

PARTICIPATION PATTERNS OF RURAL COMMUNITIES IN DEVELOPMENT  
PROJECTS IN THE NONGOMA DISTRICT OF KWAZULU - NATAL

by

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## PREFACE AND ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The dissertation comprises a literature review and a case study analysis. The literature review investigates the nature and extent of underdevelopment in the Third World context. It explores the historical overview of development strategies and how community participation came to be adopted as a development strategy. The main theme is on the perspectives on participation and how it has been practised elsewhere. The case study evaluates the practise of participation in the Nongoma district of KwaZulu - Natal.

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## ABSTRACT

There are strong arguments in the literature on development that underdevelopment of rural areas is caused by lack of grassroots participation in the development process. Participation of the rural poor in the whole development process is therefore regarded essential for redressing problems of underdevelopment.

This study sets out to explore whether the level of participation of the rural poor is satisfactory and whether the participatory approach is capable of effectively redressing underdevelopment problems. A qualitative, interpretative approach was used in attempting to answer this question. Interviews and questionnaires were used to find information on project, participants and supporting organisations. This information was interpreted and analysed to find out if the current practise of participation has the potential for sustainable development.

The study concludes that the current practise of participation has not reached a satisfactory level required for sustainable development. The main stress on this participation seems to be the weak institutional support which fails to match the development efforts of the poor within the broad spectrum of the rural development process.

## **DECLARATION**

I declare that the dissertation presents original work by the author and has not otherwise been submitted in any form for any other degree or diploma to any University. All sources of information used or quoted in the text have been acknowledged.

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N.Z Simamane

## DEDICATION

This thesis is sincerely dedicated to my mother, Jabu, for putting in as much effort as I have. Mgazi, this is for you. Ume njalo!

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## ABBREVIATIONS

CBO Community Based Organisations

FAO Food and Agriculture Organisation

IDT Independent Development Trust

KDA KwaZulu Department of Agriculture

KFC KwaZulu Finance Cooperation

KTt KwaZulu Training Trust

NDA Nongoma Development Association

NGO Non Governmental Organisation

TDC Thokazi Development Committee

WHO World Health Organisation

UN United Nations

UNRISD United Nations Research Institute for Social Development

WACARRD World Conference on Agrarian Reform and Rural Development



## 1.1 INTRODUCTION : NATURE AND EXTENT OF UNDERDEVELOPMENT IN THE THIRD WORLD

Poverty problems are acute in many parts of the Third World and the First World has for several decades been trying unsuccessfully to solve the Third World underdevelopment crisis. Rural underdevelopment in particular is often underestimated and is difficult to ascertain its precise extent. Midgley (1986) believes that this is partly due to the reason that governments are reluctant to admit their inability to deal with the problem and the fact that they are poor and ill-equipped in the methodology of collecting accurate data. Another reason is that the poorest communities are often the most isolated, their members illiterate, having little contact with the world of officialdom and the least likely to join associations such as cooperatives and rural syndicates.

Faced with these problems the Third World leaders called upon the service of experts from the Western countries whose models were based on European experience which emphasised modernisation, (Nene, 1982). The Western economic policy believed that Third World must naturally import western models of development.

Despite the importation of these policies, the pattern of underdevelopment still persists in Third World countries, because the uniqueness of problems facing these countries was not taken into consideration. Nyerere (1979) as cited by Lea and Chaudhri (1985) maintains that within the nations of the Third World the struggle for rural development has to take many forms.

They all start from a different power and economic basis, and there is therefore no universally applicable policy blueprint which they can use. Despite the fact that there are characteristics that seem common to most developing countries, each and every country presents a unique situation and would require a unique solution.

The extent of underdevelopment is also seen in the fact that after thirty years of independence, Africa appears to be more dependent on foreign aid and food hand-outs than ever before. Alijuma (1990) maintains that there is no major project of either national or regional significance that has been conceived or implemented in Africa without foreign support, to such an extent that some people get the impression that governments have abandoned their responsibility in development.

## **2. CAUSES OF UNDERDEVELOPMENT IN THIRD WORLD COUNTRIES**

Any attempt to address the issue of rural poverty needs to consider the causes and origin of this condition. In South Africa, as in other Third World countries, factors contributing to rural poverty are numerous and are strongly influenced by the country's political history, although the rural areas suffer the most because of neglect, as urbanisation problems tend to attract more attention than the plight of rural dwellers.

Essentially there are two broad theoretical perspectives that try to explain the root cause of poverty and underdevelopment in Third World countries. These are the modernisation theories and the underdevelopment theories. The modernisation school is of the opinion that Third World underdevelopment is due to certain inherent weaknesses. The modernisation theory believes that the poor are too poor because they cannot take advantage of the existing opportunities for self advancement because of social values and attitudes that derive either from cultural heritage or from their present poverty.

The underdevelopment school is often more optimistic about African and Third World countries ; it believes that these countries have an inherent ability to develop and that present levels of underdevelopment are the result of colonial policies and exploitation by the First World countries.

The fact of the matter is that the poor remain persistently poor because too few opportunities exist for them to improve their lot and that avenues for self advancement are historically linked to the advancement of the more privileged sector of the society at the expense of the underprivileged, i.e the root cause of poverty is structural rather than cultural.

The underdevelopment and dependency theories maintain that capitalism's modernisation has interrupted the nature and tempo of development in the Third World, exploited the technologically less advanced societies for its own benefits, made them dependent on capitalist countries and caused them to lag further and further behind in economic terms.

The arguments of these theories can be linked to the South African underdevelopment situation. Causes of underdevelopment in rural KwaZulu are often attributed to the policy of separate development. In 1968 an outline of prerequisites necessary for a homeland to attain full independence included administrative experience in management and control of government departments. Furthermore, there had to have been some economic development, with a displayed ability to provide jobs for homeland citizens. Unfortunately the homelands lacked economic and administrative self-sufficiency needed to obtain independence and they were therefore to be forever dependent on S.A.

Homelands government possessed too little power to co-ordinate development projects with their own domain, and in any case the key decisions are taken by whites without any consultation with homeland governments.

Homelands also lack administrative and technical self-sufficiency (Schmahmann,1978).

The start of independence in KwaZulu was not without its problems. At its first sitting the Assembly learnt that its budget for 1972-3 was 32 million with 3 million allocated to Agriculture. This was hardly enough for as at least 50 million was needed to buy the kind of technical services, research training and development that KwaZulu needed (Schmahmann,1978). It is clear that KwaZulu started from an unstable economic base and it was never able to catch up, especially under the inexperienced hands of homeland leaders. Economic underdevelopment in the homeland area became a means by which continuing dependence on White South Africa was assured and very little was generated within the borders of the KwaZulu homeland.

"No nation practically surrounded by White land, devoid of usable coastline, with no earthly prospects of its own port, given no town or city of its own consequence and with the best or most developed agricultural and industrial areas outside or on its borders, can have much future economic viability." (Schmahmann 1978 p112).

The causes of underdevelopment in KwaZulu seem to integrate both theories. The shaky economic start meant that too few opportunities existed for the rural communities to improve their lot. At the same time they were not able to fully utilize the existing development opportunities because of their general lack of skills and financial resources.

Part of the reason for the historical underdevelopment of rural areas in South Africa lies in the relative political weakness of the broader rural population of South Africa. Oppression of political power by whites rendered the blacks powerless and they were not able to participate effectively in decisions that affect their lives.

The potential power of blacks in the political economy was immense, but it was only through organisation that such potential could be transformed into effective power. This was clearly understood by the nationalist government which acted to tame or even to break any organisation that threatened to contribute to this transformation. As Wilson and Ramphela (1989, p258) note,

"power lies at the heart of the problem of poverty in South Africa. Without it those who are poor remain vulnerable to an ongoing process of impoverishment...".  
If poverty is to be addressed, it is vital that the poor have political power, and that are able to participate in the decisions that affect their lives.

Low productivity and stagnation in homeland agriculture are attributable to inadequate modern inputs and poor infrastructure, obstructive land tenure and labour practices, shortcomings in teaching programmes and the absence of their extension to farming populations. Traditional African agricultural practices depend for their success on the abundant supply of land and Africans have not been able to adapt to a relative land scarcity, nor have adopted intensive farming methods. Because of overstocking and general population pressure soil erosion and the resultant decline in soil productivity cannot be avoided. A significant factor is the lack of capital and credit facilities, the absence of developed markets for produce, lack of transportation and lack of male labour force.

It should be emphasised, however, that agriculture cannot provide a solution to homeland development problems, not because African peasants are poor farmers or because efficient agriculture requires large scale development from the land, but because of the fundamental issue of highly unequal distribution of land, (Schmahmann, 1978).

Rural communities lack land which is a very important resource in the development of rural areas.

Because employment opportunities are scarce, the majority of able bodied workers seek employment in the white sectors and subsistence economy is sustained, in the main, by women, dependent males and the elderly. This depopulation of rural areas further deepens the rate of underdevelopment.

Another contributory factor to rural underdevelopment is urban bias. In South Africa urbanisation problems tended to attract more attention than the plight of the rural dwellers. Urban elites are in control of the distribution of resources. Urban pressures, therefore, are more stronger than the rural pressures. Search for solutions to unemployment focuses on towns. There is no real attempt to focus on the rural areas and their development.

Resources e.g investment, doctors, teachers, clean water and power are allocated between city and country in a way not merely inequitable but also inefficient (Lipton, 1988).

Services that are usually provided for by the KwaZulu government in urban areas, eg. the building of schools or clinics, becomes the burden of the community in rural areas. Rural communities have to identify the need for such services and also finance their building and maintenance.

Having tried to highlight the extent of the problem in Third World countries and in South Africa in particular, it becomes clear that there is a need for substantial intervention in the area of rural development.

The core of the problem is that rural populations have been marginalised and left out of development. The problem has become so enormous that government's intervention alone has not worked and there arises a need for rural communities to be involved in development.

This study therefore explores whether the participatory approach has the potential to effectively address problems of underdevelopment. It investigates the practise and methodology of participation by KwaZulu-Natal rural population in the district of Nongoma. It hopes to come up with the best way in which the participation of the people can be acknowledged, receive the necessary support from the government and be co - opted into the broader development programmes. The argument of this thesis is that participation can only be meaningful and effective if it is supported by strong rural development policy directives from the government.



### 3. PERSPECTIVES ON COMMUNITY PARTICIPATION

Participation has come to be heralded by some as a key element in rural development. However, it is not yet clear what this concept entails and how it can be implemented. Before assessing and providing an overview of the practice of participation within South African rural areas, it is necessary to understand the theoretical influences which have informed the different approaches to community participation in development over the years. This section will look at what participation entails, who participates and how participation can be promoted. Of particular importance is the debate on the participation potential of the rural poor and stresses on it.

#### 3.1 Historical Antecedents of Community Participation

It is generally assumed that community participation is a new idea in development, but current community participation concepts are in fact underpinned by a rich legacy of ideas and practical agendas. Midgley (1986) identifies 3 ideologies which influenced the establishment of community participation.

##### 3.1.1 Firstly there is the contribution of **Western ideology**.

Western democracy is based on the theory that all people have the right to share in decision making. This stems from the idea that development owes the marginalised majority who have been badly done by the economic situation and by the acts of the government's inefficiency in taking care of development.

The development plans of the Third World have thus tended to emphasise self help and self sufficiency.

3.1.2 Secondly there is the influence of the **community development** idea of the 1950s and 1960s. Like participation, community development focused on small communities, seeking to establish democratic decision making institutions at local level. It also attempted to improve their social and economic circumstances through undertaking a variety of development projects. In most formerly colonised Third World countries the agents of community development were missionaries and colonial officials. These have been subsequently replaced by the NGOs. During the 1950s and 1960s community development enjoyed the backing of the United Nations and, as a result, liberal financial support from American aid flowed into the Third World to support such activities.

The 1970s saw the failure of community development as it proved that development programmes based on pure economic growth were not working and were also destructive of resources and social institutions in the society that they meant to develop. Many African governments failed to provide financial support for the activities of self-help. Some argue that it failed because community development programmes were designed centrally and then imposed at local level. This bureaucratic administration and superimposed direction ran counter to central premise, which was that community development should be flexible and responsive to local conditions, taking people's felt needs and priorities into account.

"Participation meant, in many instances enforced physical labour on projects identified far from local level, without participation of citizens in design, implementation and control of community programmes", (Lund, 1987 p5).

3.1.3 Thirdly there was the contribution of **Western social work and community radicalism**. One of the main focuses of social work was on community organisations seeking to improve local amenities and social services. In Europe a new approach emerged which urged that communities take direct political action to demand changes and improvements, instead of seeking to help deprived communities to improve their conditions.

Among many other influences supporting this idea was the influence of Marxist idea of change. Marxists link the problems of poverty to the oppression of working class people in general. As such, self help or community development programmes were seen to be inadequate, and soon lost appeal. The contribution of community work was to facilitate organisation against authorities and institutions which combined to keep the poor and helpless and raise the political consciousness of the poor. Political participation and representation became the stepping stone to participation in development.

From the historical antecedents it is possible to deduct the main elements of participation.

- (I) Firstly it implies collective action of self help where rural people try to provide for their basic need where they feel that the government is inefficient.

- (ii) It pertains to community development through development projects through the existing local and national development institutions.
- (iii) It means bargaining for political power i.e representation and sharing in decision making.

### **3.2 Interpreting Participation**

The elements of participation as evident in the previous section are shared by many in trying to define participation. Yet there is no simple answer to "What is community participation?" The answer to this question depends on who is doing what, where, how, and with what objectives, (Lund 1987) An ideal form of participation would be the one involving all the elements of participation mentioned in the previous section. Participation should mean representation, a platform where the poor are able to voice their concern and get the necessary support systems. Such action would obviously need some form of organisation from the rural communities. Representation alone cannot ensure effective participation. Another equally important point to consider is whether the poor are really equipped with necessary skills and have enough motivation to evoke spontaneous participation. There should also be redistribution of resources around which development projects can take place, thus creating room for participation and the feeling that they have something to gain from development.

Many definitions of community participation, however, draw on the United Nations resolutions which were adopted in the early 1970's. One definition of this kind was formulated by a group of experts appointed to discuss community level action in popular participation. It defined participation as,

"The creation of opportunities to enable all members of a community and the larger society to actively contribute to and influence the development process and to share equitably in the fruits of development", (UN 1981 p5).

These definitions are however vague and general and still raise a number of questions. Clearly much more information is needed if we are to know who decides, who should participate, who creates opportunities for participation, and by whose mandate.

How participation is interpreted will depend on the perception of the development process. Oakely et al (1991), identifies four different sources from which interpretations of participation can be generated, three of which are discussed below for the purposes of this study.

1. The first form of participation is the form in which the government is the chief protagonist. In this form of participation, he maintains, participation equals mobilisation of rural people to participate where decisions concerning development have already been taken. It involves mobilising the rural sector in order to transform it and make it more modern, eg. Ujamaa villages of Tanzania. This he terms passive participation as it does not allow for decision making and planning by the local people.

2. The second form of participation examines certain specific types of rural development programmes, such as health or water as a form of community development. This participation is actively promoted and involves some delegation of responsibility at the community level and the creation of local councils as vehicles of this participation. This form of participation is not sustainable since external assistance cannot be maintained. Under this form, participation can be categorically promoted by external agents, eg by NGOs or via government channels.
  
3. Under the third form, participation is regarded as empowering the poorer sections of the people to take independent, collective action in order to overcome their poverty and improve their social status. An important feature of participation as 'empowering the poor' is voluntary, spontaneous and often gradual growth of organised group activity, preceded by a process of collective reflection and characterised by active involvement of members and by self-reliance. In this instance participation is generated from below the non-expert populace.

Taylor (1992) prefers to call such development 'development from within' and maintains that development from within is rarely ever achieved by a mobilisation approach from above except possibly in circumstances where the views and needs of the local community and the goals of the government coincide. But, even in these circumstances, the local people don't have the decision-making power from which true development from within can occur.

On the South African scene, all problems of poverty and lack of participation have been directly linked with the oppressive racial policies. This can have a two fold effect on participation. The people might feel that they do not trust, and have no confidence in the government and will therefore feel obliged to participate in self help activities. Participation becomes a way of improving their neglected situation. Participation also becomes a way in which people empower themselves to fight oppression. On the other hand people might feel that the government owes them development, and thus resist participating in any form of development. After all, the government has shown that it can be efficient in handling development in the way in handled development in White South Africa. The mistake that it made was that the Black rural areas were left out of development. There is therefore a temptation of thinking that removal of apartheid laws will guarantee participation.

McAlistair (1988) argues that although many of the constraints on participatory rural development can be directly or indirectly traced to apartheid, it does not follow that participatory development simply results from its elimination. Elimination of these has been easy but it is the institutional government changes required for participatory development that are difficult to achieve. We need to consider the best way to decentralise development from the central government to local institutions. The challenge therefore lies with the local government whether they will be able to foster meaningful participation.

"There is presently little understanding of existing institutional capacities, let alone answers to the question of which institutional arrangements would most adequately foster the goals of development, equity and participation which different political actors now espouse", (McAlaister, 1988 p3).

Although interpretations of participation are varied, the task here is to ensure that participation, no matter what form it takes should meaningfully address underdevelopment problems. For participation to be meaningful in the South African development scene, a good institutional framework around which the poor can participate is essential. In this context participation will mean representation in the development process.

### **3.3 Who Participates**

There is little consensus as to who among the broad category of rural people is expected to participate in development. It is generally assumed that it is those that have been left out of development and marginalised during the development process. Participation is linked in many countries with the broad mass of poor, oppressed and marginalised urban and rural people, most of whom struggle to eke out an existence with limited resources. Here participation concerns a process whereby such people can begin to rise out of their poverty and seek some response to their demands. In this case the subjects of participation are the broad mass of rural poor (Oakley 1991).

However they fail to recognise that deprived communities are not homogenous and that inequalities of one kind or another characterise most forms of social organisations. Deprived rural communities are comprised of the poor, the very poor and the not so poor, who have differential access to resources. Differentiation is seldom made between different kinds of rural communities.



While some authors argue that only those sections of the village or neighbourhood that are most disadvantaged should be mobilised for participation, others believe that the whole community should be involved. For example, (Hollensteiner 1982 p39) maintained that people's participation refers not to everyone in identifiable community since local elites already have a strong voice in decision-making, but rather to the poor majority with little access to resource and power. On the other hand, (White 1981) insisted that community participation is not concerned with the mobilisation of some individuals who should be regarded as the beneficiaries of participation; rather it involves the participation of the organised community as such.

Rural communities vary in so many respects. Their participation needs and patterns will therefore vary although we might expect them to be involved in some kind of participation. Another aspect which needs to be investigated is the question of who decides on who should participate and why. One cannot avoid the fact that development requires financial resources. The very poor of the rural sector will still be left out of development even if participation is employed. The lack of financial resources will constrain them from attaining representation in the development process.

### **3.4 The Potential of Participation**

If participation is adopted as a development strategy, we then need to question whether the poor have the potential to participate effectively. United Nations publications generally take the view that poor communities have little potential for participation.

One report (1981) referred to the 'backward state' of rural communities pointing out that "it is difficult to arouse the poor and their apathy and indifference to development issues" (p16). Another (1975a) claimed that traditional forms of participation based on and communal self help were of little significance since these efforts do not form the basis for a continued involvement in community affairs. This could only be overcome through the intervention of external agents. But instead of attributing apathy and indifference to traditional culture, it has blamed political and structural factors, it has also claimed that external intervention is required to change the prevailing attitude of the poor.

Other writers have a different view of deprived communities arguing that they are not as passive and disorganised as has been suggested. Hakim (1982) emphasised the ability of the poor to take positive steps to improve their circumstances. Drawing on his experience of Latin America and Caribbean, he claimed that 'poor people know what they require to satisfy their interests, meet their needs and solve their problems' (p138). Although they make mistakes and are not always aware of the obstacles they face, they learn from their experiences and this strengthens their capacity for co-operative endeavours.

On the basis of a study in Sierra Leone (Midgely and Hamilton 1978) concluded that rural communities are not disinterested in development : all the villages in their sample had undertaken cooperative projects without any external assistance and although they had experienced many difficulties, they were capable of spontaneous involvement.

Doyle (1992) reviewed the evidence of a large number of studies, concluding that economic factors far outweighed social and cultural ones in explaining responses to planned change. Where farmers have failed to respond to new opportunities it can generally be shown as a result of inadequate level of incentive and funding.

Although most authors take sides on this question, it is obvious that the capacity of communities to engage in participatory activities is highly variable. Communities are comprised of individuals who differ in their desires to become involved or are constrained by various factors from participating. Also, people become involved to a lesser or greater degree at different times and in response to different issues. Sociological factors are also relevant, obviously, communities are fragmented into different factions or divided by culture, religion or other allegiances, will not cooperate as effectively as those that are cohesive and integrated. But the overall contention in literature is that participation of rural communities is not yet satisfactory. The real potential of the poor to participate will be challenged by the anti-participatory factors which will be discussed in the next section.

### **3.5 Stresses and Obstacles to Participation**

There are a number of structural problems which poor people confront and will be challenged as their participation develops. The point of departure of participation must be recognising the powerful, multidimensional and in many instances, anti - participatory forces which dominate the lives of the poor.

For example ,domination of the poor by few elites, structural obstacles, culture of dependence and lack of resources. Centuries of domination and subservience will not disappear overnight just because the concept of participation has been discovered.

One of the many barriers to participation is the culture of silence among the poor. Freire (1972) argues that the rural poor have no voice, no access and no participation in development activities. Poverty is not just a lack of physical resources for development, it also implies powerlessness or the inability to exert influence upon the forces which shapes one's likelihood. Even if given a chance it would be difficult for the rural poor to transcend this position.

Another challenge is to reverse the style and approach of development that dominates the practice. Classically, development interventions are undertaken by government or agency staff who use projects as the basic instrument of implementation. These projects are designed and managed by professional staff and with varying degrees of sensitivity, are introduced into rural areas. Little or no room is left for the rural communities to participate in the development process.

Oakely et al, (1991), recognises 3 categories of obstacles to participation:

- 1 Structural

- 2 Administrative

- 3 Social Obstacles

## 1. Structural Obstacles

The political environment within a particular country can be a fundamental obstacle, eg. centralised political system which does not accommodate the views of the rural communities. In this system decisions are centrally made and this can greatly reduce the potential for authentic participation.

Structural obstacles also include the contradictions which can arise between the mechanisms promoted locally by the State in order to achieve centrally planned objectives and the spontaneous, informal development efforts at grassroots level within development projects whose participants are excluded from these mechanisms. It can be seen therefore that the nature of the political environment within a particular state will have a strong influence on the potential for meaningful local level participation.

Another structural obstacle would be the existing legal system within the country which can seriously frustrate efforts to promote participation. The legal system often has a inherent bias both in the way it is conducted and in the way in which it maintains the status quo. On the other hand, many rural people are unaware of their legal rights and of the services legally available to them. Many legal systems do not overtly seek to impart this information to rural people, who thus remain largely ignorant and excluded from the effects of law which are supposed to benefit them. In other instances the legal system acts as a direct constraint on the rural people's involvement in development activities.

This is particularly the case in terms of legislation which governs the right of legal associations of different categories of rural workers. This obstacle has relevance in the South African situation where there was a ban on all political organisations and other associated organisations fighting for legal rights.

## 2. Administrative

Centralised administrative structures retain control over decision making, resource allocation and the information and knowledge which rural people will require if they are to play an effective part in the development activities.

Administrators in such structures tend to have a negative attitude towards the whole notion of people's participation, which is often manifested as disbelief that rural people can ever assume responsibility for administrative matters. The result is that administrative procedures often become an effective deterrent to rural people seeking direct involvement in or assistance from local administration. For people whose struggle for livelihood demands most of their time, such procedures cannot be afforded.

Government planners are invariably a professional group who do not concede their practice to the local level. Most rural development planning takes place in ministries in urban areas and there is rarely any genuine desire to devolve this responsibility effectively to local level. Planning information and data are often complex in nature and rarely presented in a way intelligible to most rural poor.

### 3. Social Obstacles

Probably the most frequent and powerful social obstacle to participation of the rural poor in development projects is a mentality of dependence, which is deeply and historically ingrained in their lives. In many Third World countries rural people for generations have been dominated by and dependent upon local elite groups. In practice this has meant that the rural poor have become accustomed to leaving decisions and initiatives to their 'leaders'. The lack of leadership and organisational skills and consequent inexperience in running projects or organisations, leaves most rural people incapable of responding constructively to the demands of participation. This state of affairs has been reinforced in many instances by hand - outs and actions which have not encouraged them to take initiatives themselves. The result is a widespread marginalisation of rural people from the activities of rural development which in turn leads to a lack of confidence and ultimately to a psychology of despair. This dependent mentality is further reinforced by the fact that mere survival is for most rural people their greatest challenge and consumes much of their energies, leaving them precious little time to participate.

Many rural people therefore tend to accept the status quo and their position in a framework in which economic and social arrangements maintain the control of the few and the exclusion of the majority.

In this context, the very notion of participation is far removed from reality and is almost unintelligible to rural people who have never before been invited to share in the activities and benefits previously dominated by others.

Rural people do not necessarily constitute a homogenous economic and social unit. Efforts to encourage participation which are directed at the 'rural people', 'rural poor' or 'farmers' as if these constituted distinct and homogenous categories, fail to recognise the class, caste, religious and geographical difference that can exist in rural areas. Rural poor may share their poverty, but there may be other factors which divide them and can breed mutual distrust. Aggregating the rural people as one enormous mass is inadequate in seeking to promote participation. In this respect it is important to be aware of the economic and social differentiation that characterises the rural areas of many Third World countries and that if misunderstood or inadequately managed, could severely frustrate efforts to promote participation. In many rural areas different groups compete for the available resources and have very different access to development activities. The participation of one group may be different from that of another.

Local initiatives are often circumscribed by lack of material resources and by poverty which is the very condition that they were formed to overcome. To be sustainable and to grow over time they need access to financial and other resources from outside the community.



How to create conditions which allow rural people to improve their own lot without losing control of their own initiative and institutions is an important part of participation.

The greatest stress on participation in South Africa has been the enforcement of apartheid laws. This has denied them political power as well as access to resources. The Black rural people are therefore poor and are characterised by culture of silence and dependency. They obviously lack the physical resources around which they can base their participation. They have also been oppressed for so long that they have not been exposed to decision making as they were left out of development. To expect people to get out of that position is asking for the impossible. However, most of the rural people have shown that despite the obstacles they encounter, they have the willingness and the enthusiasm to participate. They have been forced into this situation by the fact that no one is really taking care of development.

In the course of this researcher's current investigations, it has proved difficult to comprehend why so much credit is given to the potential of the poor to participate. What have they done which make proponents of participation think that they can contribute to effective rural development. It has been noted that governments tend to promote community participation because it allows them to neglect their developmental role.

For instance the rural poor are expected to organise and participate around the provision of basic services e.g water, whereas the same is not expected of their urban counterparts. In that way participation becomes a burden to them and this further marginalises them.

It is the contention of this research that the overriding obstacle to meaningful participation lies in the prevailing socio-political structure. Any form of participation occurs within a particular context and will be influenced by the economic and social forces that mould that context.

### **3.6 Promotion and Practice of Community Participation**

The growing acceptance of people's participation as a development has sharpened the demand for a clearer and more concrete interpretation of the methodology for promoting participation.

The primary concern has been to highlight the ways in which rural development projects are trying to bring about participation of the rural poor and obstacles met on the way. It is widely argued that participation will not have much meaning if it cannot be ensured that the rural poor can effectively participate in rural development. Yet little progress has been made in developing appropriate designs and organisation bases geared to facilitate the participation of the rural poor. The WCARRD (1979) quoted by Oakely (1984) argues that rural development strategies can realise their full potential only through motivation, active involvement and organisation at grassroots level of rural people in conceptualising and designing policies and programmes

Four important aspects emerge from this statement:

1. Organisation of the poor
2. Government decentralisation
3. Planning at local level
4. Participation as the basis of rural development projects.

A major element in most discussions on the promotion of community participation is the notion of institution building. This concept has been formulated by international agencies to denote the creation of procedures for democratic decision making at the local level and the involvement of people in these procedures to the extent that they regard them as the normal way of conducting community affairs. The term refers to the establishment of decision making bodies that are fully representative, democratically elected and accountable. However some writers place greater emphasis on the formalisation of these procedures than others. Majeres (1977) conceived of local institutions as properly constituted authorities linked to district, regional and national decision making bodies by legal and administrative procedures. Ower (1981) took a similar view, citing the Chinese commune and the Israel kibbutz as examples of ideal local level participatory institutions. Others (Hollensteiner 1982a, Hakim 1982) have a preference for less structured grassroots associations that are sustained by popular involvement and support. But whether local institutions are formally or informally organised, most writers point out that the major task for community workers is to foster their consolidation and effective functioning in the long term.

Community workers are entrusted with the task of institution building. These workers have been trained to promote community participation ideals. They are skilled in understanding interpersonal relationships, fostering group activities and promoting community solidarity and in teaching local people to be resourceful in their dealings with the outside world.

Hollensteiner (1982), stresses the work of the community worker but takes him/her as a person who is sponsored by certain organisations. We cannot expect appropriate regional distribution from such development since sponsor organisations cannot be uniform in their distribution of their projects. The most convenient set up would be even geographical distribution of community worker in all rural areas and a central rural development department accountable for assessing and prioritising rural development needs.

The duties of the community health worker would be to assess the needs of rural communities as a person who is an expert in rural development.

His approach however requires a slight change in that he has to recognise the existing development activities taking place in the area giving them the necessary support. In working with these organisations he advertises his abilities and trust. Once he is able establish to this relationship with rural communities, his major task would be organise rural communities and seek for their representation in the development process. In this way all the development concerns would be incorporated in the broader rural development programme which the rural communities will have a say in its formulation.

A major priority is to raise the level of social and political consciousness of local people. Hollensteiner (1989 p48) observed that by conscientizing, the people, the community workers make them consciously aware of their life situation, why it is so and what alternatives they have or can create to redress it's deficiencies.

Mass meetings are an essential element in the production of participation. These meetings permit the discussion of local issues and help to foster the group solidarity. Often role play methods are used to sensitize the people to both local and external problems. However, community workers never tell the community what to do. Their task is to foster grassroots participation and to build local institutions that can take decisions democratically and autonomously. Community workers must know where to draw the line between being a catalyst and a manipulator.

Although many basic services, including water supply, health care and primary education, can be managed at local level such services need expert knowledge and would thus require technical advice and specialised input, rather than burdening the rural poor with provision and maintenance.

To facilitate local initiative, the aim should be to empower ordinary people to take charge of their lives, to make communities more responsible for their development and to make the government listen to the people. The challenge is to build on this solid indigenous base, with a bottom-up approach that places a premium on listening to people and on genuinely empowering the intended beneficiaries of any development programme.

Another important issue in the promotion of participation is decentralisation. Decentralisation requires the creation of effective and democratically elected and representative decision making bodies with clearly defined powers to administer programmes and control revenues. Majeres (1977) has argued that the unit for decentralisation should be a local development council

which should be empowered to assume responsibility for the administration of local level programmes and to initiate a variety of infrastructural and social development project of its own. As these councils become firmly established, their powers should be extended to administer a variety of additional services. They should be formally linked to higher tier authorities and serve as a channel for communicating ideas and innovations upwards.

They should also, as the UN (1981 p23) suggested 'be integrated into the formal administrative and planning process'. major problem facing the proponents of decentralisation and one of general relevance for community participation, is finance. True decentralisation only occurs when local decision making bodies have control over financial resources. Since they are usually unable to raise sufficient revenues to meet their own needs, they are dependent on external funds and thus subject to external control.

Majeres (1977) has advocated that local bodies should receive direct central government support which should be allocated in terms of criteria such as population numbers and social need indicators. Their rights to budgetary support should be enshrined in law. Local bodies should be permitted to raise their own funds and be given access to credit and the freedom to allocate resources as they see fit. However Majeres (1977) recognised that external funds audit and specifications about how central government funds should be spent will be necessary.

### 3.6.1 Participation and the Government

According to most writers, the governments idea of popular participation seemed very limited. Their participation only meant implementation of pre established official programmes which allowed participants little real say in decision-making. The community workers were thus reduced to salesman for line-ministry programmes. In socialist states , true participatory ideals appear to be relatively short - lived and relatively give way to mechanisms which are designed to impose controls on the rural population rather than allow involvement in decision-making. Following the Arusha Declaration of 1967, Tanzania took significant steps to institute participatory procedures for development which included state control of the major means of production, collectivization into Ujaama villages and administrative decentralisation. However, after 1972 it appears that these original ideas were scrapped and the participatory functions of the people's organisation at grass-roots level were given peripheral attention. Participation and political awareness became equated, in the eyes of the Tanzanian state, with the acquiescence to official policy directives.

On the other hand some proponents of community participation have argued that state involvement is not only necessary but desirable. Hakim(1982) claimed that participation is dependent on services that only the government can provide, and community social development programmes are often ineffective without government support. Some authors claim that state support can be helpful but local people must be taught how to resist the efforts of bureaucrats and politicians to subvert their authority.

Different views on state involvement in community participation mirror wider beliefs about the nature of state power in modern societies. While Marxian and elite theories are pessimistic about the possibility of community participation, liberal-democratic and pluralist theories are much more hopeful. State responses to participation will largely depend on the type of government and the attitude of the people towards it.

Although the ideal of authentic participation is probably not possible under state direction, nevertheless there are ways in which the degree of popular involvement in the planning and implementation of rural development could be increased. One suggestion concerns the adoption of a 'process' approach to planning, in contrast to 'blueprint' style which has been dominant until now. The process approach rejects the assumption that projects are simply vehicles for the application of predetermined government solutions to developmental problems, but is based instead on the process of continuous dialogue between planners and beneficiaries in search for the most appropriate strategy (Gow and VanSant, 1983).

This style also implies what Chambers (1983) calls 'reversals in learning' in which outsiders learn from farmers and the rural poor. A variety of techniques are put forward, ranging from sitting, asking and listening to joint research and development as tools which could encourage and enable those being trained or educated to learn from the many below and not just from few above. Yet these extortions remain somewhat idealistic. It is almost unheard of for the rural poor to be effectively consulted by government planners. Another suggestion for improving the level of popular participation in government programmes is to decentralise certain powers and functions in order to increase local control.



This refers not just to transferring command over some aspects of policy and resource allocation, but also to changes in the ways in which bureaucracies operate to permit more local autonomy and especially catering for the needy sections of the community.

These suggestions are favoured by those who assume that the state has the power to initiate moves in the direction of greater participation. However poor farmers themselves may take steps to increase their own control over events and circumstances and thus circumvent the government's frequently manipulative policies, whether these are labelled 'participatory' or otherwise.

### 3.6.2 Participation and the NGOs

Another major and increasingly important category of community development is that undertaken independently of the state through non government organisations (NGOs). The role of the NGO is to add participation to the development equation. Participation means working closely with the people in a way which the government cannot and working with all the people. People's participation in development in all its aspects is perhaps the single most characteristic of NGO's approach.

However total dependence on NGOs should be avoided and instead encourage indigenous NGOs. Local power groups should be involved in the preparation and programming of projects. The emphasis of NGOs should be education and the building up of organisational base through which certain groups within the rural sector might achieve their participation.

Verhagen (1987) reviews an approach in NGO development (Lebemo case) which endeavours to widen the scope of autonomous action for the rural poor and enables them to acquire more latitude in steering socio-economic change in a direction consistent with their own priorities and long-term interests. There are two key elements in this approach:

1. Building upon what the rural poor have, rather than what they lack;
2. Promoting their organisation (Lebemo).

The argument is that voluntary organisations can improve service provision and allow local groups to maintain their autonomy against powerful private interests and a distant and perhaps alien state. In most cases successes will probably occur where they are also given a substantial degree of support by state and aid agencies, particularly in the early stages before they have built up their resources and skills.

It must be borne in mind that NGO supported schemes often have their own drawbacks. Frequently heard criticism is that such projects tend to be small, geographically dispersed and are difficult to multiply on a national scale. Once projects grow in size beyond a certain point the problems of bureaucratization and growing official links with government increase the danger that they could lose many of their original 'participatory' features such as dialogue and democratic decision-making (Galjart, 1981).

Other criticism relates to the methodology used to establish and promote small scale development projects.

Many voluntary organisations use 'conscientisation' techniques which assume that the poor have an incomplete or imperfect perception of their reality and that their 'awareness' must be heightened as the basis for group action (Oakley and Marsden, 1984). Outsiders are deemed to be the best judges of the poor people's perception.

There is thus always the danger that NGO workers will consciously or otherwise adopt a manipulative role and decrease the villagers' own freedom of choice in a non-participatory direction. It must be said that, no matter how well-meaning the external funding agency, the mere fact of financial dependence on outsiders makes the notion of true community autonomy somewhat spurious.

### 3.6.3 Community based organisations and participation

Group organisations have been a powerful instrument in facilitating the access to development of previously excluded groups. Participation is concerned with taking of action, on the basis that such action should not be designed by others. It should be based on people's knowledge about the situation. This can be best achieved by utilising the already existing community based organisations. The human potential, basic wisdom and knowledge of Africa's peoples have been seriously underestimated. To some they are seen as the major barrier to the development aims both of the African state and of the international agencies which are involved in promoting and guiding what they see as being required for development to take place. They are objects of development who have to be 'modernised', 'mobilised' or 'captured'.

A basic objective of development from within is to allow local people to become the subject, not the object, of development strategies. Given the opportunity to do so they have shown themselves to be perfectly capable of making rational choices regarding their own destinies.

Too much attention has been given to the negative development aspects of issues such as kinship and not nearly enough to the positive aspects of local community, realities on which more meaningful development can be built. People's knowledge is as appropriate a basis for development action as knowledge brought in by professionals.

Salmen (1987) believes that it is impossible for a person of one world to effectively plan and manage activities for people of the other without understanding them on their own terms. He believes that intended beneficiaries should be incorporated. There must be ways for persons entrusted with development funds to listen to the people they are trying to help. Development is a process that induces people to change their lives for the better. To be effective, a development project must enlist the cooperation of the people, who become the agent of their own improvements. One measure of a project's success is the degree to which it has encouraged people to do things for themselves beyond what the project did for them. However, one must bear in mind that real development is an ongoing process. Local organisation should be skilled to manage development so that their actions can be isolated but be sustainable.

From the literature reviewed it would seem that the participatory mode of rural development is far more difficult to achieve through official channels than via non governmental means and community based organisations initiated at grassroots level. Yet it has to be recognised that, with all their apparent advantages, the impact of voluntary organisations will be limited, comparatively speaking, due to financial and logistical problems. It is doubtful, in fact, whether most rural communities would even desire to assume complete responsibility for promoting development. In order to reach greater numbers of rural poor there is, therefore, a strong case to be made for increasing state participation in rural development.

At the same time, however, this should be designed so as to allow for much greater beneficiary involvement in preliminary decision-making as well as project execution than has been the case to date, (Midgley 1986).

### **3.7 Conclusion**

The literature reviewed argues that participation is a prerequisite to sustainable development. It also emphasises that for participation to be successful there need to be strong policy directives from the government, NGO input and grassroots participation in the development process. The input of the NGOs is stressed because it is believed that they are in a better position to have a positive impact on development than the government channels, because they are more in tune with the community needs. Given the poverty situation of the people in the Nongoma District, the weak institutional support from the government and the absence of impact from NGOs, this study investigates the level of community participation in this district.

## **4. RESEARCH DESIGN AND OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY**

### **4.1 Introduction**

The focus of this research project is rooted in the views held by proponents of theories of underdevelopment in Third World countries. Many of these theorists maintain that underdevelopment is caused by lack of grassroots participation in the development process (Derman and Poultney 1984; Gaigher et al 1995; Oakely 1991). Derman and Poultney (1984) for instance, believe that the poor remain persistently poor because too few opportunities exist for them to improve their lot. They further maintain that avenues for self advancement are historically linked to the advancement of a more privileged sector of the society at the expense of the underprivileged. There is also a widespread conviction that previous development strategies bypassed and in fact marginalised the majority of the rural poor (Oakely 1991). Consequently much of the failure of different strategies aimed at alleviating poverty is attributed to the lack of grassroots participation.

This has led to the concern that this majority should now participate in development (Thomas and Stillwel 1994; Gaigher et al 1995). Bembridge (1984) supports this idea claiming that the current trends in development are bottom - up, self help groups and local people participating in all aspects of determining their development.

The aim of this research is twofold:

First to explore whether the level of participation of the rural poor in development projects is satisfactory and second, whether a participatory approach is capable of effectively addressing underdevelopment problems.

## **4.2 Participation Debate**

Various views exist on the potential of the poor to participate and on the role and success of participation of the rural poor in development. Two broad categories of opinion are evident in literature.

On the one hand, there are those who are pessimistic about the potential of the rural poor to participate effectively. Research conducted by the United Nations (1975a , 1981 p16), for instance, argues that poor communities have little potential for participation because of "their backward state, they are bound by traditionalism and resist progress".

Other proponents of this view say that the poor not only lack physical resources, but poverty also leaves them powerless and dependent (Midgely 1984). The poor therefore find it strenuous to participate because most of their energies and time is invested in a struggle to survive. To facilitate participation therefore, the literature suggests that deprived communities need first to be made aware of their capacity for independent collective action and that this needs an external arm or skilled community worker who can assist, mobilise support and inculcate attitudes of confidence and cooperation (Oakely 1991; Thomas and Stillwel 1994).

The second broad category of opinion on community participation is that deprived communities are not as passive and disorganised as has been suggested (Hamilton 1978; Hakim 1982). They argue that the poor communities have an inherent capacity for participation, and that they are not only able to organise themselves, but do so already. Hakim (1982) emphasises the ability of the poor to take positive steps to improve their circumstances, claiming that the poor people know what they require to solve their problems.

The debate reveals that it is clear that the capacity of the poor to participate in development projects is highly variable. The overall contention, however is that participation of rural communities is not yet satisfactory (Oakely 1991).

The fieldwork conducted for this research complements these findings and shows that rural communities are constrained by various factors from participating effectively. This study explores patterns of community participation in development projects in the Nongoma district of Kwazulu - Natal, (See fig.4.1). It seeks to find out whether the participation patterns they display have the potential to address problems of underdevelopment.

The objectives of this study therefore are :

1. to identify and explain factors that influence the participation patterns of people in development projects in Nongoma.
2. to find out if the current practices of participation are effectively addressing problems of underdevelopment.



### **4.3 Area of Study and Methodology**

The study area, Nongoma, is a rural area in the Northern interior of Kwazulu - Natal. The area is divided into 3 wards, each falling under its own regional tribal authority. The wards are further divided into districts. The tribal authorities are : Usuthu tribal Authority, Mandlakazi tribal authority and Matheni tribal authority. (See fig.4.2)

#### **4.3.1 Methodology**

To find out the different development projects existing in the area, two important contacts were established:

Kwazulu Department of Agriculture and Forestry which facilitated contact with agricultural extension officers (field workers) working in the different districts. These field workers provided invaluable information about the different community organisations and projects in their districts.

The community health facilitator, from the Department of Health. This provided contact with community health workers, who also provided information on the community organisations existing in the area. The advantage of health workers was that they were more widely distributed and were more in touch with the communities, because they work within the communities from which they come.

**F1g 4.1**      **Map of KwaZulu - Natal showing the study area.**

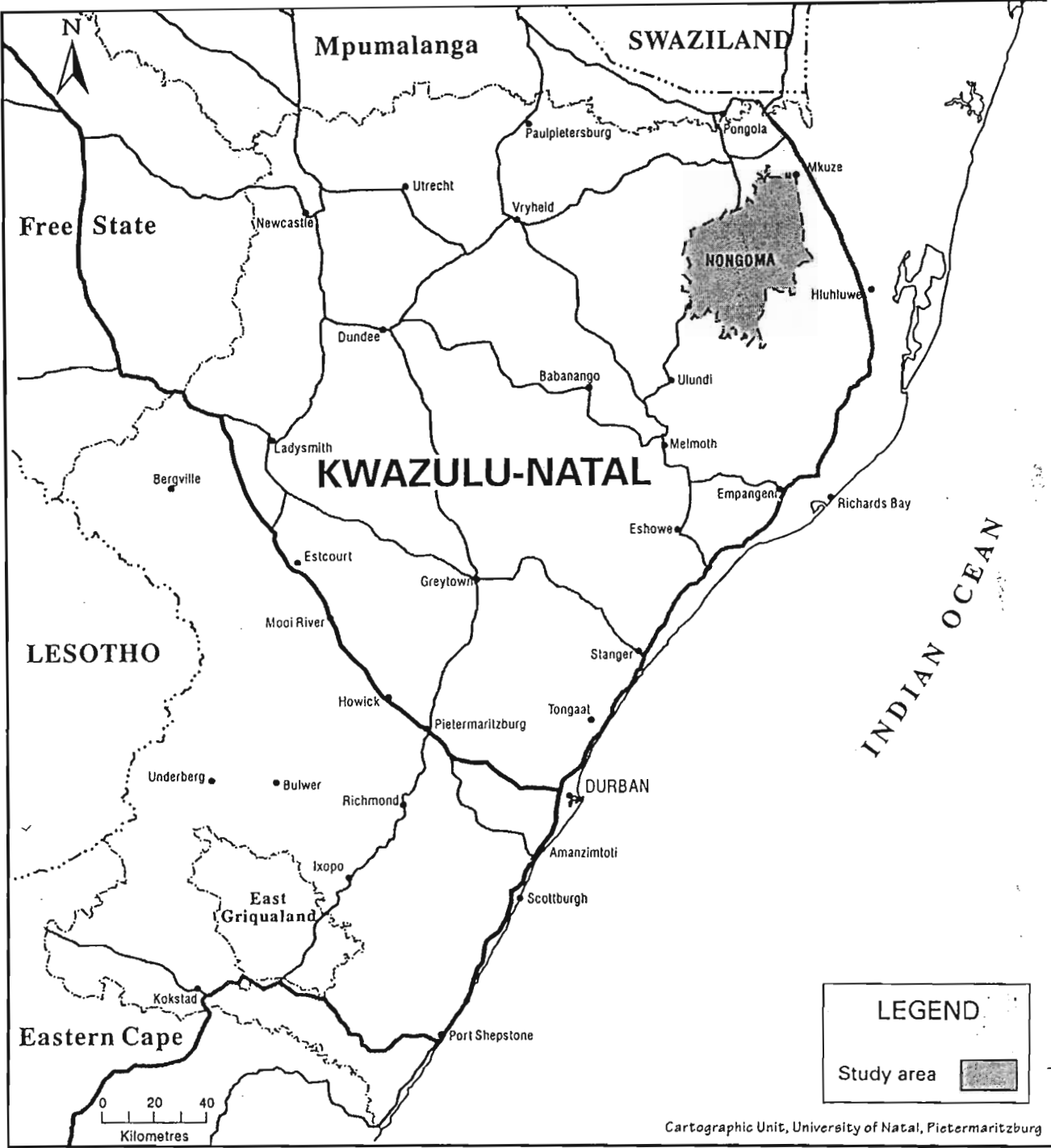
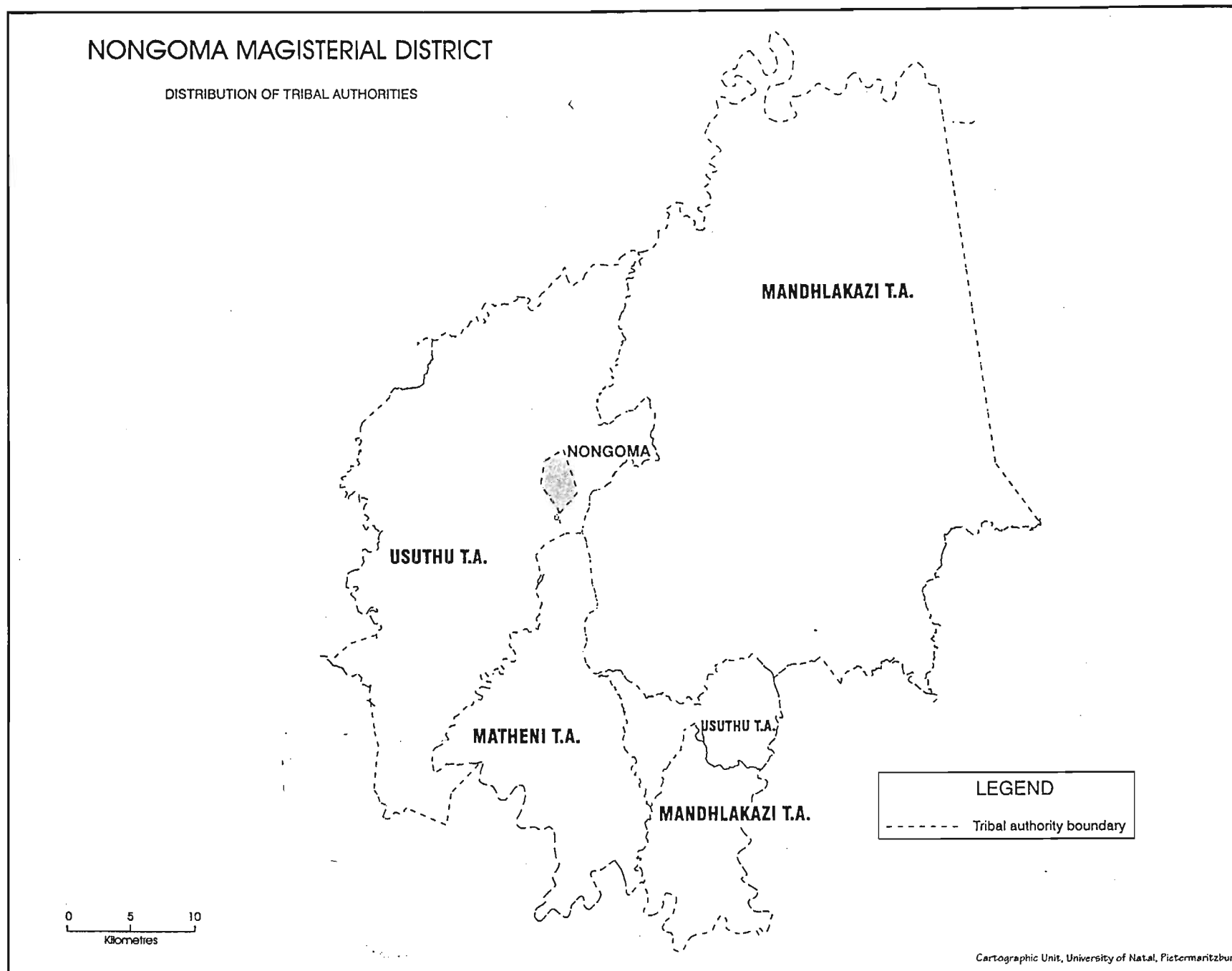


Fig. 4.2 Map of Nongoma showing the different Tribal Wards



Twenty districts were chosen as study areas. The districts were selected on the basis that they had a variety of projects (more than 4). The location of these districts is indicated on fig.4.3

The list of projects studied is indicated on fig.4.4

Fig 4.3 Map showing the distribution of areas studied within the Nongoma District.

District.

# NONGOMA MAGISTERIAL DISTRICT

DISTRIBUTION OF AREAS UNDER STUDY

0 5 10  
Kilometres



## LEGEND

- Tribal authority boundary
- Distribution of areas under study

**Figure 4.4 : List of projects studied in each area.**

- 1. Bangamaye**
  1. Clinic
  2. Garden
  3. Road
  4. Water
- 2. Bhangnoma**
  1. Clinic
  2. Garden
  3. Poultry
  4. Sewing
- 3. Bhethani**
  1. Candles
  2. Creche
  3. Gardens
  4. Sanitation
  5. Water
- 4. Gudu**
  1. Beads
  2. Gardens
  3. Mats
  4. Sewing
- 5. Holinyoka**
  1. Gardens
  2. Poultry
  3. Sanitation
  4. Sewing
  5. Water
- 6. Kombuzi B**
  1. Candles
  2. Creche
  3. Gardens
  4. Sanitation
  5. Sewing
- 7. Kombuzi ( Qondile )**
  1. Candles
  2. Clinic
  3. Garden
  4. Poultry
  5. Sewing
  6. Water
- 8. Kwadayeni**
  1. Garden
  2. Mats
  3. Poultry
  4. Road
  5. Sewing

**9. Kwadayeni ( Shisuthi)**

1. Garden
2. Poultry
3. Sewing
4. Water

**10. KwaNjoko**

1. Blocks
2. Garden
3. Poultry
4. Sewing

**11. Mememe**

1. Clinic
2. Garden
3. Sewing
4. Water

**12. Ncengisekhona**

1. Creche
2. Garden
3. Road
4. Sewing

**13. Nkunuzana**

1. Candles
2. Clinic
3. 2 Gardens
4. Poultry
5. Sanitation
6. Water

**14. Nkweme**

1. Candles
2. Gardens
3. Poultry
4. Sewing
5. Water

**15. Ntabayezulu**

1. Clinic
2. Creche
3. Garden
4. Mats
5. Road
6. Sanitation
7. Water

**16. Ntabayezulu C**

1. Candles
2. Clinic
3. Garden
4. Sewing

**17. Ovukaneni**

1. Creche
2. Garden
3. Handcraft
4. Poultry

**18. Qongqo**

1. Creche
2. Clinic
3. Garden
4. Sanitation
5. Sewing

**19. Sovane**

1. Creche
2. Clinic
3. Cotton
4. Garden
5. Knitting
6. Sewing

**20. Thokazi**

1. Blocks
2. Creche
3. 2 Gardens
4. Road
5. Sanitation
6. Water



One hundred and fifty development projects were studied in the twenty districts chosen in the study area. For various reasons, one hundred of the one hundred and fifty were selected for analysis and can broadly be divided into the categories tabled in figure 4.5 below.

CATEGORY	TYPE OF PROJECT	NUMBER OF PROJECTS
1. SOCIAL INFRASTRUCTURE	Creche	08
	Mobile clinic shelter	08
2. PHYSICAL INFRASTRUCTURE	Road	06
	Water	10
	Sanitation	07
3. HANDCRAFT	Sewing	12
	Knitting	01
	Handcraft	05
	Candle making	07
4. AGRICULTURAL	Community gardens	22
	Poultry farming	09
	Cotton farming	01
5. BUILDING	Block making	04
TOTAL		100

Figure 4.5 Categories and types of projects studied

Information about the projects was ascertained either through structured interviews with the chairmen of projects, or where persons were not available for interviews through questionnaires sent to them.

Further, structured interviews were also held with people actively involved in projects. Questionnaires were sent to those people who could not be interviewed personally. It was not always possible to gather information from both chairman and people on the ground from each and every project, but a concerted effort was made to gather information from as many perspectives as possible.

The interviews with both the project managers or chairmen and participants within projects were aimed at finding the following information:

PROJECT MANAGERS
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Type and project category</li> <li>- Who started the project?</li> <li>- How and why the project started?</li> <li>- Were there other options available?</li> <li>- Structure of operation and channels of participation</li> <li>- Support system and funding</li> <li>- How far do grassroots decisions go?</li> <li>- What is done to encourage participation?</li> <li>- Are you happy with the level of participation?</li> <li>- Problems in project and in participation.</li> </ul>

**Figure 4.6 Information from project managers**

PROJECT PARTICIPANTS
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Age, sex, education and socio - economic status</li> <li>- Reasons for involvement</li> <li>- Are they happy with the project?</li> <li>- Would they be involved given other options?</li> <li>- How far does their say go in project decisions?</li> <li>- Are they involved in any other project?</li> <li>- What else would you like to see happening?</li> <li>- Problems encountered</li> </ul>

**Figure 4.7 Information from project participants**

Structured interviews were also held with local organisations and/or individuals who supported and dealt with problem issues. These included:

**Governmental Departments:**

Tribal Authority = 1. Chairman Usuthu Tribal  
Authority

2. 3 ward chiefs

3. 2 chiefs from each ward

Health Department = 1. Community health facilitator

2. Community health workers

4 from Usuthu ward

4 from Mandlakazi ward

2 from Matheni ward

✓ Department of Agriculture and Forestry

= 1. Regional officer

2. District officer

3. Field workers

2 from Usuthu ward

2 from Mandlakazi ward

1 from Matheni ward

### **Non - Governmental Organisations:**

1. Chairman of Nongoma Development Association
2. Chairman of Thokazi Development Association
3. Chairman of Matheni Development Association.

### **Individuals:**

1. Rev Glover, a respected member of the community who is actively involved in water projects and has a Diploma in water management.
2. Prince C. Zulu, a respected Prince and chairman of Thokazi Development Committee

The aim of interviewing these local organisations was to find the following information :

- Distribution of projects they are linked with
- Type and category of project
- How they reach communities or how communities reach them
- Type of support they give
- Where do they get support and funding?
- Their role within development
- What is done to encourage participation?
- Are you happy with projects and with the way people participate?
- Problems in projects and in participation

**Figure 4.8 Information from supporting organisations or sources of support**

### Method of Analysis.

A qualitative, interpretative approach has been adopted in attempting to find out why people participate or do not and how effective this participation is.

The data collected from the interviews and questionnaires is discussed in the chapters which follow. The aim ultimately is to evaluate the potential of these projects and participants have to effect **sustainable** rural development in the area and the lessons which can be learnt for other geographical areas facing similar challenges.

#### 4.3.3 Problems Encountered During the Research

1. Some areas were inaccessible because of lack of transport and bad roads which made travelling difficult.
2. The original plan was to include Matheni ward, (see fig.4.2) in my study area, but because of faction fights in the area, this was not possible. It became impossible to make a follow up on the projects that were already under investigation in the area. As a result, the research is based on the two other wards mentioned, namely Usuthu and Mandlakazi.
3. Another limitation and time - consuming factor was that no proper records were kept by some local organisations and I had to rely totally on oral information.

## **5. GENERAL FEATURES OF THE PROJECTS**

### **5.1 Introduction**

This chapter studies the key elements of participation in the development projects within the study area. It begins by first categorising the projects and then analysing the participation patterns as displayed by the projects. The classification analysis reveals that the project categories reflect the developmental needs of the people in the rural areas, but that most projects were not operating satisfactorily. Strong support to strengthen participation patterns and the capacity of the projects and their organisations is clearly needed to ensure sustainable development.

5.2 Project categories

CATEGORY	TYPE OF PROJECT	NUMBER OF PROJECTS STUDIED
1. SOCIAL INFRASTRUCTURE	Creche	08
	Mobile clinic shelter	08
2. PHYSICAL INFRASTRUCTURE	Road	06
	Water	10
	Sanitation	07
3. HANDCRAFT	Sewing	12
	Knitting	01
	Handcraft	05
	Candle making	07
4. AGRICULTURAL	Community gardens	22
	Poultry farming	09
	Cotton farming	01
5. BUILDING	Block making	04
TOTAL		<u>100</u>



Table 5.1 lists the types of projects found in the study area and the number of each type studied. Community gardens are the most popular and are found in almost all the districts studied. Their popularity can be attributed to the following reasons:

1. The areas studied were predominantly poor rural communities where gardens provided a source of food as well as being income generating.
2. More encouragement and support is offered to community gardens from the agricultural field workers as well as the health workers thereby increasing the desirability of the gardens. Agricultural officers aid community gardeners with technical advice and organisational skills. It was noted that seeds, wire and poles for fencing were sometimes provided.
3. ✓ Community gardens also require less money in terms of member contribution than any other project.

Also high on the community projects list are sewing and poultry projects. These projects also receive a fair degree of support from the KwaZulu Department of Agriculture ( KDA ) through visits by home economists and agricultural officers. In the case of sewing projects, a trainer is brought by the home economist from the KwaZulu Training Trust (KTT) to train the people involved in sewing projects.

Although poultry project do not receive as much support from KDA, they do provide a source of fast cash for the farmer if the chickens survive and hence their relative popularity.

The general lack of potable water or dependable water sources in the area, explains the high involvement of people in water projects. Water projects are therefore essential for the provision of water.

There are very few large scale commercial farming projects or other large scale projects in the area. The largest type included in the study are the cotton and block making projects.

An explanation for low the priority apparently accorded cotton and block making projects lies in the fact that large sums of money need to be put aside for these projects and the rural communities cannot afford them. For instance in the Njoko area, the members in the block making project pay R1000 per person per year for running the project. Another factor which contributes to the low incidence of these projects is that sponsors and loan organisations require more security if large amounts of money are involved in a project. Because the most rural people are poor they do not meet the credit requirements, as a result very few rural communities are involved in cotton and block making projects.

### 5.3 Type of Project and the Needs of Rural Communities

The types of projects that the people are involved in, display the people's needs. These needs can broadly be divided into 3 categories:

### 5.3.1 Infrastructural Projects

Those projects that include road construction, water and sanitation, building clinics, schools and so forth.

### 5.3.2 Income Generating Projects

This category caters for the employment needs of the people for example, sewing, handcraft, poultry, block making, etc.

### 5.3.3 Cost Saving Projects

These are projects which are aimed at cutting down the cost of living. Having gardens for instance tends to ensure the provision of cheaper foods. Other such projects falling within this category are candle making, vaseline and jam making projects.

Those people involved in these projects have the benefit of cutting down on the costs of buying such commodities and obtaining income from the sale of the surplus goods.

An interesting factor to note is that often people are involved in more than one project. In most cases the community gardens act as the mother body of other projects. The usual pattern is that of women from community gardens organisations banding together to start a sewing, handcraft or savings club. The point to be made here is that gardens do not necessarily act as a source of income and therefore other money generating projects are sought for providing further financial assistance. } This one

Another point worth noting is that the type of income generating projects the people are involved in are those that are suitable for the lifestyle of rural women.

They do not need as much commitment as fulltime employment. In projects like sewing, gardens, candle making etc., women get time to be near their families, raising children, taking care of other household chores or taking time off during grass cutting season.

## 5.4 Structure of Operation of the Projects

### 5.4.1 When Were Projects Started?

YEAR	NO OF PROJECTS
1970s	01
1980s	04
1990 -1992	20
1993 -1995	35
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>60</b>

**Figure 5.2** When were the projects started?

Most of the projects were initiated in the period between 1993 -1995. It is not clear whether this upsurge is associated with the renewed hopes after the release of president Mandela. This seems to indicate that people now have national pride and identify themselves with the government of national unity. They are therefore willing to be part of their country's development effort. The people will obviously expect the government to return this loyalty by acknowledging and supporting their development efforts. The challenge facing the government is whether it will be able to live up to these expectations.

Despite the general picture that most projects were started in the 1990s, many projects had actually been in existence before and had faded at different times for different reasons. It was evident from the interviews that the community gardens and water committees had been in existence for a long time, but it was not always possible to trace what had happened to them.

Cotton projects started in the 80s, faded during a period of drought and then started being active once again in 1990 when new funders were available and the obtaining of loans from KwaZulu Finance Cooperation (KFC) became more accessible.

The collapse of projects can be associated with a one man driven project organisation, e.g. when the active chief dies, the active agricultural field worker leaves or an active person within the organisation dies. This creates dependency within the projects members such that they do not survive on their own. This pattern was also noted by Honey et al (1992), in his study of the Gazankulu village project. He noted that the project in one area had collapsed. The reason he attributed to it was that the extension officer assigned to the club was not resident of the village and had no transport. As a result he was unable to visit regularly.

#### 5.4.2 How Were Organisations Formed?

The general pattern in the formation of project organisation is that first people must identify their needs. Meetings are held to form committees and membership fees are paid before the project begins to function.

Different determinants have been identified as contributing towards making people identify their needs. These are shown in order of high incidence (See Fig.5.3).

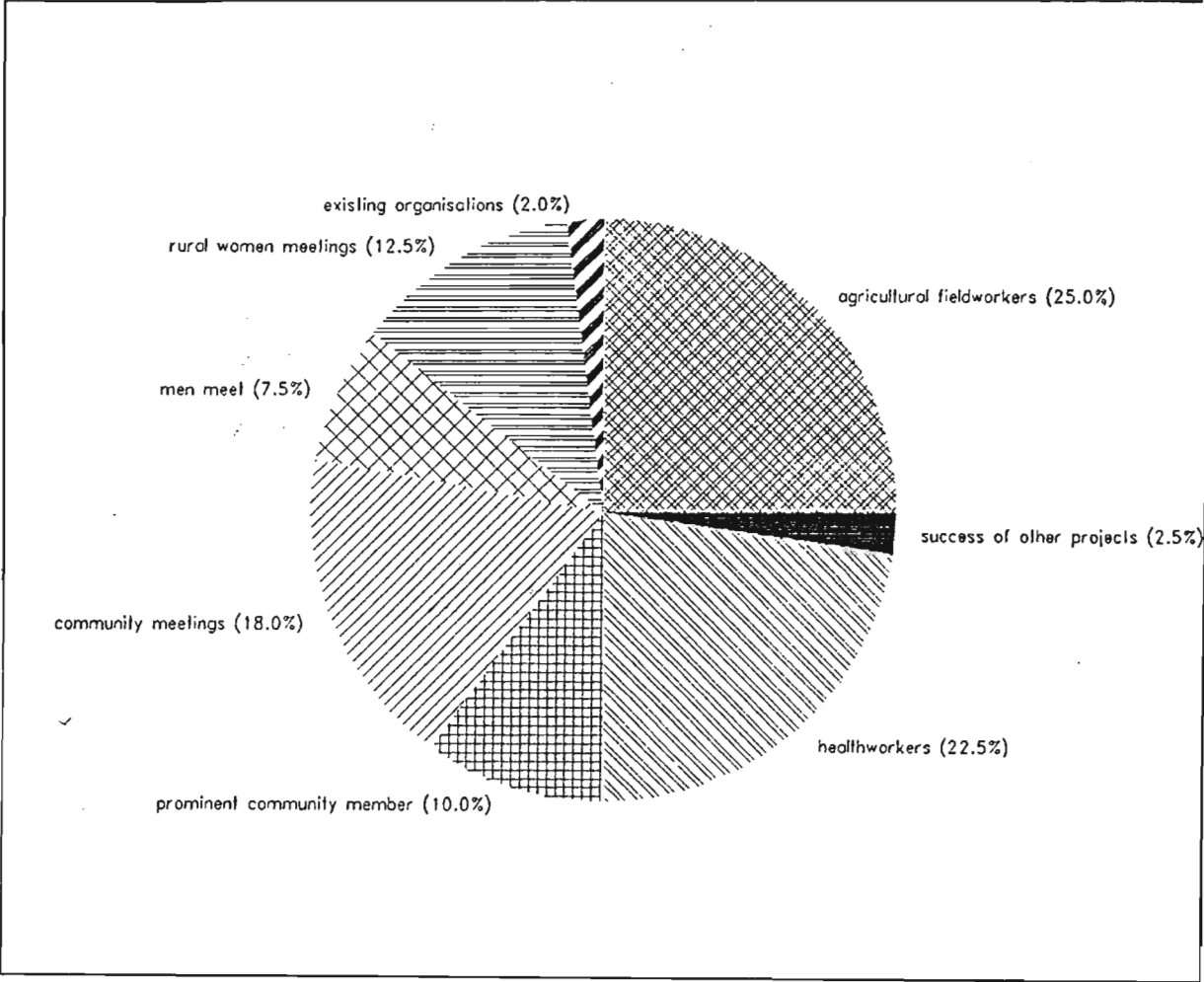


Figure 5.3 Motivating factors for the formation of projects organisation

Source: Fieldwork sample

#### 5.4.2.1 Motivated by agricultural field worker or home economist:

The duties of the agricultural field workers are to advise on agricultural matters. However, facilitating project organisation has become part of their extension work. There are no fixed meetings between the field workers and the communities.

The community only contacts the field worker or home economist if they need help. Field workers are also very few and cannot therefore reach all communities effectively. The projects which usually contact agricultural field worker are garden, sewing and poultry projects.

#### 5.4.2.2 Motivated by Health Worker:

There are two dominant types of projects which were formed after the motivation from health a worker. Those are the sewing and garden projects. Health workers visit the homestead as part of their work to advise community on health and nutrition matters. During their visits they are able to identify development problems and are thus in a better position to motivate on development matters. However the health workers are not sufficiently distributed to cover all areas.

#### 5.4.2.3 Community Meetings:

Community meetings are usually held at the chiefs residence. These meetings provide a forum for discussing development issues.

Sometimes a community member, field worker, health worker or a development committee may request a meeting. During these meetings people identify their needs, or are motivated towards development issues. Sometimes field workers are invited to participate in meetings. Projects which were initiated after such meetings are mostly water and roads projects. The problem with community meetings which are held at the chiefs' place is that other chiefs are uninterested in development matter or are busy with other things.

This is tragic as other areas are then denied a forum where they discuss development issues. This problem therefore calls for a need for permanent institutions which are specifically set aside for discussion of development issues.

#### 5.4.2.4 Rural Womens' Meetings:

These are meetings where women informally invite one another to share their problems. Such meetings are very common in the rural areas because there are many situations where women meet, for example, in the water sources, collecting wood etc. Clubs formed this way are usually sewing clubs and gardens.

#### 5.4.2.5 Motivated by Prominent Members of the Community:

Prominent members of the community quoted as motivators include minister's wife or other active women in the community. These are the members who are respected and are thus able to exert influence on the rural communities.



#### 5.4.2.6 Mens' Meetings:

Meetings of men to discuss development issues are not very common in the rural areas. Although men meet from time to time, their aim is not always to discuss development issues, but rather to discuss other matters concerning their community. Projects associated with meetings solely for men are the block projects and a few infrastructural projects.

#### 5.4.2.7 From Existing Community Organisations:

There are projects which stem from existing organisations.

Within the existing organisations, women may feel the need to form other subcommittees to deal with other problems. Handcraft and sewing projects are sometimes formed from the garden projects. Meetings of the organisation provide a forum where people can further identify their needs.

A further motivation for starting a development project is that the community sees a certain project working in another area and decides to try implementing such a project in their community. The similar pattern was noted by Vlaendaren and Nkwinti (1993) in their Ciskei case study. When other communities saw the success of development projects in the area they had been working in the villages, other started to approach their Umzekelo project for assistance with their own development problems.

Most of the organisations quoted the health workers and agricultural extension workers as the people who taught them how to form their organisation.

From the interviews held with KDA, the building of the organisation was regarded as an essential part of every field worker's task. However, in 40% of the projects studied, the community had learnt how to form organisations from other people who were already involved with other organisations. It is also evident that the rural communities need some form of external motivation to enable them to organise around development issues and build their organisational capacity. Capacity building and training on the management of development projects, therefore, becomes an important factor, and should be included in the development programme if development is to be sustainable.

In most of the projects studied the agricultural field workers and health workers were not directly in the formation of the project. This is in line with the KDA policy that the projects should be the initiative of the people, so that they feel the project belongs to them and not to the government, thereby increasing the level of self sustainability and self dependency. This has been identified in much of the literature on development as important aspect for sustainability, but that has not been the case with the projects studied in this research. McIntosh and Friedman (1989) in their study of women producer groups in KwaZulu - Natal, discovered that the organisational structure of those initiated at grassroots level had the potential for sustaining activities which they regarded as important. Their only limitation was that they failed to achieve economic viability. This is the same problem experienced by most of the projects studied in this research. Even though they were internally organised, they lacked the financial resources, to make them economically sustainable.

It is encouraging to see that people who participate have been able to effectively organise around development issues. This is a clear indication that people are ready for development and is a good sign of willingness to participate despite difficulties experienced in participation.

#### 5.4.3 Why were project organisations formed and were there other options available?

There is an obvious correlation between the type of projects people in the rural areas are engaged in and the reasons why they are formed. When one looks at the reasons why people participate it becomes clear that the people participate in order to satisfy their felt needs and improve their situation, where no one else seems to take the responsibility.

This is also noted by (Vlaenderen and Nkwiti, 1993 p.214) " ... projects are initiated when deprived, oppressed or marginalised communities indicate their dissatisfaction with their socio-economic condition". Discussed below are reasons why projects are started, and what purpose they serve.

##### 5.4.3.1. Provision of infrastructure:

People become involved in infrastructural projects, e.g roads, water and clinics because of the need to develop their communities and make life less burdensome for themselves.

These infrastructural projects were started because there was no provision of such services and people did not know who to turn to as the government was not showing any responsibility towards the provision of these services. This corresponds with the idea that Third World governments neglects rural development, which was discussed in chapter three of this thesis. An area may desperately feel that it needs a clinic, and since it cannot turn to anyone for the provision of this service, they have to see to its provision themselves. People feel obliged to take charge of development because no one else is taking charge. The formation of project organisation seems to be out of desperate necessity voluntary, but rather people participate because there is no other alternative.

#### 5.4.3.2 Employment Opportunities / Income needs:

Another reason which encourages people to become involved, is the need for income.

The projects which satisfy this need are the income generating projects such as handcraft and sewing projects, poultry, block making and cotton projects. It is often the case in the rural areas that the lack of employment opportunities leaves the people with no options but to become involved in these projects.

#### 5.4.3.3 Cost Saving Skills:

The third reason is associated with catering for the poverty needs of the rural people. These are projects like gardens which act as a source of food, candles which cut down the cost of household supplies, knitting and sewing.

Forming organisations seem to be the way of survival to the rural communities. This includes providing physical infrastructure as well as providing employment opportunities. By forming organisations they are able to pool their funds together and contribute towards the resources they need. The rural communities have to form fully constituted organisations, with a certain amount of cash in the bank as this is a prerequisite from most of the funders. People also need to be organised so as to be able to purchase their own inputs and pool their funds together so that they can be able to take care of their needs.

#### 5.4.5 Number of members within projects

P.C	1 - 10	10 -20	30 -50	50 +	W.C	TOTAL
Creche	05	02	-	-	01	08
Infra	-	-	-	-	31	31
Sew	05	07	-	-	-	12
Knit	01	-	-	-	-	01
Hand	04	01	-	-	-	05
Candle	03	04	-	-	-	07
Garden	03	05	12	02	-	22
Poult	05	04	-	-	-	09
Cotton	-	-	-	01	-	01
Block	-	-	01	03	-	04
<b>TOTAL</b>						<b>100</b>

Fig.5.4 Number of members in projects

Key: P.C = Project category                      W.C = Whole community  
 Infra = Infrastructure;      Sew = Sewing;      Knit = knitting  
 Hand = Handcraft;      Cand = Candle;      Poult = Poultry

Statistics in the table suggest that the number of members in the project organisation depends on the type of the project, for example, some projects by their very nature and high cost, involve the whole community or a number of families. Projects within this category are clinics, roads, water and sanitation projects.

The second category is that of projects with more than 50 members. The projects which fell within this category were cotton and block projects. The large numbers in these projects can be attributed to the fact that more money is required to run these projects and therefore more people need to pool their funds together.

The third category is that of projects with 30 - 50 members. The dominant project type in this category are the community gardens. In the 10 - 30 member category we find mostly sewing and garden projects. In the category of projects with less than 10 members there are handcraft, candle making projects, etc. These are projects which favour working individually and do not therefore need a lot of members.

#### 5.4.6 Constitution and Policy Framework

All the organisations had the necessary office bearers and had a constitution. Although they had office bearers, the work was not really specified, and anyone does the work, such as balancing financial books or writing minutes as it comes in depending on who is not busy at the time.

Organisations did not have a clear policy framework nor any future plans of expansion. They believed that these would only be determined by the availability of the funds. The necessary books were kept by most organisations although they were not always properly done and no proper records were kept. Most of the organisations also had a certain amount of bank balance in their bank books.

Most of the organisations mentioned that meetings were held between the committee members should need arise. The constitution also specified how many meetings should be held. However there was a widespread complaint among the project chairpersons that people were reluctant to attend meetings.

In the infrastructural projects quarterly meeting are held between the committee and the community members. These are usually held at the chief's place and minuted by the tribal authority. The water committees meet monthly with water committees from other districts through meetings called by the Nongoma Development Association.

Despite the initiation of the idea of meetings there are many problems in some areas. In the infrastructural projects the attendance of meetings was very low. People tended to be more involved in projects with direct benefits e.g gardens or money generating projects like sewing. In one sanitation project there have been no meeting since the formation and they planned to meet once funds are available. In the sewing and garden projects, over and above the meeting with members of the club, they also have meetings with KDA officers, as often as they need help.

There were very few instances where there are no meetings at all in the project organisation. In the sewing projects, not having meetings was associated with the fact that, after training, they started working individually. Although the constitutions of most organisations stipulate when meetings should be held, there is, however, a generally poor attendance of meetings.

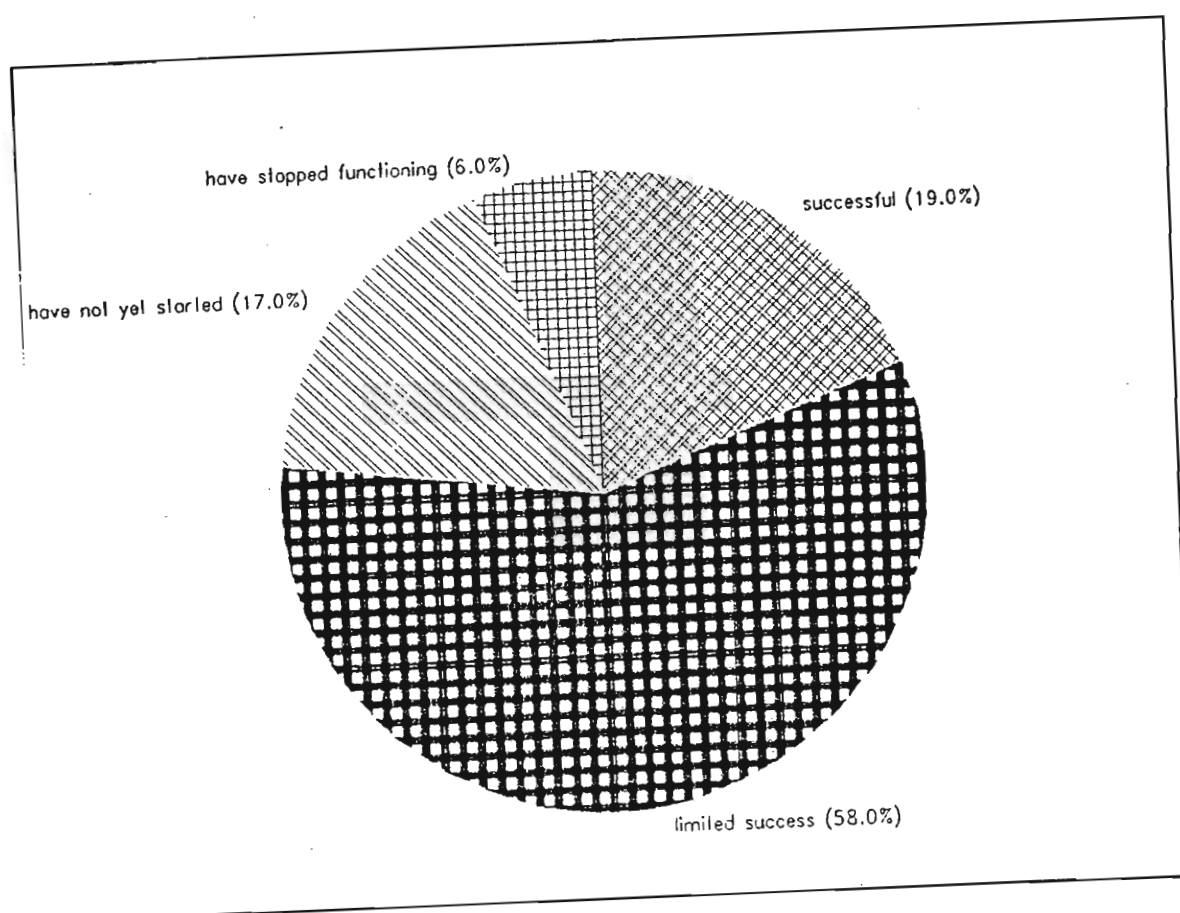


Another point to be noted is that in most organisations no co-operative meetings were held with other similar project committees, except for the water committees. Most projects operate in relative isolation.

Generally the projects were not well run, as books were not well kept and they did not have a framework upon which the organisation was based. The committee members also did not fully commit themselves to attending meetings pertaining to the smooth running and planning within the project or attending to work that needed to be done within the project organisation.

They also do not have money to spend on the project e.g transport costs or administration costs so as to ensure efficient running of the project. Well run organisations are crucial to sustainable development. Capacity building through appropriate training and financial empowerment should receive priority attention (Thomas and Stilwell, 1994).

### 5.5 Extent of project success



**Figure 5.5** Extent of success of the projects

**Source :** Fieldwork sample

This section tries to establish whether projects are successful or not, how well they function and whether they fulfil their intended purpose. To determine the success or failure of the project it is useful to establish how much the project has been able to achieve. Are projects merely existing as organisations or are they really benefitting people and satisfying needs?

The level of development or extent of success of the project can be divided into 4 categories:

1. Successful
2. Limited success ( functioning but struggling )
3. Those projects that have not started functioning yet
4. Those that have stopped functioning

#### 5.5.1 Successful Projects and Contributory Factors

Only 19% of the one hundred projects studied were considered to be successful. These are projects which have been completed, in terms of infrastructural projects, and those which have developed to the point of selling and generating a profit, or which were generally functioning well. This was seen in how much the project has been able to achieve and whether people were satisfied with it.

Most of the successful projects fall within the category of infrastructural projects, because they have the capacity to be completed. There were fewer income generating projects which were considered successful.

Almost all those projects which were successful had received funding, mostly from IDT. The creche projects were funded for buildings, equipment and toys. The parents were only paying for the teacher.

Roads were completed or certain phases had been completed through funding. In the road projects which had been funded, the community contributed with labour and were subsequently paid. In water projects, water had been brought nearer and boreholes or tanks provided. In one community there were taps in every household. In successful sanitation projects, materials for building toilets had been supplied in some homesteads or, in other cases, in all homesteads. The number of homesteads supplied with building material depended on how much supply the donors were prepared to give.

In the successful garden projects, the gardens were functioning well and people were able to get food from them. However, in most gardens the production had not grown beyond self consumption. Selling was limited and no market had been generated. In the sewing projects, people had received training and they had a sewing centre with all the necessary equipment and were sewing for schools or had a steady market from the local community. In successful candle projects, candles were selling very well, although people were selling from their own homes. In poultry projects, they had the shelter for the chickens, could afford to buy food from the profit and were selling very well. The cotton project was getting a loan from the KFC and Clark Cotton. However, they could work even if they had no money as money owed was deducted from the profit of the produce. Successful block making projects were those that were making and selling blocks to an extent that people thought that they were getting enough profit from the project.

The success of the projects identified as successful could be attributed to these factors :

1. Availability of donations
2. Thokazi Development Committee
  1. Institutional support
  2. Leadership
3. Demand for project

#### 5.5.1.1 Availability of Donations:

Those projects that had been successful had received funding in one way or another. Creches had received funding from the Independent Development Trust (IDT). Roads were funded by Lima Consultants and water projects were funded by Imvula Trust. The cotton project was successful because members did not have to pay for 'material', but received loans from KFC and Clark Cotton. Money was also deducted from profits of produce.

#### 5.5.1.2 Enough Funds from Members' Contribution:

There are also those projects which are successful even though they are not receiving any funding. One such clinic project has been completed from the community's own funds, even though it did take 3 years to build three small rooms.

The successful candle projects were also not funded but the membership fees ranged between R5 - R10.

They are able to operate because the equipment and materials which they use to make candles is affordable if bought in bulk. Their efforts are also encouraged by the fact that candles are commonly used in the rural areas and that creates a great demand for them.

The gardens also operate from members' own contribution because not much money is needed in running these projects.

#### 5.5.1.3 Thokazi Development Committee:

A second interesting factor is that the successful projects seem to be concentrated in the Thokazi district all under the Thokazi Development Committee. This is a body that is responsible for all development in the area, the association chairman being Prince Capsin Zulu. He has been very active in generating funding for most of the projects in this area. The King who is the chief of the ward, has been working in conjunction with the Thokazi Development Association. The successful fowl run and sewing projects were started by the King and then run by his wife. The King has an advantageous position of access to funds, because he has knowledge of where to get funds and people sponsoring development in KwaZulu go through him. Projects in Thokazi have an institutional support base, because they can report their development efforts and problems to the association and they are lucky to have a person who can bargain for funds. This proves that leadership is also an important aspect of successful participation. Another important point is that projects in the Thokazi district receive institutional support from the Thokazi development Committee. They are able to report their problems and seek advice from the committee.

This aspect has been cited in literature as an important component of successful participation.

#### 5.5.1.4 Demand:

The success of projects is also determined by the demand for the project product. If there is a demand for what can be produced, the people within the project are prepared to contribute more money to get the project going.

Block making projects are in demand in the rural areas because of the need for cheaper building materials. The success of block projects can be attributed to the fact that because more financial contribution is required in these projects, people commit themselves to the success of the project so that they do not operate at a loss.

The poultry projects also survive because fast profit is obtained from the sale of chickens and their demand is very high. If they have been able to raise the chickens well and no problems are experienced they are sure of a good market. Higher membership fees are also paid for poultry products. Most of the projects found within this category are incoming generating projects.

### **5.5.2 Projects with Limited Success and Experiencing Stresses**

This refers to those projects that were functioning and people were benefitting from them, but people were not completely happy about them. These projects had not completely reached their intended purpose. 58% of the projects studied fell within this category. The projects which fall within this category are infrastructural projects. These projects are very expensive to carry out and they need proper maintenance. The projects in this category usually have been pushed this far through donations, and once funding was removed there was no money to sustain the project.

The following factors were identified as stresses to the success of the projects in the study area.

1. Lack of funding
2. Infrastructural hindrances

#### **5.5.2.1 Lack of Funding:**

In the creche projects, for instance, the creche is successfully built from donations or communities own funds. The problem now is continuing with the paying of teachers or getting food and other necessary equipment. In the clinic projects, parts of the clinic had been finished, but the project could not continue because people were not paying.

The clinic shelters are however in use, although they are not in a satisfactory condition. For example, they do not have all the equipment and no water and sanitation services are provided.



The mobile clinic only comes once a month and people would like to see a real clinic built instead. Since it had been said earlier on that three years were taken to build a shelter alone, it would be difficult to achieve this.

In the water projects, efforts have been made to bring water closer to the communities through water tanks donations or installation of boreholes. The problem now becomes that of paying for the maintenance of tanks or boreholes. All these efforts are only possible through sponsors. Water projects are among the most expensive and it becomes difficult for people to pay from their own funds. In the sanitation projects, toilets have been provided in some households through external funding. Further funding is still required to build toilets for the other households. Those that had not as yet received funding were not willing to start on their own, because they had seen that it is possible to get donations.

In the income generating projects, people are able to get skills through free training, as in sewing projects or through sharing skills with other women. However, after that, people find it difficult to carry on. They lack the capital to carry on their own business and to buy the necessary materials and equipment.

#### 5.5.2.2 Infrastructural Hindrance

Brookes (1991) argues that the most important constraint on sustainable development in the less developed areas is the poor development of needed infrastructure (good roads, electricity, piped water supply, sanitation facilities and lack of markets, physical and financial resources.

These problems of infrastructural hindrance were also experienced in the Nongoma study area.

In the sewing projects people are trained using donor's machines and materials. As soon as they finish, they leave with the machines and the members are left with only the skills. They struggle to get money to buy materials or machines or to have a sewing centre or places to sell. Even for those who are selling there is not enough of a market, people are not buying to the participants' satisfaction and they do not get big contracts. Others who have been trained feel that they need more skills. Those who get lucky and are able to sell successfully, get out of the organisation, because it keeps them back if they have to share expenses. It seems the market is not checked before training or people's skills are not appropriate to the market.

Handcraft projects usually do not need a lot of money to maintained. Beads and clay are obtained locally and are cheap or available freely. Most of these projects survive on their own funds. The only limitation is the lack of market and people within these projects areas are not satisfied with the rate of selling. Most of those doing beadwork and pottery sell their handcraft at Pongola where they get a chance of selling to tourists.

The candle projects survive but their limitation is that they do not have all the necessary equipment, for example, pots and the candle mixture is not obtained locally.

Most of the gardens are able to survive from the members own contribution only. Money is needed to buy seeds or medicines. This help was initially given by KDA. Limitation in most gardens are related to water problems.

Honey et al (1992 :223) noticed the same problems in the Gazankulu village garden projects. The progress within the projects was hindered by pump problems and resultant water shortages. The extension officers' lack of transport curbed efforts to organise a maintenance team to resolve the water problems. Most of the extension officers in Nongoma also did not have transport and given the transport problems in the rural areas, it is difficult for them to reach all rural communities. (See section 9.5.5 of this thesis).

There are also complaints that plots are too small and they are only able to produce enough for their own consumption. In a few gardens there were problems of lack of fences and their produce is therefore constantly being destroyed by animals.

Although it may seem that the gardens are not dependent on outside sponsors, seeing that they can function fairly well in the absence of sponsors, in most garden projects, people felt that they needed the money. The contradiction is that after saying that they were satisfied with the project and it was helping them, they displayed dissatisfaction that they do not have money. This raises concerns that people want something that will bring in money. The aim of the people in garden projects is that they want food as well as income from produce.

They produce food, but no income is obtained because plots are small and because of other problems, less is produced.

Most of the poultry projects are not funded, yet they survive on their own funds because profit made is enough to be ploughed back to the project. Limitations within the poultry projects include, slow payments and not having enough funds.

Others have started with the buildings, but have not started selling yet because they are still accumulating or trying to get funds. Others are selling, but do not have a decent or appropriate shelter and they are struggling to buy chicken food which is too expensive. They are therefore struggling to maintain the project from their own funds.

The limitation in the block making project is the water problem, since these projects are dependent on water. One project from Nongoma has to operate from Mkhuze because of the scarcity of water in the area, (See Fig.4.1). Support towards provision of water is needed. Funding is needed towards the expansion of business, because they felt that their own funds could only afford small scale operations and there are no chances of expansion.

The research also noted that there is a pattern of stopping payments in those projects that were initially dependent on own funds. This pattern is encouraged by projects which see that people have received donations somewhere and they also wait for the donations. Their whole interest seem to be centred around money rather than the project.

### **5.5.3 Projects That Have Not Started Operating**

17% of the projects studied fell into this category. These are projects which only exist as organisational plans, but nothing has been done about them as yet. They are either awaiting funding or are waiting for people to pay. These are usually organisations which have seen projects in other areas succeeding because of donations, or projects which have just started. This confirms the point that donations create dependency.

People think that the problems they experience in projects can only be solved by external funding and they undermine their own capabilities or what they can achieve on their own.

The limitations to these projects seem to be twofold:

1. People are not paying or few of them have paid.
2. No donations have been received.

Most of the projects falling within this category are infrastructural projects. This is understandable because these projects are very expensive and it is difficult for rural people to afford the payments. Candle projects which fell within this category had not started because they were still waiting for training on how to make candles. The other type of project falling within this category were poultry projects. Their limitations were that they were still awaiting training and did not have enough money to get started or to send a person for training.

#### 5.5.4 Projects That Have Stopped Operating

Only 6% of the projects studied fell within this category. These are projects which were functioning but have been crippled by a range of problems to the point of stopping. They are not formally dissolved but they still exist as organisations so as to get the advantage of funding, just in case it becomes available. Their limitations are those of lack of sustainability.

Most of the projects falling within this category are the sewing projects. Sewing projects find themselves in this position because training is offered freely and it is an obvious attraction. After that they are left on their own.

They must have capital to start their own business, get a sewing centre and market. People find that they are not able to afford these and they are not confident enough of their skills to be competent to sew and sell. What makes the situation worse is that those who are successful withdraw from the organisations.

A number of reasons have also been identified resulting in the stoppage of garden projects. One garden project stopped because the donor died and no site for the new garden had yet been found. In another garden they did not have a fence and their produce was destroyed by animals to the point that it had to stop. One creche which had stopped had no funds to pay the teacher.

The participants felt that donations and institutional support were not carried to a satisfactory level. The sponsors fund projects with the hope that they will eventually be sustainable after initial support and that has not been the case with these projects. It was evident from the interviews that there seems to be a culture of dependence which has been created within the rural communities. They seem to think that it is only money that is needed for project success and they only participate with the hope of getting money. This culture of dependence can be understood in the light of poverty conditions of the rural poor. Unless their socio - economic situation is improved, we cannot expect them to get out of their situation.

When the project participants were asked whether they were happy with the project, less than 50% of them were completely happy. This means that generally the project failure rate is high.

The reason for dissatisfaction about development projects is that the projects have not been able to make any real improvements in the financial condition and quality of life of the poor. In most projects it takes time before visible results are seen, because they have to accumulate funds or wait for sponsors, which is a very long process.

The high rate of unsuccessful projects in the study is similar to that observed by (Peek 1984 p74). He observed that one third of the development projects are unsuccessful, one third a failure, with 10% being a total failure. On the same note statistics on 212 World Bank Agricultural projects completed between 1978 and 1983 have shown that 53% of projects could be judged a failure (Holomisa 1994).

## 5.6 Support System

After community members have identified the problem and wish to form organisations, there are people who are then contacted for whatever form of support. It is worth noting that other organisation look for support even before they join. This section investigates who is contacted by the project organisations and what help is given by the supporting organisations or institutions.

All the project organisations studied indicated that they needed to contact someone after forming committees. The same pattern was noted by (Vlaenderen and Nkwiti 1993 p218) in their study of Ciskei community in 1990,

"... All attempts to improve their condition were characterised by a dependency on someone from outside the community to provide the needed material and human resources ".

In most cases more than one contact was made. The chief was the most contacted, not because he had most help to offer, but because every decisions taken in the community had to go through him. The next most contacted person is the agricultural field worker.

The people contacted can be divided into 3 categories:

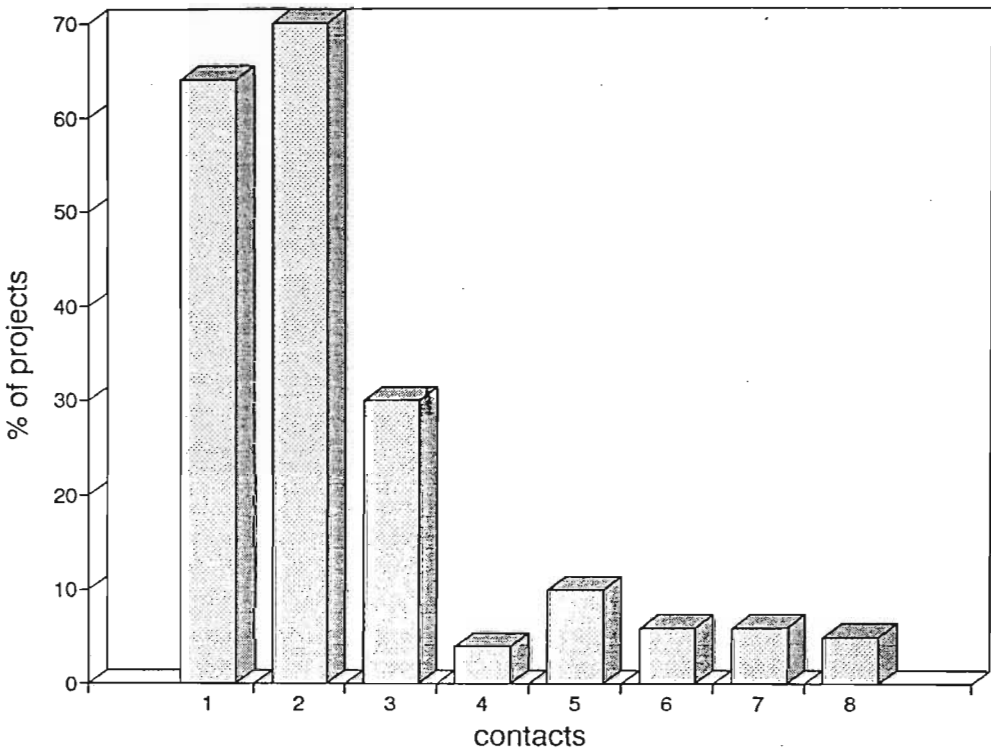
1. Government institutions
2. Non - government organisations
3. Community based organisations
4. Prominent member of the community

Figure 5.6 shows the contacts and the percentage of the people who contact them.



**Figure 5.6    Institutions and other sources of support contacted by project organisations**

**Source:**        Fieldwork sample



**Figure 5.6    Institutions and other sources of support contacted by project organisations**

**Source :** Fieldwork Sample

**Key:**

- |                                       |  |
|---------------------------------------|--|
| 1 = Chiefs; 2 = Agricultural officer; | 3 = Health worker;                           |
| 4 = Department of works;              | 5 = KTT; 6 = Nongoma development association |
| 7 = CBO's; 8 = Prominent person       |  |

NB    Refer to chapter 9 of this thesis for more detailed information on the structure of operation of these organisations and institutions.

### 5.6.1 Government institutions

#### 5.6.1.1 Tribal Authorities

The Tribal Authority reaches the communities through the chief. The type of projects with the highest incidence of contacting the chief are the infrastructural projects. Almost all such projects contacted the chief. This is because these organisations are formed during community meetings at the chief's residence.

Generally no help is really obtained from the chief, except for issuing of sites where needed. There are only a few instances where the chief has actually helped, e.g referring the organisations to the right channels. The second category which always contact the chief are the garden projects. This is understandable because sites are needed for the community gardens. The support given by the chief will depend on how active the chief is. Whatever the case, it still becomes very important to inform the chief of whatever is happening in the area.

#### 5.6.1.2 Kwazulu Department of Agriculture

The Dept of Agriculture reaches the community through the agricultural field workers. The agricultural field workers are by far the most contacted person in projects. Those projects which tend to be initiated through contacting the field worker are the sewing, gardens and poultry projects. This is because these projects fall within the field worker's extension work.

The field workers advise communities on agricultural matters, e.g which fertiliser to use or how to manage gardens. They advise on the cost of the project and where financial assistance can be obtained or refer them to the expert. In the case of some gardens, fence poles and seeds are provided. No financial assistance is given towards the running of community gardens projects. In the poultry projects the agricultural field worker advises on how and where to get chickens and how to raise them.

The sewing projects fall under the work of the home economist of the KDA, but since there is a shortage, the agricultural field workers take over. Support given includes forming organisations, getting a trainer or referring them to the KTT. Other projects that contact the field worker, although to a limited extent, are the creche and sanitation projects. In a few of them sand was supplied for building, but generally no help was given.

#### 5.6.1.3 KwaZulu Department of Health:

The Department of Health reaches the communities through the health worker. Although health workers featured prominently as motivators to the formation of organisations, (refer to 5.4.2.2 of this chapter) only 3% of the projects contacted them for support. The health workers advise community on health and nutrition matters. As they visit the communities they are able to motivate the community on developmental matters. Their role in development include educating communities on the formation of projects and referring them to the right channels.

#### 5.6.1.4 KwaZulu Training Trust

KTT was mainly contacted by the sewing projects, directly by the projects or after referral by KDA. The support given is mainly that of supplying a trainer. In some cases, KTT sells machines to the people within projects at lower prices. KTT also train people on poultry projects.

#### 5.6.1.5 KwaZulu Department of Works

There were very few projects that consulted the Department of Public Works. Those were mainly road projects. In one project no help was given and they said they do not deal with tribal roads. Their main task is to send engineering consultants to survey the area. Communities claim that no further help is given.

### 5.6.2 Non - governmental organisations

#### 5.6.2.1 Nongoma Development Association

The only NGO mentioned was the Nongoma Development Association (NDA). The Nongoma Development Association is consulted mainly by road projects in the project studied, although it has other projects linked to it. The NDA refers them to the Department of Works and they also accompanied the consultant to survey the area. It also helps with seeking funds for the projects and helping with the filling-in of application forms for financial assistance.

### 5.6.3 Community based organisations

Only 6% of the projects studied contacted the other existing community based organisations (CBO). The projects that had contacted other organisations are the creche projects. The already established creche projects seem to provide a strong support for the new ones. In other projects no particular help is given, but rather moral support. In one particular organisation it helped with the training of the teacher and it still helps with food donations. The sewing and knitting projects also indicated using CBOs. Here the CBOs only help by sharing their skills with them.

### 5.6.4 Individuals and Prominent Community Members

These are the people who render their help as individuals. People contact them because they had seen them helping in other communities. An example of this is Rev. Glover. Rev. Glover has a Diploma in Water Engineering and he offers his skills in water projects. Most of the water project organisations in the area had contacted him. Support given include donations of water tanks, installation of boreholes and surveying projects. He makes himself accessible by attending the community water meetings.

Other individuals contacted include a very active tribal Prince in the area, Prince C.Zulu. He works for Engineering consultants and has been able to get funds for his area. People come to him and he applies for funding for them.

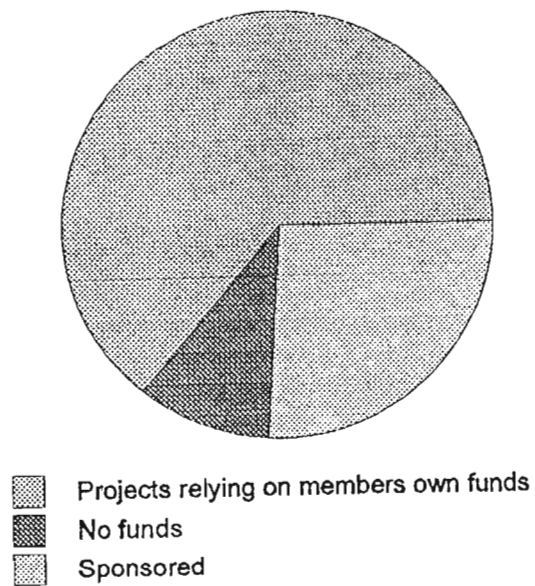
All the projects studied had consulted someone after formation, with the hope of getting help or support. This expresses the need to support the developmental efforts of the poor. There is always need for leadership and for external help and motivation to help rural communities realise their potential. However, the help sought is always financial and communities do not seem to regard the training they get e.g training on project management as important. This echoes what has been said earlier on, that people think that the whole existence of the project depend on funding and they disregard the empowerment of the participants.

Projects at Thokazi district were very successful even though they had not contacted any of these local organisations. They made application straight to the funders. This would seem to mean that these contacts and the support they give do not make much difference towards the success of the project, but it is rather the receiving of funding that determines the success or failure of the project. This issue highlights the relative importance of funding on one hand and other necessities for successful development on the other hand. It is important therefore that the empowerment that these institutions and organisations give, be backed up by strong financial support. Empowerment alone without adequate financial support is futile.

The local people generally have strong ideas about what they want, but often lack opportunity, knowledge and the necessary skills needed to improve their situations. Development organisations need to tap this resource as they continue with the process, (Holomisa1994 p101).

## 5.7 Funding

For each and every project money is needed to run the project as well as organisation. Less than 36% of the projects studied received any form of funding or donations. Most relied on their own funds and others had no funds at all. Fig 5.7 gives an indication of how projects are funded.



**Figure 5.7** Funding of projects

**Source :** Fieldwork sample

### 5.7.1 Projects relying on members funds

PROJECT TYPE	R5 -R10	R11-R40	R41-R50	R50 +	TOTAL
Creche	4	-	-	-	4
Clinic	-	3	-	-	3
Road	-	-	-	-	0
Water	4	-	3	-	7
Sanitati	-	-	-	-	-
Sewing	-	9	-	-	9
Knitting	-	-	-	-	0
Handcraf	2	-	-	-	2
Candle	5	-	-	-	5
Garden	20	-	-	-	20
Poultry	4	-	6	-	10
Cotton	-	-	-	-	0
Block	-	-	-	4	4
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>64</b>				

**Fig. 5.8 Members' contribution in the projects**

64% of all the projects studied ran the project from members own contribution. For creche projects parents contribute by paying for the teacher. The usual contribution is R5 per child. Where a need for further building still exists, the parents are required to pay an extra R10.



Considering that the high cost of running a creche, it is understandable why people lose interest on the way, as they are still accumulating funds because it takes a long time before visible results can be seen. None of the clinic projects studied had received any form of funding. Between R20 - R30 is paid per homestead towards the construction of the clinic shelter. The cost of running a clinic is very high. Most of the clinic projects therefore are incomplete or have not started at all, while people are still collecting funds. The only clinic which had been successfully completed with 3 rooms, took almost 3 years to complete.

The cost of water projects are also very expensive. Payments made towards water projects range between R50 per house once a year or R5 monthly. The organisation with the highest bank balance had R2000 in the bank. As a result the money collected by the members can never be enough to cover all the costs. All water projects therefore function if there has been funding or some sort of donation. The money collected is never meant to carry out the project cost, but rather towards maintenance of the equipment.

The other projects which rely on own funds are sewing and handcraft. Most of the sewing projects get free training and their own funds go towards buying of material, equipment and obtaining shelter. Only one sewing project had managed to build its own sewing centre, most rely on church or school building as their sewing centre. The sewing projects do not pay any fixed amount, but payment depends on needs. Candle projects contribute R20 per year and that is usually enough to cover the cost of running the project. Money to buy more is obtained from profits.

Garden projects also do not have any external funding and rely solely on their own funds. The contribution is R5.00 per member and goes towards buying of seeds fertilisers, etc. Extra money is paid if fencing is needed, for instance.

Poultry projects rely solely on own funds. The usual joining fee is R50.00 and more money is then paid depending on the needs, e.g for shelter, to buy more chickens or to buy chicken food. Block projects also do not receive any form of funding. More money is paid in block projects. The average amount is R1000 per person. The profit from projects is then used to keep the project running.

#### 5.7.2 Projects with no funds

10% of the funds studied did not have funds. The members in the road projects do not contribute any money towards road projects. The community's contribution is in the form of labour and also for the maintenance of the road. All the road that have been successfully completed had relied mainly on external funding, (See 5.7.3 for sponsors). Community members are employed and are subsequently paid for their labour.

Two of the seven sanitation projects studied did not have any funds. The explanation for this was that these projects had seen other districts being helped with funds to build toilets. They saw that it was possible to get toilets without actually using their own funds. There were also complaints that people were simply refusing to pay.

### 5.7.3 Sponsored Projects

External funding is very difficult to get and often people have to wait for a long time before funding can be available. Funds do not arrive on the expected date. The community becomes demoralised as it waits for funds (Nkwiti 1993). What makes the situation worse is that the funders have their predetermined conditions of funding and of what development should be. The selection of the projects to be funded is based on the bank balance of the organisation. This does not acknowledge that the financial situation of the poor is not their strongest point. The other contributions which the poor may offer, for example their labour and their enthusiasm, is looked down upon. This excludes the poorest communities which cannot raise funds at all.

Only 26% of the projects studied had received any form of external funding or donations. 6% of the projects studied were funded by IDT. The projects that were sponsored by IDT include creche and water projects. They cover all the expenses for construction and the community only maintains the project from its own funds. 10% of the projects were funded by the Imvula Trust. Imvula Trust funded mainly the water and sanitation projects. Usually it covers all the expenses and the community maintains the project from its own funds or by labour. Other sponsors include, Lima consultants, National Economic Forum, Corporate Outreach, loans from KFC and Clark Cotton.

From the above it is evident that the development projects are inadequately funded. Communities have to largely remain on their own funds.

Given the high cost of implementing projects in the rural areas and the poverty situation of the people in the rural areas, the chances of projects succeeding are very limited.

An interesting factor is how the organisations come to hear of the funders. When asked this question, very few said they heard it from the organisations they contacted. Most of them said "from others". One interesting case is that of the project manager who saw an advert of the sponsor in the Sunday Times newspaper. It came out that they got help from that sponsor, but how many rural people are able to read or read the Sunday Times. Although it is apparent that people need to know about funders, there is no particular place where they can get that information; i.e there is no resource centre for them. If sponsors really mean to reach the rural poor, they should make use of channels that are accessible to the rural communities, e.g tribal authorities or any other structure in rural areas. These structures should have an inventory of all those who are willing to help the rural communities. Another important lesson to be learnt from this example is that reading (literacy) is the key to successful participation. How can we expect rural communities to make their project proposals without being able to read and write, even if they had a local contact anyway. Basic literacy skills are important for successful participation.

There is also a pattern of organisations keeping money in the bank for the sake of the funders. Funders always want to find out the financial position of the organisations before they can fund projects. An important factor which is overlooked here is that rural people are poverty stricken and financial contribution cannot be their strongest point, but they have labour and enthusiasm that they can offer.

Another point worth noting is that the development plans of the funders do not always coincide with those of the community. Although most of the communities are involved in the gardens and sewing projects, the projects that receive much funding are the water and sanitation projects. This situation can be resolved if there is a broad programme of rural development which will encompass all the developmental needs of the rural areas and the funds could be distributed evenly to cater for all those needs.

## 5.8 Conclusion

This chapter has revealed that for a range of reasons, the level of success of the projects have not reached a satisfactory level. It is clear that although rural communities show their willingness to get involved in development, there are many stresses to their participation. The support they get from the local structures, and the local resources are insufficient to bring about change.

The potential of the poor to improve their situation is higher, provided their efforts receive appropriate support. Solutions to rural poverty lie in the support that the participation of the poor will receive. This will involve restructuring of institutional structures such that there is a strong support for local initiatives. The activities of the poor should be able to inform planners and be fitted within the broad development programme.

What is needed in the rural areas are strong support structures and a strong policy direction or commitment from the government. If this is neglected the efforts of the poor will be isolated and meaningless and they will continue being marginalised. The next chapter will look at the implications for sustainability of the projects.

## **6. PROJECT INFORMATION : PARTICIPATION MODEL AND IMPLICATIONS FOR SUSTAINABILITY**

### **6.1 Introduction**

When project managers were asked whether they were happy with the way people participate, there was a general positive response, yet the success of the projects had not reached a satisfactory level. Participation problems were only experienced in infrastructural projects which involved the whole community. The problems were not related to not being involved in projects, but were rather associated with the reluctance to pay or to attend meetings. The same positive response applied to people when people were asked if they had a say in decision making within the project. They were happy with the way they participate.

Despite the general positive image projected, the level of participation does not seem to correspond with the level of success of the project. It appears therefore that the willingness and the keenness of the people to participate does not guarantee success of the project. It can be assumed therefore that the type of participation that take place in KwaZulu Natal rural areas and its support systems cannot meaningfully address poverty problems. The same warning had been uttered by (Huppert in Thomas and Stilwell 1994 p18),

" Experience indicates that participatory approaches have not always been successful ... warnings have consequently been voiced against expecting too much from increased participation, or regarding it as a 'magic formula' for rural development."

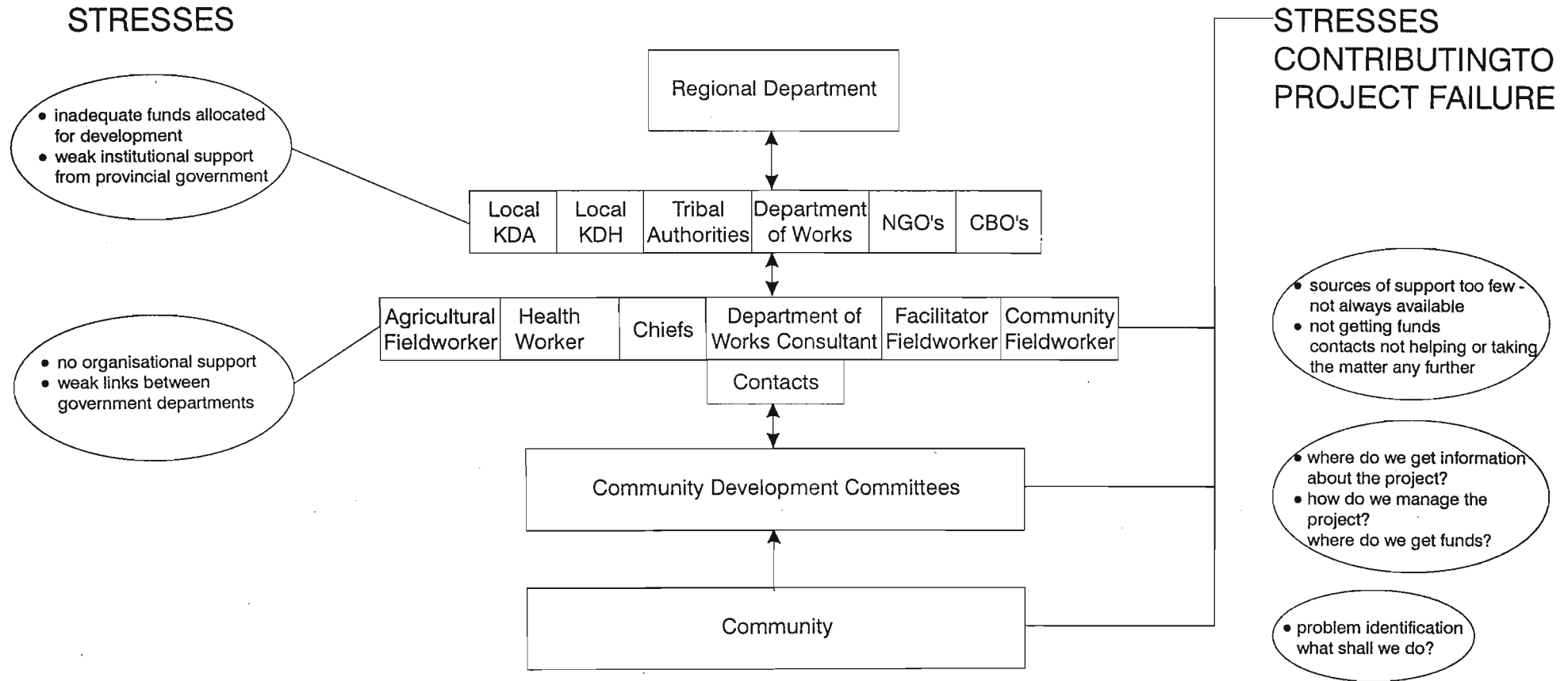
Fig.6.1

Current participation model in the Nongoma district of KwaZulu -

Natal.

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# CURRENT PARTICIPATION MODEL





The above model tries to explain where the weak link in participation occurs, how far the grassroots initiation can go and where it is held back. From this model it seems that there are a number of stresses to participation, but for the purpose of this research we concentrate on the following points:

1. Funding
2. Provision of infrastructure
3. Institutional support system
4. Development plans of funders versus community needs
5. Socio - economic status of rural people
6. Projects as employment opportunities

## 6.2 Funding

The biggest stress to the success of most projects is the lack of funding. All the projects need money to operate successfully. Some projects cannot start at all because there are no funds available. Those who are lucky to obtain funding usually find it difficult to operate after funding is removed. For example, in the creche projects funding may be provided to train teachers, build a creche and buy all the necessary equipment, but once it is completed, the community finds it difficult to pay the teacher or to supply regular food for the children. In order to succeed most development projects need constant funding (Holomisa 1994 p103).

This research does not call for a welfare state, but we need to consider the poverty situation of the rural poor and its associated problems. We need to reconcile this dependency on funds with the chances for self reliance.

Rural people obviously lack funds needed for success of projects, this calls for strong financial back up , while at the same time working towards self reliance and empowerment of rural communities. The rural communities who rely on their own funds, find it strenuous to carry their projects towards success. People have to accumulate funds and given the high costs of projects, it takes a long time to accumulate funds and some monies are lost on the way leading to the issue where no immediate results can be seen.

People basically depend on their own funds for development. Given their poverty stricken conditions, it is obvious that without any form of external funding projects will not be able to survive. The funds allocated by the government towards rural development are inadequate and do not cover all the people's needs. Adequate money need to be allocated for rural development if participation is to be sustainable.

The other stress to the success of projects is the current trend towards a stoppage of payments. People see other projects receiving funds and are filled with hopes that their project might be funded as well. This has created a sense of dependency among the rural people as they now relax and wait for funds

People are so desperate about funding it appears they believe that the whole existence of the project revolves around money. In fact the impression one gets is that they are more interested in money than the project itself. The general outcry in the garden project was that people needed money, and the reasons for needing money were not given as those of expanding the project, but rather just needing money. It becomes apparent therefore that what people really need are employment opportunities, where they will be able to earn money.

### **6.3 Provision of Infrastructure**

The second stress to participation is infrastructural hinderance, lack of transport, lack of market and resources. People might struggle through own funds or donations to develop skills such as sewing, but there is often no market for them. In the garden projects they might need to produce enough to sell , but there is inadequate provision of water or sites are too small.

If people are to participate successfully, there must be adequate provision of infrastructural services. In these projects people still have to start by providing their own infrastructural services. It is unlikely that these projects will be sustainable because they lack the infrastructure

## 6.4 Institutional Support Systems

Another most important stress on the participation of projects are weak institutional support systems which projects depend on. It has always been argued that community participation is a pre-requisite to achieving sustainable development (Thomas and Stilwell 1994). This will however be ensured if the rural communities are empowered to make their own decisions. Most often the rural communities do not have the capacity to take advantage of the situation.

"Potential net benefits and opportunities therefore must be demonstrated, where possible, with the assistance of the development agents " (Thomas and Stilwell 1994 p3).

Most of the support offered to the rural communities must be towards empowerment of rural communities so as to enable them to participate effectively. This empowerment could mean education and training on how to manage development. It was discovered in this research that the people within projects were not receiving enough empowerment to make them efficient enough to manage development. After forming organisations people are not always sure who to contact. Their response to the question 'who did you contact' was that they heard "from others" . It usually turns out they contacted the wrong person because no help was obtained e.g road projects contacting agricultural officer. The agricultural officers only have limited knowledge of these because their main concentration is on agricultural matters. Having to deal with all developmental problems limit their productivity.

No one is assigned to rural development and people struggle to find support. The same thing happens when people look for funds, they do not know who to contact. Most of the rural people involved in development are illiterate people. It makes their situation worse if they are faced with a problem of not knowing who to contact.

Weak support is also shown in the way general neglect of rural development. The efforts of the people are isolated and not fitted within any development programme. Although several government departments work with development projects, none seem to be fully committed to rural development, as each is looking at the other to carry the main developmental work. Most are working with the same developmental projects and play similar roles, with no effort made by the different government departments to fit all development projects within one developmental plan so as to avoid duplication. People need institutional fabric around which communities can organise themselves and grow.

For participation of people to be sustainable there need to be a resource centre or resource centres which will help support the efforts of the people. These may assist in giving information about the funders to the rural people, training rural people on project management, and all other forms of information relating to problems which people may experience in the running of the project. Everybody willing to help in the rural areas should inform these structures of their range of potential support and expertise. In that way people will know exactly where to go for support and what support is available.

## 6.5 Development Plans of Funders versus Community Needs

Funders have their own development plans which may differ from those of the communities. For, instance, most of the projects that people are involved in are community gardens and sewing projects, but most of the project which receive funding are the water and sanitation projects. People therefore end up being involved in those projects that are likely to get funding and not in those projects that they really need. People lose their commitment to the projects and are reluctant to collect funds and just wait for funds.

The conflict between development plans of the funders and that of the community were evident in the community meeting which was called by Escom. Escom wanted to discuss its plans to install electricity in the area. The community did not even want to discuss those plans because their pressing problem was the scarcity of water and they felt that electricity was just a luxury. This means that the community may not realise, (because of literacy) how many developmental spin - offs could come from electricity and what the overall community benefits could be.

Since electricity is so important, external intervention in form of explaining and convincing the rural people of the need for electricity, should have been used, while at the same time acknowledging the needs of the rural people. This example highlights a critical issue of striking a balance between interventionist approach and being solely informed by the rural people.

The problem seems to be lack of holistic planning between all parties and stakeholders in rural development. What is needed are funds allocated for development in general, so that other projects which are important to the rural communities are not neglected at the expense of funder-oriented development. Communities should have representation where community organisations may get a chance to discuss with funders the developmental needs of the community. In that way the funders will be informed by the community and the funds will be allocated according to the needs of the rural communities.

The KDA support is oriented towards garden and sewing projects. This might be in line with their policies and extension work, but it seems to limit the scope of involvement of the rural people, because they tend to choose these projects because they receive support. Because other development projects do not receive as much support, people only concentrate on garden and sewing projects and in that way not everyone's interest is catered for.

## **6.6 Socio - Economic Status of Rural People**

The commitment of people to participation in the development problems seem to be a positive one, however, there are structural obstacles which they cannot escape. The general complaint in infrastructural projects, is that people are reluctant to pay. The fact is people do not have money. Even those who are in the committees are not paid travelling expenses, and this becomes a big stress to their participation level. Those who can afford, withdraw from the organisation as they can provide for their own services.

The poverty situation of the rural people is an obstacle to the success of the projects. People from disadvantaged socio-economic backgrounds need various forms of support in their development efforts, (Refer to Fig.5.11) and development must not be seen as a strain by them.

One of the problems associated with poverty which was also discussed in chapter three of this thesis is the lack of efficient leadership and organisational skills. The rural communities were inexperienced in the running of projects, and this leaves them incapable of responding to the demands of participation. People end up not having faith in themselves and think that they cannot be in a position to improve their condition.

For example, Mr E Ndlela of Matheni Development Committee commented:

" ..People don't have faith in themselves that they can be able to do anything on their own... people want to see things done for them... people only have faith in the project if there is visible money, a government officer or a white man..."(Holinyoka 16 December 1994)

All in all the local initiatives are crippled by lack of material resources. They are therefore not able to get out of the poverty situation. They lack the physical resources around which they can base their participation. To be sustainable financial support is needed.



## **6.7 Projects as employment opportunities**

The projects do not bring in as much income as intended. People therefore find that they cannot rely on the project. Developmental projects need to strengthen their capacity to generate income. This can only be achieved if more money is generated towards the expansion of the project. It would seem that if alternative employment opportunities are provided in the rural area, people would not see any need to participate in development projects.

## **6.8 Conclusion**

This chapter has tried to analyse the issues that need to be addressed about development projects if we want them to be sustainable. It was discovered that the projects need strong support systems which will incorporate their efforts in a broad development plans. The next chapter investigates the participants in projects. The aim is to establish whether they have the potential for sustainable development.

## 7. GENERAL FEATURES OF PARTICIPANTS

### 7.1 Introduction

This chapter investigates the participants involved in the development projects. It tries to find out who participates, why people participate and the form that participation takes. From the general characteristics of the participants the problems or stresses on participation are more easily identified. The heading of this chapter follows the structure of the questionnaire.

### 7.2 Who Participates

#### 7.2.1 Age

Age in years	% of participants
30 and younger	= 08
31 - 50	= 70
51 - 65	= 14
65 and older	= 08
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>= 100</b>

Fig. 7.1 Table showing ages of participants

In most projects the people who participate are people between the ages 31-50 years old. This is the labour productive group which could otherwise be gainfully employed. The younger group is either still at school or their time is spent on household chores. The 60 years and over group is either too old to be involved or they rely on their pension allowance for survival.

### 7.2.2 Gender

Sex	% of participants
Female	76
Male	24
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>100</b>

**Fig. 7.2** Sex ratio in ratio projects

By far the majority of the participants are, middle aged women who are married, uneducated and unemployed. Some of them have men working in the urban area or in town. In most cases the men are working in the urban areas and were no longer sending money home, or the money sent was not enough. They feel the need to bring in extra income, because of the poverty problems.

The type of development projects which are dominant in the rural areas are those which favour the involvement of women i.e gardens, sewing, handcraft. This explains why most men are not involved because men tend to avoid female oriented projects. The type of projects men feature prominently in are infrastructural projects.

The projects with more men were the block making projects. It is evident that the type of projects associated with men are projects which require physical labour. Although there are fewer men than women in the projects, men still dominate as office bearers in the committees.

### 7.2.3 Education Status

Level of education	% of participants
Sub A - Std 5	68
Std 6 - Std 8	26
Std 9 - Std 10	04
Other	02
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>100</b>

Figure 7.3 Education status of participants

Most of the people involved have primary education or were illiterate. This means that participation in development projects is associated with people of low education status. These are the people with limited access to other job options.

### 7.2.4 Economic Status / Employment

Oakley (1991), maintains that participation is linked in many countries with the broad mass of poor, oppressed and marginalised urban and rural people, most of whom struggle to eke out existence with limited resources.

This pattern was also observed in this study where most of the people involved are not employed and they get involved so as to get money or to cut down on the expenses of living. The few people who were working were found in infrastructural projects e.g. roads. Those who were not working did not have any other source of income, or were relying on income from husbands working in urban areas which was not always regular. A few self employed people were found in the garden projects. This is probably because these projects are flexible and can give time for other engagements.

Generally the people involved in development projects are people of low economic status, who are engaged because they want money out of the project. The projects therefore become substitute of low wage employment.

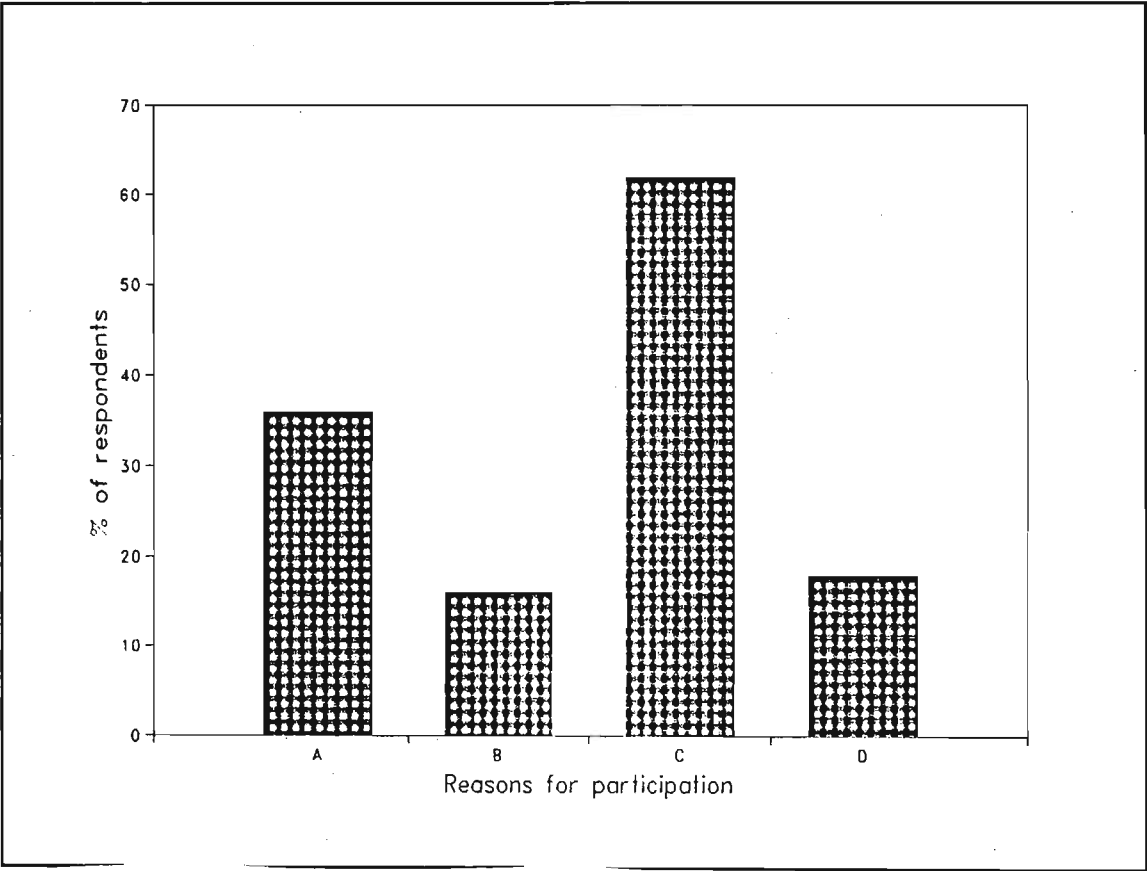


Figure 7.4 Reasons why people participate

Key:

- A = Provision of infrastructure
- B = Health reasons
- C = Income
- C = Cost saving

People participate for a variety of reasons, but two main trends can be identified. People seem to participate mainly because of the need for provision of infrastructure and employment. The aspect of being able to save with others and for the purposes of attracting funds. The reasons for involvement correspond with the reasons for the formation of projects which was discussed in chapter 5 of this thesis.

### 7.3.1 Provision of Infrastructure

People participate because they want to get basic infrastructure to improve their situation and make life less burdensome for themselves. In most of these the whole community is involved.

### 7.3.2 Health Reasons

The reasons cited in the water and sanitation projects were that people get involved because they need clean water and hygienic toilets so as to minimise diseases. In the gardens the main reason was that they get nutritious and healthy food. This is important because most of the rural areas are infested with diseases related to lack of clean water and those of malnutrition. The health workers educate the rural people on the prevention of malnutrition diseases. The rural people have since become aware of the need to deal with this issue seriously which is why they organise around these projects.

### 7.3.3 Income Needs / Cost Saving

The other most important reasons cited for involvement in projects is the need for income. In the sewing and handcraft projects the main aim is to acquire skills which will enable participants to earn a living. Involvement in sewing projects substitutes the employment needs of the people. The same goes for poultry, cotton and block projects. In the vaseline, jam, sewing and handcraft projects, over and above the need for money, there is an added dimension of being able to save from being self reliant e.g. in candles, or vaseline, they do not have to buy these commodities from the shop and it becomes cheaper.

There are also those people who participate because they saw projects in other communities being successful and benefitting the people. This motivates them to start their own project hoping they would get the same results.

## **7.4 Would You Be Involved If You Had Other Options**

Two main responses emerged from this question. There are those who said they would not be involved if other options were available. These are mainly the people who are involved in the infrastructural projects. These people felt that it was very strenuous to be involved in these projects. Involvement in the infrastructural projects requires a lot of commitment and money and it is discouraging when they are not given any support. They were forced to participate because no one really cared about provision of these necessary services. People felt that the provision of these was the government's responsibility.



What demoralised them was that the government was not even supporting their efforts. What they perceived as even more discouraging was seeing other places getting sponsors and being helped, while they struggled.

This observation opposes the idea presented by (Thomas and Stilwell 1994 p7) that "sustainability can only be achieved when major resources such as soil and water are managed by those most likely to benefit." The fact is that most of these beneficiaries are unemployed and they have other pressing poverty needs they have to take care of so it becomes strenuous.

Few people from income generating projects said they would leave present projects if other options were available. Their reasons for leaving would on how depend much money is obtained from these options. Most of these responses came from the poultry projects. This proves that projects do not bring as much income as expected and would be abandoned in favour of higher paying activities.

Few people maintained that they would still be involved even if other option were available because, they cared about their community. They regarded the provision of infrastructure as the basic need and they would like to be part of it.

In the income generating and cost saving projects most people said they would still be involved even if other options existed. The reasons cited were that these projects are quite flexible and allow women to be near their children or to work from home. These types of projects could still be done even when coupled with full time employment.

This reason was quoted by most women in garden and sewing projects. There were still those people who said they would still be involved because they enjoyed what they were doing and would not trade it for anything else.

### **7.5 Are You Involved In Other Projects**

70% of the people were involved in more than one project. There is a tendency towards supplementing infrastructural projects with income generating projects. The only deviation was shown by men who were only involved in one project. Men are mostly involved in infrastructural projects. Most of the people in the garden projects were involved in other income generating projects e.g. sewing, handcraft or poultry.

The people from the cotton and blocks projects were usually not involved in other projects. These projects require a lot of commitment and people cannot afford to be involved in other projects. A very interesting observation regarding the people who are involved in development is that it is always the same group of people who participate in the different projects. They form a own clique of people who are actively involved in development while the rest of the community is not involved.

### **7.6 Does The Project Help / Satisfy You**

50% of the people felt that the projects helped them and they were quite happy and satisfied with them.

Their satisfaction ranged from being able to have infrastructural services to having acquired a skill which now helped to make a living.

50% of the people felt that even though the projects have helped them, they were not completely happy with them. Their dissatisfaction stemmed from the lack of funding which hindered satisfactory progress within the project. Other projects had not even started to function because of lack of funding.

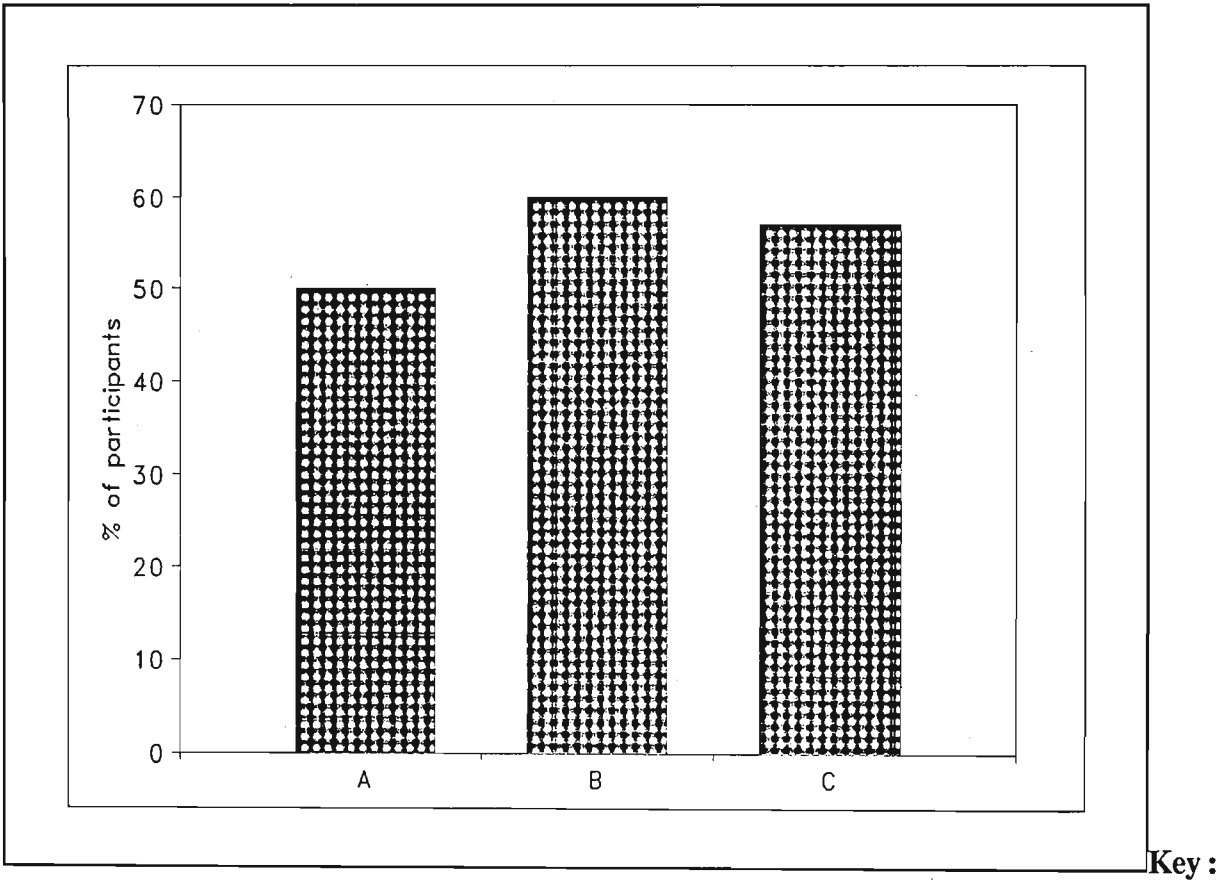
Dissatisfaction also seem to stemmed from the fact that the participants were not making as much financial gain from the project as they would have liked to. Those people involved in sewing and handcraft were not selling well and they were not making as much money. Few sewing projects had a steady markets or standing contracts. The gardens were not producing enough for own consumption and few had gone beyond own consumption. There were no markets linked to the gardens. The only people who were happy with the financial situation were few poultry, sewing and mostly block projects.

## **7.7 Do You Have a Say in the Running of the Project**

Most people responded that they have a say in decisions concerning the running of projects and all the decisions taken within the projects. If we consider that projects are not always successful, it is evident therefore that participation does not guarantee success of the project. The grassroots decision cannot go beyond taking decisions in the project. Beyond that the fate of the project, is determined by the external factors e.g availability of funds.

7.8 What else would you like to see happening

Figure 7.5 What respondents would like to see happening.



Key :  
A = Provision of infrastructure B = Funding C = Government support

This question was asked with an intention of finding out the stresses that limited the participation of the people thus leading to the general failure of the projects. What people wanted to see happening can be divided into these categories.

#### 7.8.1. Provision of Infrastructural Services

This response was cited mostly by people who were already involved in infrastructural projects. Involvement in infrastructural projects took so much of their time that they do not get enough time for projects that give them financial benefits.

#### 7.8.2. Funding

The second concern was provision of funds. Funding was regarded as the missing ingredient to project success. Where projects had managed to get funding there were complaints that funding took a long time before it could be approved. Projects which were not externally sponsored were not able to function to a satisfactory level.

#### 7.8.3. Institutional Support

There was also a cry for more support for development efforts. This support was mainly wanted from government and from the sponsors. People wanted to see their projects being acknowledged and funded.

Income generating projects needed to improve their business and learning skills, to make them more competent. This reason was mainly cited by people in sewing projects who felt that they had not acquired enough skills to make them competent. Sewing centres and markets where people can sell their produce are needed. People also expressed a need for an institution where they can present their problems or get any information regarding the running of the projects.

Another form of support needed was the place where they could get information about the sponsors and the people to contact if they have problems with the personnel to attend to their problems.

#### 7.8.4. Employment

Dissatisfaction was expressed with the projects such that the respondents that they felt what needed to be done was creation the of employment opportunities.

## **8. IMPLICATIONS FOR SUSTAINABILITY**

This chapter analyses the potential of the participants (the rural communities) to effect sustainable development.

### **8.1 Gender Representation**

Most of the people involved in development projects are women, yet they lack enough representation in development structure. In particular the role of women is often not adequately appreciated nor is it incorporated into the design of research trials and extension strategies (Lea and Averbach 1992). It is be very important to recognise and appreciate the importance of woman in the development process, so that development responds to the specific needs of the women.

### **8.2 Illiteracy**

Most of the people who participate are illiterate and find it strenuous and difficult to seek for information needed to run the project. For their participation to be sustainable there needs to be training on organisational management techniques. It would be most helpful if there could be capacity building structures and institutional support which will help support the efforts of the poor. This could be attained through basic adult education or skills which would empower the people.

### **8.3 Unemployment**

Most of the people were unemployed and their participation was a way of seeking employment. On the other hand involvement in the project itself means paying costs towards the running of the project. It is therefore unlikely that people who are unemployed will be able to sustain the running of the projects, because they do not have a regular source of income. For development to be sustainable funding in the form of loans for instance, could be the solution to help communities cope with the financial demands of the project. Another alternative could be providing alternative employment opportunities in the rural areas, such as rural industry.

Because the people are unemployed it means they do not have enough money to provide for their basic needs. Gaigher and van Rensburg(1995), maintain that the poor will not have the potential because healthy people are necessary to carry out development action. If people are poverty stricken and hungry that limits their potential to participate.

### **8.4 High Expectations From the Poor**

There are basically two reasons why people participate in development projects. The first one is that they want to improve their situation by providing infrastructural services. Provision of these projects is very expensive and the people cannot afford on their own. Provision of the basic services should be the responsibility of the government so that people can channel their energies to more beneficial activities.



Provision of infrastructure is the springboard of all development and should it be inadequate, it is unlikely that development in general will succeed. The poor are entitled to the basic services which should be provided by the government. However one cannot escape the fact that the provision of basic services will depend on the socio-economic conditions of the country.

The second reason why people participate is that they need financial gains from the project. It came out of this research however that money was very difficult to get from these projects. If the projects are not able to give the people the expected financial gains, it is unlikely that the projects will be sustainable. Necessary support should be given to projects so that they can be able satisfy the people.

### **8.5 Involuntary Participation**

When people were asked if they would still be involved in projects if there were other options available, those people who were participating in infrastructural projects responded by saying that they were forced to participate because no one seemed responsible to provide basic services. If people are not participating voluntarily, out of their own free will, it is unlikely that participation will survive. It is in the income generating projects where people expressed satisfaction although the satisfaction was limited.

## **8.6 Unsatisfactory Projects**

50% felt that the project has not progressed to their satisfaction. The problem is funding which is needed to make projects succeed. It has been cited many times that financial assistance is the only solution to project survival.

Another problem which has been cited many times already is that no financial gains are obtained from the project. The projects must receive enough financial support so that they may be able to produce visible results which will be able to satisfy the participants. If people are not satisfied with projects, the chances of sustainability will be threatened.

## **8.7 Limited Influence of Participants on Success of Project**

Most of the respondents felt they had a say and could participate in the decision making within projects. It is apparent that participation of rural communities alone does not guarantee success of the project. People have a say in the decisions concerning the project, but the most important issue here is how far their decisions go and what effect do they have on the success or failure of the project. Their taking part shows that they are able to organise around their development. What is needed is working on this good start that people have, and to encourage them by providing them with the necessary support, to show that their efforts are worthwhile. Support that will maintain their dignity and make them feel that they really have an impact on development. This could only be attained if there is proper representation of participants in development process and access to resources necessary for development.

Otherwise the poor will actually remain voiceless if their efforts are not recognised because their participation equals no representation.

### **8.8 What People Would Like to See Happening**

In response to this question there were strong calls for support from the government. This means that the government is not seen as giving enough support, and this is a challenge which the government of national unity and the provincial government has to face.

### **8.9 Conclusion**

Participants in the development projects have shown that despite their limitations they are willing and able to organise around development issues. The local people generally have strong ideas about what they want but generally lack opportunity, knowledge and the necessary skills to assert themselves. Development organisations need to tap this resource as they continue with the process. (Holomisa, 1994) Sustainability does not depend on keenness alone, but need institutional structures around which they can participate.

The next chapter investigates the organisations or institutions which support rural development. The aim is to find out if the support given can ensure sustainability.

## **9. GENERAL FEATURES OF ORGANISATIONS / INSTITUTIONS AND SOURCES OF SUPPORT FOR DEVELOPMENT PROJECTS.**

### **9.1 Introduction**

This chapter describes the institutions and organisations which play a supportive role in the development projects in the Nongoma district of KwaZulu - Natal. It explores the nature and the extent of support given and analyses community participation patterns.

Sources of support fell into the following categories:

1. Government institutions
2. Non governmental organisations
3. Prominent community members

### **9.2 KwaZulu Government institutions**

1. Department of Works
2. Department of Agriculture
3. Tribal Authorities
4. Department of Health

### 9.2.1 Department of Works

#### Structure of the organisation:

The Head Office of the Department of Works is at Ulundi and Nongoma as a Regional office has four districts under it. These are Nongoma, KwaMsane, Ncotshane and Ngwavuma.

#### Funding:

The Nongoma Regional Department of Works obtains its funds from the head office at Ulundi. The regional office then allocates funds according to the needs of each district. The regional director said he was happy with the funds and considered them sufficient to cover all the projects.

#### Role in development / Channels of participation:

The Department of Works deals with planning, construction and maintenance of various engineering installation. The Nongoma Department of Works, collaborates with the other government Departments like the Departments of Health, Justice, Education and Defence at district level. Quarterly meetings are held with the Board members of the Department of Works to get to know the needs of each Department. The needs which the Department of works caters for include; building schools, construction of roads, dams and other infrastructural services. From these needs a five year plan is drawn with the assumption that the various Departments should have consulted the concerned communities on what their needs are.

## Activities

Some of the projects the department of Works is involved in, are Nongoma water supply rehabilitation, Manguzi hospital staff accommodation. What is notable about these project is that they are concentrated in places where there are government services and not in the more remote tribal areas of Nongoma.

### 9.2.2 Department of Agriculture

#### Structure of the organisation:

The Nongoma Department of Agriculture and Forestry district falls under the Mbedlane region and has its head office at Ulundi.

#### Role in development:

The aim of the department of agriculture is to develop the agricultural potential of KwaZulu-Natal. The Department reaches the community through the field workers. The field workers are placed at different places that have been earmarked for development (See Fig.9.1). Their placement depends on whether there is suitable accommodation for them. These field workers are trained as agricultural advisors or as home economists.

The agricultural field workers advise communities on agricultural matters e.g which fertilisers to use, how to manage gardens etc. The economist helps the on the matters of nutrition and hygiene.

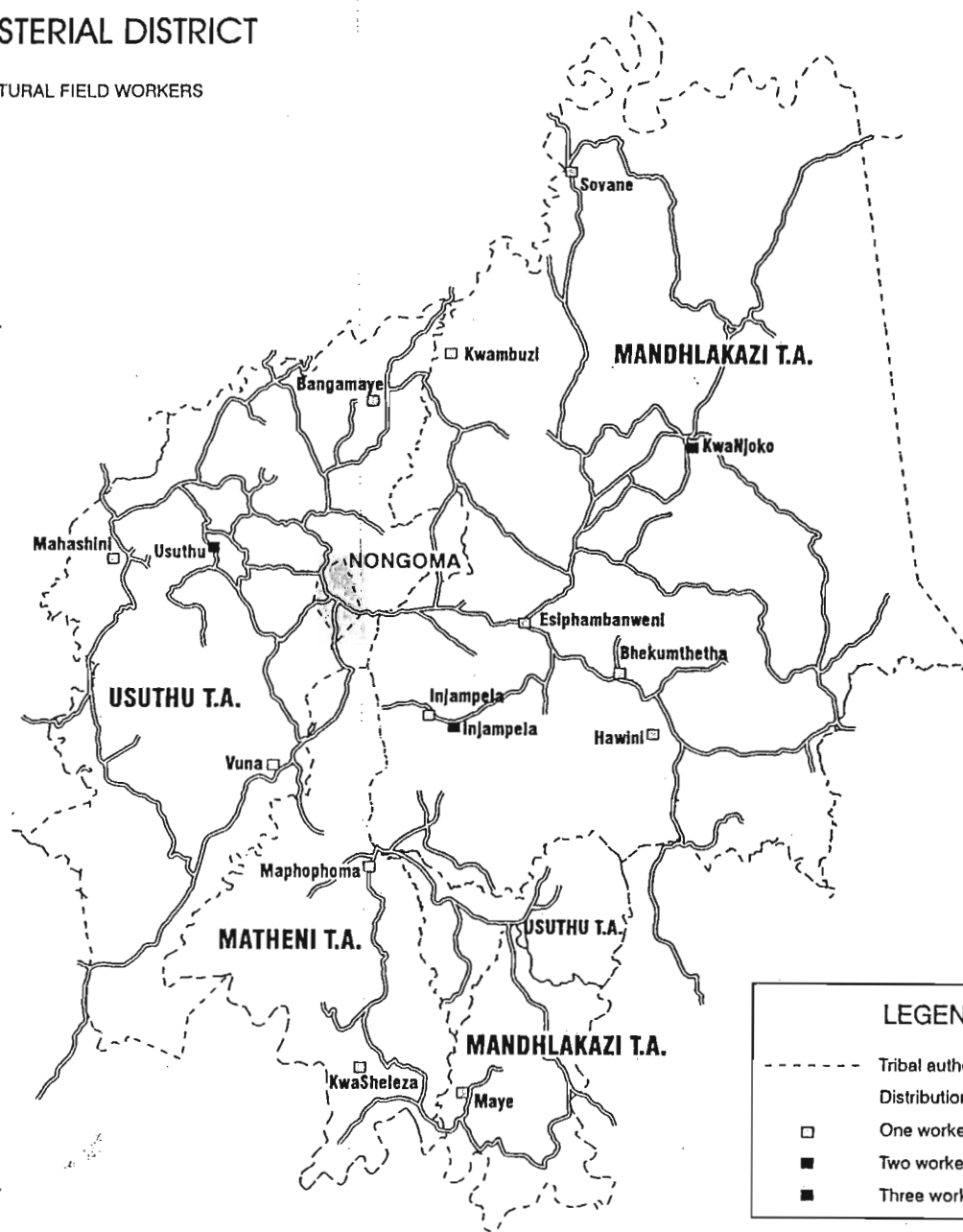
Fig.9.1 Map showing the distribution of Agricultural field workers in

Nongoma

# NONGOMA MAGISTERIAL DISTRICT

DISTRIBUTION OF AGRICULTURAL FIELD WORKERS

0 5 10  
Kilometres



## LEGEND

- Tribal authority boundary
- Distribution of field workers:
- One worker per area
- Two workers per area
- Three workers per area

Help offered include technical know how and not funding as such. They advise on the cost of the proposed project, organisations where financial assistance can be obtained and they also provide fence and poles. They help link communities to the necessary experts needed for a particular project. They also help promote money generating projects e.g baking, knitting, growing vegetables.

Funds from the department are used for demonstration and people do not pay in order to attend lessons although they have to buy their own material, sewing machines etc.

#### Participation channels

Most projects under the supervision of the department of Agriculture were started by the communities. The communities then contact the field worker / officer in their area. Sometimes the field workers identify the need and start a project but they always find it easier to work with the already existing communities. Most of the organisations visited said that they invite the agricultural officer through the chief. There are no scheduled meetings between the agricultural officers and the community, because field workers are too few. The meetings depend on whether the officer is available or not.

#### For big capital projects:

Once the community has decided on the project they take the matter to the officer. The officer takes the matter to the district task team meeting of all field workers which is held monthly in the district office. The district task team evaluates the project in terms of the support it needs.



The regional technical working which deals with matters arising from the district appoints the project planning committee. The project planning committee consists of the head of the district, the specialist needed for that project, engineers and all other relevant people. These people will go back to the project to check its feasibility. They then prepare a report or appoint a private consultant. If the project is viable the government starts budgeting for the project. The funding therefore comes from the government.

For smaller project:

These fall under the extension programme of the officer. The officer assesses the project as part of his extension work. The officer provides technical and advisory support e.g providing fencing and poles and referring the organisations to the right channels, for either training, funding or advise.

#### Activities

The Department is involved in a variety of projects including spring protection, cattle co - opt, poultry, community gardens etc, (See attached list - appendix3). Please note that the list is incomplete. It was noted in the research that no proper records are kept. This is a stress to development as efficient organisation is required for sustainable development. This pattern of inefficiency in the keeping of records was also noted in other sources of support contacted. It was not possible to get the list of all projects.

### 9.2.3 Tribal authorities

The District is divided into three wards each falling under its own regional authority. These are:

1. Usuthu regional tribal authority = King Goodwill Zulu
2. Mandlakazi regional authority = Prince Bhekintinta Zulu
3. Matheni regional tribal authority. = James Zulu

Each of the tribal authority has its own head chief.

#### Structure of the organisation:

The head office of the tribal authority is at Ulundi. Each regional tribal authority is composed of the head chief or any other ex-officio headman, together with those members of the tribe whom the tribe recognises as councillors or chiefs.

#### Funding:

The Tribal Authority has power to collect from various donors or sources and have access to funds of the department of the chief minister of finance, for specific projects. None of the projects studied said they had received money from the tribal authority.

### Role in development:

The aims of the Tribal Authority are generally to administer the affairs of the tribe and the community in respect of which it has been established. It also advises and assists the government on matters which concern the moral and well being of Black South Africans residents in the area including the development and improvement of any land within the area (Buthelezi commission 1982).

The Tribal Authority hold quarterly meetings with the chiefs to look into the needs of the community. These needs are brought in by to the chiefs by community organisations. These community organisations should be constituted and should themselves already be saving funds for their project. The Tribal Authority then looks for sponsors and donors, should there be any money available, the organisations are given the money for their respective projects. There is however not enough money and there is a long waiting list. None of projects in the projects studied were started by the chief but, the Tribal authorities have formed development committees which will start to function as soon as they get funds from the R.D.P. The Tribal Authorities together with the Nongoma Development Association are in the process of getting an inventory of development projects in the Nongoma district. The purpose of this is to find out the needs of each project so as to calculate how much money would be applied for from the R.D.P funds.

#### 9.2.4 Department of Health

The Health Department has health workers working in all the three wards in the Nongoma district. It was not possible to get proper details of the number of the health workers and their distribution, but it is estimated that there are +\- 300.

##### Structure of the organisation:

The Department of Health reaches the community through community health workers and health facilitators. Health workers qualify after they have undertaken a course lasting six months. They get training on first aid, community gardens, forming project organisations and applying for credit. They are then appointed and paid by the Tribal Authorities. They only work for 16 days depending on how many homesteads they supervise. Their average area is 80 - 100 homesteads.

Community health workers go to the communities and lay down their criteria on how they can help them. The community will then hold a meeting to choose the community health committees to deal with whatever needs they may have regarding development. The community worker is present on these meeting only to guide the selection of office bearers. The health workers report to the community health facilitators who are trained community nurses. Their main aim however is to look at the general welfare of the community health workers. They also do follow up to see whether the health workers are really doing their work. There are no scheduled meetings between the health workers and the community. Communities contact them if they need help.

### Role in development:

The health worker visits her designated area and advice on health, hygiene and nutrition matters. This includes encouraging people to have gardens, proper sanitation and first aid. As the health worker visits the homes and talks to women in the different homesteads she is able to identify development problems. These problems are taken up to the chief when there are tribal authority meetings. Development committees are formed during those meetings. The health workers are present during the election of office bearers only to guide. When the committee is formed the health worker then refers them to the right Department.

### Activities

The projects which are linked with the health workers are usually the garden, sanitation and mobile clinic shelters projects. Because the health workers are more widely distributed and live within the communities they work in, they are more in touch with the projects in their area, even though they may not be directly linked with them. This brings to light the problem of lack of empowerment as well as lack of institutional support for health workers.

## 9.3 Non government organisations

### 9.3.1 Nongoma Development Association

The Nongoma development association started in 1993 and since it is a new organisation it mostly still has proposals which have not yet materialised. This organisation has been classified under NGOs because it operates at a much higher level than CBOs in the Nongoma district.

It is well structured and its main function is to help the existing project organisations in the area. The Association operates in all the three wards in the district.

#### Structure of the organisation:

At the base there are the Local Development Committee which are elected by the community from each of the three wards. These committees are represented in the tribal Development Committee, CBOs, NGOs, and government officials. Three members from each of these committees form the District Development Association which is responsible for the broad spectrum of development. Monthly meetings are held by the executive member of the District Development Association to look into the needs of the community. Most of the projects have not yet materialised because of the lack of funds.

#### Funding:

Community organisations joining the association pay an annual affiliation fee of R25. This money is used for administration purposes. The Association asks for donations from various sponsors, such as IDT, Imvula Trust and Lima consultants.

They have had difficulties in getting sponsors. Most donations are for water projects. Sponsors that have helped them so far are IDT and Imvula Trust. However there is a general concern of the shortage of funds. There is evidence that applications have been made, but the association claims that they are rarely replied.

#### Role in development:

The association is contacted by the community organisation when the necessary permission to start the project has been obtained from the chief. The organisation then pays the affiliation fee. The association surveys and assess needs of the project. Once they know what the project needs, they refer the organisation to the right channels e.g KTT, Dept of Works or Health. They also help organisations apply for funds from various sponsors mentioned earlier. When the funds are available they are distributed to the various projects on the waiting list. However there is lack of funds and resources and they cannot achieve what they want to achieve.

#### Activities

The association is involved in a number projects in the area, (See attached list appendix 4). Most of its projects are water, sanitation, and road projects.

#### 9.3.2 Thokazi Development Committee

The Thokazi Development Committee was started in 1990. Its aim was to build roads and prevent soil erosion in the area. It also aimed at attending the general development of the area. The Committee was started by Prince Capsin Zulu who is a respected and influential member of the community. He felt that there was a need for a structure that would take of development and give the necessary support to the development projects.

### Role in Development:

The Committee act as a support system / resource centre for development projects. They discuss development plans of the community. All the development projects in the area fall under it. They also have a community office where people can get information they require about project, e.g who to contact and where to apply for funds. The chairman helps them with the application for funds.

### Funding:

Most of the funds are obtained from members own contribution, although the committee had to rely much on donations from sponsors. The Committee started getting funds in 1992. Most of the funds obtained are for infrastructural projects. Funds have been obtained from National Economic Forum, IDT, Operation Jumpstart, Invula Trust. Details of how much funding has been given could not be obtained.

## **9.4 Prominent Community Members**

### **9.4.1 Rev Glover**

Rev Glover has a Diploma in water Engineering. He offers his skills to the water committees but does not offer financial assistance.



## 9.5 Analysis of findings

### 9.5.1 Types of Organisations

Most of the organisations involved in development are government departments. Although there are a number of active NGOs active in other rural areas in KwaZulu - Natal, no such NGOs are operating at Nongoma. In the literature review the importance of NGOs and their impact on development was emphasised. In the absence of NGOs in the district, it is easy to understand why participation is not satisfactory. There is a need for the uniform geographical distribution of NGOs so that even the remote rural areas could benefit from participation.

The government departments involved in development are the Departments of Health and Agriculture which deal with health and agricultural oriented development projects. Projects which fall outside the scope of these departments still have to be accommodated by these departments.

This limits the capacity of these institutions to support development, e.g block projects contact the agricultural extension officers if they need help, and the agricultural officer's role does not include this. If development is to be sustainable, a specific department or institution which is capable of managing all areas of development is needed, so that all development efforts are accommodated and co - ordinated in a holistic plan.

### 9.5.2 Institutional Links

Although the various government departments are working in the same area and most of the time with the same community organisation, the linkages between the departments are very poor or are non-existent. Often they work with the same projects and all are playing the same role. There is thus duplication and each department knows that it is not solely responsible for the project as there are other departments working on it. This shows that the government lacks commitment and planning for rural development and the development efforts of the poor are not given any recognition. There are no plans to fit the projects within a development programme. For participation to be sustainable all the local initiatives need to be co-ordinated in a broad programme of development so that they can get the necessary support.

Although the NDA and TDC are classified as NGOs they are local based and do not have branches anywhere else. Even though the NDA had plans to include the government departments, there are no links as yet. Efforts of these NGOs are isolated and they do not have a well supported development programme. The Thokazi Development Committee is also local based and is not linked to any strong support system. The individuals involved in development also have the same problem of not being linked to a development network. They do not rely on any one for funds, or for any other form of support.

### 9.5.3 Role in Development

The field workers and health workers have their specific duties specified by their departmental needs. Over and above their specified duties they also have a developmental role e.g they also motivate communities towards the identification of developmental needs and forming organisations, training people on project management, helping with filling application forms and referring them to the right channels and where they can get financial assistance.

The major role of these institutions should be to empower or build capacities within rural communities. But because so few personnel are available these organisations are not able to attend to all rural communities, it means that they will not be able to achieve this. Although these organisations try to play the role of capacity building within the rural communities, their role in development is limited by the fact that inadequate funds are provided for rural development and they do not have enough resources.

### 9.5.4 Distribution

There are few field workers and health workers working with community organisations and they are overloaded with work. They are therefore not enough to cover rural areas effectively. Their distribution also favours the well off places. The placement of field workers for instance depends on suitable accommodation and this is obviously not obtained in remote rural area. This means that not all the rural communities will be reached.

This is a problem because almost all projects started had contacted these organisations, which confirms the fact that their support is needed. For sustainable development there needs to be enough facilitators so that they can be able to reach all communities in need of their services.

#### 9.5.5 How Do They Reach Communities

Most of the organisations wait for communities to come to them if they have problems. They have no fixed meetings with communities. They do not have office with personnel always in attendance. The only exception is the Thokazi Development Committee, which has community office where their problems are addressed.

There is thus no guarantee that communities will get help if they need it. There need to be offices which cater for the people's problems and staff which is always in attendance of their development needs. The other problem is that of lack of transport. The three health facilitators operating in the whole district only have one car to get to communities. The communities can therefore not be visited as often as they would like. The agricultural fieldworkers also do not have transport and this limits their ability to reach rural communities effectively.

#### 9.5.6 What is Done to Encourage Participation

Meetings to discuss development issues are held at chief's place. The sitting of these meetings will depend on the chief. As a result there are areas where no meetings are held at all. In the case of field workers and health workers they motivate communities through their limited consultations or through meetings held at the chief's place. Unless there is enough support given towards encouraging people to participate, or a forum which motivates development issues there will be no chances for sustainable development.

#### 7.5.6 Funding

Although government departments allocate funds for development, no project from the projects studied had received funds from these departments. In the case of the NGOs, there are no adequate funds available. The NDA uses affiliation fees for administrative purposes. They depend on the funds from sponsors which are very difficult to get. In the research it was discovered that NDA is the least used, probably because people had to pay affiliation fee.

In the Thokazi Development Committee they depend on sponsors. Although funds are not regular, they have managed to be successful. This is because their chairman is in a position to bargain for funds. Inadequate funds are allocated for development and that limits the chances for sustainable rural development.

### 9.5.7 Capability of the Facilitators

The government departments that are involved in development are not specifically trained to manage development. The agricultural extension workers assist on agricultural matters, but the project organisation has become part of their extension work. They are basically agriculturalist and not developmental managers. Health are to advise on health matters, but have also taken over the task of managing development projects. The NDA and TDC do not have any training on development. They are just people interested in development and their knowledge is based on the experience they have on working with development organisations. The chief has other more important administrative roles to do other than the developmental role. It means that development is not compulsory occupation for them. However the chiefs are the most used development structures. There is a general complaint that chiefs are not working and are disinterested in development.

People in charge of the organisation are not really trained to manage development. Their knowledge of development is only based on the experience they have on working with rural projects. People are generally not satisfied with the capabilities of these institutions, claiming that they have not made much improvement on the project.

One possible explanation is that too much responsibility is placed on health workers, agricultural officers and the chiefs, who have to operate in relative isolation and with inadequate resources to effect rural development. For example if we look at the education status of the health workers we find that most of them have primary school education.

This is a problem since they also lack empowerment and are therefore not in a strong position to manage development.

## 9.6 Conclusion

The efforts of the organisations involved in development, in training for project management cannot be undermined. Rural communities do make use of these structures and this is an indication of the faith people have in these structures. It was discovered that contacting these organisations did not necessarily mean success or sustainability of the project. It is clear that the support they give is not enough to address the problems of experienced by development projects. The limitations include the weak institutional support for developmental projects organisations and in that way the organisations are unable to carry development to a sustainable level.

For participation to become entrenched as a process, it must be institutionalised at all levels starting locally (Thomas and Stillwel 1994). Secondly, no adequate funds are allocated for development projects. This lack of financial and back up support limits the capability of these organisations. As Gaigher (1995 p230) puts it, "a supportive government together with community's own capacity for innovation and change, given the means and the opportunity, can bring about lasting improvement in the standard of living of developing countries".

It is this link between the government and the rural communities that will ensure sustainable development. The next chapter will explore how this link can be effected for successful participation.

## **10. CONCLUSION: PROSPECTS FOR SUCCESSFUL PARTICIPATION IN KWAZULU - NATAL**

### **10.1 Introduction**

Problems of underdevelopment are linked to the fact that the poor have been denied the opportunity to participate in the development process. Participation of rural communities in planning the development process is now regarded as essential for successful rural development. However, there is no clear consensus on what participation should entail.

This has created problems, as in most Third World countries this participation has been interpreted as neglect of the rural communities. Attempts at target group participation are frequently aimed at relieving the work load of state administrators by promoting self administration (Huppert 1994 p18). As a result participatory approaches have not always been successful because the target groups have proved not to have the necessary potential for sustainable development. The important task would be ensuring that the form that participation takes have the potential to address problems of underdevelopment.

The purpose of this study was to find out whether participation of the rural communities in development has the potential for sustainable development. Participation has become a development concern in recent years with arguments that it can only be attained if people are empowered to take charge of their development and set the development agenda.



The study was able to achieve its objective because it was able to identify anti- participatory factors which limit the potential of the people to participate. This concluding chapter summarises participation as practised in Nongoma, identifies its loopholes and investigates what can be done to make participation more meaningful in the development process.

## **10.2 Stresses on the Present Practise of Participation at Nongoma**

A number of factors have been identified by this study as stresses on participation including the following:

1. Inadequate funding of rural area
2. Weak institutional links
3. Infrastructural hinderances
4. Lack of empowerment of rural communities

This section will concentrate on the weak institutional support and lack of government commitment in development which seems to be the main problem threatening sustainable development.

The rural people are generally illiterate and poor. This in itself is a shaky start for development because it renders them powerless. They have to identify their development problems, form project committees and get the project started. Over and above this, they are faced with a number of problems. First they are not really sure who to contact for their problems. There are no formal and reliable channels which deal with issues that need addressing.

Most often when they have struggled with that first problem of who to contact, the second problem is that no help is obtained from the supporting organisations. They now have to meet further problems as they struggle with the question of where to get funds and filling-in of application forms. As they go through these different struggles, there are no specific institutions are set aside helping them. This proves that responsibility for development, including the provision of basic services, is left entirely on the hands of the rural poor to cope with on their own. Rural people therefore find themselves with so much to take care of, that participation becomes a burden to them especially if we consider their poverty stricken situation.

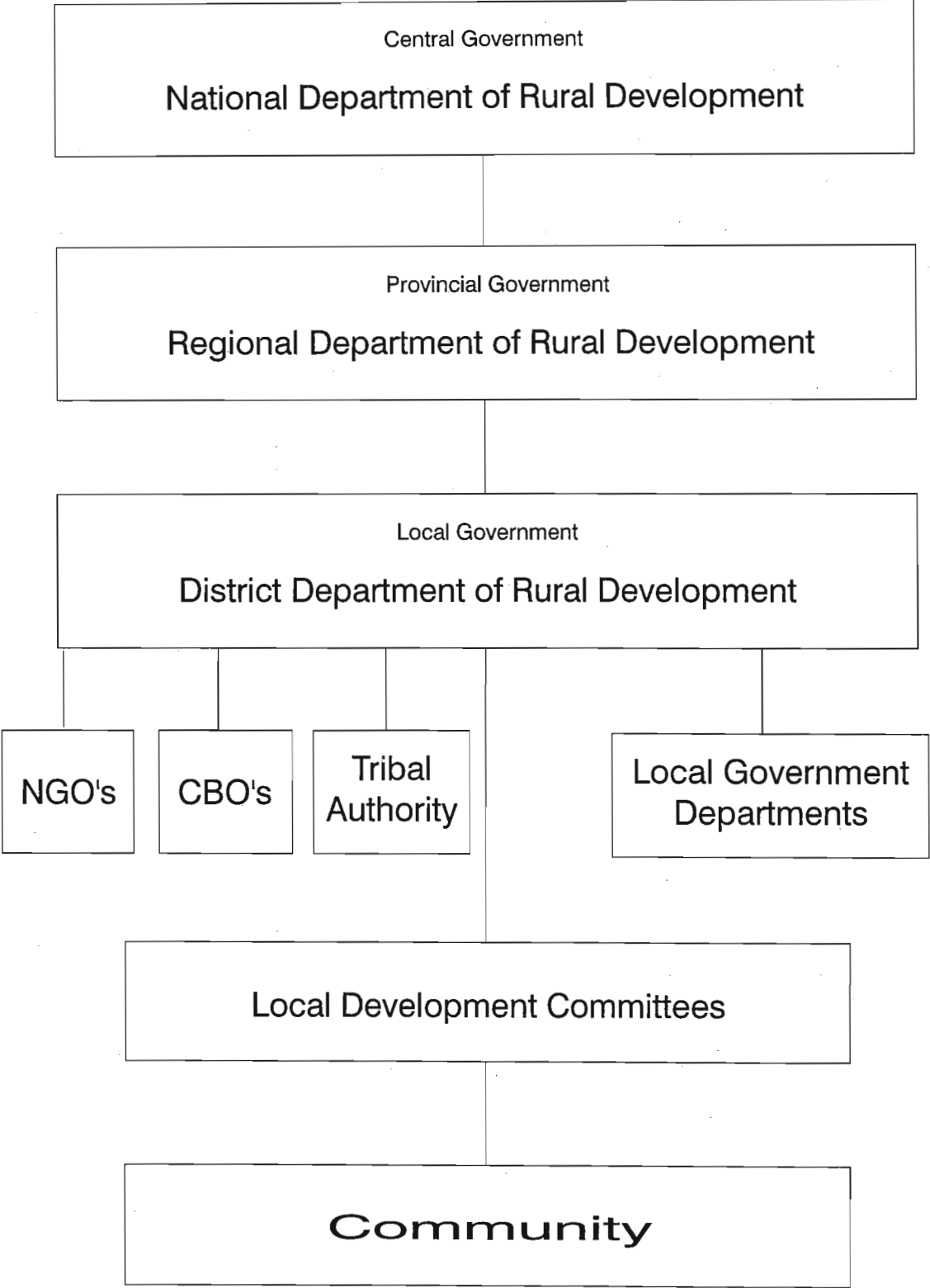
Moreover the poorest of the poor communities that cannot organise and do not have the money to maintain development projects end up without even the basic services. Where people are able to organise to better their situation, it is glorified as grassroots participation, and the government relaxes and offers no support.

The rural poor need to be empowered and fully supported to maintain sustainable development. This could be achieved by designing institutions to encourage successful development. There is a shortage of available institutions where they get information about available resources in rural development. Even if communities need to make suggestions and development proposals, there is no forum where they can get representation . This further marginalises them. Further, there are no links between organisations with similar projects. Many operate in relative isolation to the broader development process, with weak organisation structures, no vision for expansion and no policy framework.

It is apparent that this lack of institutional support hinders development in the rural areas. This calls for a structure that will ensure full support of the development efforts of the rural areas. Sustainable rural development will only be attained if the issues concerning the of appropriate institutional support are addressed. To make sure that people become motivated and involved in development requires " an institutional fabric around which societies can organise themselves and grow" (Thomas and Stillwel 1994 p15). This institutional support and good leadership were noted to be the factors contributing to the success of development projects at Thokazi area which fell under the Thokazi Development Committee.

On the same note, Uphoff (1993 p612) argues that the countries with the best linkage between central government and rural communities through a network of local institutions had the best performance in agriculture and in social indicators. It is community participation together with this type of back up support that will establish sustainable development in Nongoma District.

# PROPOSED PARTICIPATION MODE



The model suggests that effective development must start with a National Department of Rural Development. This department should have rural development planners who should plan for rural development and implement development programmes. It should assess the rural development needs and allocate funds for rural development. Such a department would be of much value because the failure of rural development strategies can partly be attributed to the fact rural development currently falls under general affairs in the government with no specific department assigned to it.

A department specific to rural development will be better equipped to deal with problems of underdevelopment. Such arrangement will address the neglect that the rural people are currently experiencing. This will be in line with the recommendations of the white paper on rural development that the government will be committed to the basic levels of infrastructural development, for instance in water availability, sanitation, access to schools and clinics, road development and energy provision. All these will reduce the burden of poverty in the rural areas and allow rural people to use their time more productively and so contribute to the national growth.

At district level there should be a fully trained rural planner assigned for development. This planner should work in consultation with all the representative structures at local level that have experience in the area of development, including representation of government departments, tribal authorities, the NGOs and CBOs.

The NGOS should retain their autonomy and at the same time support for the new governments efforts to achieve the goals of democracy that met the developmental needs of the communities. The NGOs should work hand in hand with the government to implement RDP projects because they have the experience of working with rural people. The CBOs have valuable local community knowledge and they know their community needs.

Elected representatives in the local rural development department will need to concentrate on training and capacity building opportunities to maximise the potential of the rural communities to manage development. This will enable the rural people to tackle their task of setting the agenda for rural development. The local rural development department will monitor development and RDP priorities at local level.

These structures are to assess the developmental needs of the area and make development plans, which include provision of basic infrastructure. It should also act as a resource centre, a place where people can come if they need information or are experiencing problems regarding development. The plans of this department will be informed by the community based organisations.

Participation of the people will mean representation of the rural people in the development process through a forum where they can voice their concern. The position of the planner will be that he has expert knowledge to guide and promote the principles of sustainable development so that development will stay 'ahead of the game'.

The rural people on the other hand know what their needs are, and the activities they are involved in should inform the planner on how much the rural people can do and how much support is needed. This eliminates the prevailing dilemma where the government plans are not accepted by the community because of lack of consultation and where communities lack support from government. The needs of the people should then be taken up to the provincial department of rural development which will see to it that they are fitted into an integrated development programme for the region. The local department of rural development will have to make use of an efficiently trained facilitator to work with the community organisations to build their capacity to participate. Facilitators will need access to resources, facilities and expertise and get the necessary organisational back up from the department.

#### **10.4 Conclusion**

Effective participation will need strong policy direction and commitment from central and provincial level government and even the current form of participation will be a futile exercise if adequate support from the government is not forthcoming. Strong government policy on rural development will ensure that the development efforts of the poor are not isolated, but are integrated within a holistic strategy for rural development, where there is adequate representation of the rural poor. Further research needs to be done to ascertain the capacity of the existing structures in rural development, e.g tribal authorities, to effect development in the new government structure.

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**Appendix 1 : Questionnaire : Participants**

1. Name of the organisation:
2. Type of project:
3. Why did you become involved:
4. Would you be involved if you had other options:
5. How does the project help you if it does:
6. Are you happy with the project:
7. What else would you like to see happening:
8. Do you have a say in the decisions regarding the project:
9. What are the problems encountered
10. Age:
11. Sex:
12. Marital status:
13. Educational status:
14. Are you: Employed; Self employed; Unemployed:
15. Are you involved in other projects:

**Appendix 2 Questionnaire : Chairman / Manager of the project**

1. Name of the organisation:
2. When was the project started:
3. By whom was it started:
4. Why was it started:
5. Were there other options available:
6. Who did you contact:
7. What support did you receive:
8. Where do you get funds and how do you use them:
9. Number of members in the project:
10. Structure of organisation
11. Do you keep books:
12. How often do you have meetings, with whom;
13. How far do grassroots decisions go;
14. Are you happy with the way people participate:
15. Problems encountered:

### Appendix 3 List of projects linked to the Nongoma Department of Agriculture

Sukumani Community garden

Zamani Cotton Farmers Association

Zenzele Community garden

Sizakancane Community garden

Thuthukani Candle club	Njampela
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Inkomazi Community garden	Mshanelo
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celisandla Community garden	Emahashini
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Qaphelubheke Community Garden	Msebe
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Gugulethu Community Garden	Kwanjoko
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Zizameleni Sewing Club	Njampela
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Zenzeleni Farmers Association	Sovane
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Cotton and Maize Farmers Association	Sovane
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Mahashini Farmers Association	Mahashini
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Phakamani Community gardens	Mpunzane
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KwaMusi Water and Sanitation	Usuthu
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Mpuqwini Water	Mandlakazi
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Poultry Club	Dayeni
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Usuthu Water Project	Usuthu
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Sewing Project	KwaMbuzi
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NB: List supplied by Nongoma Dept of Agriculture

**Appendix 4 List of projects in progress and completed in Nongoma -  
Nongoma development Association**

Water scheme	Kwadayeni
Water and gardens	KwaMusi
Water	Linda
Creche	Sibongmandla
Water and Sanitation	Mahashini
Creche	Inkanyezi
Garden	Mandlakazi
Water	Maciijo
Water	Bhanganoma
Masibambane Garden	Usuthu
Water	Esisusweni
Water	Injampela
“	Bekumteto
“	Odushwini
“	Hlathelidumayo
“	Ncemanene
“	Nkaleni
“	Sovane
“	Mashenge
“	Ezihlabeni
Poultry	Holinyoka
Creche	Denge