basis to monitor and evaluate the final implementation of the plan. The technical nature of the process of formation of the document, among other things, systematically excludes lay people and other service providers. This brings into focus the specific areas for the contributions that would lead to enhancing women's employment and for promoting entrepreneurship. These are:

- (a) Identifying the potential pool of female labour in rural locations, in formal and informal activities, and in various sectors and identifying the levels of skills women possess or need to develop to participate in those productive areas, will be critical. Social workers should have the local authority to update this information for easy planning and evaluation for allocators in this area.
- (b) Assessing the present productive contributions of women and identifying areas where productivity can be enhanced (e.g. rural agriculture and marketing and where entry and mobility can be facilitated) is also critical before embarking on small unproductive projects.
- (c) Making recommendations for local community economic development policies which would directly support farm and rural women, viz.:
  - (i) to promote the development and maintenance of small businesses operated by women with middle and lower incomes through accessible start-up loans, low interest loans, technical assistance and educational programmes;
  - (ii) to increase the proportion of women in leadership positions within the district council and local government and empower them as individuals and as a sub-group. Leadership requires personal empowerment and competence.
  - (iii) Market analysis and planning, that is helpful to rural women and that they can understand, should provide minimal protection where there is no guarantee of sustained local consumption of the produce from income generating activities, e.g. handicrafts. Because handicraft sales may fall and rise with tourism or reflect international shifts in taste, rural producers are often affected by the changes in the market. The people who wish to

teach women the “accouterments of industrial enterprise” must come to grips with the reality of the cultural restraints on women and their expressed preferences, available skills, and knowledge. For example, sewing (and baking) projects were common and were even identified as needed by rural women, although these would have no commercial value or would not bring the women into the modern sector. They were a rational option and appropriate and feasible in the context of the women’s lives. Therefore, if social development agencies and social workers accept the premise that social development means, empowerment in large part, enhancing individuals’ control over their own lives (personal competence), then a sewing project could be a viable part of development. Moreover, such a project - which does not directly generate needed cash or adequate income - can be a step, via enhanced skills, to an improved standard of living, and to a greater sense of efficacy toward more broadly based development activities.

Personal and social empowerment and competence comes through, and results in the capacity to participate effectively in and benefit from community decision-making for social and economic development. This is most desirable for women and the disadvantaged in the rural neighbourhood.

### **8.5.3 Community/political participation for social development**

- a) Developing, and ensuring a power base for women in decision-making for development, would be best mobilized at local government level. The fact that local politicians now engage with very different constituencies that combine different interests, values and cultures, means rural women may have a chance to access and to participate meaningfully in decisions affecting service delivery in their neighbourhoods. In this case of course, because the majority of rural men were also excluded in this process, gendered participation and gendered consultation would have to be entrenched in the Integrated Development Plan itself (see Agenda 45, 2000 and the website at <http://www.gender.co.za> for details). Gender planning, discussed within the model for social development oriented social workers, has a role to play here.
- b) The exercise of the right to vote and to stand for public office should be encouraged for women to vote for other women who will in future, act as role models and the process be conducive to women’s participation for all spheres of government.

- c) The Integrated Development Plan must be seen as a framework for women's mobilization around service delivery needs in local government. It is the policy tool which aims to integrate community involvement with developmental objectives and service delivery (practical, gender and strategic needs or achieve task and process goals). The framework enables local government to translate participation into action to ensure that gender specific needs are met.
- d) Social development-oriented workers and social workers must make sure that they are in constant contact with or are part of the gender unit (like the URC Gender Working Group) in the district council, and that they work with councillors and civil servants in the Council to change the organizational culture and perception of those in authority in order to integrate gender issues and issues of the rural poor into the planning processes. Women's or gender issues must not be marginalized, but even as they are addressed in targeted projects for women, the integration of gender into mainstream programmes must be sought.
- e) Gender planning in the project cycle can be complex, time-consuming and expensive as each stage requires detailed scrutiny to identify the techniques required, and for continual monitoring of their effectiveness once introduced. It requires a commitment by all role players at all levels. In project development cycles, gender analysis must be central in all stages, from identification of the project (its policy direction); needs assessment (gender diagnosis, gender roles identification and gender needs) to be the basis for objectives and through to the design appraisal, implementation and monitoring and evaluation of programmes.
- f) The following measures must be taken and their implementation assessed, monitored and evaluated by social development-oriented workers or social workers involved in project development or other social services in rural areas. These must also be recognized by the consultants working in rural areas, especially because the consultants from remote parts of the neighbourhoods qualify and win the tenders responsible for critical, local, social and economic development.
  - (i) There must be staff gender training to increase gender awareness in all services to rural people. In order for gender training to be relevant for social development practice, it should be based on interdisciplinary research, knowledge on gender and gender related issues. It should promote capacity building in the trainees with regard to the ability to participate in advocacy and community service, networking and

information sharing both locally, regionally and nationally.

- (ii) When tenders for projects are called for, the development of gendered terms of reference for staff and consultants must be set.
- (iii) Mechanisms must be developed to ensure that women and gender-aware organizations are included in the planning process.
- (iv) All socio-economic feasibility studies must focus on: gender needs assessment, and yield gender disaggregated data over allocation and control of resources.
- (v) In the appraisal of projects there should be gendered terms of reference to consultants; and an inclusion of a gender expert in the team of the personnel involved. In respect of appraisal studies, there has to be gendered cost-benefit analysis to include women's invisible work, and the inclusion of women in staff gender training.
- (vi) Staff training on gender-awareness and gender issues should impact upon implementation and monitoring. Team composition, gendered terms of reference and clarification of women's role in participatory processes and projects, should reflect a commitment to eradicate gender bias or sex discrimination and improve quality of life.
- (vii) There is nothing like neutrality in knowledge and practice with regard to social development-oriented interventions. Social work as a profession within developmental social welfare and as part of social development, is committed to the eradication of poverty, to people-empowerment and to improving their social functioning in order for them to function as reproductive contributing members of society, who are able to improve the quality of their own lives.

In order to effectively implement the foregoing recommendations, social development-oriented practitioners or (generalist) social workers must operate within the framework of their profession(s), and have an understanding of how the profession fits in with the broader 'scheme of things'. What is the relationship between social work and social development and the latter's place within sustainable development? The value of social work in the lives of their clients will make sense if it is seen in perspective, i.e. as part of the totality of living, e.g. within the social, economic development and environmental contexts.

As part of the recommendations of the study, is the model for social development practice. First and foremost, the model suggested in this study, places social work within a broader framework or context and makes it part of social development and developmental social welfare (the latter being one of the Resource Systems). This means that social work practice is informed by these as they form the policy framework, and is also accountable and contributes to broader sustainable development.

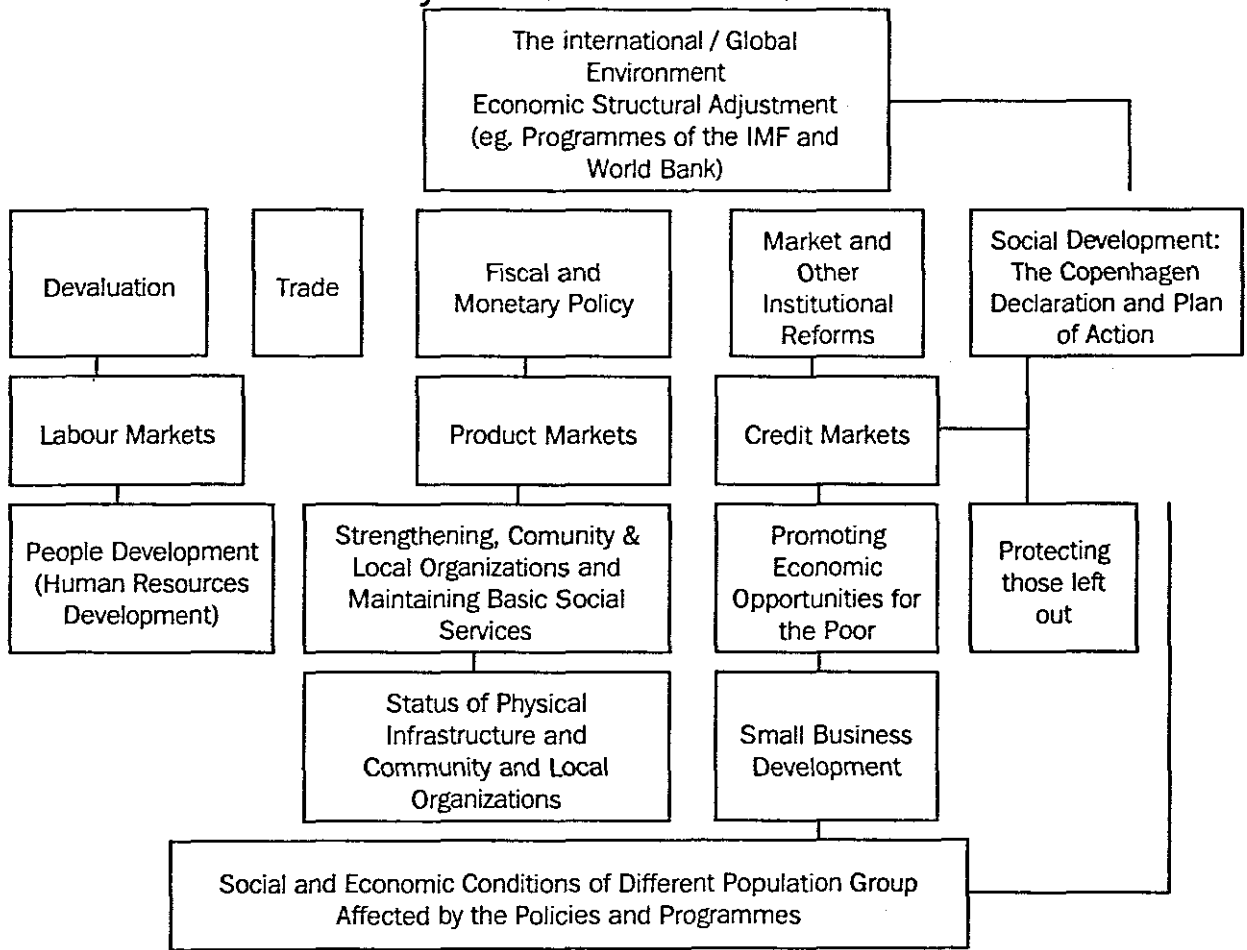
#### **8.5.4 Overview of the model for social development practice by social workers or social service professionals in a local rural community**

There are three parts in the presentation of the model. Part I of the model is presented in the diagram in Figure 8.1. This part illustrates the conceptual framework of social development where the latter is the broader framework/context showing links between policy interventions, market factors and social development at the international levels and how these impact on the local community and household levels. Then the second part of the model is presented in Figure 8.2, which locates the place of social work in the social development paradigm. The third part of the model is the framework for social work intervention, the phases in social development programmes designed to implement development goals.

##### **8.5.4.1. Social development and the linkages between the global and local community / household environments**

This part of the model is illustrated in Figure 8.1 as follows:

**Figure 8.1: Framework showing links between Policy Interventions, Market Factors, Poverty Programmes (social development) and Impacts at the Community and Household Levels**



**Source:** Adapted from World Bank (1990)

Although there are many approaches to the analysis of the environment and the context within which social development takes place, following from the study, the system approach offers some of the most valuable explanation about how women live, and about the practice context of the social worker.

The rural neighbourhood and the rural poor (and women) are linked to and form part of many other environments. The latter can be referred to as the external environment made up of the following interrelated parts: the global or international environment, the



macro-environment (the natural, countrywide); the mezzo (the regional and the provincial) and the micro-environment (the local community or neighbourhood). All of these environments are characterized by the factors, which, at varying levels of intensity at different times, through different ways impact significantly in the lives of the individuals, or groups of persons in the local communities. The environmental factors include economic factors, political factors, technological, cultural social, physical and institutional factors.

The social development worker or social worker should understand these and the impact of globalization upon them and how this in turn affects his or her work with individuals, group, families, and communities. The economic structural adjustment programmes of the 1980s and 1990s in Southern Africa have had and are having devastating effects on funding for social services unemployment, and the general quality of rural life. The framework identifies the ways in which the global (external environment), the different factors at the international, the national, and regional levels, are likely to affect the poor and the vulnerable groups by identifying the potential limits in the transactions with each other.

No social development worker should operate or can operate effectively unless he or she has an understanding of these external global issues - even if his or her interventions are directed at the level. Poverty alleviation, embraced in social development goals, at the sector, programme and project levels, includes four main kinds:

- (1) Strengthening local and community organizations and maintaining basic social structure;
- (2) Enhancing and maintaining human resource development (such as through

education, population development, health and nutrition;

- (3) Promoting economic opportunities, and
- (4) Providing programmes to provide those who are left out (such as the old rural women, handicapped, and quick).

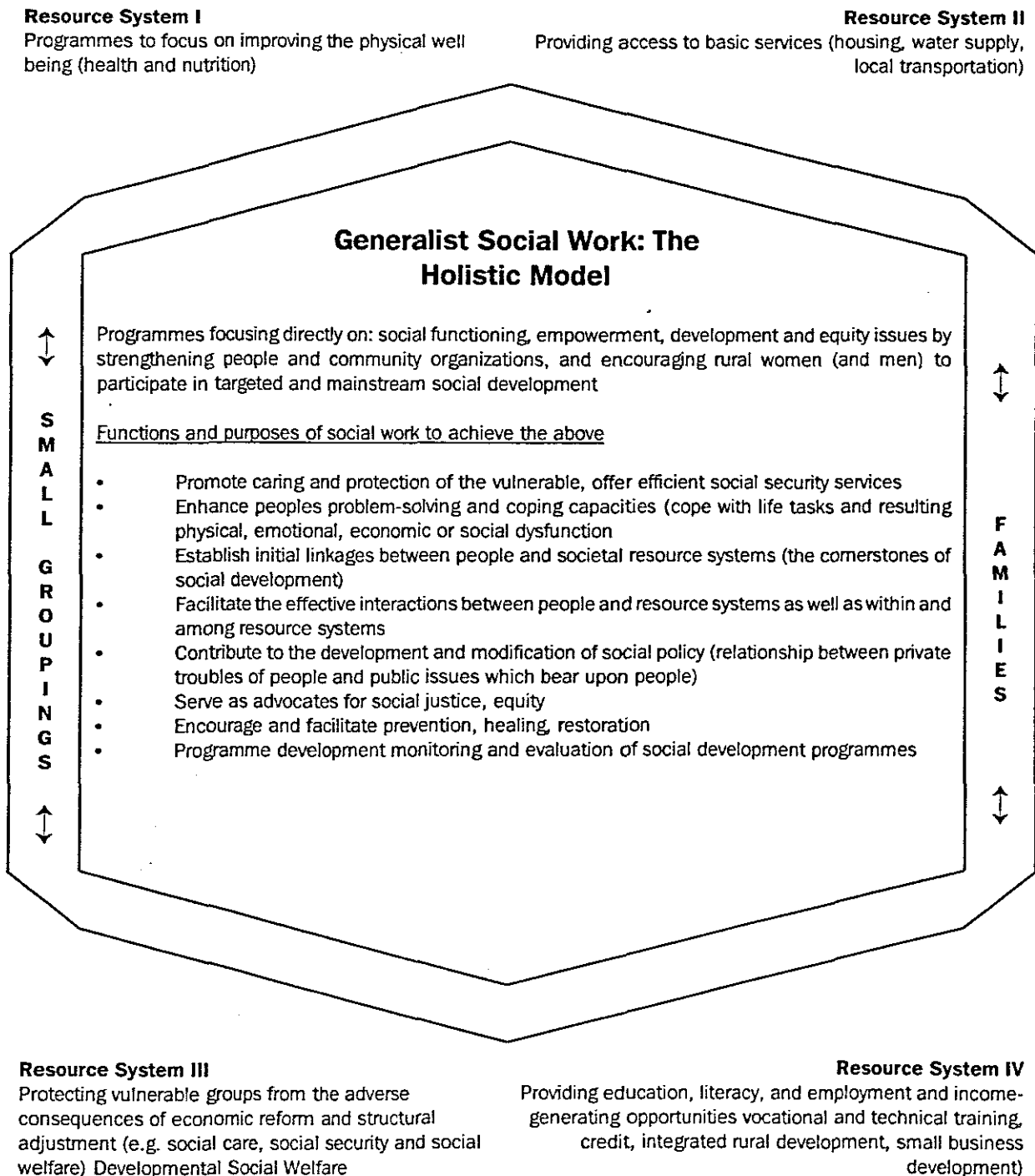
Potential outcomes are expected and desirable at the household level for the different affected population groups namely, impacts on income, employment, health, education, access to farm services, and personal and social empowerment to meet other needs and be in control of one's life.

Within this framework, a look at how social work fits in, and acts as an agent of social and economic development is suggested. The model in Figure 8.2 locates social work within social development practice.

**(b) Social work practice within the social development paradigm: the model**

Figure 8.2 illustrating the model discussed below is on page 313.

**Figure 8.2: Model of social development practice for social workers or social development workers**



Social development here is based on the notion that the principal objective should be to help indigenous communities or underprivileged groups (such as women, landless labourers, the rural poor), to develop the organizational or institutional capacity and knowledge to identify and satisfy their own needs and improve the quality of their lives. Social development programmes referred to as 'Resource Systems'; are the broad range of programmes designed to offer resources and opportunities to improve the quality of life and to develop and enhance the capacity of citizens to create new ones by participating fully in social, economic, and political activities at the local and/or national levels.

Social development dimensions, i.e. the Resource Systems identified in the model are in the areas of welfare, health, education, housing, local economic and rural development, and land reforms. These are the dimensions of social development whose ultimate objective is to bring about sustained improvement in the well-being of the individual, the family, community, and society at large. In Figure 8.2, Resource System I embraces the health dimension; Resource System II embraces the rural development dimension - physical infrastructure or collective basic services; Resource System III embraces the education dimension, and Resource System IV embraces the developmental social welfare dimension within which the "holistic approach/model of social work" falls.

The model as presented does not discuss in any detail the methods, techniques and skills involved, but assumes that a trained or skilled worker has the knowledge and research base or can tap it, when needed. Rather, what it clarifies are the guiding principles embraced in the conceptual framework of social development, and how generalist social work or social development oriented practice fits in and is further affected by these. These principles include the following:

- (a) Social development oriented-practice incorporates a range of interventions or strategies because it has to maximize external capacity (resources) and internal potential (individual/community) of the clientele in relation to the four 'Resource Systems' in Figure 8.2. The distribution and creation of resources focuses on the needs of all members of society, including the disadvantaged, the poor and women.
- (b) The process of empowerment and development is based on participatory/consultative and people-centered actions.
- (c) The principle of equity of access to services, targeting private troubles/public issues, means the elimination of the dichotomy between the personal and the 'social', and the practising of all methods of social work in response to needs (defined and perceived by the person or people involved).
- (d) The developmental processes involved, imply that viable and sustainable processes that promote and facilitate self-reliance and transformation, must contribute to human rights and social justice. As a result of this social work and social service professions have had to consolidate their different professional roles and take cognisance of the fact that individuals must be looked at a 'totality or a whole rather than a unit that accommodates their priorities. Moreover, any professional role will be meaningful for social development if viewed as and practised through multi-disciplinary and collaborative effort from the various programmes - in partnerships between government and civil society (its individuals, groups, and business structures). Hence new roles and skills social workers are required to promote and develop, have been added to their

traditional repertoire of skills.

Roles linked to the functions and purposes identified in the generalist social work model (the holistic approach) in Figure 8.2, include the following:

- counselling of individuals, couples and families;
- capacity building and human resource development;
- conscientization or awareness rousing;
- role of facilitator and educator;
- role of change agent;
- planning; project design and management; facilitation and skills development for income generating or entrepreneurship; and the
- role of financial manager (in fund raising and budgetting).

To facilitate effective interactions between people and the resource systems as well as within and among resource systems, putting people at the centre and empowering them, the following roles are emphasized and added:

The role of advocate (involving mobilizing, brokering) intersectoral collaborator, negotiator/conflict manager, and public relations/marketing, are critical. Establishing initial linkages and maintaining these between people and the 'Resource Systems', is one of the key functions or purposes of social work. Thus, the worker must be involved in information management; handling policy issues; being a researcher; a monitor and evaluator of the impact of social services and programmes of social development.

Most important here are the skills of communication, leadership and as part of these are: networking; negotiation; delegation; referral; and creative problem solving.

The third part of the model, briefly outlines the guidelines or framework for programme planning in respect of social development structure targeting women or gender in a rural neighbourhood. The planning framework, also a problem solving process represents a lesson from the experience in implementing the study and working in the rural area.

**(c) The framework for intervention or problem-solving or planning process: phases in the intervention process**

Like all helping models that are people-centered, the guidelines in intervention processes and methods, will help the clients to ask and answer four fundamental questions:

- (1) What is the current situation related to the key socio-economic and cultural issues, the private or public concerns that need to be targeted for changes as well as the main resources and opportunities? The latter being the local people and their assets.
- (2) What are the felt needs and goals for change?
- (3) What strategies are there for action to accomplish goals?
- (4) The exact steps, resources, and actions for implementation and achieving set goals.

Furthermore, like any helping model it must also identify the theory to guide the thinking about people, the concepts, the values, how the thinking and the values need to be translated with practice. To understand work with women within the model, the feminist theory of patriarchy, subordination and gender, are critical. For social development theory, the people-centered approach towards empowerment and

development, is the key. Integrated holistic social work practice is seen as having a significant role in stimulating effective social development, individually as part of developmental social welfare and/or collectively with other resource systems in the education, health, economics dimensions - in addition to that, some special considerations must be proposed as to how to deal with special groups, here the women and the rural poor as individuals, in households and in groups in a rural community in KwaZulu-Natal.

Three major phases are discussed here:

(a) **Phase I: Situational analysis: Problem identification/problem analysis/needs assessment**

The purpose of this first step in the planning process is to establish a profile of community problems and needs. The analysis part of this first phase attempts to go beyond a simple description of these, and to go on to explain why they exist. Resources ultimately will be allocated to resources that reflect a particular analysis or understanding of the reason for the existence of a problem or need.

The rights of relevant stake-holders or service providers and the clients that is, the affected (or consumers) will be critical to understanding causes and possible solutions. But a service provision that is guided by the values of self-determination and is people-centered in approach, will make a systematic effort to help the clients express their needs and priorities first and foremost.

The first phase has two sub-steps or is closely linked with the next phase, i.e. data collection and establishing priority needs of the affected target group.



There are three types of data relevant to be collected for the purposes of needs assessment.

**(1) Demographic statistical profiles**

Demographic and statistical information will provide a means of comparison of sample profiles with public record profiles in a given community. In addition, it provides a basic framework for comparing key informant and rural women's (and men's) perceptions with community reports. What information falls in this category socio demographic factors refer to such variables as age, gender, income, employment, educational levels, geographic local (rural-health incidence) of disability, family structure, household composition, birth rates, poverty level, and so on.

Other social factors will refer to people's beliefs values, attitudes, opinions and lifestyles. Demographic and statistical information can be obtained through what is commonly known as desktop-research readily available through local and state resources e.g census and can be obtained at minimal expense.

The physical characteristics and the ecological factors in the community as well as the social services available, and accessible, the gaps and so on, can be studied too through spatial planners' maps and other documents of the district Council's Integrated Development plan available from the local government offices e.g. the uThungulu District Council.

To promote community involvement, a community orientated participatory model, enhancing communication between social development workers and the community is used.

## (2) **Key Informants**

Key informants, defined as persons having direct contact with individuals experiencing problems in living, and having understanding and networks with the rural traditional ways, the rural leadership, men and women are sampled: These can be asked to provide information on how they perceive community problems and needs from their vantage point. Individual contact in face to face interviews using semi-structured interview schedules, or questionnaires can be used to collect relevant data - The delphi technique can be utilized as a research tool with key informants.

## (3) **The General Public**

The third data source would be the "general public" - the rural men and women of critical/principal importance in community-orientated needs assessment (or people-centred needs assessment) is data from them as consumers, initiators and stakeholders in the social development programme. Here data collection can be accomplished by individually interviewing a random sample of the adult population in the geographical area serviced by the organization employing the social development worker.

However, where gender is a critical consideration , as it should be in rural neighbourhoods, the use of gender analysis in gender needs and gender roles identification within households, as well as outside households in the community, must be embraced. The questions must explore the gender needs, opportunities and resources identified which must be examined for how they affect or can promote or reduce women's access to and control of resources and benefits in a short or longer run. The activities planned for development must be studied for the possible negative

or possible effect on women's reproductive/productive and community management roles and needs.

Ideally, problems and needs of people should be identified by those who experience and are closest to them, the solutions must come from them as well as their community leaders in cases of community wide planning. But as has been mentioned the external environmental factors, as well as in particular, the legal-political environment, put many constraints along the way of the "purely" people-driven development. However, tentative 'advice' suggestions are often sought from the people but the search for expertise that is used unconditionally is turned over to planners experts/consultants and professionals, who plan and implement the development programmes that meet the criteria or "standards" expected and set by the external environment. These "planners" also tend to specialize in their fields of expertise (which is acceptable) but they tend to lose sight of the holistic nature of men and women and the importance of self-determination and of the need for disciplinary/intersectoral, community-based interventions.

In order to avoid that people with valuable insights into community needs are excluded or kept silent through community planning, participatory strategies that are all inclusive (and sometimes others which are enforced by legislative provisions) are to be taken into consideration by planners in developing an open process that involves wide community participation.

The model is presented in two parts.

### **8.5.5 The model and the conceptual framework of social development**

A guide or framework of the processes of intervention in social development practice is discussed, then the contribution of generalist social work in respect of work with rural women, in the KwaZulu local community studied, will be analyzed. It is envisaged that these will illustrate the flexibility of any process model, including the one advocated in the study.

Three major phases in the framework for intervention are discussed here:

#### **Phase I: Situational Analysis (Problem identification/problem analysis/needs assessment)**

The current situation or the context within which the problems, the needs exist are explored involving the people affected. Quantitative and qualitative research methods are used, but the voices of the local people are heard through the use of participatory rural appraisal and gender analysis. Who has the power and authority to act or not to act, the policy framework and development strategies (economic growth and strategic action plans); service provisions and strategic plans; institutional development; spatial development plans and the implementation framework (including financial budgeting proposals, etc.), of local tribal authority, local government and other key stakeholders.

All the while, the people (women) are involved and are enabled so that their exploration involves how their personal and individual situation fit in with the key issues in their environment. The experience of data collection is not disempowering, but takes place as a mutual learning and sharing experience preferably at the local people's pace.

## **Phase II: Gender role and needs identification**

Helping women determine their felt needs - both practical and strategic gender needs.

In this phase, critical awareness thinking, participatory rural awareness, and gender analysis in groups are techniques used to collect data upon which action will be based particularly in the following phase of developing about strategies.

In this phase clients/women begin to spell out possibilities for the future and to work out realistic and challenging goals to meet their needs, develop their unused potential and effectively access whatever other resources are available or develop a change agenda to establish new ways to mobilize - needed resources.

Information sharing, and networking for individual and/or collective empowerment is critical here, for issues calling for change in the lives of women and the rural poor.

Women and the rural poor need information for diverse purposes ranging from information for personal to community needs and covering the legislation, the human (women's) rights, the legislative, decision and administrative processes involved.

Information sharing that is empowering will assist women to acquire skills to do the following:

- a) to recognize it when they need factual information rather than rely on gossip or hearsay and myths;
- b) to be able to find information when they need it;
- c) to be able to evaluate information and solve problems accordingly.

Part of the information to be shared is the one contained in the findings and general recommendations of the study. Here the information will be shared gradually at the people's pace and through learning that is field-based or around individual problems or concerns as suggested in this chapter.

The next phase, Phase III involves developing action strategies, that is, helping the women or the rural poor to discover how to get what they need.

### **Phase III: Strategies for action**

This phase defines the "work" that needs to be done to translate needs and priorities into: implementable goals and objectives, and plans that can be monitored and evaluated. Again here gender analysis and gender planning methods, the principles, guidelines, roles and skills of social development, effected in participatory people-centered empowerment-oriented and developmental processes - will help clients achieve their goals and meet their needs within the social development paradigm.

*The challenge for the social development-oriented worker or generalist social worker, is to be competent, compassionate and committed. The importance of the helping relationship guided by the basic values of social work, the principles of developmental social welfare, the interpersonal skills and other communication skills, cannot be overemphasized. Literature and research on these aspects abound and should be updated by the worker.*

Flexibility in the use of the model must be highlighted because that will explain the seemingly "messy" presentation of work that was based on systematic designs. While the model given here provides guidance, it must remain flexible to meet the needs of

the people. Furthermore, since the phases and steps and methods of the model intermingle, workers will often find themselves moving back and forth in the model. Often two or more steps or even phases of the process merge into one another. For instance, individuals or groups can name parts of a problem situation, set goals, and develop strategies to achieve them in the same text or another. New and more substantial concerns then arise while goals are being set, and the process moves back to an earlier, exploratory stage. The research design and processes discussed in Chapter 5 of this study which was followed to collect the data, reflect this intermingling, and flexibility which however, remained focused because of the vision of social development. Thus the use of the model here would be a search for best practice itself, guided fundamentally by the situation, the needs, problems, resources and goals of the target people being helped, (and their own perceptions and interpretation of their goals), within the broader framework of social development goals.

In addition to the foregoing comment, it must be noted too, that the term 'phase' is used to help focus on the key elements of the process - which process is flexible, cyclical and defies the problem solving logic. However, moving from assessment to planning implementation and monitoring and evaluation, forms the underlying logic in all problem-solving or helping or project development processes.

Having looked at the broader context within which social work functions, (i.e social work in the social development paradigm), the generalist intervention programmes and some specific contributions of social work practice targetting individuals, and groups identified here, are briefly discussed.

### **8.5.6 Contribution of generalist social work**

The general purposes and functions of generalist social work are mentioned in Figure 8.2. Social work, in its holistic and people centered approach to helping individuals (women and children, youth the disabled, the elderly and the poor), couples, families, and whole communities, through small groups and organizations (participating within and/or outside developmental social welfare) embraces those social programmes focusing directly on: social functioning, people empowerment, development and equity issues - by strengthening people and encouraging rural women and men to participate in mainstream development and poverty alleviation (accessing, and developing appropriate social development programmes).

The one way social development-oriented or generalist social workers contribute to social development, is through direct work with people as individuals, groups and communities.

Social development-oriented social workers use the integrated approach to practice, can refocus on two subjects that have largely been marginalized in mainstream development:

- (a) women as organizers and community leaders in general and in community development, particularly in integrated rural development planning and/or local government;
- (b) gender issues and women's needs [practical and strategic gender needs] of women as individuals and as a group. The gender planning practice model or gender analysis (and participation) rural appraisal (PRA), are then further recommended for inclusion in methods of practice to translate social



development goals (in relation to gender) into practice. Gender planning (or gender analysis) like personal and social participation, is not an end, in itself, but a means by which women, through a process of empowerment, can emancipate themselves.

The second way social work can contribute to social development is indirect practice to ensure equality in the distribution of resources, reduce inequities, and improve the quality in the three other Resource Systems, in addition to working with Resource System IV (see annotation Figure 8.2).

In order use to achieve social development goals, eliminating the false dichotomies and artificial separations, and acknowledging that the 'personal' is 'political', are the principles that social development-oriented clinical social or community workers should adhere to.

Specific lessons learnt from the study and in the work at the Desk for Abused Women in University of Zululand which target the generalist social worker whether in clinical work, work with special rural groups or community and as a practitioner, educator and researcher, are given in the following presentation.

**(a) The levels of interventions of the generalist social worker**

The following may also interminglge and overlap but are discussed separately, where possible, for clarity.

(i) **Intervening at the individual level**

Generic social work using the holistic approach, is able to achieve the goals of social development embraced in the individualistic strategy. In such a case the social worker or social development worker still intervenes with an individual's intrapsychic or interpersonal problems, and assists him or her to find new strategies of coping or changing, i.e. developing insight and competence to improve his/her own social functioning. Social development oriented social workers must work daily to achieve both personal and institutional equity, and they are uniquely able to understand fully the interrelationships of such changes. Social development-oriented social workers, like feminists, should be acutely aware that macro-level change (like the economic structural adjustment programmes, the political changes, and changes brought about constitutionally in the country) will affect individuals in a variety of ways. They can assist individuals to prepare and become ready for the changes that are taking place and which will take place. Fear and resistance associated with role-change strategies can easily be understood by clinical social workers; support and encouragement for role equity strategies can be easily generated by social development-oriented social workers.

Given societal attitudes, myths and stereotypes about rural women in the rural community, women encounter considerable ignorance and bias in psychotherapy or traditional clinical social work. There are practitioners who are insensitive to cultural diversity, know little about the cultural heritages of Zulu women or other racial or ethnic groups and are especially ignorant of women's lives even in their own cultural groups. They also fail to understand the extent to which the economic status of these women determines their psychological and social well being.

Social workers working with individuals, and who acknowledge that social development is at the core of empowerment, subscribe to the following principles and guidelines in their interventions:

They acknowledge that racism, gender, class bias, and heterosexism are major sources of women's personal and psychological distress. The focus on environmental stress as a major source of pathology is not used as an avenue of escape from individual responsibility, and *vice versa*, where the victim ends up being blamed. Instead, they are opposed to personal adjustment to oppressive social conditions - the goal is social and political change. To them, women must be economically and psychologically independent. In addition, women are encouraged to develop the independence and assertiveness qualities that have previously been defined as "male". Women's strategic gender needs are attended to as women are helped to cope with their day to day problems around the relationships in the domestic arena in their work, and in their community lives.

Gender-role analysis is used to encourage women to evaluate the ways in which traditional social roles and norms and structural realities, limit female autonomy and choice. It also acts as a process through which women come to understand how, by internalizing cultural values about women, they become co-conspirators in their own oppression.

All women groups used by social workers, especially the socio-therapeutic groups, should be based on the person-centered approach to de-emphasize the authority of the therapist and to help group members share and understand the experiences that have influenced them as women. Most importantly, these groups will facilitate the respect and trust of women for one another and help women develop a sense of solidarity with

other women as a group. This could later help develop a sensitivity and awareness for gender participation.

Furthermore, social development-oriented/generalist social workers reaffirm the basic assumption of social work that a person is a totality and therefore that psychological change, behavioural role-related personal change, and change in social political orientation of individuals, all have significant implications for broad-based social change. They, therefore, continue to encourage their clients to participate in social action on their own behalf, and they link them with relevant structures and community resources for that purpose. It is regarded as therapeutic for women to engage in social actions designed to change their conditions at home, at work (trade unions), and in their communities (e.g. the KZN Women's Network Against Violence and other NGO structures).

Social development-oriented social workers recognize the value of clinical social work when dealing with domestic violence, rape, marital conflict, child abuse, alcohol and drug abuse. These are not seen as just pathologies "wasting" state money (because they are not "developmental"). These are the personal problems which limit personal power and affect the mental health of women and children and which in turn affect the ability of these people to cope with the socio-economic demands and burdens imposed by the day to day survival tasks. In the end the women are unable to participate effectively in broad-based social development.

**(ii) Intervening at the mezzo and macro-level, or the community level through indirect practice**

In relation to effective participation in community decision-making and development,

social development-oriented workers and social workers must develop knowledge, skills and methods for working with groups and social systems. Social work through the specialized method of community organization or indirect practice equip workers with the required basic skills to strengthen their capacity to provide gender-inclusive, women-specific functional and technical assistance to the rural communities in KwaZulu-Natal.

Community participation for rural women (and the poor) in KwaZulu-Natal should serve as an instrument of personal and socio-economic empowerment. This goal can be achieved through intervention at community level using community organization. In relation to project development, participation should take place at the planning implementation and follow-up stages. At each of the stages, social development-oriented workers or social workers should ensure that they interact with individuals, teams of specialist service providers and/or consultants in the different sectors, who serve the rural community.

In the planning stages they should ensure that information sharing takes place meaningfully with the potential beneficiaries in order to facilitate collective or individual action. Information must be demystified so that communication processes and means thereof are the ones that rural people use and can understand.

Where consultation occurs and beneficiaries are not only informed, but are also consulted on key issues, facilitating the interaction here is critical. The district council, i.e. the URC makes frequent use of consultants, individuals and companies, who have the expertise required to help the URC or any other district council, plan, design, implement and evaluate its special development programmes. Most often than not, the consultants' expertise and knowledge are never understood by the locals and the

latter felt they are just used, e.g. to collect data or are recipients of training programmes - designed elsewhere without their input. The social development workers need to base and network with both these consultants and target communities in order to demystify actions involved and make, for meaningful contribution of the local decision-making. Decision-making implies much greater degree of control or influence on projects by beneficiaries. The councillors who are political representatives of the community are in constant and in closer interaction with consultants through the tendering system, among other things. But who controls the Tender Board, and how accountable is (it includes the consultants) to the wider community, becomes a critical issue what must be acknowledged and recognized is that, particularly as women become community leaders or even local councillors in government, they become disempowered if they lack interpersonal competence and competence in the management of themselves and others. Interpersonal skills include those intangible things like handling conflict well, knowing how to relate assertively with colleagues, tribal leaders, development agencies, service providers, civil servants of the local government, and clients', the ability to listen accurately; interviewing; and so on. Self-management skills should include things such as using a diary, time management, planning, organizing and delegation. Training is often seen as a panacea for all these potential problems. Not all training is empowering. To be empowering, training need to respond to specific needs that are identified. Some of these individual needs can not be resolved through training in reading, language, public decision processes only, but also through receiving counseling on a one to one basis with a gender-sensitive or a feminist oriented social worker on coping with emotions arising out of existing and new experience. There must be created and developed, a greater understanding of the common and unique problems and needs of all sections of women not merely of middle and upper social classes in politics. It would be necessary to work at existing forms for discussion and dissemination of information on women's issues. Unless a

national consensus (then local) is developed on basic questions related to women's access to employment and child care, political representation, access to literacy, education and training opportunities and health services, the declining value of women's contributions in these spheres cannot be controlled.

Women must be helped to assert their voice in decisions that affect their lives, as well as of the community (and nation) as a whole. This means helping them to organize for more effective participation at all levels of the political process: from the level of the rural neighbourhood and locality, through to the women's organizations, special committees, and unions, to end the marginalization of women's role and status in the process of political decision-making, and in society as a whole.

The training and retraining of social workers and other social service workers for social development, has become the key strategy in making social development goals achievable through professional effort. Thus, social work education, traditionally known as a secondary method of social work, has a crucial role in preparing practitioners for emerging roles in response to changes, personal, socio-economic and political needs of their communities.

**(iii) Intervening through social work and education, the learning needs of social development-oriented workers**

Racism and sexism overlap as oppressive factors in the lives of Black women in South Africa. To develop a strongly anti-racist, as well as anti-sexist social work practice, social work education must make combating racism and sexism a priority. In keeping with this priority, social work programmes must create task forces composed of educators, students, and community representatives, to discuss how to develop anti-

racist content. Careful attention should be paid to community issues involving racism and the quality of life of Black people in the community, particularly because the highest proportion of Black people live in rural areas and are the rural poor.

The curriculum should include a compulsory course or module devoted to racism; this course can often be taught in conjunction with the topics of sexism or gender discrimination. Both kinds of oppression, although different, work to further the prosperity of a few and the suppression of the majority. Focusing on the social and power relations that produce and perpetuate poverty and discrimination against women, is critical rather than the mere description of the conditions of women in different situations.

Social-development-oriented workers must be helped to develop or upgrade their training and re-training for social development in the following areas:

- (1) Developing programme and project planning skills, particularly gender planning.
- (2) Gaining a better understanding of the government legislative processes of all three levels or tiers of government, including the tribal authority's participation here - and then learn the ingredients of a successful lobbying campaign.
- (3) Must learn to understand common sources of group conflict and to explore effective methods, techniques and skills for conflict resolution.
- (4) Must develop knowledge, methods and skills for building effective alliances and coalitions as the networking, within the workers' own 'resource system' and between them and other resource systems. This is a critical aspect in implementing social development goals based on teamwork and interdisciplinary knowledge and work.
- (5) Sharpen skills for planning and conducting effective meetings where the person-



centered approach is always at the core of transactions.

- (6) Must share ideas, strategies for avoiding burnout and maintaining a long-term vision and commitment to progressive social change.
- (7) All social development workers or social workers practicing community development using the model of social development practice must have knowledge of the institutional design of rural service systems in the light of new local government arrangements.
- (8) finally, they must have the expertise to assess the current capacity of role players, design and conduct training courses, and draft a best practice training document for future training purposes.

(iv) **Research as an indirect intervention method for social development goals**

Within the context of helping, through community participation, it is the members of the community who know what burst, what direction to follow, what problems are crucial, and what views of themselves and of life, they need to modify in order to become more effective, productive, and fully functioning. This view is very important for external consultants, experts, social development workers to adopt because most of their approaches and methodologies involve active manipulation of situations and intellectualized interpretation. The political and philosophical implications of these approaches however, must be questioned in the new political dispensation and under the constitutional climate of South Africa. Therefore recommendations on how knowledge should be acquired through research - are made.

Basic research is needed regarding family patterns and dynamics among the poor in rural areas, so that data can be obtained to explain observed patterns of change and the effects of development efforts, and to guide planners in the design and

implementation of poverty alleviation. Furthermore, in the planning of major development projects by district councils, special data is needed. Here the social development-oriented workers or social workers must have the expertise to design and to conduct a survey on the socio-economic conditions of a rural community, to be used as a baseline against which service delivery can be assessed.

**(1) Use of participatory rural appraisal (PRA) and gender analysis: A lesson for social workers**

One limitation of this study as common in surveys by experts and consultants in rural areas lies in the use of traditional methodology in studying the women and gender issues. Participatory research is more appropriate. Participatory tools would not automatically reflect gender or other differences in and among the community as perceived by the people, when used as a community wide tool. However, participatory research analysis and tools, in fact, have often been used in a manner that is insensitive to critical differences within communities, including gender. If this result is to be avoided, it is essential to combine these with gender analysis, and the analysis of difference. It is therefore recommended that for project/programme planning use of some form of PRA combined with gender analysis and the analysis of difference is made, as it has been proved successful in demonstrating their relevance and practicality for participatory gender-responsive planning.

Social development workers or social workers must have the expertise to analyze proposed institutional arrangements conduct interviews with stakeholders in order to reach consensus between them, and draft guidelines to be used as a basis for future activities. Quantitative methods of traditional research must be mastered and used, but in people-centered research, this must be done sensitively. Another participatory

methodology advocated by Paulo Freire cited by Hope and Timmel (1996:53-71) is one of developing critical awareness and can be very useful in focus groups. The researcher-practitioner uses the survey for the generative themes of a community as the starting point of critical awareness of the nature of problems affecting the target community and this is in line with the people-centered approach. As these themes emerge, smaller teams need to investigate how the themes are linked to national or provincial or public policies. They need to analyze how each theme fits into the structures of the rural society that keep things the way they are, so that they can find ways to make the necessary changes, in attitudes, behaviour, customs and laws. As the survey is one of the most important parts of the whole process, it should be by a very perceptive and sensitive team consisting of several trained people, having amongst them some understanding of sociology, psychology, local culture, economics, language, and principles of adult education. In critical awareness, every problem is viewed as having three different angles: values and beliefs; community decision making; and economical implications. The participatory process consists not only of demystifying information and knowledge for the rural poor and women, but will involve them in designing, planning, implementation and evaluation of programmes. This involvement in action research ensures personal empowerment.

## **(2) Micro-computers and the management of data**

As the need for more data on women is recognized and the quantity of data grows, the potential for information "overload" has also increased. The use of micro-computers holds out promise for lessening of the time between data collection, data reduction, and analysis, and micro-computers could facilitate the integration of information on women and gender into a database and make it possible for field workers to do on-the-spot, rapid assessments of needs, resources, and policies.

## 8.6 FUTURE RESEARCH

Socio-cultural factors affecting women's participation in social development both in rural and urban neighbourhoods, need special focus for comparison. That way the other environmental factors that are external, such as economic factors at global, national and local levels, can be isolated for specific assessment. The household for instance, is not just an economic unit, but also a cultural institution. The question for research is, what is the impact of patriarchal thinking on women's reluctance or willingness to be involved in activities outside their homes or ascribed roles?

Additionally, action-research to test the applicability of gender planning in the current conventional decision-making structures (e.g. local government), must be carried out. This must lead to lessons that can be used in training and practice models for social development workers.

## 8.7 CONCLUSION

*Social workers must face the challenge that, dealing with problems of the poor and of women, cannot avoid the issues of inequality and power relations (race and gender, among others), for themselves and their clients. A two-pronged attack on effecting social development is inevitable by social workers within a broad societal agenda of social caring and transformation, and one that puts the social work profession's house in order. The rural neighbourhood, and women, face and confront problems that require the levels of change amenable to individual, family and community work interventions by social workers, and by individuals, civic society, the governmental, non-governmental and the private sector, at national and global levels. Therefore, modest changes should not be dismissed as irrelevant. Personal empowerment feeds into*

social empowerment for broad-based social development.

It has become clear that community-wide and community-based interventions should always be based on the felt needs of the people, and the conversion of private troubles of people into public 'issues', and *vice versa* must take place where necessary. The beginning of this process should recognize how rural people interact, learn and source out help from people they know and trust. They interact, most frequently, through personal contacts with family, friends and neighbours and their tribal community leadership. They need personal contact too with social development workers to share their fear, hopes, aspirations - all within a professional relationship targeted to help with specific problems targeted ...that matter to them - not only general topics or life skills training around issues perceived by outsiders as critical - and which are not prioritized by them.

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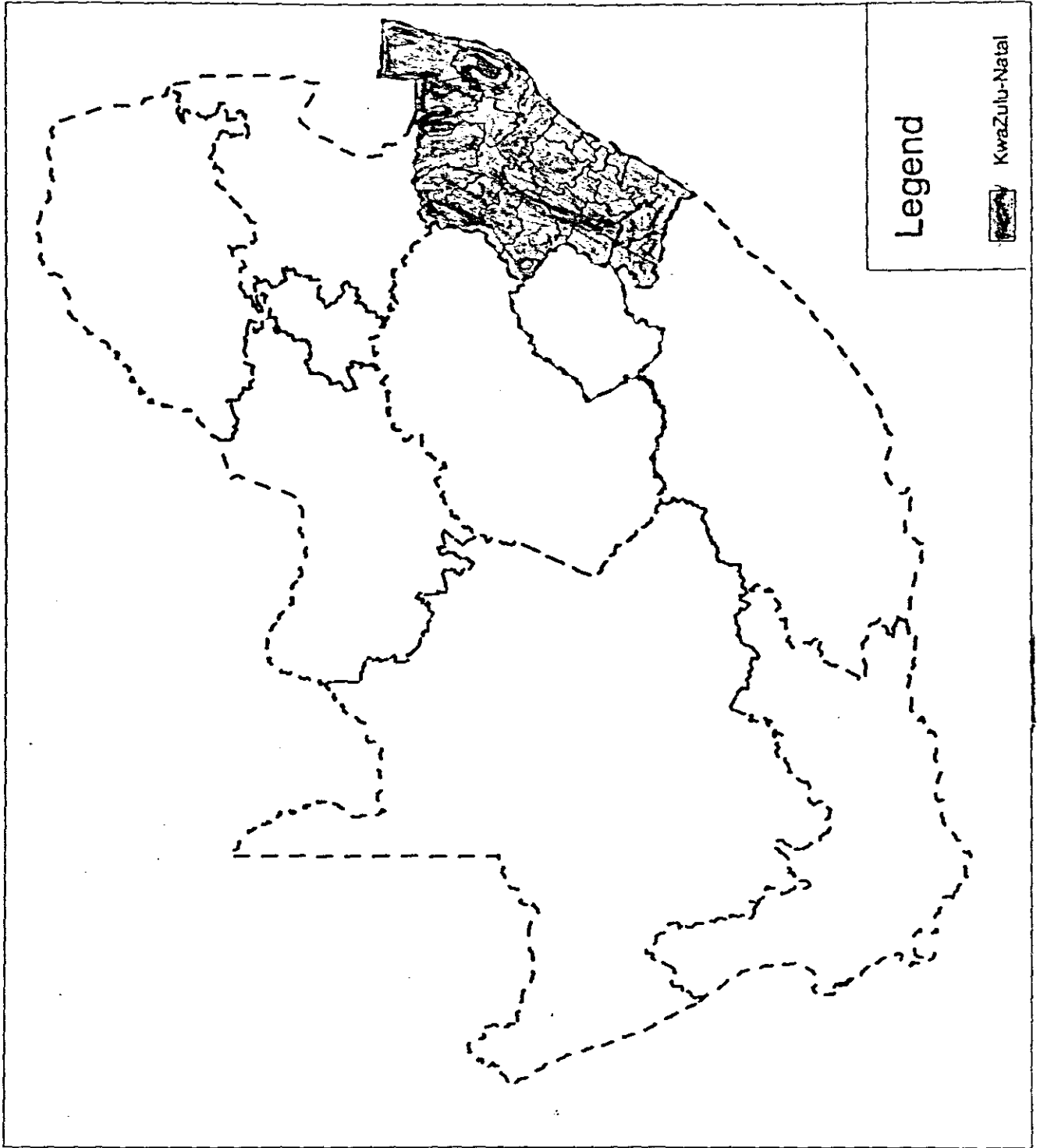
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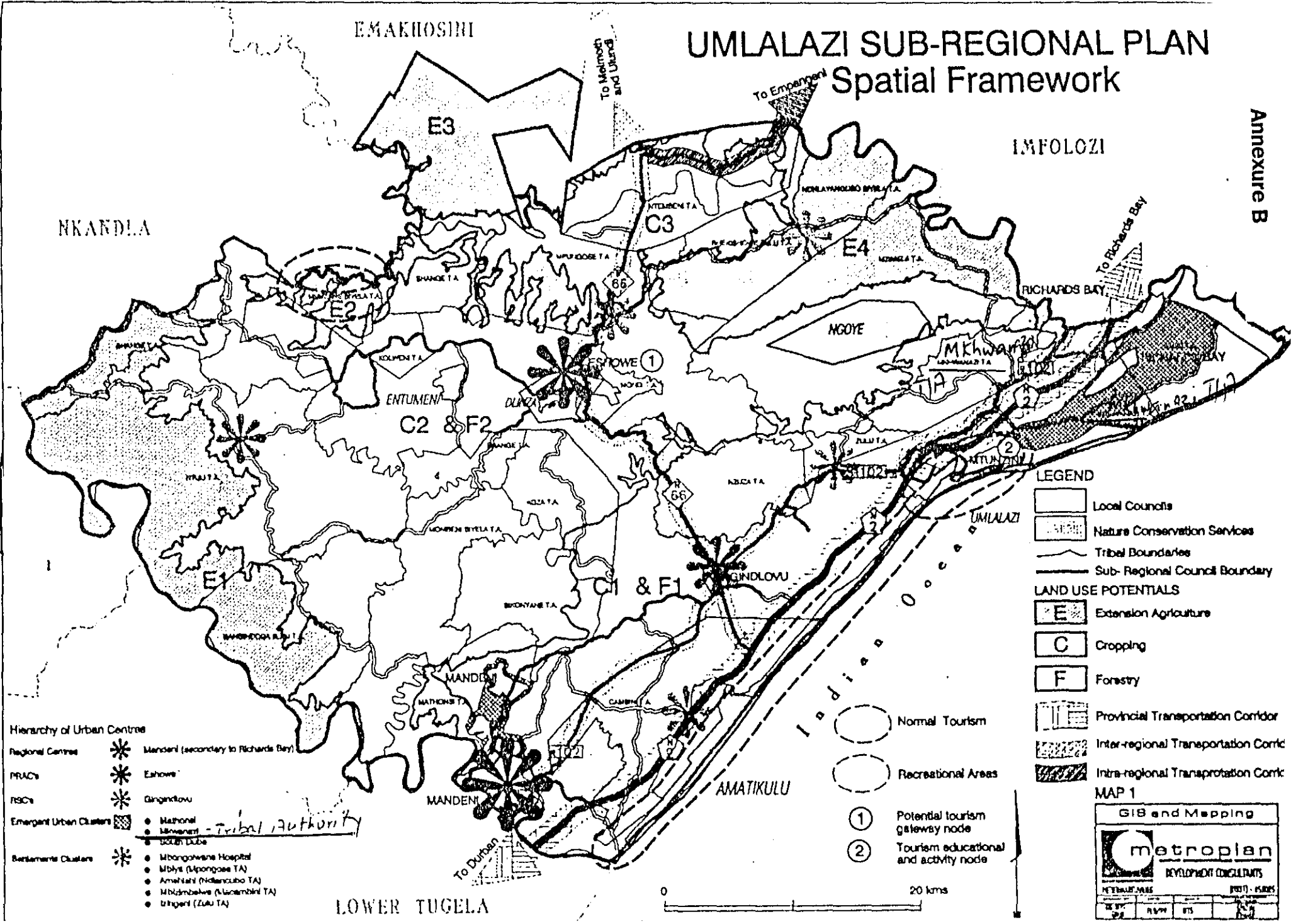
LOCATION OF KWAZULU-NATAL IN SOUTH AFRICA



# UMLALAZI SUB-REGIONAL PLAN Spatial Framework

Annexure B

330



- Hierarchy of Urban Centres**
- Regional Centres \* Mandeni (secondary to Richards Bay)
  - PRACs \* Eshowe
  - RSCs \* Gungulovu
  - Emergent Urban Clusters \*
    - National
    - Mbonambi - Tribal Authority
    - Mbonambi
  - Settlements Clusters \*
    - Mbonambi Hospital
    - Mbonambi (Mpongoe TA)
    - Amalalali (Mkhenkane TA)
    - Mbonambi (Mkhenkane TA)
    - Mbonambi (Mkhenkane TA)
    - Mbonambi (Mkhenkane TA)

- LEGEND**
- Local Councils
  - Nature Conservation Services
  - Tribal Boundaries
  - Sub-Regional Council Boundary
- LAND USE POTENTIALS**
- E Extension Agriculture
  - C Cropping
  - F Forestry
- Provincial Transportation Corridor
  - Inter-regional Transportation Corridor
  - Intra-regional Transportation Corridor
- MAP 1**
- Normal Tourism
  - Recreational Areas
  - ① Potential tourism gateway node
  - ② Tourism educational and activity node

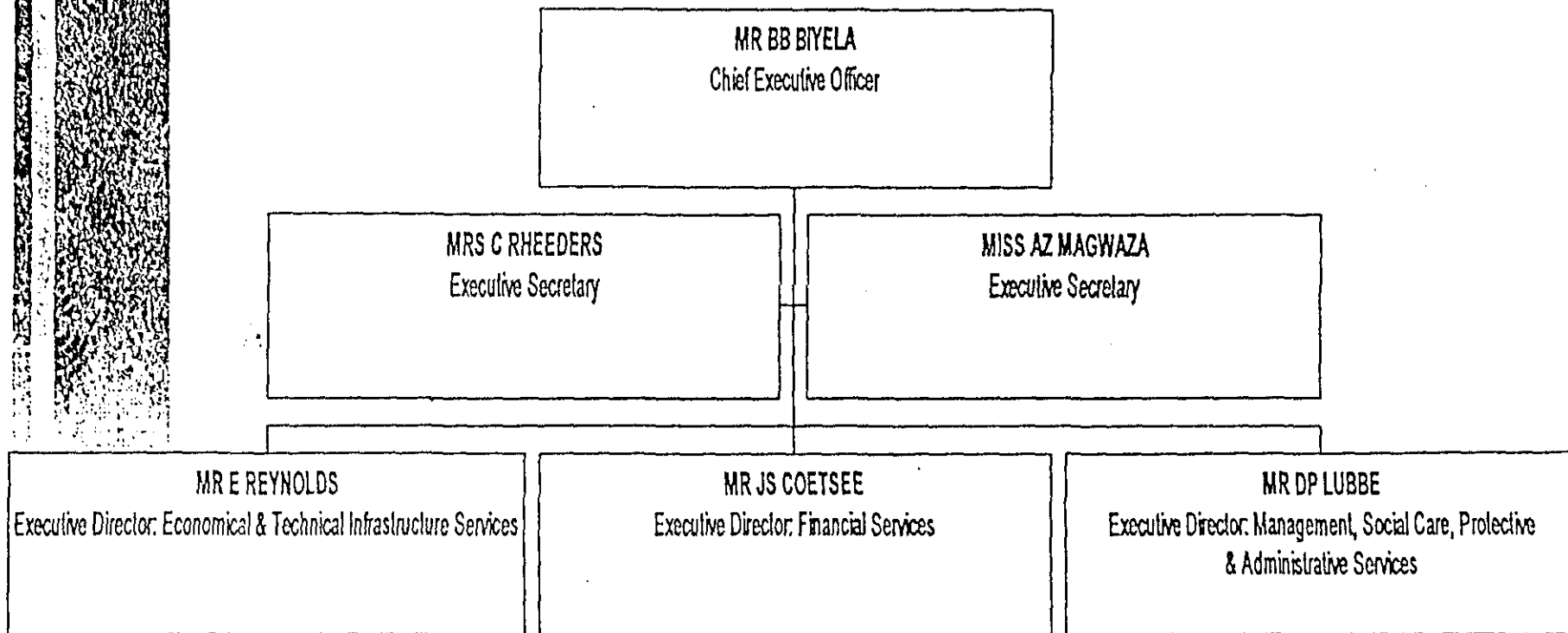
GIB and Mapping

**metroplan**  
DEVELOPMENT CONSULTANTS

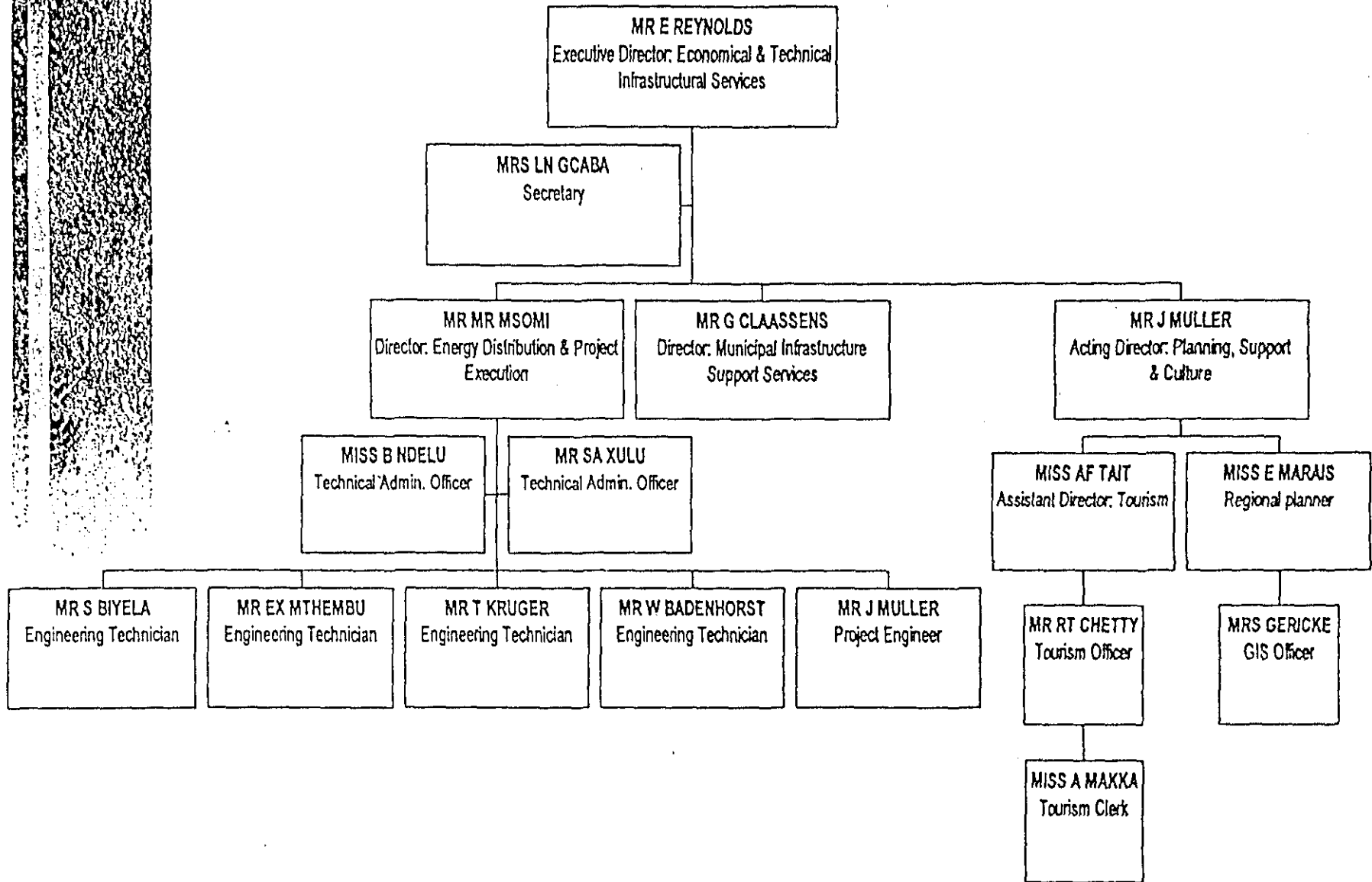
1997 - 1998

Figure 6.2: Organogram of the uThungulu Regional Council's paid staff

**DEPARTMENT: CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER**



# ECONOMICAL AND TECHNICAL INFRASTRUCTURE SERVICES



Appendix C: Figure 6.2 - Organogram of the uThungulu Regional Council's paid staff



# MANAGEMENT, SOCIAL CARE, PROTECTIVE & ADMINISTRATIVE SERVICES

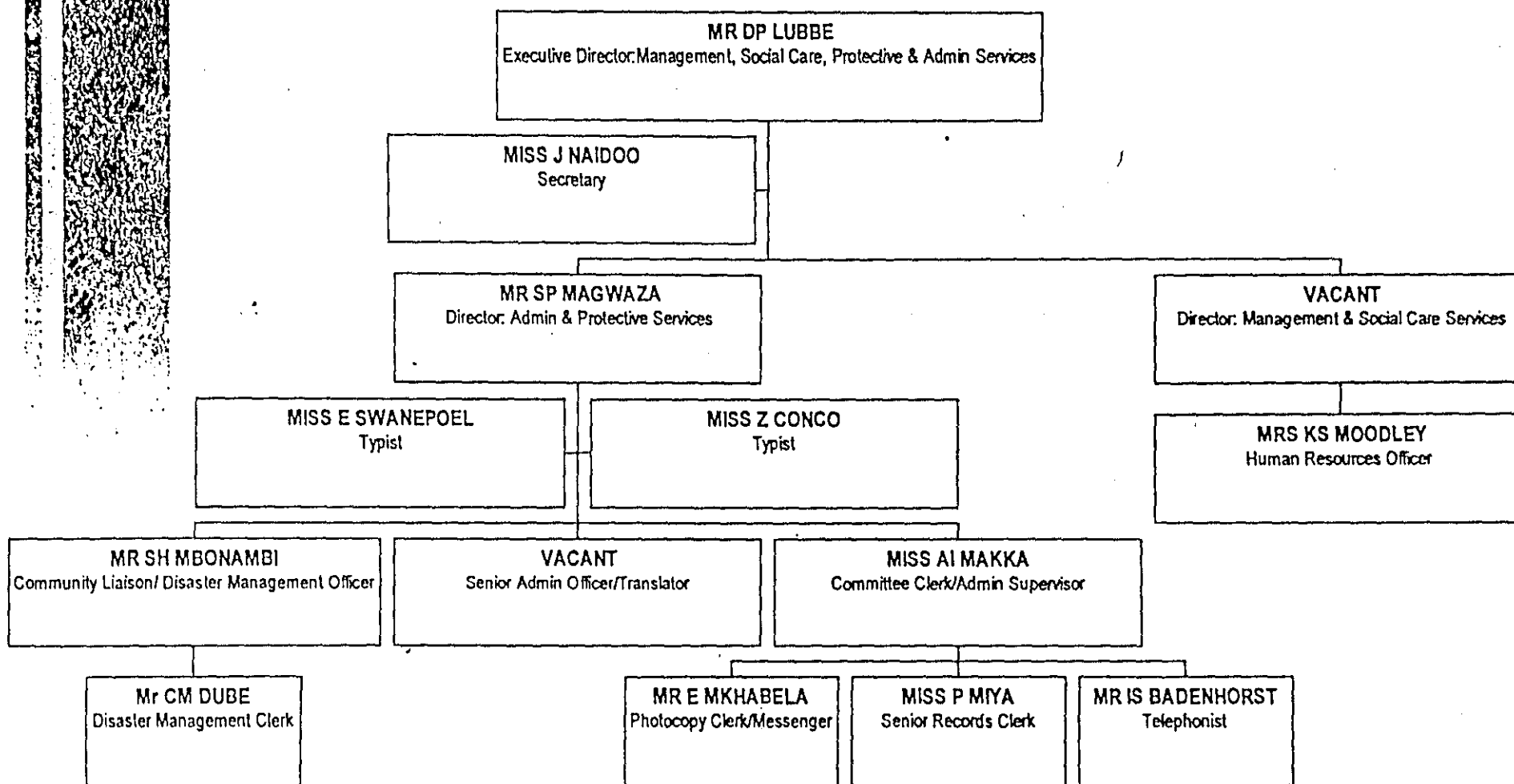
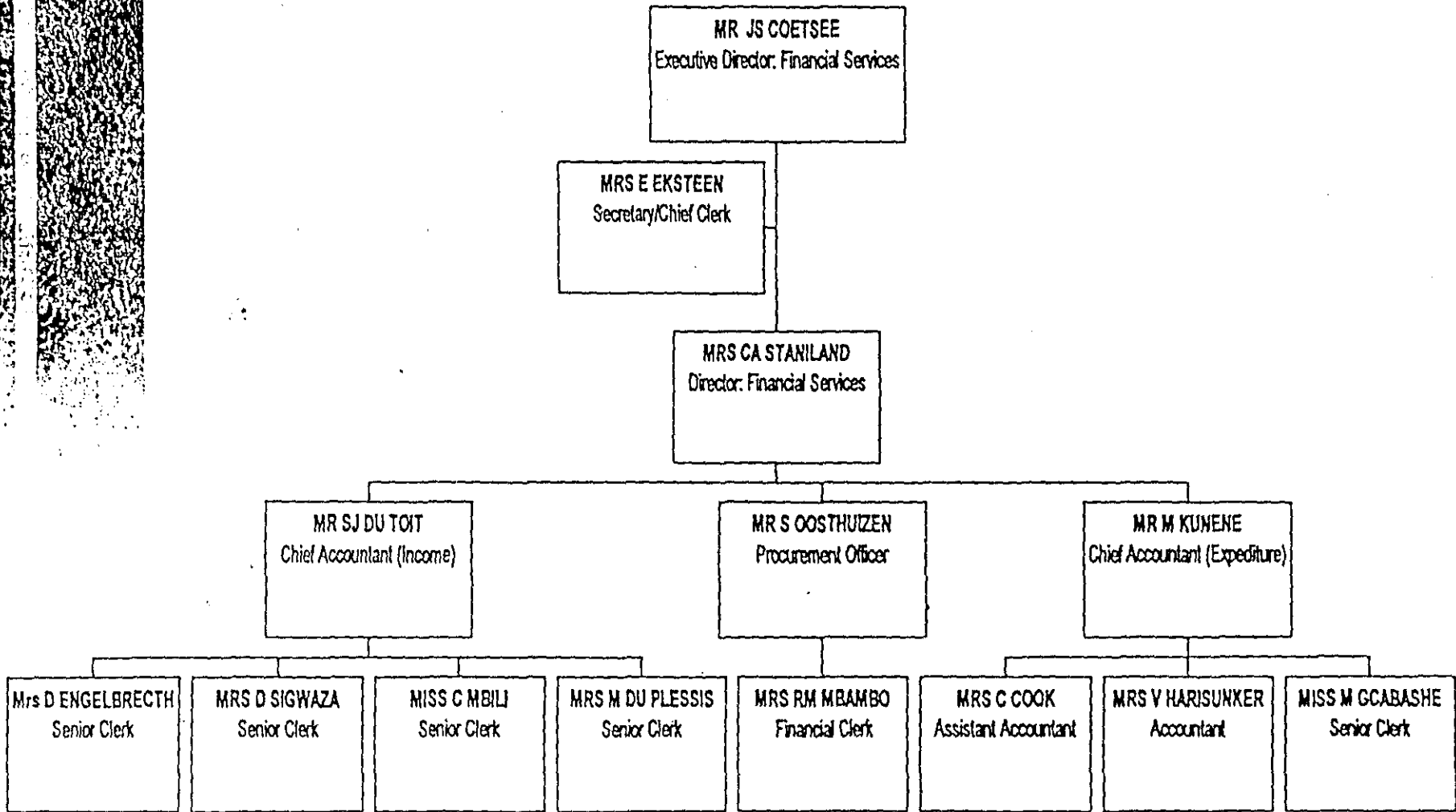


Figure 6.2: Organogram of the uThungulu Regional Council's paid staff

# FINANCIAL SERVICES



**APPENDIX D**

**UNIVERSITY OF ZULULAND**

**DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL WORK**

Interview Schedule I: Interviews with the Heads of Households.

**WOMEN, GENDER AND SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT IN A KWA ZULU NATAL RURAL  
NEIGHBOURHOOD: TOWARDS ESTABLISHING A SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT MODEL**

Instructions to the Interviewer

Please read the instructions to each question carefully and complete it yourself.  
Interview each household head or his or her representative even where there is one  
homestead with more than one household. All information gathered here is confidential.

**I BACKGROUND**

Please tell us about yourself.

1 Are you the living head of household or his or her representative? If not, who is  
and what determines this position?

Are you the living head of household, his or her representative?

Yes or No? If not, who is and what determines this position in your family?

.....

2 Please indicate your age

Under 40

40 - 44

- 45 - 49
- 50 - 54
- 55 - 59
- 65 - 69
- 70 - 79
- Over 80

3 Which isigodi (ward) do you live in? .....

4 Length of residence in the area?

Less than 10 years

10 - 20 years

21 - 40 years

Over 40 years

5 Marital status:

(a) Married

(b) Type of marriage (polygamous or married to one spouse)

(c) Divorced or widowed or separated

(d) Never married

(e) Cohabiting

6 If you have a partner, is he or she a daily commuter, a weekend commuter or a monthly commuter or other?

.....

7 What is your highest school qualification?

(a) Did not go to school

(b) Primary school

- (c) Secondary school
- (d) Matric
- (e) Certificate
- (f) Diploma
- (g) Degree
- (h) Other
- (i) No qualification

9.1 Have you been exposed to any training workshops (tick any that are applicable)

- (a) Financial Management
- (b) Literacy
- (c) Civic education
- (d) Skills training
- (e) Human and Woman's Rights
- (f) HIV / AIDS
- (g) Other (mention)

.....

7.1 When you need to find information do you use (tick any that are applicable)

- (a) radio
- (b) newspapers / magazines
- (c) your friends
- (d) your family
- (e) television

- (f) textbooks
- (g) library
- (h) internet
- (i) colleagues
- (j) officials
- (k) other (which do you use at work and which at home?)

11.1 Do you have a telephone at home or a cellphone?  
.....

12 Employment and income

What is the source of the primary income of breadwinner in the family / household?

- (a) state or government employee
- (b) private or non-governmental organization
- (c) self employed (non-farm)
- (d) small farmer
- (e) commercial farmer
- (f) other
- (g) unemployed

Income (amount)

- a) less than R100
- b) R100 - R200
- c) R201 - R500
- d) R501 - R1 000
- e) R1 001 - R1 500

- f) R1 501 - R2 500
- g) R2 501 - R3 500
- h) Over R3 500
- i) Unspecified

10 Religious Activity

Are you affiliated to a religious organization or church? Yes / No

Which church denomination? Are you an active member or not? Yes / No

Do you occupy a position in church? Yes / No

(Specify)

11 Particulars of family household Figure 11.1)

12 Which of the following activities do the individual adult members of the family in a typical day?

- (a) sit around alone
- (b) sit around with neighbors and gossip
- (c) goes job hunting
- (d) works around the house / help with housework
- (e) work outside the house part-time
- (f) does work which indirectly contribute to family income

Unemployed adult of the family (name)	Most frequent action during the day	Frequency (always) Sometimes, rarely

Residence

7.1 Housing. Is this your:

- (a) own home
- (b) rented house
- (c) a squatter's house (shack size of the house, number of rooms)
- (d) any other buildings in the court and used by members of the same household? How many? .....
- (e) building material of the house .....
- (f) in whose name is the land on which the house is and the land being used for farming (if any)

6.1 Facilities in the house (mark with an "X".

Water:	Yes	No
Inside the house		
Outside the house		
Communal tap / tank		
Other		

Toilet facilities (describe) .....

6.2 Energy source(s) (specify)

If firewood is collected, who collects it and how many times a week?

How long does each trip to collect firewood take (in hours)

Do you grow a vegetable garden? Yes / No



Political party

	Active Yes / No	Office Bearer	Men and women represent
Political party			
Stokvel			
Burial Society			
School Governing Body (School Committee)			
Trade Union			
Women's Organization (sewing, baking, cooking)			
Sugar Cane Association			
Farmers / Agricultural Union			
Communal Garden Group			
Development Committee			
Church Groups			
Water Committee			
Civic Organization			
Other			

20 How many men and how many women are representative in the organization you are a member of (number of each or would you say it is more men than women or vice versa)

Thank you for your cooperation.

SIGNATURE: .....

INTERVIEWER

APPENDIX E

DEPARTMENT OF SOCIALWORK

UNIVERSITY OF ZULULAND

Interview Schedule: Interviews with community leaders.

Women Gender and Development in a KwaZulu Rural Neighbourhood: Towards  
Establishing a Social Development Practice Model)

Instructions

Please read the instructions carefully and make sure you complete answers to every question. (NB: The names of the persons will not be identified in the report, it's only to assist in the analysis of data that the names are written).

INTERVIEWER I.D.

Please tell us about yourself.

1. Personal details

Name : .....

Physical address : .....

.....

2. Age:

Under 40 years

40 – 44 years

45 – 49 years

50 – 54 years

55 – 59 years

60 – 64 years

3. Gender: .....

4. Home language: .....

Which other language do you speak and write? .....

5. Which isigodi do you live in? .....

Length of residence in the area? .....

6. Employment:

What type of work of you do / did you do?

Service oriented

Administration

Professional

Technical

Business

Other

7. Length of period in present occupation.

8. Source of income:

Salary / wages

Commission

Pension / annuity

Own business

Other

9 Income (tick the relevant amount)

Less than:

R100 – R200

R200 – R500

R501 – R1 000

R1 001 – R1 500

R1 501 – R2 500

R2 501 – R3 500

R3 501 – R4 500

R4 501 – R6 000

R6 001 – R8 000

R8 001 – R11 000

R11 001 – R16 000

R16 001 – R30 000

R30 001 or more

Unspecified .....

10 Educational qualifications

What are your highest qualifications?

Certificate

Diploma

Degree

Post graduate degree / diploma

Matric

Secondary school  
Never attended school  
Other (specify)

.....

11 Religious Activity

Church denomination? .....

Active or not? .....

Any special position in church? .....

12 What are your most frequent sources of information on community issues?  
Specify if it is "frequently" "sometimes" or "rarely" for any of the following:

Councillors

Inkosi

Headmen

Colleagues / work mates

Service providers

Those who have personal experiences

Consultants

Radio

Newsletters, Newspapers / Magazines

Directives in Circulars

Civic Organizations

Books

The Internet

Other (specify) .....

II PARTICIPATION IN CIVIC ORGANIZATIONS

13 Do you belong to any organized community development or service organization or group in your area? If so, name it and then indicate if you are a general affiliate member or an executive member. The groups could be any of the following:

A farmers Association

A Women's Group

A community Development Committee

A School Committee or School Governing Body

A Welfare Organization

A Water Committee

A Communal Garden Group

A Religious Group

A Trade Union

A Burial Society

A Stokvel or Savings Club

14 In the last two months, have you been involved in one of the meetings? How many?

- meetings
- projects activities
- If not, why?

.....  
.....

17. What type of meeting places is available to you?

- (a) Church halls
- (b) School halls (classrooms)
- (c) Community halls
- (d) Members' homes

(e) Inkosi's Courthouse

(f) Other

.....

7. What would you say are the most important community development issues that concern you? Name three.

.....

.....

8. Where have you received or do you envisage that help with the issues will come from? Identify the issue and then the source of assistance.

.....

9. What was the total budget of the Tribal Authority Trust in the past financial year?

.....

10. What expenditure items took most of the budget?

.....

.....

### III INTERPERSONAL CONTACTS

11. How frequently, if at all, do you have personal contacts with the following kinds of people? Alternative replies would be "frequently", "occasionally" "rarely", or "never".

11.1 Tribal Authority – Inkosi, Headmen and Councillors:

.....

11.2 Regional Council Representatives:

.....

11.3 Regional Authority Representatives:

.....

11.4 Provincial government Officials:

11.5 Government Departmental Offices Serving your areas, specifically:  
Agriculture, Education, Welfare, Health:

11.6 Elected Councillors: .....

11.7 Labour Union Leaders: .....

11.8 Political party leaders: .....

11.9 Members of Parliament: .....

11.10 Other: Non-governmental Organizations, e.g. World Vision, ACAT, etc.)

.....

11.11 Specify these NGO's: .....

11.12 Project Committees (e.g. Water Communal Garden Group, Co-Operative:

.....

11.13 Other .....

#### IV ISSUE INVOLVEMENT

12. Did you perform any of the activities in election campaigns in your community (local, provincial, national – mark with an "x" any relevant one)



Minor

Spoke to friends, relatives or occupational associates

Urged members of the organization to vote

Registered to vote

Major

Contributed financially

Gave public endorsement

Helped decide campaign

Strategy

Distributed fliers posters

Trained and became a monitor or voting official

Assisted in the registration of polling stations

Others do activity reported

13. Select one or two programmes or projects you know (specify) and identify any of the activities you engaged in, in respect of each. Tick where relevant.

(a) helped to identify and present the need authority that finally took action

Yes / No

(b) Served on one or more key committees

(c) Appeared before one or more of the key committees

(d) Contacted personally the members of one or more of the committees responsible for programme development

(e) Campaigned for the adoption of the programme

(f) Helped draw the plans

(g) Contacted or contacted by local regional government officials

(h) Contacted or contacted by civic organizations

- (i) Contacted or contacted by other types of people (specify)

.....

- (j) Other form of activity
- (k) No activity at all

**VI ADVISORY ACTIVITY**

12. Have you been contacted for advice within the past year? If yes, by whom?  
(specify) e.g. if by:

- individuals / groups on development issues
- individuals / groups on policy issues. Colleagues on any of the above
- other.

16. Name the first three persons you would consult for advice on any three substantive areas / issues (specify) both name and issue. Identify the position and gender of the person

Issue	Position	Name of person	Gender

17. Is there a development programme in the community (other than a crèche) that has been started and financed from outside by government and non-governmental organizations that:

- (a) has both females and males in equal numbers in the organizing decision making body or key committee - Yes / No
- (b) in the employees implementing the programme. Yes / No  
Specify what programme in respect of "a" or "b".

3. Do you think women are treated differently because they are women in the area?

3. Do you think women are treated differently because they are women in the area?
- (a) Yes
  - (b) No
27. Do you think there are different advantages and disadvantages for men and women in the workplace? Yes / No.
- If yes, is it because of
- (a) salaries or wages are different
  - (b) promotion possibilities are different
  - (c) women having children
  - (d) skills of women are different
  - (e) other (specify)
6. What do you think are the three most pressing social / development problems in your area?
- .....
- .....
7. Do you believe the solution lies with any of the following and which of the three?
- (a) National Government
  - (b) Provincial Government? Specifically
  - (c) Local Government (Regional Council and Tribal Authority?)
  - (d) Self help groups
  - (e) Inkosi and his Councillors
  - (f) Selected individuals (Name their positions or surnames and gender?)
  - (g) Other? (Specify)
  - (h) Any comments .....