The Mediation of Community Participation in the Delivery of Low-Cost Housing

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Abstract

International debates in the field of development have redefined housing as *sustainable housing*. Thus, housing no long refers to the delivery of physical products. The introduction of the concept of sustainability has far reaching consequences for the delivery of housing, which now amounts to the creation of *viable communities*. Moreover, the delivery of housing now takes place within the context of a policy framework that is indicative of a complete reversal of past policies towards developmentally-oriented, integrated approaches aimed at bringing about the long term sustainability of a vibrant and organic civil society.

Significantly, the conception of housing as a process prioritises community control of projects at the local level with the assistance of external role players. Unfortunately, this long awaited component of housing projects is often marred by capacity constraints on the part of beneficiary communities who cannot participate and /or negotiate with other stakeholders in the delivery of housing. Therefore, the level at which this investigation is focused is on the mediation of community participation by all the relevant stakeholders in order to unravel the influence that this has on the quality of the housing products that are received.

In this respect, an inquiry into the concepts of participation is tested against a case study of a community involved in a housing project and concludes that community participation is indeed mediated by many role players and that their influence has a determining effect on the quality of the social and physical products received.

Acknowledgements

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INTRODUCTION

A policy designed without the participation of beneficiaries has indeed failed to consider some of their important needs and perspectives, and has become a vehicle for those who were at the table - developers, civics, all the 'stakeholders' concerned with delivering shelter - rather than for those who were not; the beneficiaries who must live in the dwellings which the policy delivers (Tomlinson: 1996).

The national housing goal according to the National White Paper on Housing (hereafter referred to as the White Paper), which was published in 1994, aimed to increase housing delivery on a sustainable basis to a peak level of 350 000 units per annum. This translates to a target set by the Government of National Unity (GNU) of one million houses in five years. Two later, the visible lack of progress in the delivery of those houses has been subject to widespread criticism emanating from many quarters. According to de Satge` & Lowe Morna (1996) only some 12 000 new housing units have been built since the elections against a target of 300 000. Many reasons have been cited for this lack of delivery. Among the most popular are:

- The lack of administrative structures within the civil service, particularly at the local government level (Pieterse & Simone: 1994).
- The lack of funds that are available for redistribution in a changing global climate that is becoming increasingly competitive and requires that the state exercises fiscal restraint (Tucker & Scott: 1992).
- The unstable environment within low income communities (henceforth referred to as communities) (Atkinson: 1992).
- The lack of commitment from the private sector (particularly the banks within the corporate sector) to engage with communities (Smit: 1993).
- The lack of skills in the implementation of housing projects (Merrifield: 1992).
- The reality that it takes a long time to set up a housing project (Tomlinson: 1996).
- The fact that the housing policy has been challenged by people (Tomlinson: 1996).

However, I wish to argue that related to and dependent on all of the above reasons is the lack of effective community participation within housing projects. A fundamental principle of

the White Paper (1994) which emulates the principles espoused in the Reconstruction and Development Programme (RDP) (1994) is the participation of communities in the achievement of their housing goals. In addition, the White Paper (1994) has not just committed itself to the provision of houses but to the provision of 'sustainable housing' and the creation of 'viable communities'. Implicit in the articulation of these goals is the empowerment of these communities to the extent that they begin taking responsibility for their own development and enrichment. And essential to the empowerment of these communities is their participation. Kaplan (1994) argues that a strongly developed civil society is a crucial element in a democratic society in order to ensure that the power of the state and of Capital are kept in check. However, another rationale behind community participation is that it would reduce poor people's dependency on social welfare products from a state with limited financial resources. Atkinson and Madiba (year of publication unknown) argue that participation is often seen as a key to economic development in less developed countries where states lacking administrative and financial capacity are unable to extend services to all areas, particularly to areas where recipients are unable to pay for services.

The choice of low-income housing projects to test the objectives of community participation provides fertile ground for the exploration of the tension between community participation for the purposes of empowerment and community participation for the purposes of efficient delivery. While the White Paper (1994) clearly advances the need for community participation on the basis that it will develop and empower civil society, another dimension to the necessity for community participation is the *project-linked subsidy scheme* for low-income housing that does not allow beneficiaries to act individually. Therefore, within the context of the current housing policy framework, entire communities have to reach a common agreement on the type of housing that they are going to receive. Within this context, the concepts of *effective* community participation and *adequate* shelter can be can be tested.

What this investigation hopes to illustrate is that there is a relationship between effective community participation and the achievement of adequate shelter. However, this is not a causal relationship, it is a relationship that is mediated by a set of circumstances which this study will explore. It is possible to achieve adequate shelter without any community

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participation. However, in the context of scarce financial resources and surplus needs, community participation starts playing a role in the quality of the shelter that one receives for the simple reason that important choices with regard to the physical and social environment have to be made. Unfortunately, community participation has been viewed as an obstacle to the rapid delivery of housing (Tomlinson: 1996). Communities have been criticised for their lack of capacity to make important technical decisions; and for their lack of leadership and cohesiveness among other things (Moser: 1989). However, there are many other stakeholders in the delivery of housing, these are the state, developers, non-government organisations (NGOs), building contractors and so on. These agents have an important role to play in shaping the community participation that occurs. Each of these agents have their own objectives and sometimes these do not coincide with the objectives of the community or with the objectives of sustainable housing. The influence that they exert on the delivery of low income housing has important consequences for the quality of community participation that occurs as well as for the product that the community receives.

Therefore, what is under consideration in this paper are the objectives, intensity and instruments of community participation as they have thus far occurred within a particular low-income housing project. The community under review is Mzamo M'hle (which means a nice try) and is located in the Eastern Cape. This community provides an excellent test-bed to establish the role of community participation in the delivery of housing because it is in the process of a project-linked subsidy scheme housing project and it is also currently characterised by a level of organisation at the community level that allows the community to engage with the other role players in the project. Thus, the focus of this study will be on the different role players in the delivery of housing and the role that they play in shaping community participation and the efficient delivery of housing. Moreover, the nature of the developments in this community are resonant of developments in many communities around the country. Therefore, lessons generated from this study could have wider applicability.

As a point of departure, chapter one will attempt to provide conceptual clarity for the notions of effective community participation and adequate shelter. This conceptual clarification is important to provide the framework within which the key issues concerning community

participation in the delivery of housing, as expressed in the policy documents, should be understood. In this respect, chapter one will:

1. attempt to provide a definition for the concept 'effective' community participation in order to determine the different intensities and objectives of community participation;

2. attempt to define the concept of 'adequate shelter' in an attempt to unravel the meaning of adequate shelter in terms of it's ability to meet the protection, comfort, health and hygiene needs of the poor; and

3. identify the key issues concerning housing and community participation as they are expressed in the White Paper (1994) by outlining the policy environment within which participation is meant to occur.

However, since the objectives of community participation are confined by the roles played and the responsibilities undertaken by the different stakeholders in the delivery of housing, the question of agency in relation to community participation needs to be explored in order to determine what the roles and responsibilities of the different role players should be in order to ensure effective community participation. Therefore, chapter two and three will focus on the internal and external role players in the delivery of housing, respectively. Chapter two demonstrates that the composition of communities is complex and that this often translates into complicated relationships within communities. The role of community leaders, in particular, has a determining influence on the levels of community participation in the delivery of housing. In this respect, chapter two will:

1. attempt to provide a definition for the of concept *'community'*; in an attempt to determine the structure of communities in order to understand how this affects community participation; and

2. provide an analysis of the forms of leadership that occur in communities, since leaders are the people who are most often associated with community participation in an effort to gain an insight into the functioning of community leaders and community based organisations such as civics.

The emphasis of chapter three is on the institutional structure of land assembly and the implementation of housing projects. It can be argued that these external forces have the

most crucial influence on the process of community participation in the delivery of housing because they originate from relative positions of power and authority. In this respect, chapter three focuses on the external agents and institutional arrangements that mediate community participation in the delivery of housing. This chapter will discuss the role of local government and the private sector in relation to housing delivery and housing policy in order to determine the roles and responsibilities of local government and the private sector in relation to housing delivery and to see how they influence community participation.

Chapter four provides an analysis of the case study area. This chapter will:

1. attempt to asses the perception of community participation from the point of view of the community and the external development agents who have worked in/with this community in order to establish what the community and the development agents think of community participation; and

2. attempt to determine the internal and external constraints related to participation in the delivery of housing as they are experienced by this community in an effort to highlight the problems encountered by communities and development agents within housing projects.

Finally, chapter five will attempt to provide a framework for effective community participation and the delivery of housing that can result in the efficient and satisfactory delivery of shelter to communities. Chapter five focuses on solutions within the current policy framework as well as proposals for the transformation of the current policy framework in order to raise the status of community participation in development projects.

Chapter 1

Chapter one raises the main issues concerning participation in relation to housing policy. As a point of departure, the first two sections of this chapter will attempt to provide a conceptual understanding of effective community participation and adequate shelter, respectively. This conceptual clarification is important because it sets the tone for the rest of the document and also provides a bench mark against which policies and practices of community participation can be measured. Hence, the third part of this chapter raises the main issues concerned with community participation in the delivery of housing as promulgated by the White Paper (1994).

Towards A Definition For Effective Community Participation

There are many confusing and contradictory definitions for community participation. Depending on the ideological framework within which they operate, they generally vary in two ways. Moser (1989) argues that the distinction is ultimately a simplistic one which distinguishes between definitions that contain an element of empowerment and definitions that do not. She contends that this is central to the whole debate concerning community participation. Implicit in her analysis is the contention that definitions can either make reference to development of communities or to development in communities.

Paul (1988) places five different objectives of community participation along a development continuum. These objectives are as follows:
1. empowerment,
2. building beneficiary capacity,
3. increasing project effectiveness,
4. improving project efficiency, and
5. project cost sharing.

In addition, Atkinson and Madiba (year of publication unknown) argue that a useful way of distinguishing amongst available approaches "...is along a continuum of a transfer of power

from planners to the public". They argue that that there are eight possible results of participation on a range from negative transfer of power to complete transfer of power. These eight stages are:

1. manipulation,
2. therapy,
3. informing,
4. consultation,
5. placation,
6. partnership,
7. delegated power, and
8. citizen-control.

Atkinson and Madiba (year of publication unknown) measure these results of participation against Arenstein's ladder[1] and come up with the following conclusions: there is no participation during the stages of manipulation and therapy; the stages of informing, consultation and placation merely result in tokenism; and it is only during the stages of partnership, designated power and citizen control that complete citizen control occurs. Paul's (1988) objectives of participation can also be measured against Arenstein's ladder in so far as empowerment and building beneficiary capacity can be located within the range of citizen control and his remaining three objectives fall somewhere within the range of tokenism and no (meaningful) participation.

For Paul (1988) and Atkinson & Madiba (year of publication unknown) the above continuums appear to have been constructed in order to highlight the tension between participation as a means to an end (participation that ensures efficient delivery) and participation as an end in itself (participation that leads to the empowerment of communities). However, Moser (1989) argues that the assumption that 'empowerment is necessarily a good thing' warrants further investigation. She holds that there are many contradictions between real empowerment and what frequently happens to people having been empowered, especially under oppressive regimes. Therefore, she contends that the value of empowerment within the context of

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[1] Arenstein's ladder looks at the different degrees of participation which start form no participation through to manipulation, tokenism, partnerships and citizen control (Gounden & Merrifield: 1994)

specific projects needs to be considered in order to highlight the advantages and disadvantages of community participation for empowerment.

In response to the above dilemma, Holcombe (1995) provides a useful distinction between participation and empowerment. Holcombe (1995) argues that the definitions for empowerment and participation appear to be problematic dichotomies. Regardless, he submits that definitions cannot be separated from values, in this respect, he argues that empowerment and participation are interdependent. For Holcombe (1995), participation represents action, or being part of an action such as the decision-making process. Empowerment, on the other hand, represents sharing control, the entitlement and the ability to participate and to influence decisions as on the allocation of resources.

Be that as it may, many contributors to the debate argue that effective community participation should be located within an empowering framework where the community should be involved in effective decision making at every stage of the project cycle (Muller: 1994, Tomlinson: 1996, Paul: 1988). In this regard, Muller (1994) argues for the promotion of the objectives of the most destitute sector of South African society in all 'community-oriented projects'. He argues that the fulfilment of these objectives necessitates the empowerment of this sector to the extent that it "...[decreases] dependency, increases social, economic and personal development, [promotes] self determination, self reliance and dignity, [dismantles] discriminatory, oppressive and paternalistic structures and [replaces] these with developmental, democratic and liberating systems" (Muller; 1994: 12).

In light of this argument, Muller (1994) advances a dichotomy in the theory of decision-making in which he locates the concept of decision-making in community participation within two broad theoretical frameworks, viz., *decision methodology* and *empowerment phenomenology*. Muller (1994) contends that these two frameworks are at extreme and opposite ends of the empowerment continuum. In addition, Atkinson & Madiba (year of publication unknown) argue that there is an inherent tension between the philosophical merits of efficiency and democracy. However, Muller (1994) argues that decision methodology is an autocratic, technocratic, top-down process of community participation while empowerment phenomenology, on the other hand, has the potential to provide a model for effective

participation that is generated from within communities. Although Muller's (1994) frameworks are within the context of townplanning, his frameworks for empowerment can be successfully applied to the housing context because of its focus on the organisation of people for effective and representative community participation in the context of projects that deal with the delivery of physical products. Moreover, they are also valuable they make a stronger argument for the empowerment of communities.

Muller (1994) argues that 'civil conflagration' in the United States and 'social commitment' in Great Britain facilitated the engagement of the public in more egalitarian decision-making processes. The consequences of these activities was the formulation of planning models that included a social dimension. According to Muller (1994) various new models evolved where participation was seen to facilitate decision making at the levels of goal formulation, objective generation, testing, reduction of alternatives and even the monitoring and evaluation of alternatives. However, he argues that intrinsically all of these models were based on the rational process upon which public participation was merely appended. He contends that while the incorporation of community opinion in the planning process does add some merit to the judgement exercised by the decision-maker that the process is, however, interpreted as being no more than a modification of the top-down practice of the rational model. Thus it's receptiveness to the anti-naturalist critique that the methods of the natural sciences are inappropriate and inapplicable to the social sciences because the intricacies of human behavioural patterns disparage the use of methodological naturalism (Muller: 1994).

Muller (1994) submits that an alternative method is required especially within the context of South African development where communities are held acquiescent by autocratic rational planning. He argues that planning is more appropriate when generated from within communities rather than imposed from above. Therefore, he argues that Friedmann's social mobilisation or learning models offer a useful intellectual framework for planning activity. However, he contends that these activities do not provide a procedure or methodology for the empowerment of communities. Therefore, Muller (1994) argues for a methodology that can accommodate the philosophical principles of the anti-naturalist lobby in a procedural form. By way of reference to Habermas' critical theory, Kuhn's paradigmatic thesis, and Husserl's phenomenological philosophy, he argues that a number of mechanisms within these

theories provide 'fertile fields' in which to locate a participatory methodology. In particular, he advances Husserl's phenomenology as a theory that has the greatest potential for a participatory methodology.

According to Muller (1994), the transfer of the investigatory methods of the empirical sciences to the social sciences was untenable for Husserl. For Husserl 'judgement' was to be deduced from descriptions of experiences and not from the application of logic or scientific assumptions. Muller (1994) argues that Husserl's philosophy of phenomenology has strong links with humanistic existentialism which is essentially based on the contention that truth can be located exclusively in the subjective, personal reality of the believer and that the human will is the 'arbiter' of social values.

> Thus the essence of phenomenology is in the entering of a phenomenon into the (subjective and experientially-based) consciousness of the participant. Conceptual considerations attaching to consciousness: reflection, perception and intentionality, thus offer support to the structure of phenomenology...What a participant intends an object of reality to be, what he or she interprets an object as being, is drawn from personal perception of that object, and that perception is a function of the experiences, values, beliefs, prejudices and attitudes held by the participant (Muller; 1994: 14).

For Muller (1994) it was through the process of 'reduction and bracketing' that a humanistic vieWhite Paperoint of and on the world was developed as an alternative to the prominent investigative custom of the natural sciences.

Muller (1994) submits that contributors to the debate have argued that the various experiences of life tend to subjugate the tendency towards generalisations. For this reason phenomenology is seen as important because it focuses on particular circumstances rather than on the general. With regard to development in a community, a phenomenological model is accordingly focused on the specific situations and on the behaviour of the community in relation to the situation. Behaviour is allied to values, perceptions and interpretations of the community, which are in turn a reflection of the intentions and beliefs of the members of the community. "Because human behaviour can only be understood in terms of its meaning to the actors, beliefs themselves are constitutive of facts. A meeting, a document, or a housing unit is

defined in terms of what it is believed to be" (op cit. Muller; 1994: 15).

Muller (1994) argues that the proposition that a house is definable on the basis of the beliefs of the participant is particularly relevant to the South African context. In addition, he argues that the unstructured, informal and intuitive socialisation of people in disadvantaged communities leads to the definition and description of phenomena for them through the medium of personal comprehension. He argues that there is little evidence to suggest that professional planners have attempted to gain an insight into the beliefs of communities and he contends that the crisis around the development of informal settlement in SA is directly related to the disregard of professionals for the community's values. According to Muller (1994), the phenomenological perspective on participation necessitates the inclusion of the values of the community, this in turn necessitates the community's right to decision-making.

He advances 'promotive planning' and 'strategic choice' as two approaches that have relevance to the theory of phenomenology. According to Muller (1994), promotive planning was conceptualised at the time of the "1976 Soweto riots". Muller (1994) holds that it is structured around the promotion of democratic ideals and the associated prerequisite of community participation. According to this approach, the goal of planning is to protect the interests of the most marginalised members of society. This would then mean that a marginalised group would define their interests according to their own perceptions and priorities as opposed to the development practitioner's perceptions of what those priorities are. Muller (1994) argues that solutions reached through community involvement using this approach command more respect because the community's perceptions prevail throughout the entire process.

According to this approach, it becomes obligatory for the development practitioner to humbly withdraw from involvement when the "dictates of the empowerment of the group" necessitates such a withdrawal (Muller; 1994: 17). However, even though the development practitioner distances him/herself from the negotiating table, s/he is still seen as having a strong role to play as advisor, collator and evaluator if information and as generator of alternate strategies and programmes for implementation "in all cases for the consideration of the affected group" (Muller; 1994: 17). Therefore, according to this approach, the

development practitioner provides information, advice and recommendations; the community issues instructions and makes decisions. (Muller: 1994).

Muller (1994) argues that the concept of strategic choice offers some useful directives for the purposes of converting progressive principles into a procedural model. Planning theorists "...present strategic choice as a methodology based on the principle that planning is a specific process of choice involving the evaluation of various alternatives in the light of desirable end states" (Muller: 1994; 17). It is a process that takes account of the past and of the future by allowing decision makers to get acquainted with problems through successive rounds of problem identification, comparison, decision making and so on. It is argued that the sequential rounds of decision making activity makes the procedure appropriate to the SA context. The provision for sequential referral to the community for discussion and decision at each phase ,viz., 'scanning, shaping, designing, comparing choosing and doing' facilitates a total involvement of the community throughout the process. It is argued that decisions generated throughout this process progress in activity loops and permeate through the phenomenological filter of the community because information and decisions generated in each stage form the basis of actions and decisions for the next stage. In addition, this process makes allowances for particular unresolvable problems which can feed backward or feed forward to other stages for refinement or revision. However, each stage of decision making activity is advocated by the counsel of the development practitioner.

The above framework for effective community participation is based on a continuum of community participation from project cost-sharing to citizen control. At this juncture it must be noted that in practice community participation does not necessarily take place on a sliding scale from cost-sharing to citizen control, instead it occurs in a more nuanced manner, with different objectives along that continuum gaining prominence during different stages of the project. Furthermore, it is not simply a case of one objective being achieved at the expense of another, it is quite possible for variable objectives to be achieved within a single project.

Measuring community participation then, is not simply a matter of attaching a set of values to measurable criteria, but rather, examining the extent and influence that different approaches have on a range of objectives. These very objectives themselves are subjective and depend

on the expectations of beneficiaries and policy makers. Moreover, policy makers constrained by short term expectations tend to define cost sharing in a very narrow and quantifiable manner relating to capital project costs and tend to diminish the importance of longer term and qualitative benefits to communities. This may happen in a situation where the priority of the community could be the total opposite. Similarly defining citizen control is also not easily measurable as an indicator of community participation.

However, based on the above argument, it can be concluded that within the phenomenological model the empowerment of communities is desirable and possible. In addition it can be argued that a good definition for effective community participation focus on the process of empowering communities for the purposes of building capacity in terms of developing and promoting not only skills and awareness but also "...self determination, self reliance and dignity" (ibid: 12). Regardless, there is an ongoing debate about the costs, in terms of time and money, in taking communities through a process of empowerment, particularly within a context of limited financial resources. It is not my intention to get into that debate at this point. However, elements of that debate will come to the fore during later stages of this document.

Towards a Definition for Adequate Shelter

The debate about what 'adequate shelter' is can be traced back to the 'depth versus width' debate. The context of this debate was within the limited financial resources where there was widespread agreement that the state could not afford to build a proper house for every person in need of one. The focus of this debate was on whether the state should aim to reach the maximum number of people in need through the provision of subsidies (width) or whether it should concentrate on building proper houses for the benefit of a few (depth). Suffice to say the state opted for the former option. According to Tomlinson (1996), the policy-makers made an incorrect choice in this case because politicians had made promises to deliver houses which they cannot do within the current policy framework. Tomlinson (1996) contends that in most cases incremental dwellings are being delivered as opposed conventional houses.

The literature does not provide a definition for housing as the construction of houses with brick walls and tiled roofs. All the definitions of housing refer to a process. Gounden and Merrifield (1994) refer to it as the processes and operations necessary for the delivery of a housing product. The White Paper (1994) defines it "...as a variety of processes through which habitable, stable and sustainable, public and private residential environments are created for viable households and communities" (White Paper; 1994: 4.2).

In both of these definitions there is some reference to a physical product. What this structure is supposed to be built from, what it is supposed to look like, whether it will conform to conventional notions of a house, are all issues that are left undetermined. The White Paper (1994) only goes so far as defining a permanent residential structure as one with secure tenure that ensures privacy, provides adequate protection against the elements, has potable water, adequate sanitary facilities including waste disposal and domestic electricity supply. In addition, it argues that people will only be able to access these on a progressive basis.

Furthermore, White Paper (1994) proposes that people will access housing finance from the state "...at a level that is commensurate with their means and thereafter constantly strive to improve their circumstances through whatever further means come at their disposal" (White Paper; 1994: 4.1). In this respect, Tomlinson (1996) argues that a significant amount of doubt has been asserted as to whether the standard of housing to be delivered will satisfy the beneficiaries. Tomlinson (1996) summarises the housing subsidy as a "once-off capital grant" or "gift" with the level of subsidy varying according to household income. The maximum subsidy is R15 000 for households earning less than R800 a month with the minimum subsidy pegged at R5 000 for households earning between R 2501- R3 000. Given that the cost of a serviced site can be anything up to R12 000, what is left over for the so-called "top structure" raises many concerns for what can be achieved with a meagre balance of R6 000. In fact, Tomlinson (1996) argues in her survey of beneficiary views on the government subsidy scheme, that the greatest complaints from beneficiaries were related to the size and quality of the house.

Moreover, from a feminist perspective it can be argued that a fundamental contradiction in housing policy is that it's rationale derives from a functionalist analysis. According to

Moser (1992), policy makers perceive men's and women's needs as synonymous. In other words, as individuals within the household unit, men and women both contribute equally towards the optimum functioning of the household unit. Moser (1992) contends that the design of houses must project the productive role of women. "[W]omen have first hand experience of domestic labour without services, and therefore can best order the provision of different services" (Moser; 1992: 18). Moser (1992) contends that the lack of consultation with women means that poor service provision can exert extreme pressure on the domestic responsibilities of women. In addition, she submits that a lack of consultation in terms of the design of homes also does not provide the opportunity for home industries or for renting out space.

"[L]ittle thought has been directed to technical assistance that will support initiatives from households wishing to extend themselves or to adopt co-residence" (Chant & Ward; 1987: 16). Chant and Ward (1987) argue that in addition to plot sub-division and horizontal extension, low income families need advice on how to develop vertical dwelling structures. This allows for the potential diversification of survival strategies (renting and home industries) to allow families to expand while saving valuable space.

Thus it is extremely difficult to determine what is meant by the concept of adequate shelter. In different contexts it appears to mean different things. What is apparent is that the quality of ones shelter will be determined by one's socio-economic status. Given that the housing policy acknowledges the need for people to improve their own housing circumstances, it would be wise to take cognisance of the arguments advanced by Moser (1992), Chant and Ward (1987) for the design of homes that will not only ease the productive role of women but will also lead to a diversification of the income-generating strategy.

The following section outlines the policy vision for the attainment of adequate shelter through the participation of communities.

The Key Issues in Housing and Participation as they Appear in the White Paper (1994).

The White Paper (1994) which represents a new approach to policy formulation in SA was the culmination of a two and a half year period of bilateral negotiations of all major stakeholders in the public and the private realm. According to the White Paper (1994), The National Housing Forum (NHF) was established in 1992 as a forum for all major stakeholders in the housing sector to develop a new housing strategy and policy together with the Department of Housing through a series of bilateral negotiations. The White Paper (1994) submits that the NHF represents the most inclusive process of policy formulation ever undertaken in SA with regard to housing. In 1993, a National Housing Board with representation from housing suppliers, consumers and regulators was also formed in order to advise government on issues of national policy. This led to the establishment of the nine provincial housing boards (PHBs) in March 1994. These PHBs are responsible for approving housing projects as well as for allocating housing subsidies and are, together with the provincial departments of housing, generally responsible for the implementation of housing policy within the provinces.

The White Paper (1994) argues that for the majority of South Africans, life's reality is one of poverty and despair. Having recognised this reality, the White Paper (1994) suggests that it is incumbent upon the state to implement policies and strategies that will redress the unequal distribution of wealth in this country. However, it contends that because of the diversity of SA's economic and housing problems that there is no distinct blueprint for solving these problems. In this regard, it argues that housing is a key component of the RDP's comprehensive programme for economic and social development and because of housing's prominence within the RDP, it contends that the necessary 'political will' and 'fiscal support' should be secured to ensure the successful launch of sustainable housing programmes. However, two years later, the diminishing role of the RDP at national and provincial level raises noteworthy concerns about the mobilisation of support for housing issues. Moreover, Marais (1996) argues that the RDP has failed in its role to bring divergent social forces together towards a common goal for development. He cites the 'feeble delivery of housing as a case in point. He argues that an important element responsible for the failure of housing delivery was the notion that this venture could be guaranteed by a "social accord" which rested on the voluntarism of financial institutions and developers. In this respect, Marais (1996) contends that conciliation might cement political compromises but it unable to reconcile social inequalities.

Notwithstanding, when the White Paper was published in 1994, the government committed itself to a 'development process driven from within communities'. It's primary objective was the building of beneficiary capacity. This is extremely important in the White Paper (1994) which in line with the objectives of the RDP (1994) is strongly committed to the rationale of sustainable development, which within the housing context can be construed as the creation of viable communities. The White Paper (1994) aims to achieve this by strongly recommending the involvement of communities in housing projects at the levels of planning and implementation. With regard to community participation in the planning stages of a project, it refers to the empowerment of communities to the extent that a community's decision making capacity is increased so that they could take control of their housing process. The White Paper (1994) argues that the state will formulate policies that will support initiatives emerging from communities aimed at equipping and empowering people to "...drive their own economic empowerment for the development of their physical environment and the satisfaction of their basic needs" (White Paper: 1994). Enabling communities to take the responsibility for their own development is considered to be vital for the survival of sustainable development.

With regard to the participation of communities at the level of implementation, the White Paper (1994) calls for the use of local labour in the construction of houses and also for the use of small contractors. This would lead to the generation of economic activity within the community which is another important component of sustainable development. In this regard, the White Paper (1994) holds that it will be biased towards "...the involvement of small and medium sized businesses and labour intensive approaches, in order to maximise the economic growth and employment impact of such a policy" (White Paper: 1994). It is argued that these policies need to maximise the options available to communities and in so doing enable the maximum involvement of communities, particularly as it relates to the development of skills, the generation of labour and economic empowerment. Furthermore, in line with the dominant theme of 'gender development' the White Paper (1994) commits itself to policies that will constantly evaluate and support the role of women in the housing process.

However, another reason for the participation of communities is for the dissemination of information. This refers to participation on a wider level. The White Paper submits that the required annual delivery rate of approximately 350 000 units within extreme budgetary constraints does not allow sufficient subsidy money per household to enable the construction, at state expense, of a minimum standard complete house for each household. Only a limited state subsidy contribution towards the cost of a house is possible. It is very important that beneficiary communities understand this. In this regard, a prominent member of the PHB in KwaZulu-Natal argued that one of the primary reasons for participation was to ensure that this message was communicated clearly to all concerned (Sewparsad; pers comm: 15/11/95).

The White Paper (1994) envisages the participation of communities in housing projects through the vehicle of 'social compacts'. These are agreements that will be representative of all stakeholders concerned with the development of a particular area. According to Baskin (1994), the social compact is an agreement between the beneficiary community, (neighbouring) communities who fear negative externalities, the local authority, the developer and the land owner. The purpose of the social compact is to negotiate the terms of reference for the processes that are going to guide the development of the area or settlement. In other words, it is a formal mechanism to address the problems between stakeholders in a project, before, during and after the implementation of a project (DAG: 1995). Baskin (1994) argues that the determining mark of the social compact is that it provides the means, in terms of a process, for the social compact to be reached.

However, it should be noted that there have been many debates about the legitimacy and transparency of social compacts. Baskin (1994) argues that the easiest social compacts are those between developers and local elites. Clearly this kind of social compact raises concerns about the transparency and legitimacy of the agreement. Gounden and Merrifield (1994) argue that community participation is not about enriching local power blocs or patronising local warlords. In addition, the social compact is a requirement of the government housing subsidy scheme for the approval of housing projects (DAG: 1995). However, if one considers the importance of social compacts in accessing bridging finance from the PHB's then it is particularly disturbing that a member of the PHB in KwaZulu-Natal upon being questioned about criteria for releasing subsidy funds for housing projects should argue that the PHB is

merely a vehicle for finance and while it is concerned that a social compact is agreed upon, it is not necessarily concerned about who the signatories of the social compact are (Sewparsad; pers comm: 15/11/95).

The purpose of the above section was to outline the main issues concerning community participation from a policy point of view. It can be argued that the government has it's 'heart in the right place' but that essentially, whether the mechanisms to ensure that the policies get translated into practice are sufficient or not, still has to be determined. The conceptual clarification of effective community participation argued for a bottom up approach to development in which the views of the community should prevail. However, it is evident that participation from a policy perspective which merely "strongly recommends the participation of communities" can neither guarantee the participation of communities nor the representativeness of that participation, if it does occur at all. In this respect, capacity building appears to be an objective of the White Paper in as far as it will ensure the success of a project in terms of its efficiency in the delivery of physical products. Therefore, it is evident that the policies for participation (although they claim to be) are not geared towards the generation of a questioning civil society that will be able to engage with institutions that formulate policies. Instead they are more in keeping with a perspective that aims to reduce the financial dependency of the poor on the state.

Conclusion

It was considered important to highlight the state's position on participation because without the appropriate policy environment, attempts at true participation will constantly encounter hurdles. It would appear that SA has a policy framework that is merely conducive to community participation. There is wide acknowledgement that participation has been unsuccessfully appended to housing delivery in many projects in SA (Tomlinson: 1996). In this respect, one purpose of this chapter was to provide a framework for the analysis of community participation that will enable the identification of participation as an end; and participation as a means. Another purpose, was to show that adequate shelter is an entity that is context specific and that for poor people it is often more than shelter, it is also a potential source of income. However, the lack of clarity from the White Paper on a definition for

adequate shelter further intensifies the complexities of community participation because housing agents are currently faced with communities that have high expectations which will need to be knocked down considerably in order to accommodate the subsidy. The following chapter will show how participation is mediated by the communities themselves in order to determine the internal obstacles to representative and effective community participation.

Chapter 2

The purpose of this chapter is to examine the role of communities in development projects. The main area of focus will be in distinguishing the community role players in community participation. In this respect, the first part of this chapter will attempt to define the concept of community in order to see who it is we are talking about when we make reference to "the community". The second part of this chapter will attempt to unravel the mystery surrounding the issue of leadership in communities, since community leaders are the people most likely to be associated with participation in development projects. This section will place an important emphasis on the role of civics. This focus on civics as community leaders is motivated by the fact that they have played a dominant role in housing related issues. During the so-called "struggle years" the South African National Civic Organisation (SANCO) played a key role in mobilising support around rent boycotts and service charge boycotts in response to the poor allocation of resources to townships (Swilling, Cobbett & Hunter: 1993). Presently, they have maintained their role in the democratic SA in all levels of housing. For example, in the Eastern Cape, SANCO is influential at both the provincial and local government level.

Towards a Definition for Community

Arriving at a functional definition for the concept of *'community'* has serious implications for the way in which development occurs. A frequently recorded criticism is that community's often retard the development process by bringing projects to a standstill (Pieterse & Simone: 1994). Within this context, it is argued that irresolute power struggles within communities tend to undermine the development process. This interpretation of events highlights the importance of achieving a comprehensive understanding of community dynamics in development projects. Moser (1989) argues that the type of participation that occurs within community participation is informed by the people who participate in it. As already alluded to in the last chapter, participation by power blocs and community elites does not satisfy the criteria for effective community participation (ibid.). It can be argued that differences within communities can be observed at the macro level, i.e., between groups and at the micro

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level, i.e., within groups. However, it is widely acknowledged that most analyses of communities often overlook differences at both these levels. Therefore, this section aims to highlight the different characteristics of people and groups that make up communities and in this way hopes to arrive at a functional definition for the concept of community which will enhance the understanding of community dynamics. Such an understanding is considered to be of the utmost importance for the facilitation of processes that lead to the smooth delivery of development goods.

According to Friedmann (1992), capacity building and empowerment frequently suggest objectives that go beyond the housing process itself - from the more sweeping notion of social development, to some stronger notion of political mobilisation which challenges and possibly even modifies the conditions which gave rise to the housing predicament in the first instance. However, Moser (1989) cautions that such conceptions are often "ungirded" by the romantic notion that the poor often organise themselves into communities which assumes a homogeneity of community and congruency of interests between different housing users that more often than not does not exist.

Moreover, it has been argued that "...a fully inclusive community or sense of common good is never a realisable, concrete object - given a multiplicity of belongings and identities inherent in many communities" (Pieterse & Simone; 1994: 28). Hence, at the macro level, a widely held assumption about communities is that they are homogenous wholes. In addition, Moser (1989) argues that a persistent problem at the policy level is the conceptualisation of the community as a homogenous entity. She contends that this perception of community assumes equal empowerment between all members of the community while obscuring clarity on whether the group being referred to is defined in spatial or in social terms. The case for the recognition of heterogeneity within communities is also advanced by Friedmann (1992) who argues that the conception of community at policy level is merely limited to the group that the policy is targeting.

Moser (1989) argues that many kinds of organisations exist at the community level, each affecting projects in their own way. She contends that infrequently there is only one dominant organisation in a community, nevertheless, the more common scenario is for several

overlapping organisations to co-exist. However, she also argues that communities lacking any kind of organisation at all also exist. These, she submits, are extremely heterogeneous and capricious in nature.

The most commonly cited groups within South African communities are civic organisations, political parties, youth groups, gender forums, development forums and so on. Often conflicting interests between such groups manifest themselves in the form of competition over scarce resources. "Development introduces scarce resources into resource-starved communities and focuses the power struggles in these communities because individuals and organisations controlling resources command political allegiance" (Hindson & Swilling; 1994: 12). Hindson and Swilling argue that where "urban reconstruction" has to be instituted, the possibility for conflict is the norm rather than the exception. In addition, they formulate the following conclusions based on their understanding of the roots of conflict within development: "Power structures in divided communities are a part of reality;...[b]lack residential communities are themselves often deeply divided, politically and to some degree economically and;...[t]he more fundamental sources of conflict lie in the racial and class structuring of the wider society, including the spatial and physical structuring of South African cities" (Hindson & Swilling; 1994: 12).

Pieterse & Simone (1994) advance the example of Phola Park as a case where development introduced conflict into communities. In this case, while the possibility of better houses and services could increase the material benefits of the majority of residents, it poses a threat to the immigrants in the settlement whose "primary roots" remain in rural areas. Pieterse & Simone(1994) argue that any sector of a community that perceives itself to be marginalised can actively resist development and may even disrupt it.

Also within the development framework, Cherry (1994) provides two examples of tensions between groups in her discussion of the politics of conflict in KwaZulu-Natal (KZN) and the Eastern Cape (EC). In KZN, the conflict that she refers to by and large relates to conflict on a regional scale, however, at the local level it also plays itself out as conflicting interests between groups within communities. Thus an analogy between regional and local level conflict can be drawn. Hence, Cherry's (1994) argument that the essence of the conflict in

KZN is a territorially based contest for resources and power between two competing political parties of the same ethnic background, i.e. the African National Congress (ANC) and the Inkatha Freedom Party (IFP). She argues that supporters of the ANC, the majority party, see their welfare as best being served as part of a united nation, while supporters of the IFP, who have been mobilised around ethnic symbols, believe that their welfare will be better served by fragmentation; as a minority, the more power is fragmented, the more they will retain access at the provincial level. This conflict is largely based on access to resources in rural and peri-urban settlements which are controlled by the KwaZulu Administration and it's traditional structures of chiefs and headmen. Cherry (1994) contends that women and youth in particular are being disadvantaged by the retention of these traditional structures of authority. Moreover, Friedmann (1992) argues that basic organisational codes to elect a representative, accountable leadership that operates within a framework of transparency may be unimaginable to a constituency that is accustomed to a hierarchical framework of leadership which relies heavily on relations of mutual obligation as opposed to democratic accountability.

Cherry's (1994) study of a community in the EC, Kwazakele, provides an example of "Gramscian hegemony". In this community, the "opposition bloc" procured moral supremacy; ideological and organisational leadership; and gained the support of most of the residents. According to Cherry (1994), levels of political consciousness and participation were high, and usually voluntary. In addition, residents tended to approve of "street and area committee structures" which they believed served their interests. However, she contends that territorial hegemony was central to the way in which these structures operated. She argues that "[t]hose outside the structures were not accommodated. Those inside were bound by the legitimacy which they conferred, through their own participation, on these structures" (Cherry; 1994: 622). Thus majoritarian decision-making predominated and disagreement was not tolerated.

At the micro level, Moser (1989) argues that while the differentiation is often made between local leaders, neighbourhood organisations and political parties as the three community level groups involved in community participation, further specification is less common. In addition, Friedmann (1992) submits that "...a target population refers to a specific group of people that is made the object of government policies and programs. They may be female-headed households, children, landless rural labourers, small farm peasants, victims of war or

drought, and shanty town dwellers" (Friedmann: 1992: 57). This type of definition can be literally translated to mean specific groups of people ,i.e., children, female-headed households, squatters, and so on. In other words, broad categories of people that are targeted for development. The limitation with respect to such a definition is that it tends to confine analysis to a particular category, thus diminishing the acknowledgement of variances within categories of people.

According to Moser (1989), further evidence to challenge the notion of homogeneity in communities stems from the experience that survival strategies which are adopted in disadvantaged communities generate intense individualism. In this respect, she argues that conflicting interests as opposed to similarities in interests tend to be the order of the day. In addition, she claims that the most substantial inconsistency at the community level is between house owners, renters and squatters. In this respect, renters and squatters are often reluctant to involve themselves in development or upgrading projects unless they are clear about what exactly they have to gain from the development.

Moser (1989) takes her analysis a step further to the level of the family unit as a group. In this respect she highlights the contradiction between the assumption of homogenous family units maintaining stereotypical sexual divisions of labour and the reality that many households are de facto being headed by women. At this level, she argues that differences within the family unit are not taken into account in the formulation of eligibility criteria.

Recent studies have shown that the majority of low income household units are not nuclear family units. Thus, analyses located in the realm of the nuclear family unit have been sharply criticised. The limitation that this type of analysis places on the demand for housing is the assumption that there is only one breadwinner per family unit (where the family unit refers to father, mother and children). As such the demand for housing is determined by the level of the income of the breadwinner, who is also assumed to be the father. A consequence of this shortcoming has been that housing policies and interventions have been specifically targeted towards the needs of the nuclear family. The net result has been that the vast majority of those most in need of housing are not being targeted for development in terms of housing policy. Often this vast majority refers to single female headed households that are extended in

form. In fact, Moser (1989) argues that one third of the world's households are headed by women.

The above discussion has demonstrated that communities are made up of people and groups with diverse interests and needs. The lack of attention to variances at the micro level in communities has resulted in a lack of harmony between housing problems and housing solutions. In addition, the lack of understanding of the unique and complex dynamics at the macro level in communities has often resulted in the mediocre management of the development process in community projects. In this respect, Friedmann (1992) argues that development programs have failed to generate "collective capacity building and empowerment". He argues that this is as much because these results were not part of the project objectives of the "project initiators", as well as because the methods by which public participation is conducted, are not designed to bring about such results.

Therefore it is evident that not all members of communities become empowered in the process of community participation. The following section will show that potential candidates for empowerment usually emanate from privileged positions within communities, i.e., people who hold influential positions in communities.

Community Leadership and Decision-Making

In her research on beneficiaries views on housing, Tomlinson (1996) argues that shelter was delivered with little or no consultation. She contends that a probable explanation for this is that developers simply negotiated a social compact with whom they assumed to be the leaders of the community. She argues further in her inquiry into the choice of developer in housing projects, that this choice was often made through interaction solely between local civic leaders and developers. Moreover, Hindson and Swilling (1994) argue that within the South African housing delivery context, those most often assumed to be in the leadership are the civic leaders. However, Chant and Ward (1987) argue that very little is known about the "...various types of community leadership that emerge; the nature of its links to outside bodies and to the community members it represents; the characteristics; motives; skills; and legitimacy of individual [and group] leadership..." (Chant & Ward; 1987: 73). Since this is an

investigation into participation, this section of the chapter will focus on the different types of leadership that emerge and how this leadership interacts with external development agents in an effort to determine their role in shaping community participation in development projects. However, Pieterse & Simone (1994) argue that civics tend to enjoy widespread support in communities and are also construed by many development agents as organisations that demonstrate the representativeness that is sought in the development process. Therefore, in respect of the large role that civics have assumed as community leaders in the delivery of housing, special attention will also be paid to them in this section.

Chant and Ward (1987) argue that a comprehensive understanding on the issue of leadership in decision-making is important for several reasons. Firstly, the authority that leaders have in advocating and directing participation is an important 'variable' in its own right. Secondly, leadership is not a 'passive variable' in any development project. According to Chant and Ward (1987), where leaders already exist any external intervention may be construed as a threat regardless of how benign or valuable the intervention is to the development of the community. For Chant and Ward (1987) it is important that these fears must be recognised and sensitively dealt with in order to allay them. Thirdly, in the case where multiple leadership exists, conflictual relationships may obstruct development and wider participation. Finally, it is important to be aware of leadership because insensitive actions by external development agents may undermine the viability of the development project.

In a similar vein, Heymans (1993) raises additional concerns that are specific to the leadership role of civics in communities. Heymans (1993) questions the representativeness of civics in his article on people's development. He argues that while civics enjoy widespread support from communities, they also operate in a fairly autocratic manner. He contends that civics have established a reputation for undermining projects and programmes. In addition, he holds that their support bases vary from case to case. According to Heymans (1993), while civics often argue that "they are the community", experience has suggested that they are often perceived as but one of many interest groups. The problem, according to Heymans, is that some civics refuse to acknowledge that other interest groups operate at their level in the community. He reports that some civics actually prevent development agencies from making contact with the full spectrum of interests in communities.

With respect to addressing the issues raised above, Chant and Ward (1987) argue that there are two types of leaders in contemporary society. Those that have a 'socio-emotional' role and who have emerged through a basis of support for traditional values. The second type of leaders that emerge are those whose function is 'task-related', they derive their support on the basis of their education and experience; or from contacts with state officials and politicians. However, Chant and Ward (1987) also contend that many types of leaders share common characteristics.

Chant and Ward (1987) argue that by distinguishing the different styles of leadership in contemporary society it will be possible to distinguish the possible types of participation that will be encouraged under different styles of leaderships. They identify four styles of leadership: traditional, authoritarian, positional and freely elected/community representational leaders. This differentiation together with Swilling's (1993) definitions for different kinds of civics provides a framework for understanding the way that civics function.

According to Chant and Ward (1987), traditional styles of leadership have their roots in rural forms of leadership. They argue that community participation is likely to be low under traditional leadership unless other forms of leadership that can mobilise support for development are allowed to co-exist with it.

Chant and Ward (1987) submit that *authoritarian* leaders gain their positions through domination and coercion. They maintain their control through the monopoly of local resources or through force exercised by a strong 'coterie' of strongmen or bodyguards. Swilling's (1993) definition of *leadership elite civics* fall under this style of leadership. According to Swilling (1993), leadership elite civics refer to a totally undemocratic form of leadership. In this case, the civic leadership employ opportunistic methods to bring their organisation into negotiations and benefit from being able to deliver without doing any organisational work.

According to Chant and Ward (1987) *Positional* leaders are attached to an external institution such as a political party, trade union, religious organisation and so on. In this case, Chant

and Ward (1987) argue that the aim of the organisation is to gain grass-roots support among the poor. *Populist civics* and *paper civics* can be categorised under this form of leadership. According to Swilling (1993), populist civics enjoy grassroots support, however, this support is poorly organised on the ground. Swilling (1993) holds that *paper civics* refer to civics without a base or consistent leadership. In this case, the name of the civic is simply invoked when it is found suitable by any leadership element that takes it upon himself/themselves to represent the area. Moreover, Chant and Ward (1987) submit that positional leaders derive their legitimacy either through the status conferred on them by the external organisation or through the support of residents who perceive links with the organisation to be of some value.

Chant and Ward (1987) contend that *freely elected/community representational leaders* provide the only category where community residents play a critical role in electing a leader. However, they caution that 'freely elected' does not imply that the entire community has participated in the election nor that the leadership is representative of the entire community. Regardless, they concede that the source of legitimacy in this case is the community itself. In this case, leaders are chosen for instrumental reasons such as to achieve improvements for their settlements. Therefore they are likely to involve the residents in mobilisation efforts in order to influence the relevant agencies for goods and services. In this regard, Swilling (1993) makes reference to *grassroots civics*, which he argues come closest to the conception of an ideal civic. These civics have an accountable grassroots base and accountable leadership. They have street committees that meet regularly and have executive structures with membership in the form of dues with a card system. The leadership is usually elected by an annual or bi-annual general meeting. Swilling (1993) argues that this type of civic demonstrates accountability while at the same time allowing the leadership some latitude to develop and implement strategies. He attributes this to the tight relationship between the leadership and an organised grassroots base.

Therefore, it can be concluded that there are different types of leaders operating within communities and that their legitimacy is gained from various sources. Civics can be described as non-traditional leaders who derive their legitimacy from the tasks they are able to fulfil for the wider community. It can also be argued that for development agents, it is extremely important to understand the kind of leadership one is dealing with because this will dictate

the terms of interaction with the community. However, the fact that authoritarian and traditional forms of leadership exist in urban communities should not be construed as a reason to ignore these leaders. In this regard, Heymans' (1993) contention that it is "strategically wise" to engage with civics holds true for all forms of leadership.

Given that leadership or the lack of it has often been blamed for the poor performance of housing delivery projects by external agents, it then becomes important to explore the relationship between community leaders and external agents in order to determine whether it is a co-operative or conflictual relationship. Chant and Ward (1987) contend that project success depends to a large degree on whether there is convergence or divergence between the aims of the external agencies and those of the local leaders, and in the methods adopted to fulfil these objectives. They argue that the extent to which priorities of external agents and leaders; as well as those of the community correspond or divert is a crucial factor in determining community participation. Chant and Ward (1987) argue that the nature and potential success of intervention depends on several factors operating both at the level of the external agent and at the level of the community.

Accordingly, Chant and Ward (1987) identify five possible sources of conflict over aims. These are: participation, timing, selection of development goals, cost recovery and administration.

With reference to participation, Chant and Ward (1987) argue that the scope and nature of participation may be a source of conflict where the extent of community participation in decision-making and formulation is challenged. In addition, there might also be conflict over who controls community participation. If the external agency works directly with the community, local leaders may see their support base eroding. However, external agents might also use community development as a pretext for party-political mobilisation. Community leaders are often vehemently opposed to such endeavours.

The timing of a project may also result in conflict. The process of identifying and approaching community leaders is a time consuming process with which external agents may not be bothered because they are eager to see the project get underway as soon as possible.

However, Chant and Ward (1987) caution that agents who don't take the time to identify leaders and gain their approval, may halt the project's prospects before it commences.

The determining problem with regard to the selection of development goals, according to Chant and Ward (1987) is: who decides? Planners may feel that they have superior knowledge, while leaders may feel that they understand their community's needs best, however, their needs may be impracticable in technical or financial terms. On the other hand, planners may go for expediency and residents may lose interest if their demands are not met. Another conflictive issue is how priorities are assessed; how much weight should be given to the views of the development agents, leaders and residents respectively? Muller's (1994) proposals in chapter one offer some useful directives in answering this question.

According to Chant and Ward (1987), cost recovery is usually one of the most problematic areas of housing projects. Conflicts of aims and interests may arise over the following issues. Firstly, the level of the subsidy and the opportunity for the subsidy. Secondly, the issue of repayment terms. In the case where the agency may have borrowed money for the project and needs to recoup it urgently and residents may find it difficult to pay over a short period of time, serious problems can arise. This problem can be related to the *bridging finance* concerns that will be raised in the next chapter. Often leaders may be called upon to exert pressure on non-payers, this is a role which they resent.

Finally, administration of the project is likely to be controversial in terms of local leadership. For example, who should staff the project? It may be more expedient for development agencies to employ their own community development workers rather than using valuable time to train local residents. Moreover, if the aim of the agency is to improve the skills of the resident community, leaders may resent the training of settlement recruits alongside themselves.

Apart from these sources of conflict that could create obstacles for interaction between leaders in general and external agents, Swilling (1993) provides some local examples of problems that have arisen because of interaction that is limited to civics and external agents only. Swilling (1993) cautions that in development projects, civics are sometimes used to

"rubber stamp" the design and implementation of a project by an external agent. He refers to the Independent Development Trust (IDT) that initiated development projects which required civic backing. Swilling (1993) argues that initially, both parties benefited: the developing agency got it's project implemented and the local civic was seen as delivering. However, he warns that often as the projects proceeded, critical voices in the communities rose up and the civics found themselves defending a product that they neither anticipated nor desired. In this respect, Pieterse & Simone (1994) argue that civics often lack the capacity to propose alternatives to tightly controlled planning criteria which are extremely technical in nature.

Another problem, according to Swilling (1993), is that external agencies often assume that civic organisations are the same as community based development organisations (CBDOs). Thus Swilling (1993)'s contention that "developing agencies, local authorities and civic leaders" have attempted to convert civics into agencies wrapped up in the planning, management and monitoring of development projects. Swilling (1993) argues that this has often resulted in the civic leadership becoming full-time organisers for the development project with their salaries being financed by the project funds. The most noteworthy effect that this has is that it diminishes the amount of money to be used on the physical products of the project. Swilling (1993) argues that this procedure has met with limited success. In addition, he argues that there are examples where the civic leaders have guided their constituencies into processes that leave a limited scope for the criticism of these processes "...because the interests of the leadership become synonymous with the interests of the development project" (Swilling; 1993: 31). According to Swilling (1993), this problem highlights the need to discern between the broad-based organising role of the civic in relation to a variety of community issues; and the particular roles of CBDOs that must proficiently and competently regulate the delivery of physical development products.

It can be concluded that the diversity of interests between community leaders and external agents demands a passage towards the reconciliation of conflicting interests and misunderstandings that will lead to the efficient delivery of housing.

Conclusion

It is evident that community participation is not an elementary matter. In the above analysis I have attempted to highlight the difficulties that are associated with participation by focusing on the community's interaction with participatory policies. It is evident that community leaders play an important role in shaping the community's interaction with participatory policies. In addition, the focus on community leaders and decision-making also raises many concerns about the success of community participation in housing projects because of their interaction with external agents. It is clear that there are many areas of conflict within communities and between communities and external agents. However, this should not be construed as a bleak prediction for the implementation of participatory policies. It is evident that the delivery of housing within a new policy environment is still in its infant stages, no doubt, as time goes by and as lessons from projects are generated, community participation as it has been portrayed above, will become less of a terrain fraught with obstacles. The next chapter will focus on the role of external agents in the delivery of housing.

Chapter 3

The important shift from what the government can do for communities to what communities can do for themselves requires that communities be reconceptualised in line with arguments put forward in the previous chapter. However, the access of communities to and influence over institutions of authority is still very much mediated by the amount of power that external agents are prepared to relinquish to them. In this respect, this chapter focuses on the external agents in the delivery of housing. This focus is on the role of local authorities and the role of the private sector in the delivery of housing.

The Role of Local Authorities in Housing

Local authorities (LAs) have been widely acknowledged as the hands and feet of the RDP (1994). Being the third tier of government, LAs are at the forefront of interaction with civil society. This places them in a central position with regard to development.

At a general level, LAs decisions on the allocation of services such as water, electricity, sewerage disposal, waste removal, and so on, have a direct impact on the housing delivery process. At a more specific level, there are two processes in which LA involvement impacts directly on the housing delivery process. Firstly, LA involvement in community projects through the conduit of social compacts critically affect the housing delivery process. At this level the form of the merger between the LA and the community has serious consequences for capacity building and the physical housing products themselves. In this respect, Stiefel & Wolfe (1994) argue that the level of resources that will be made available to communities depends largely on their ability to influence the content of the merger and to prevent the LAs from absorbing the "lion's share" of the resources. Secondly, the passing of the Development Facilitation Act (DFA) creates a space for LAs authorities to make their mark on the kind of housing that is going to take place under their jurisdiction. Therefore, this part of the chapter will focus on three issues: 1) the broad implications of LA planning for housing; 2) the role of LAs in "community-driven" projects, i.e., with respect to their role in social compacts; and 3) LAs

interpretation of the DFA and its implication for housing.

SA's transition to democracy has been accompanied by far reaching changes for the way that LAs operate. In terms of contextualising the current status of LAs, Swilling & Boya (1995) argue that nowhere else in the world, has national level constitutional transformation been accompanied by local level changes such as in SA. They argue that chapter ten of the constitution, which provides a framework for managing local government (LG) transition, not only entrenches this transition, but also lays down constitutional principles that effectively protect the autonomy of LAs. This has serious implications for the sustainability of development and democracy in SA.

Swilling & Boya (1995) argue that SA invokes images of a divided country in terms of the level of service provision in white areas and the level of service provision in black areas. This division highlights sharp contrasts between these areas with black areas exhibiting a disparity of services that confounds any reasonable understanding of what actually constitutes a healthy, safe and secure environment. On the other hand, white suburbs display levels of services that are comparable to the most advanced first world countries. According to Swilling & Boya (1995), South Africa's racial residential segregation was underpinned by an "integrative urban economic and ecological logic" that favoured the white urbanites. In this respect, they make reference to the colonial nature of the economic relationship between the whites and blacks (including coloureds and Indians) which was unequal, exploitative and a subsidiary to the segregated racial relationships between the different race groups. They argue that this exploitative relationship was most evident in the way that the LG finance system was structured.

Swilling & Boya (1995) explain that apartheid zoning placed all the major commercial and industrial areas in white areas under the jurisdiction of the white LAs. In addition, they argue that although there has been a steady rate of decentralisation of certain commercial activities to suburban areas, it has been calculated that between 50% and 70% of all revenue to all white LAs came from the commercial and industrial areas in the form of property rates and service charges. They argue that this money was used to cross-subsidise the development of high-level services in the white suburbs. Moreover, they contend that of this revenue, not a cent was spent in the black areas.

Swilling & Boya (1995) argue that the black LAs who had no economic base earned some revenue from the service charges and rentals paid on state-owned housing and from a few inter-governmental grants (IGGs) from the national government that subsidised up to 30% of their costs. In addition, Mandy (1991) submits that the state only went as far as guarantying loans received by the black LAs for capital projects such as electrification. These loans were to be serviced out of future revenue. According to Mandy (1991), this was a stringent financial policy which destabilised and discredited black LAs.

Moreover, Swilling & Boya (1995) contend that black labour plus black consumer spending in white areas built up the economic base of the white areas and created a viable tax base for the white LAs which enabled the cross-subsidisation of white suburbs. Thus, the systematic dilapidation of the black townships was an outcome of the "net financial drain of resources" from impoverished black areas to moneyed white areas (Swilling & Boya: 1995).

Therefore, at a broader level, the role of the new LAs is to reverse the rationale that underpinned the planning of the old LAs. However, Vawda and Mckenna (1995) caution that it would be unwise to simply destroy the old system and replace it with a new one, they argue that there should be a managed transition form the old system to a new one. Moreover, Swilling & Boya (1995) argue that this task involves more than just the redirection of resources from white areas to black areas. They argue that the challenge facing LAs is to meet the socio-economic needs of the population in an economically and ecologically sustainable manner. They argue that the needs of the majority include the need for a healthy environment for the present and future generations. Thus, they contend that SA's present pre-occupation with development and redistribution is at a tangent from the international focus of LAs which is increasingly focusing on environmentally friendly practices because the "waste assimilation capacities of the environment [have] begun to reach [their] limits". Therefore, in addition to redistribution, South African LAs have got to make the transition to more productive use of waste products which in turn means decreased use of non-renewable resources (Swilling & Boya: 1995).

Another international trend worth considering for South African LAs, according to Heymans (1991), is the current trend in Britain where LAs who were traditionally seen as service

providers are considering the transformation to "enabling agencies". Heymans contends that for conservatives, this includes, *inter alia,* privatisation, which in SA, is a hotly debated issue but in the process of slowing down even though there have been some notable examples of successes. However, Heymans (1991) argues that for the British Labour Party and trade unions (generally speaking: the left) the notion of "enabling" could be translated to mean the possibility for greater control over services by neighbourhood groups which would "...reduce the distance between the consumers of services and the origins and controls of those services" (Heymans; 1991: 156). Within this context it could be an option worth considering for SA.

More specifically in relation to the delivery of housing, LAs have an extremely important role to play in assisting communities in pursuit of their housing goals. In fact, according to the competencies defined in Chapter 10 of the interim constitution, a LA is charged with making provision "...for access by all persons within its area of jurisdiction to ...housing... within a safe and healthy environment..." (section 175 [3]). In addition, the White Paper (1994) identifies a facilitatory role for local government, hence it argues that LAs should set the framework within which housing delivery can take place. Therefore, LA planning programs should include: determining housing needs; the funding and provision of bulk infrastructure; service provision; and the provision and maintenance of social facilities and welfare housing.

It has been widely acknowledged that the primary role of LAs in relation to housing is in covering the cost of connector and bulk infrastructure, the delivery of all appropriate services and the collection of revenue. However, earlier reference to the social compact demonstrates how LAs have a more direct role to play in the provision of housing. Conventional models of housing delivery within the framework of the social compact leave the principal responsibility for housing to the community and to the developer with the LA playing only a supportive role. However, in a paper produced by the UCT Graduate School of Business (GSB) in 1995, it is argued that LAs, by strengthening their ties to the community in the social compact, have a vigorous role to play in the housing delivery process. The trend towards increasing the housing responsibilities of the LAs appears to be in keeping with what has been referred to as the reluctance of the private sector to get involved in the provision of low income housing and also of the lack of capacity in communities to drive the development process on their own (GSB: 1995, Merrifield: 1994, Smit: 1993).

The traditional model of the social compact placed many responsibilities on the developer. The developer was responsible for project management, design and accessing bridging finance, in short, s/he carried the development risk. LA involvement in social compacts was perceived to be limited to the provision of land and bulk services and to a lesser extent to the approval of certain project processes. The role of the community was confined to the approval of certain project processes and to a lesser extent, the design of houses. A consequence of this arrangement has been the failure of social compacts because of the reluctance on the part of private developers to get involved in carrying the largest risk. (GSB: 1995)

In an attempt to address this problem, the GSB (1995) advances a model of the social compact which places the LA in a central position. The model advanced by the GSB (1995) sees the LA in a joint venture with the local community as joint developers. In this model, the LA and the community form a "joint development team" (JDT) and an independent project manager (PM) who will act as an agent for both the LA and the community is appointed. The GSB (1995) is vague on who exactly appoints the PM, however, the implication is that the JDT appoints the PM. The PM is responsible for all project managing functions, including the recommendation of all professionals for appointment to the JDT, as well as securing bridging finance on behalf of the JDT. Thus, s/he is only partially responsible for bridging finance. According to this model, the largest risk rests with the LA who should not only take primary responsibility for providing land and bulk infrastructure but also for bridging finance. However, in order to maintain an equilibrium of control, it is suggested that LA can only be involved in the design and approval of the housing project in conjunction with the community.

This model provides a role for the LA which is the closest to the objectives of the new Housing Amendment Bill which begins to locate LAs centrally in the provision of housing. This Bill argues that one of the principle responsibilities of LAs is to "...initiate, plan, co-ordinate, promote and enable appropriate housing development;..." (10.1 [h]).

With regard to the role of LAs in relation to the DFA, the DFA is a new law aimed at speeding up the development process in SA and thus the delivery of the RDP. It is primarily aimed at cutting through time consuming land administration legislation. However, it has broader

implications in that it will govern local planning, budgeting and delivery. The DFA does not replace existing legislation, rather it operates parallel to existing legislation by providing an alternative mechanism for fast-tracking development and also providing a new policy framework for integrated development. The main mechanism to speed up development is the Development Tribunal (DT) which is a body set up in terms of the DFA to exercise final decision-making over land development applications with a view to fast-tracking them. A DT comprises members appointed by the Premier of the province who have qualifications in or knowledge and/or experience of land development or the law. One half of the members must come from the LAs and provincial government and the other half must come from civil society.

The DFA fundamentally transforms the way in which LG works because the development framework for a particular area needs to be formulated by the responsible LA and other stakeholders. These development frameworks are referred to as land development objectives (LDOs), they are five-year strategic development objectives for a particular locality. LDOs must cover the standard of services to be provided in the area. LDOs must provide development objectives for the area, for example, how integration will take place, the level of infrastructure that will be provided and how natural resources will be used. Finally, LDOs must formulate development strategies for achieving these objectives and set targets against which performance can be measured. These LDOs are to be guided by general principles that have been formulated at the national level, which amongst other things, promote integrated land development; community participation and empowerment of communities; accessible and transparent laws, practices and processes; sustainable land use; equality of land use; and security of tenure with a range of tenure options.

The significance of the LDOs can be acknowledged by the fact that LG will influence the decisions of the DT through the LDOs. In other words, the DT or any other decision-making body dealing with land development issues will have to make their decisions in accordance with the LDOs for that particular area

The benefits that these LDOs have for housing are obvious because land and housing are two issues that cannot be separated. In this respect, LDOs have the capacity to:

- ensure the best resource allocation by ensuring that resources are allocated in terms of necessity and impact on people, as opposed to technical criteria;
- legally enforce public participation in local planning;
- focus LAs and binds them to certain delivery targets;
- correct geographic disparities and imbalances in levels of investment and development between areas within each LA; and
- provide a clear framework for investors and developers to make decisions about where to develop and for communities to tackle their expectations for delivery.

LDOs will have to be developed specifically around housing issues in terms of the new powers being allocated to the LAs in the Draft Housing Bill. This Bill argues that: " Any municipality may apply in writing to the member of the executive council in the form specified by that member...for the purposes of administering one or more national housing programme" (IV.11.1). Therefore, the Bill facilitates housing LDOs in that it gives LAs direct responsibility for administering and implementing housing programmes.

The above section has demonstrated that LAs have an extremely important role to play in housing. The new Draft Housing Bill as well as the DFA have created the policy environment for LAs to get increasingly involved in not only the delivery of housing but also in the building of beneficiary capacity.

The Role of the Private Sector in Housing:

As has been implied in my discussion of the various partnerships that are involved in the delivery of housing, it is evident that the delivery of housing in SA is no longer the sole domain of the state. Apart form the state and the communities that have been discussed at length this far, there is also another sector that has a stake in and an important role to play in housing, i.e., the private sector. The private sector in housing refers to a few different agents. These include financial institutions, private developers, building contractors, NGOs and professionals. However, the roles and responsibilities of some of these agents are often superimposed. For example the developer can be the building contractor and vice versa, in addition, the NGOs can also play the part of project manger.

With respect to the construction and financial sectors, it is widely acknowledged that they are not playing a big enough role in low-income housing market. Both Merrifield (1994) and Smit (1993) argue that the reason for this lack of enthusiasm can be related to supply-side constraints.

Merrifield (1994) locates the root of the private sector's reluctance to get involved in low-income housing in events that took place during the 1980's when the state withdrew from building township houses in order to stem the flow of black people to urban areas form the rural and homeland areas. He advances a number of reasons for the poor show of the private sector in this market. However, this discussion will focus on two of the most popular reasons cited for the lack of private sector activity in the black low-income housing market (See Merrifield; 1994: pp 6-10, for more reasons). These are: 1) the bureaucratic bungling of the state; and 2) the culture of non-payment in black townships.

According to Merrifield (1994), the reasons for the so-called culture of non-payment can be traced back to events that were initiated in the 1980's, when the state which had previously let out for tender large batches of houses for construction by the private sector in its township development programme, now privatised the functions of the developer, which had previously fallen within its range. Thus the private companies were, from that point onwards, responsible not only for constructing houses but also for designing as well as marketing properties to individual buyers. However, Merrifield (1994) contends that the state never entirely withdrew from the housing process. In this regard, even though the state expected free market principles to dictate the demand for housing, it still expected the private sector to work within it's regulatory framework. Thus, the state continued to set the parameters within the private sector operated creating endless problems for the developers.

For example, within the old Republic of SA, black people were prevented from owning property right up until 1986, this created a number of problems for the developers, most especially, the problem of dealing with a relatively unsophisticated market that was not accustomed to the experience of home ownership. According to Merrifield (1994), these new home owners failed to keep up with their contractual obligations as a result of extremely high expectations. Thus, the new homeowners expected private contractors/developers to continue with the maintenance

of their homes long after the contractual three month maintenance period, even if they themselves had caused the damage to their properties. Furthermore, Merrifield (1994) contends that the expectations of the new home owners were fuelled by political parties and the civic movement and this sometimes resulted in bond boycotts. However, Merrifield (1994) argues that the expectations and subsequent bond boycott problems could have been avoided if either the state or the private sector had engaged in the dissemination of information to prospective clients about the roles and responsibilities of home ownership.

Regardless, these bond boycotts have become a much vaunted excuse of the private sector for their neglect of the low-income market. According to Smit (1993) the financial sector in particular, perceive black townships as high risk areas that cannot service bonds. Moreover, it is also argued that while the banks and building societies do see the black populace as a substantial prospective source of funding, few are actually doing anything to make it happen (op cit.; Smit: 1993).

Secondly, according to Merrifield (1994), there were problems associated with township establishment approval. In this case, the former mass housing contractors and "white-orientated developers" had to contend with recent and fluid legislation, LA regulations and specifications and the adversity of a frequently "ill-equipped, untrained or incompetent officialdom". Thus, township establishment took up to three years to occur, at a considerable disadvantage to the developer in terms of holding costs. According to Merrifield (1994), the main reason for the delay was the difficulty on the part of the state officials in interpreting the new legislation.

The above are the main problems that led to the departure of the private developers from the low income market. While their problems do have some justification, it is also evident that they can find a way to address them. Merrifield (1994) argues that the problems of the private sector can be solved by developing a better relations with the state. He argues that the state has got to provide a consistent legislative framework and make substantial efforts at training its officials around that framework. Secondly, he argues that the responsibility for determining appropriate township establishment standards and design should shift to the private sector with the state playing a watchdog role. Thirdly, the state should provide "developers support" (providing infrastructure, finance, client education and liaison, marketing, etc.), particularly to small

contractors. The private sector on the other hand needs to exert better control on the quality of its products. In addition, their use of unskilled labour should be accompanied by training and sound management.

In addition, Smit (1993) who focuses his critique on the financial sector, argues that the reluctance of the private sector to get involved provides a rationale for state intervention that is aimed at making markets work better in certain circumstances (in this case, the low-income housing market). In addition, he argues that the financial institutions have got to start to making a more positive effort in making loans available to black people. This argument is supported by Merrifield (1994) who holds that the current subsidy is insufficient for the construction of a conventional secure house. In addition, Smit (1993) argues that the resolution of the housing crisis will take much longer to accomplish without this kind of financial support. He suggests that a reason for being optimistic about the future lies in the pioneering work done by the NGO sector to produce innovative financing mechanisms.

However, NGOs who have an extremely important role to play in housing delivery projects also have problems of their own. The NGO sector, it is argued have been plagued by an identity crisis ever since the inception of a democratic government in SA (Thaw: 1996; Mkhabela 1994 Campbell: year of publication unknown). The seeds of this crisis can be found in their transformation from organisations that were involved in resistance to organisations that are involved in development. However, Kaplan (1994) provides a definition for the role of NGOs in development which also satisfies the inquiry about their role in the delivery of housing. Kaplan (1994) argues that "...[NGOs] collective vision is clear: development work is building the capacity of civil society. The specific identities of many NGOs is framed and informed by this common vision" (Kaplan; 1994:2).

Therefore, specifically in relation to their role in housing, NGOs have an important role to play in providing the much needed technical and social advice in the housing delivery process. These roles can be determined from Kaplan's (1994) comments about the role of NGOs in general. Kaplan (1994) advances three levels at which NGOs can intervene in general. He argues that NGOs should intervene at the levels of building beneficiary capacity; provision; and advocacy and influence.

The first level at which NGOs can intervene is at the level of capacity building. Kaplan (1994) argues that civil society is a society whose institutions belong to the people. He argues that ordinary people need to gain mastery over these institutions, need to wrest control from the hands of the elite, particularly groups of hierarchies, need to integrate the institutions into their routine and need to ensure that they are served by these institutions, rather than only serving them. Therefore, he argues that not only the institutions have to be changed but also the capacity of the people have to be built. He argues that capacity can to a certain extent be improved by intervention at the level of information and training. However, for full control to take place by ordinary people, organisation needs to take place. He submits that people need to gain the capacity for organisation in order to ensure the integration of the institution into their own lives. This is where the concept of civil society as a vital and vibrant entity holds the most significance. Therefore, an important level of intervention for NGOs to engage in is the support of viable community based organisations in housing delivery projects, where they can provide support to trusts, section 21 companies, development forums, civics and so on who have a leading role to play in the decision-making process.

According to Kaplan (1994), provision is another level of intervention and it refers to the supplementation of community based organisations if they are under-resourced and have limited access (which is the rule rather than the exception in housing projects). Within the housing context, this often translates to administrative, technical and social support for communities.

Finally, Kaplan (1994) argues that NGOs can play an advocacy and influence role in order to influence other institutions. In this respect, NGOs can engage with hierarchical institutions in an attempt to influence policy at a level that increases the access of ordinary people to those institutions. For example, making an input on housing policy at the local, provincial and national levels. However, Pieterse & Simone (1994) caution that advocacy skills require special skills because capacity building addresses activities that often do not cohere together in neat little packages.

Moreover, with respect to the role of NGOs as facilitators, Mkhabela (1994) argues that NGOs play one of the most critical roles in forging relations with the state. She holds that what is at

stake in SA is the role of development organisations within the context of a sympathetic government committed to grassroots development. She contends that NGO projects are important only in so far as they help the state put into place policies that create an enabling environment and thereby release energies on the ground for development. She submits that NGO projects will remain irrelevant to the majority of the needy unless they are used as "beacons to light up the pathway for the state to pursue".

Campbell (year of publication unknown), on the other hand argues that given the emerging nature of the transitional state which will probably consist of significant elements of the past - at least in the immediate future its ability to deliver will be severely curtailed and there will be a continued role for NGOs in the medium to longer term which would focus on areas which government would tend not to or where government does not have the resources both human and capital to reach everyone. With respect to the housing sector, building beneficiary capacity is one component of development for which government funds have not been forthcoming, in spite of the lip service that it is being paid.

Conclusion:

The purpose of the above chapter was to complete the circle with regard to the other major role players in housing; viz., the state and the private sector. Previous chapters focused on the role of communities, this chapter has shown that community's on their own cannot take control of their own development. In order for that situation to arise, a concerted effort by the other role players identified in this chapter will have to be made in order to facilitate effective community participation and improve the delivery of housing.

Chapter 4

This chapter aims to test the theoretical assumptions that were made earlier on in the document. The content of this chapter is made up of secondary research, interviews with community leaders, a representative of the LA i.e., the ward councillor[2] representing the community (hereafter referred to as "the councillor") a consultant from a firm of townplanning consultants (hereafter referred to as "the consultant"), an official from the regional Department of Local Government and Housing in East London (hereafter referred to as "the official") and informal discussions with members from a community. This chapter is broken down into five sections: the first deals with the research methodology adopted for the field research; the second provides a brief history of the case study area; the third focuses on community participation within the community; the fourth looks at the theory of community participation from the perspective of the interviewees and the fifth focuses on forms of community participation.

Research Methodology

The township of Mzamo M'hle was identified as a good case study area to test the theory of community participation. This community was targeted because it is currently in the process of implementing a project-linked housing subsidy project. In addition, development agents are working with community based structures towards the fulfilment of the housing project. In this regard, a number of concepts such as community participation, the community and adequate housing can be tested.

Although a request was made to the community leaders for a focus group interview with ordinary members of the community, this did not materialise due to problems experienced with assembling a disjointed group of people unaccustomed to the discipline of attending meetings. It was fairly easy to arrange a focus group with the community leaders, since they meet regularly on a weekly basis. However, informal and unstructured discussions have been

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[2] The ward councillor is employed by a development NGO that focuses on urban development. In this respect, the views that she advanced, especially those that did not deal specifically with council issues, can also be considered to be reflective of the NGO perspective on community participation.

held with at least three people who live in this community in order to get a broader picture of the state of affairs. Moreover, the official who made himself available for an interview, was unfortunately, not familiar with the case study project. This project was administered in Port Elizabeth in the early 1990's and the relevant documentation at the time of the interview had not as yet been transferred to East London. Therefore, questions in this interview were pitched at a general level of community participation.

The interview with the community leaders was conducted in the form of a focus group. This form of interview was considered the most appropriate considering the large number of people that were identified as community leaders in the case study community. Moreover, this kind of interview creates a relaxed atmosphere where people may feel at ease and express themselves more openly. The questions that were put to the community leaders sought to determine their perspective on the issue of community participation. The questions on the interview guide were a set of previously formulated open ended questions based on the literature research. They were arranged in a format such as to elicit the information in a systematic manner for easy comparison to the literature research.

The interviews with the consultant, the councillor and the official were conducted individually. In addition, a questionnaire was made available to them prior to the interviews so that they could reflect on the issues raised. These questions were formulated in a similar manner to the questions mentioned above.

Unfortunately, a concern that must be raised is that the structured nature of the questions not only guided the responses from the respondents but also limited their scope. Thus, relatively little information was gained on the subject's world. In this respect, it must be acknowledged that the opportunity to expand and alter the arguments advanced in this document were lost.

A Brief History of the Community:

In order to increase our understanding of the dynamics peculiar to this community, it will be essential to introduce it by way of a short contextual analysis. Mzamo M'hle is a township under the jurisdiction of the East London Transitional Local Council (TLC) in the province

of the Eastern Cape. The majority of the early inhabitants of the township came from Vale Farm which is in the neighbouring white suburb of Gonubie. The rest of the early inhabitants came from the informal settlement of Monkey Town which was also in the Gonubie area.

Vale Farm was occupied by squatters during mid-1989 and reached the size of approximately 60 shacks by February 1990. Soon after, the informal settlement of Monkey Town was also established. In April 1990, the municipality issued eviction notices to the so-called squatters. According to the community's account of the events that occurred, it would appear that the residents of Vale Farm and Monkey Town awoke one morning to find notices pinned on to tree trunks advising them of their impending eviction. The ensuing response was intense negotiations with the municipality through the conduit of the United Democratic Front (UDF) which resulted in the Cape Provincial Administration (community participationA) undertaking to develop a site and service scheme.

The community participationA identified five different locations for the relocation of the communities. These were labelled alphabetically from A to E. Locations C, D and E were considered unsuitable because of their distance from Gonubie where the majority of the people were employed. Location A was considered to be environmentally sensitive because of its proximity to the sea and because of the fact that it suffered form a high water table. In fact, geological tests proved it unsuitable for the development of a low income-township. The community chose location B which arguably had the best advantage of adjoining the existing infrastructure of Gonubie due to its proximity to the town, i.e., it was situated close to the main road into the town. It would appear that the residents of Gonubie were opposed to this development. The major concern raised was that the value of their properties would decrease if it was located adjacent to a township. Another concern raised was that the potential "toyi-toying" of the community would block the access road to the town. This objection resulted in a unilateral choice by the community participationA of location A which was the most unsuitable (also most expensive) piece of land for the development.

The community participationA appointed a firm of private consultants, Setplan, to plan the layout of the township. Setplan's current consultant to the community argued that they were opposed to the location of the township due to the results of the geological tests. He

submitted that Setplan planned the township under duress. Regardless, 597 Sites of 200m²
each were developed in the township of Mzamo M'hle. Each site had its own water tap and
conventional flushing toilet. Apart from the main road in the township which was tarred, all
other roads were gravel constructed and street lighting was provided. In addition, drainage
provision was also made. Sites within the township for a school, a community centre, a clinic,
a sports field and small business usage were also identified.

The move to the new township took place in two stages starting in mid-1992. The first group
of people moved as soon as a fair number of sites were ready for occupation and the second
group of people followed when the rest of the township was developed. This move was
facilitated by the then South African Defence Force who provided trucks to transport people
and their belongings to their new location. People were housed in tents until they could erect
structures for themselves. Minutes of meetings held by the then Gonubie Municipality reflect
that this two stage move was riddled with problems for the community. For the people left
behind on Vale Farm and Monkey Town there were problems in gaining access to water; for
the people who had moved to the new settlement there were problems with respect to
accessing building materials, technical advice and building assistance that was promised to
the them once they had moved.

The township which was administered by the community participationA in Port Elizabeth was
re-conceptualised as a housing project in May 1994. An application to the then National
Housing Commission (NHC) secured the funds for the project. The township was established
in terms of the Establishment of Less Informal Township Act, 1991 (Act 113 of 1991). This
meant that rather than the leasehold option of the past, people would now be able to receive
full property rights.

However, a number of things have changed since then and the residents of Mzamo M'hle
have not as yet received tenure rights for their properties. The main reason for this is that the
township was made up of two separately owned pieces of land. One portion of the land was
owned by a Regional Services Council (RSC), the other by a private owner. Hence, the
assembly of the land was somewhat complicated. While there was no problem accessing the
land from the RSC, the private owner expressed dissatisfaction with the compensation that

he received for his share of the land. What ensued was a lengthy court battle which has only recently been resolved. In fact, tenure rights for this community are only expected to be realised in early 1997.

Moreover, changes have also materialised as a result of the new political reality. The administration of the project now falls under the administration of the provincial Department of Local Government and Housing in Bisho (the new provincial capital of the Eastern Cape). Mzamo M'hle is administered from its regional office in East London. Moreover, the PHB of the Eastern Cape is now responsible for releasing the loan that was secured from the NHC. Thus, the funding for the project which was originally administered by the community participationA and funded by a loan from the NHC has under the current dispensation been converted to a project based subsidy application. The original NHC loan will be offset against money recovered from the National Housing Fund through the NHB and PHB. These administrative changes have also contributed to the retardation of the project. Hence, the principal problem in this community is in accessing the housing subsidies so that top structures can be built on the serviced sites. At this stage the project appears to be in limbo until the tenure problems are resolved.

In addition, the community has since expanded and is in need of more land to accommodate new arrivals. The LA has acknowledged this, it has been proactive in identifying a suitable piece of land which is close but separate from the present community. The reason underlying this is the fact that the present township is surrounded by poor land, thus, a suitable piece of land could not be found to adjoin it. Moreover, the present community have been lumped with the responsibility for the payment of the expensive infrastructural developments that were necessary to counter the effects of building on land with poor soil conditions. This money, will be deducted from their housing subsidies. However, the consultant justifiably argued that since the community was not involved in the decision to move to this poor location, that it was unfair to expect them to bear the cost of the expensive infrastructural development. He believed that these costs should be written off by the LA.

In the interim, the community has been organised with the assistance of the LA to engage with all other role players in the new housing projects. In 1995, an RDP (1994) unit was set

up in the TLC. This unit in turn set up a development forum (DF) in the community in order to satisfy the principles of participation that are a requirement of the new housing policies. Also in the interim, two smaller projects have been completed in the community, an IDT funded primary school to the value of one million rands has been built, for which the community raised R20 000. In addition, flushing toilets have been built at specific locations for use by the new arrivals to the community. This was funded by the TLC. Local labour was employed in the brick-making and the construction of the toilets. Issues that the DF currently face are the release of the housing subsidies, negotiations with regard to having a portion of the infrastructure costs written off and the expansion of the township.

Community Participation in Mzamo M'hle:

All interviewees submitted that the overarching operational structure in this community was the DF. However, the community leadership provided more information on the breakdown of the DF. The DF is made up of six area sub-committees. These sub-committees are further made up of representatives from 11 committees each representing a different interest groups. The interest groups that are operational in this community are: 1) sports and culture; 2) education and training; 3)small business; 4) safety and security; 5) health, 6) welfare, 7) road and transport; 8) environment, 9) services; 10) labour; and 11) agriculture. A representative from each of these sits on the area sub-committees which report to the executive council of the DF. Moreover, the community leaders argued that the highest decision-making body in the community is the executive committee of the DF. The executive committee is made up of a chairperson, vice chairperson, secretary, vice secretary, treasurer and a chairperson and secretary from each sub-committee. This submission was corroborated by the ward councillor, however, her views on the responsibilities of the executive committee deviated somewhat from that of the community leaders. She argued that the task of the executive committee was merely to discuss and co-ordinate activities and report back to the sub-committees. In this respect, it can be argued that the community leaders possibly misunderstand their decision-making capacity.

It is clear that the community was not totally involved in the site and service project set up by the community participationA. However, the ward councillor and the consultant both

argued that in the current housing projects, which have respectively been characterised as upgrade and greenfields, the community has participated from the beginning at the stage of planning. This in turn was based on the results of a needs assessment in the community.

According to the consultant, the DF set up a steering committee to deal with all projects initiated. Furthermore, a housing project steering committee was set up specifically to deal with the housing projects, this steering committee which comprises eight members is in liaison with the LA and the consultants. It is answerable to the DF steering committee which in turn reports to the wider DF.

With respect to the question of the accountability and representativeness of the above committees, the consultant could not vouch that the full steering committee reported back to the DF, he merely assumed that this took place. In addition, he contended that party and inter-personal politics dictated the structuring and the nature of the community participation. However, The ward councillor argued that there was an intense process of participation in this community with equal representation, she volunteered that political manoeuvring occurred infrequently but that inclusivity was encouraged by the TLC.

For their part the community leadership argued that the legitimacy of the community representatives was confirmed because people were elected by the community at an annual general meeting. They argued that *"nobody is allowed to be a traditional leader"*. In fact, they contended that representative community participation was better than individual participation because *"there is strength in numbers"*. According to the community leaders, the elected structure complied with the views of the majority. They argued that community members were kept informed of executive committee activities through the representatives from the area sub-committees. In addition, they argued that the performance of the representatives was measured by the progress of the project. However, they also submitted that because of the need for continuity, it was better that new people were not elected all the time. This is borne out by the fact that some members of the executive committee have been involved in the development of this community since negotiations started with the community participationA in the old Vale Farm days. This information is gleaned from minutes of meetings which were held with the Gonubie Municipality where certain names keep

appearing, these are names of people who are currently sitting on the executive committee of the DF.

This appears to lend some weight to the contentions made by the consultant who argued that the community leaders *"control the situation quite closely"*. The consultant was also of the opinion that there *were "elements within the community that were not entirely in synch with the leadership"*. This was also impressed upon me by the fact that a person whom I had originally identified for the task of interpreting in my focus group sessions, from within the community, was rejected by the community leaders. They appointed another interpreter for the task who happened to be both the secretary of the executive committee and of the ANC. My request for a scribe from within the community was also turned down. I was advised to employ somebody from outside the community for the job. In addition, my informal discussions which were held with a domestic worker, a garden worker and a missionary worker from the community also appear to support this impression. Not one of these people were able to provide me with any information on the housing projects. In fact, the missionary worker said that the best person to speak to about the housing project was the secretary of the executive committee.

Moreover, the councillor argued that *"in community dynamics, certain bodies, e.g. SANCO, can be snubbed"*. It has been rumoured that SANCO have not been able to successfully launch in this community because they are being crowded out by the ANC (the Eastern Cape is politically characterised by tensions between the ANC and SANCO). In addition, it has also been rumoured that the councillor has been instrumental in influencing this situation. The sensitive nature of this information precludes me from mentioning its source, however, it can be concluded that the question of political manoeuvring does warrant further investigation. Thus, the participation in this community though structured through the best intentions of the community leaders, in a manner that allows inclusivity, does appear to be mediated by a particular set of influences.

Finally, the role of women in participation appears to be limited in this community. The consultant argued that there was poor gender participation at committee level. However, he argued that there was good representation from women at the broader DF meetings. In

addition, he argued that one member of the housing project steering committee was a woman but that she *"never pitched at any of the meetings"*. The councillor argued that women were involved in community participation but as heads of sub-committees, approximately only 20% were women.

The above scenario points to a situation that is not entirely democratic in the way that participation is operationalised. However, I believe that the actions of the community leaders are not motivated by any goals towards self-enrichment. I got a sense of a genuine commitment to the development of the community as a whole, through my interactions with them. This leads me to conclude this section with the observation that the current situation appears to apply because the community leaders don't know any better, as opposed to not wanting any better. However, I got a sense that they were open to new ideas.

The Theory of Community Participation:

My attempts at trying to establish what people thought of effective community participation produced the following responses: The community leaders argued that effective community participation involves decision-making by the community. They argued that it was a requisite for the community to take the lead in managing and monitoring the project. In addition, they submitted that it entailed employing labour from within the community. The consultant argued that the distinguishing characteristic of effective community participation was representativeness. For him effective community participation entailed interplay between the community and the consultant with an open and trustworthy relationship where questions and criticism could be raised without anyone feeling threatened; and where there could be a reliance on the legitimacy of the leadership. The councillor was of the view that effective community participation was an inclusive process where the community made decisions together with other role players. The councillor believed that the community should make decisions based on feasibility studies made by the LA. According to her view, communities should be consulted on major developments, however, she felt that communities lacked the capacity to make decisions on certain components of projects, for example, on the costing of a project. She contended that this could only be determined and decide upon by the LA. The official chose to answer this context within the context of the new housing policy arguing

that community participation was a people driven process and not a developer-driven one. In this respect he argued that participation should be as wide as possible in order to accommodate all *"tiers of stakeholders"*, whom he referred to as primary (the developer and the community), secondary (the private sector) and tertiary (community interest groups) stakeholders.

The consultant and the councillor both agreed that low-income communities have the capacity and the skills to participate in projects. However, they argued that there was room to enhance those skills. The consultant submitted that this could be done through increased interaction with consultants where people could *"pick up information"*. Furthermore, he argued that people from within communities should be used to conduct community surveys, however, he felt that they would initially require training for this. The councillor argued that community skills could be enhanced through exposure to education and training around leadership skills, meeting procedure skills and writing skills. She argued that organisational development had a great role to play in enhancing the capacity of communities. The official, on the other hand, was vague in his response arguing that the Draft Housing Bill guides LAs to take the housing process further and assist communities to develop their skills. Implicit in his response was that they do not currently possess the necessary skills to participate in development projects. Moreover, he only envisaged community's skills being developed to the level that they would understand what is required of them in the current housing policy and be able to participate in the physical construction of the project. He viewed the development of the *"construction skills"* of communities as crucial to the success of housing projects.

In addition, the consultant submitted that levels of community participation should be decided upon by the community in conjunction with other role players. He argued that communities should be clearly informed about the implications of community participation before they made any decisions. In addition, he contended that there was a need for external intervention in the case where power struggles emerged. The councillor argued that the issue of levels of community participation involved a two-tiered approach. She submitted that it depended on whether the community was institutionalised or not. She argued that at the community level, communities could make decisions, but that at a broader level, the inclusivity of other role

players was important for the TLC. However, it was evident that the official believed that this responsibility lay with the relevant housing authority.

Moreover, the councillor submitted that for the ownership of the process and the product by the community, the desirable level of community participation was from planning to implementation. This view resonated in the official's response, however, his motivation for this position was that the state is moving away from the provision of physical houses. The consultant was of the opinion that in an ideal situation, the community would have access to a consultant who provided all information to them and that they would make decisions based on the information. Implicit in his response was that community participation should take place at all levels with the assistance of a consultant, this response was resonant of Muller's (1994) *promotive planning approach* that was discussed in chapter one.

In terms of a definition for community, the community leaders argued that a community was a group of people staying together with a common vision. In addition, they volunteered that their community was a non-racial united community that was not closed. The consultant defined a community as a group of people gathered together in space and time. He added further that communities were made of multiple households with different experiences. According to the official a community referred to a group located in a particular area with identical development needs. The councillor simply submitted that communities were heterogeneous entities.

In terms of defining adequate shelter the community defined it as a brick house with a good roof on a re-inforced foundation and slab having services such as electricity, water and a bathroom inside the house. The consultant defined it as a sound weatherproof structure (not necessarily brick) situated in a place where it would not be swept away or subjected to groundwater and air pollution. In addition, he submitted that it must be large enough for the needs of the person and it must be acceptable to the person. He also argued that adequate shelter was in the eye of the beneficiary. The ward councillor argued that adequate shelter was shelter that could accommodate all household needs. The official argued that adequate shelter referred to *"some form of top structure"* that conformed to the minimum standard of service requirements.

Forms of Community Participation:

There was overwhelming agreement from the community leadership, the consultant the councillor and the official that communities should participate in development projects. However, there appeared to be little commonality in the views expressed on how this participation should be structured. The community leaders argued that the community should collectively decide what their role would be in the project before making any decisions on how it should be structured. The consultant argued that community participation should be structured in a way that was efficient and allowed for the element of checks and balances to be built in. The councillor argued that participation should be structured in a way that it is equally representative but that it should be skewed towards the needs of the beneficiaries at the level of implementation. The official argued that it should be structured in a way that it occurs through a representative group which he referred to as a *"community based partner"*.

In terms of the participation of neighbouring communities in development projects, the communities views appeared to divert from that of the councillor and the consultant. The communities expressed an interest in assistance from neighbouring communities. This was the level of participation that they deemed necessary from neighbouring communities. They argued that in their particular community, only church groups from neighbouring communities offered any assistance during times of need. The consultant argued that adjacent communities had a right to participate in projects where they perceived themselves to be interested and affected parties. However, he implied that their role was merely to raise concerns. The ward councillor argued that neighbouring communities had a right to participate in projects when their environment or the welfare of their properties was threatened or affected. In addition, she argued that the role they should play in participation was to raise awareness and concerns; to offer advice; and sometimes to assume principled positions on certain decisions. The official for his part had a completely different opinion from the rest of the subjects and argued that neighbouring communities should not participate in development projects in order to reduce the possibility for conflict.

The community argued that the role of the councillor was to get more information about consultants, to identify and appoint the consultant in order to *"avoid delaying tactics"*. They contended that in East London, consultants were chosen behind closed doors. They argued that the councillor was the link between the community and the council.

Finally, in terms of the role of the consultant, they argued that he should explain technical and social problems to them. They submitted that he should provide *"written material to avoid people forgetting things"*; and that he should *"explain what he is going to do and stick to it"*. They also argued that he should be more visible to the community by attending more community meetings. Implicit in the responses about the consultant was a sense of suspicion. However, it must be acknowledged that this situation may have arisen because the community had no say in the appointment of the consultants.

Conclusion

It is acknowledged that there are shortcomings with this research due to the lack of a wider range of interviewees from the community, in this respect it was difficult to prove without any doubt the accountability between the executive committee of the DF and the wider DF. However, the responses received in this field study largely support the assumptions made in the theory part of this document. It is evident that community participation is a complex matter and that that communities themselves are complex entities. It is evident that there are many internal and external influences that are brought to bear on the mediation of community participation that takes place in communities. In this particular community, community participation is mediated by the influence of the councillor, the consultant and the community leaders.

Chapter 5

The focus of this investigation was on the mediation of community participation by the different role players in the delivery of housing. In this respect, this investigation has highlighted that a vacuum exists between the perceived role of the different role players (as demonstrated in the case study) and the roles and responsibilities of these role players as envisaged in the policy framework and the theory of sustainable housing. The case study showed beyond doubt that community participation was understood by each role player in terms of how it will ease the burden of their own work or goals.

In order to establish a framework within which community participation could be understood, it was necessary to provide conceptual clarity on three concepts that are extremely important in the delivery of housing. These were the definitions of effective community participation, adequate shelter and the community. However, it has been discovered that there are no adequate and definite definitions for anything. What the literature research as well as the field study has thrown up is that when it come to community participation in housing, concepts such as effective community participation, adequate shelter and the community are highly contested issues. The only certainty that could be associated with effective community participation, is that a method to ensure it is not cast in stone. In addition, the only certainty that could be associated with a definition for adequate shelter indicated that it does not refer to a conventional brick house. Finally, an attempt to make sense of the constitution if communities has demonstrated that they are complex entities, each to be treated in accordance with the normative framework within which they operate. In this respect, the following section of this chapter will briefly highlight the problems that were identified.

The Current Status of community participation

An example of the kind of problems that can arise because of a lack of understanding of (and commitment to) proper facilitation is demonstrable by reference to the case study. This conclusion is derived from a comparison of the information obtained from the literature research against evidence provided by the case study. The case study has shown that dialectical forces

still dictate the delivery of housing. The lack of proper facilitation at the most basic level in this project has led to beneficiary communities receiving little value for their money.

With respect to the concept of effective community participation, the framework for effective participation argued that in community participation the values and views of the community should prevail at all times. The evidence provided in the case study shows that this is did not take place (see chapter four). In this case, development agents (especially the consultant), while displaying the will to facilitate projects at the level of effective community participation are hampered by limited opportunities to implement participation at this level of intensity. This appears to be the case for two reasons. Firstly, the implementer's (the official) views on building beneficiary capacity are limited to the development of construction skills. Secondly, instruments for facilitation are lacking. Therefore, while housing policies promulgate participatory development, the mechanisms to ensure that this kind of development takes place are lacking.

The much vaunted social compact which is a requirement of the project-linked subsidy housing programme and which may be construed as an instrument of participation does not appear to guarantee representative participation. The literature research as well as the case study has shown that often in housing projects, participation in social compacts is limited to community leaders and to significant others who have the ability to derail the process. Furthermore, often community leaders are merely co-opted by the developing agency in an effort to promote the goals of the developing agency as opposed to the goals of the community. This often occurs because the community leaders are susceptible to the influence of special material gains for themselves. However, it can also occur because these leaders lack the skills and/or power to challenge issues that they are opposed to. I believe that the latter case applies to the case study community.

Moreover, even though the introduction of the DFA and the Draft Housing Bill are addressing issues related to the long term sustainability of empowerment based on the principles of sustainable development, a problem with both the Bill and the Act is that they are worded in such a way that they accommodate various interpretations, some of which seek to maintain the status quo. Moreover, the adoption of the DFA is not mandatory, for example, the province of KwaZulu-Natal has chosen not to adopt it.

With respect to a definition of adequate shelter, it would appear that housing delivery agents are in the business of delivering physical products. In fact, the production of houses is the criteria against which the success of the housing sector is being measured. However, while the value of these physical products cannot be discounted, they do tend to narrow the focus of a successful housing programme that should be targeting the creation of viable and sustainable communities, instead.

However, the case study has also demonstrated the relative lack of mutual understanding between the views of the community on adequate shelter and that of the literature as well as the other agents interviewed. However, while the community's views on adequate shelter are extremely conventional, they have to be understood in the context of the community's aspirations for products that they have previously had little or no access to. Moreover, it can be argued that there was some overlap between the views of the other agents and the literature because of their superior level of education and exposure to these debates in development.

With reference to the definition of community, the combination of views expressed suggested that there was an acknowledgement of the diversity of communities, with the possible exception of the official. However, the community leaders tempered their view with an assertion that communities are people who have a common vision. It must be acknowledged that a possible motivation for this interpretation can be traced to their desire to be seen as legitimate and representative. An acknowledgement of conflict could undermine their position in the community.

However, I wish to argue that the most important issue that has been thrown up by this investigation is that community participation is understood differently by all the relevant stakeholders and that this lack of understanding creates very difficult conditions for the facilitation of housing projects and the building of beneficiary capacity. A manifestation of poor commitment to capacity building at project level is the emergence of divisions within communities, for example, these can occur between squatters, township residents and hostel dwellers. These divisions are further aggravated by material disparity and competing local

power structures. It is my contention that proper facilitation at project level could avert these problems as they are experienced by development agencies and communities.

In line with the arguments presented above, the following section of this chapter will advance some proposals for new areas of policy research that can enhance the long term objectives of community participation.

Housing policies need to place a greater emphasis on community participation. The current policy framework has much to say about the importance of community participation in the delivery of housing, however, it appears to be vague on issues of community empowerment. Within the current policy framework, the objective of community participation appears to be the enhancement of the self reliance of beneficiaries in order to ease the development burden of the state. In the context of poverty eradication, policies have prioritised the concept of community participation in order to increase the access of the poor to resources.

However, what needs to be amplified is the creation of viable communities within a strong civil society. According to Kaplan (1994) policies need to emphasise the importance of creating an active and organic civil society where the power of the state and capital can be held in check by a superabundance of proficient, autonomous and representative community organisations where discussion, creativity, new ideas and self-expression predominate.

It is widely acknowledged that even where policies refer to community participation in housing, the objectives of community participation that appear to be prioritised are cost sharing, project effectiveness and project efficiency. When viewed against the spectrum of objectives inherent in sustainable development, they appear to be narrow in focus and short term in orientation. Therefore, it can be concluded that government policies can achieve more by prioritising the capacity building component of effective community participation in housing as it relates to the empowerment and sustainability of communities. Moreover, if approaches to community participation are informed by a commitment to capacity building as the long term objective of community participation, then it could make a difference to the way governments and even donors treat community participation in the design and implementation of projects. Perhaps in this regard the success of programmes and projects will no longer be measured against the delivery of physical products.

In addition, the question of agency is of extreme importance to the question of community participation. Who should take the ultimate responsibility to ensure that community participation takes place and that it is effective and representative? It is evident from the

previous sections of this document, that every role player in the delivery of housing is responsible for ensuring that this occurs. However, on a more general level, I would argue that any person with an inkling of a social conscience must take some responsibility for ensuring that community participation takes place.

However, I wish to submit that given that the social compact is the only formal institutional mechanism that can keep track of whether participation occurs or not and given that the PHBs are responsible for the approval of housing project applications, that the current policy framework needs to transform to ensure that PHB should bear the ultimate responsibility for effective community participation in social compacts. The process of project approvals is preceded by a round of project evaluations by the housing boards, during this stage of the approval, the technical feasibility of projects is closely examined. I wish to argue that the examination of the social compact, in particular the form of the merger, also warrants close scrutiny in terms of its social viability and ability to effectively build beneficiary capacity and increase community decision-making. In this respect, the PHBs should take final responsibility for ensuring that effective community participation takes place.

Moreover, participation must not be viewed as a means simply to deal with performance problems. Therefore, policies must be formulated that will insist that the participation of communities be incorporated at the preparatory stage of projects. Furthermore, mechanisms must be built into policies that will enable the monitoring of participation at all stages of the project cycle.

In addition, given the age old excuse of a limited housing budget and the fact that the current housing subsidy is a once-off grant, policies need to be put in place in order to ensure that increased state funding is forthcoming for the purposes of developing beneficiary capacity to the extent that they are empowering to communities.

Moreover, as indicated earlier, the reluctance of the private sector to get involved in low income housing provides a rationale for the state to formulate policies that are aimed at improving the performance of the housing market

The marginalisation of women in housing is another area that policy research needs to focus on. Todes and Walker (1992) argue that project based housing programmes that are directed by NGOs show the greatest potential for the transformation of women's' position. According to Todes and Walker (1992) leadership structures and power relations may undermine NGOs attempts to empower women. Therefore, it is of critical importance that policies are put into place that will empower women to the extent that they can exert an effective influence on all stakeholders in the housing delivery process. Todes and Walker argue that this will enable women to influence institutions both at the local level as well as at the policy level.

Integration is a concept that housing agents pay scant attention to. I wish to submit that in the absence of any concrete definition for adequate shelter and with the acknowledgement that adequate shelter should address the socio-economic needs of people in a holistic manner, then at the most basic level, integration must be included in the adequate shelter equation. If adequate shelter is expected to improve the life opportunities of the vast majority of the poor then an extremely important aspect of it relates to building homes in areas that already posses infrastructural capacities and provide easy access to corridors of activities. Tomlinson (1996) argues that the departments of health and education are monitoring the delivery housing closely because housing delivery in undeveloped areas necessitates the erection of new schools and clinics. Thus, future polices must build in mechanisms that will actively discourage the creation of low-income settlements that do not adjoin the existing infrastructure of "built up" areas. This will go a long way in relieving the financial burden of the state as well as poor communities.

An extremely important element in the struggle for effective community participation is the dissemination of information and the education of role players. This not only relates to the education of communities but more importantly to the education of housing agents. It can be argued that communities can only be empowered to the extent that the agents working with them are willing to allow them to proceed. What this requires is the intensive training of delivery agents around principles of sustainable development. Training programmes for government and other agencies that deal with housing on the theme of community participation and its proxies should become mandatory.

Finally, there is a need to keep abreast of international developments in low income housing and development. Agencies that should be focused upon are NGOs, government agencies and international donor organisations. The experiences of other developing countries will provide a valuable source of information for SA, since they are grappling with similar policy problems. Thus, future policies must be informed by the experiences of developing countries.

Conclusion

At the beginning of this document, I argued that what was under consideration in this paper was the objectives, intensity and instruments of community participation in the delivery of low cost housing. What I have discovered is that these indicators are fluid, not easily quantified and come nowhere close to the ideal objective of effective community participation as it was defined in the conceptual chapter. Moreover, this appears to be the case because the very policy framework that champions the cause of community participation and is supposedly underpinned by principles of sustainable development is flawed in that it does not elucidate how the goals of sustainable development are to be achieved. In this regard, I wish to submit that within the framework of a state that is supportive of developmentally-oriented policies, it then falls upon the state to fix the objectives of effective community participation.

What this highlights is that institutional arrangements are crucial to the success of effective community participation. In this respect, the success of organisational development at the community level; and at the level of the second and third tiers of government (the implementing arm of the state) to ensure representative and effective community participation will be an important indicator of beneficiary capacity. This is an important goal to achieve if it is considered that a recurring problem in the implementation of participatory policies is that an enormous cavity exists between policy proposals and what actually happens in practice. This problem is indicative of the vacuum between political rhetoric (what politicians promise) and what formal institutional arrangements are currently able to achieve. In this respect, a significant problem that has emerged is that the implementers of participatory policy neither understand nor deliver socio-economic goods that have the capacity to build beneficiary capacity.

Moreover, what has been established is that the intensity of community participation affects the quality of shelter. A constant theme throughout this paper has been the building of sustainable beneficiary capacity in order to enable people to take control of their own destinies, in the context of this study this translates to being able to effectively participate in the housing delivery process. In the case study, a community whose participation was limited, was forced to accept at a great cost to themselves, a product that they had no desire for. A

contributing factor to this kind of scenario is the lack of agreement on the requirements for effective community participation from the different role players.

In this respect, it becomes imperative to determine what the long term and short term objectives of effective community participation are. The Conceptual framework clearly pointed to the long term objectives for the empowerment of communities. However, there is also an urgent need for the delivery of houses. In this respect, it becomes important to arrange and prioritise the objectives of community participation so that adequate shelter is achievable within a short time frame with a long term commitment to the ongoing capacitation of communities.

There is an urgent need to transform the dire housing scenario that currently prevails because it has the potential to send poor people spiralling down a tube that leads to "ghettorisation" where they will perpetually be trapped in a cycle of poverty. What this requires is a complete ideological about-turn for the implementers of housing policy. This in turn requires a more articulate policy framework that will (if it does nothing else) facilitate the casting away of those trapped in an ancient mind set.

Appendix A

Schedule of Interviewees:

<u>Community Leaders:</u>

Simon Blandile	Secretary General - Development Forum
Patrick Monani	Chairperson - Development Forum
David Mantsanga	Treasurer - Development Forum
Fezile Nxusani	Vice Secretary - Development Forum
Nelford Sicasha	Chairperson - Land and Housing
Mani Xhosana	Land and Housing Committee
Arthur Khahla	Sport and Culture Committee
Phiwe Mabuda	Safety and Security
Mlungisi Rala	Safety and Security

<u>External Role Players:</u>

Anthony Meuleman	Consultant to the Community from Setplan
Neo Morane	Ward Councillor - East London TLC
William Perks	Deputy Director - Department of Housing & Local Government

<u>Other:</u>

Vish Sewparsad	Provincial Housing Board

Appendix B

Questions for the External Role Players:

Introduction:

1. How are you related to the community (Mzamo M'hle)?
2. How would you characterise the nature of this community?
3. What is your basis for this characterisation?

The theory of Community Participation:

6. How would you define effective community participation?
7. Do you think communities should participate in development projects?
8. If yes, how should participation be structured?
9. What types of projects warrant participation (greenfield or upgrade)?
10. What is the desirable level of participation and at what stages of the project should this participation occur?
11. Why?

Your experience of Community Participation:

12. What kind of project is this community involved in?
13. Is there any community participation in this project?
14. How community participation structured?
15. At what level does the community participate?
16. At what stages of the project does the community participate?
17. What is the accountability between the different structures?
18. How representative of the community is the community participation?
19. Do women participate in this project?
20. Do party politics and/or interpersonal politics dictate the structuring and nature of community participation?
21. Do low-income communities have the capacity and skills to participate in development

projects?

22. What skills or level of capacity are necessary to facilitate community participation?

23. How can skills be enhanced and the capacity of the community be built to facilitate community participation?

24. Who should decide on levels of community participation?

Forms of Community Participation:

25. Should adjacent communities participate in decisions concerning development projects?

26. What role should they play?

27. Should community participation be at beneficiary level or at community representative level?

28. What is the best way of structuring community participation?

Conceptual Clarity:

29. How would you define adequate shelter?

30. How would you define the notion of "community" ?

Appendix C

Questions for the Community:

The experience of community participation in this community:

1. What structures are operational in your community?

2. Is your community involved in a development project?

3. What kind of a project?

4. Who is funding this project?

5. Is there any community participation in your project?

6. What is the level of organisation in your community?

7. Do you think they fully represent the community?

8. In what kind of decisions do the community participate?

9. Are there other stake holders in the project?

10. What is your relationship with the LA?

Roles and Responsibilities of Stakeholders:

11. What is the role of a community in housing?

12. What is the role of a councillor?

13. What is the role of a consultant?

14. Should neighbouring communities participate?

Conceptual Clarity?

15. What is your understanding of community participation?

16. Should community participation at the individual or the community representative level?

17. What is your definition of community?

18. What is your definition of adequate shelter?

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