

**MOVING TOWARDS SUSTAINABLE FOOD SECURITY:  
A CASE STUDY OF UMSINGA FOOD SECURITY PROGRAMME**

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A thesis submitted in partial fulfilment for the requirements of the Degree of Master of Social Science (Community Development). This study represents the work done by the author. It has not been submitted in any other university. Whereas use made of the work of others, it has been duly acknowledged.

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## DEDICATIONS

This dissertation is dedicated to my family especially my mother, Ella, who has stood by my side through thick and thin. *'Nhlekozana imisebenzi yakho iyobongwa eZulwini'*

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The accomplishment of this degree would not have been possible without GOD THE ALMIGHTY from whom I have drawn my strength.

## ABSTRACT

*An intervention on food security is sustainable when it begins to address issues of development that are the priority to the beneficiaries rather than those of the benefactor. Food security in this study is regarded as the priority that is interwoven in social, economical and ecological aspect of development. Therefore, it can only be solved through processes of sustainable development.*

*This study is concerned about the current approaches and processes of food security programmes that do not capture the elements of sustainable development. Therefore, the aim of the study was to establish how the elements of sustainable development are practiced in the programmes of food security in South Africa. Most importantly, how the programme goes beyond food and market availability to social change.*

*In order to achieve this aim, a qualitative research process was applied using a case study. The study examined one of the food security programmes in uMsinga area, north of KwaZulu Natal. This programme is funded by the National Development Agency (NDA) and administered by the Non-Governmental Organisation called uMsinga Peace and Development Committee (MPDC).*

*The study found that the programme still reflects the common and the short-sighted understanding of food security. It still emphasises the market-led methods of food security which have undermined the environment and social development of the community. Hence the programme comes short in ensuring sustainable food security in the area of uMsinga where years of factions fights has destroyed the social fabric of the community.*

*The study recommended a deliberate intervention strategy of community building for uMsinga community. This calls for a strategy where a process of community conscientization becomes one of the main objectives of the programme. It is through community building that those available resources such as financial, natural, human, infrastructure and institutions can be identified within the community. Conscientization process can be able to equip the community with skills and knowledge of how to access and control those resources to satisfy both short-term and long-term needs.*

# TABLE OF CONTENTS

CONTENT	PAGE NO.
Abstract	i
Table of contents	ii
List of tables and figures	iv
List of acronyms	viii
<b>CHAPTER 1: The pinnacle of food security</b>	<b>1</b>
1.0. Introduction	1
1.1. Background of the study	1
1.2. The objectives of the study	2
1.3. Research questions	3
1.4. Methodology	3
1.4.1. The Case Study	3
1.4.2. Interviews	4
1.4.2.1. <i>Group Interviews</i>	4
1.4.2.2. <i>One-on-one interview</i>	5
1.4.2.3. <i>Survey</i>	6
1.4.3. Document review	7
1.5. Limitation experience during data collection	7
1.6. The outline of the dissertation	7
1.7. Conclusion	8
<b>CHAPTER 2: Sustainable food security: A conceptual framework</b>	<b>9</b>
2.0. Introduction	9
2.1. The influence of theory in development	9
2.1.1. The modernisation approach and food security	10
2.1.1.1. <i>Characteristics of modernisation</i>	10
2.1.1.2. <i>Barriers to modernisation</i>	11
2.1.1.3. <i>Criticism of modernisation</i>	13
2.1.2. Sustainable development	15

2.1.2.1. <i>Characteristics of sustainable development</i>	16
2.1.2.2. <i>Dimensions of sustainable development</i>	17
2.1.2.3. <i>Principles of sustainable development</i>	20
2.2. Food security	26
2.2.1. Definitions of food security	27
2.3. Sustainable food security: A conceptual framework	28
2.3.1. Characteristics of sustainable food security	29
2.3.1.1. <i>Freedom of choice and action</i>	29
2.3.1.2. <i>Physical Strength</i>	30
2.3.1.3. <i>Security</i>	30
2.3.1.4. <i>Good social relationships</i>	31
2.3.1.5. <i>Quality Life</i>	31
2.3.2. Access and control of resources for sustainable livelihood	32
2.3.2.1. <i>Natural capital</i>	32
2.3.2.2. <i>Financial capital</i>	32
2.3.2.3. <i>Physical capital</i>	33
2.3.2.4. <i>Human capital</i>	33
2.3.2.5. <i>Social capital</i>	33
2.4. Conclusion	34
<b>CHAPTER 3: A literature review</b>	<b>35</b>
3.0. Introduction	35
3.1. International perspective	35
3.1.1. Causes of food security: An international perspectives	36
3.1.2. Response to food insecurity	37
3.1.2.1. <i>International food security policy framework</i>	37
3.1.2.2. <i>The impact of food imports on livelihood of the poor</i>	40
3.1.2.3. <i>The challenges of food aid</i>	41
3.1.2.4. <i>Genetically Modified Foods (GMFs)</i>	42
3.1.2.5. <i>The anti-hunger programme of the Food and Agriculture Organisation</i>	44
3.2. The South Africa experience in food security	45
3.2.1. Responses to food insecurity in South Africa	46
3.2.1.1. <i>The social grants</i>	46
3.2.1.2. <i>The Intergrated Food Security Strategy (IFSS)</i>	48

3.2.2. Challenges facing South Africa	49
3.2.2.1. <i>Land reform challenges</i>	49
3.2.2.2. <i>Development agencies and Civil society organisations</i>	51
3.2.2.3. <i>Gender equity and empowerment</i>	54
3.3. Conclusion	55
<b>CHAPTER 4: The study area</b>	<b>56</b>
4.0. Introduction	56
4.1. The study area	56
4.1.1. Geographical location	57
4.1.2. Historical background	61
4.1.3. Demographical information	61
4.1.3.1. <i>Population</i>	61
4.1.3.2. <i>Education levels</i>	62
4.1.3.3. <i>Employment</i>	62
4.1.3.4. <i>Industries</i>	62
4.2. Msinga Peace and Development Committee	62
4.3. Conclusion	63
<b>CHAPTER 5: Findings and Analysis</b>	<b>64</b>
5.0. Introduction	64
5.1. Methodology	64
5.2. UMsinga food security programme	67
5.2.1. The role of Msinga Peace and Development Committee	67
5.2.2. The division of the co-operatives	68
5.2.3. The aims and objectives of the programme	69
5.2.4. Characteristics of the MPDC food security programme	69
5.2.5. Achievement and challenges of the programme	74
5.2.5.1. <i>Curbing faction fights</i>	74
5.2.5.2. <i>Partnership with other role players in the programme</i>	76
5.2.5.3. <i>Job creation</i>	79
5.2.5.4. <i>Skills development</i>	80
5.2.5.5. <i>Sources of food in the area</i>	81
5.3. Sustainable food security	84

5.3.1. Access and control of food resources	84
5.3.1.1. <i>Natural resources</i>	85
5.3.1.2. <i>Financial resources</i>	88
5.3.1.3. <i>Physical resources</i>	90
5.3.1.4. <i>Human resources</i>	91
5.3.1.5. <i>Social resources</i>	93
5.3.2. Levels of participation in the programme	95
5.3.2.1. <i>Community participation</i>	95
5.3.2.2. <i>Participation of women in decision making</i>	96
5.3.2.3. <i>Participation of the MPDC in programme formulation</i>	98
5.4. Discussion on findings	98
5.4.1. Economic development	99
5.4.1.1. <i>Finances</i>	99
5.4.1.2. <i>Land issue</i>	101
5.4.1.3. <i>Water issue</i>	101
5.4.1.4. <i>Road issue</i>	102
5.4.2. Social development	102
5.4.2.1. <i>A threat to community initiative</i>	103
5.4.2.2. <i>Political tension as threat to sustainable food security</i>	103
5.4.2.3. <i>Powerlessness and mistrust</i>	103
5.4.2.4. <i>Networking and partnership</i>	104
5.4.3. Ecological development	105
5.5. Conclusion	106
<b>CHAPTER 6: Conclusion and recommendation</b>	<b>108</b>
6.0. Introduction	108
6.1. Were the objectives met and questions answered?	108
6.1.1 Gaining an insight into programmes of food security	108
6.1.2. Identified gaps and mismatches	109
6.1.2.1. <i>Social and ecological development</i>	109
6.1.2.2. <i>Security of ownership of resources</i>	110
6.1.2.3. <i>Understanding the culture of the people</i>	110
6.1.3. Gaps and Mismatches in the programme	110
6.1.3.1. <i>Social development for sustainable food security</i>	111

6.1.3.2. <i>Meeting the priority needs of the people</i>	111
6.1.3.3. <i>Gender equity in all level of the programme</i>	112
6.1.3.4. <i>Partnership in the programme</i>	112
6.2. Recommendations	113
6.2.1. A consortium for role players	113
6.2.2. Increasing accessibility of resources to the community	114
6.2.3. Food security as an empowering process	115
6.2.4. Community building	116
6.2.4.1. <i>Community conscientization</i>	116
6.2.4.2. <i>Organisation of participants and the community</i>	117
6.2.4.3. <i>A need for emergency food intervention for healthy life</i>	118
6.2.5. Address the issue of water as the beneficiaries' priority	119
6.2.6. Caring for the soil	119
6.3. Conclusion	119
<b>REFERENCES</b>	<b>120</b>
<b>APPENDICES</b>	<b>133</b>

## TABLE AND FIGURES

Table 5.1.: A summary of data collection methods and resources	66
Table 5.2.: Levels of participation	96
Figure 4.1.: Municipal Demarcation of KwaZulu Natal	58
Figure 4.2.: UMsinga Local Municipality	59
Figure 4.3.: Ward 11 of uMsinga Municipality	60
Figure 4.4.: Hierarchical structure of the MPDC	63
Figure 5.1.: The view of uThukela	68
Figure 5.2.: The view of uMsinga Top	68
Figure 5.3.: The diversity of crops in single plot	70
Figure 5.4.: UThukela project	71
Figure 5.5.: UMsinga Top project	71
Figure 5.6.: Soil erosion looming in uThukela project	72
Figure 5.7.: A vegetable garden in need of watering and caring	74
Figure 5.8.: A source of water for uMsinga Top vegetable project	81
Figure 5.9.: Categories of source of food	82
Figure 5.10.: Presentation of a priority programme by the people	87
Figure 5.11.: The market place in Tugela Ferry	89
Figure 5.12.: Levels of participation in terms of gender	97

## ACRONYMS

<b>FAO:</b>	Food and Agriculture Organisation
<b>FSG:</b>	Farmers Support Group
<b>GATT:</b>	General Agreement on Trade and Tarrifs
<b>GEAR:</b>	Growth, Employment and Redistribution
<b>GDP:</b>	Gross Domestic Product
<b>GMF:</b>	Genetically Modified Food
<b>HIV/AIDS:</b>	Human Immune Virus/ Amino Immune Deficiency Syndrome
<b>IFSS:</b>	Integrated Food Security Strategy
<b>IMF:</b>	International Monetary Funds
<b>LRAD:</b>	Land Reform for agricultural Development
<b>MPDC:</b>	Msinga Peace and Development Committee
<b>NDA:</b>	National Development Agency
<b>NGO:</b>	Non Governmental Organisation
<b>NGP:</b>	National Gross Product
<b>USAID:</b>	United States Agency for international Development
<b>WFP:</b>	World Food Programme
<b>WSSD:</b>	World Summit on Sustainable Development
<b>WTO:</b>	World Trade Organisation

# CHAPTER ONE

## THE PINNACLE OF FOOD SECURITY

### 1.0. INTRODUCTION

This introductory chapter outlines the background and presents the main arguments of the study. The research objectives will be briefly discussed as well as the key research questions. The chapter then discusses the methodology of the study and concludes with a presentation of the composition of this dissertation.

### 1.1. BACKGROUND OF THE STUDY

At the 2002 World Summit on Sustainable Development (WWSN) held in Johannesburg, South Africa, heads of states recommitted themselves to ensuring that world hunger is reduced by half by the year 2015 (WWSN Report, 2002). In fact similar convictions were uttered 30 years ago at the World Food Conference in Rome. Seemingly, the problem of food security has been and continues to be a challenge that has gone beyond convictions and promises.

However, there has been a strong recognition by many of the participants in food security issues that the availability of food at a national level does not guarantee food security for individual households (Alamgir and Arora, 1991). The South African Department of Agriculture report on Integrated Food Security Strategy (2002) claimed that South Africa had been able to meet its food demand for the last twenty years, but that there is about 35% of the total population still vulnerable to food insecurity. Lack of food security at household level has been identified as a threat to the principles of sustainable development.

Numerous studies show that there have been years of intervention both internationally and nationally to overcome the problem of food insecurity. Institutions have been established, human resources have been developed, and financial resources have been invested to deal directly with the problem of food insecurity (Alamgir and Arora, 1991). However, scenarios of diseases, deaths and criminal acts associated with food insecurity continue to ravage societies, particularly those that are situated in the developing countries.

This is an exploratory study on how food security fits within the context of sustainable development. The study critically examines the nature of food security programmes, the

approaches and the processes that role players engage in as they pursue sustainable food security. It is within this context, that the perspectives of the role players on the concept food security in relation to sustainable development will be examined.

The central argument of this dissertation is that unless the programmes of food security operate within the context of sustainable development, they will not be able to ensure sustainable food security in areas where they have been implemented. Currently in the planning and the implementation of food security programmes, there seems to be focus on economic growth without ensuring the social and ecological development. As a result, when such programmes have run their course, the communities continue to suffer from food insecurity.

This study also argues that the approaches and processes currently being administered in food security programmes ignore important aspects of the society that are hindering the development of people into a state of well being. A state of well being enables individuals to cope with any challenges of development, including food security. If the aspects of well being are not addressed from the beginning of the programme, there is a danger that food security programmes will continue to be a once-off activity and perpetrators of inequality. Inequality emerges when the food security programmes focus more on the creation of income without dealing with the social inequalities that prevent people from benefiting equally from such programmes.

## **1.2. THE OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY**

In view of the foregoing discussion on food security, the main objectives of the study are the following:

- ✓ To assess the food security program taking place in the area of UMsinga (Tugela Ferry) with focus on planning, implementation and resource inputs.
- ✓ To identify gaps and mismatches in the programme in conjunction with the factors that contribute to sustainable food insecurity in the area of intervention.
- ✓ To identify and analyze the role of the stakeholders in the programme.
- ✓ To explore possible strategies that could lead to a more sustainable food security program.
- ✓ To make recommendations on appropriate strategies in the implementation of food security programmes within a rural setup.

### 1.3. RESEARCH QUESTIONS

- ✓ What are the characteristics of the existing food security programme?
- ✓ What strategies does the organization use to ensure sustainable food security?
- ✓ To what extent does the programme meet the needs of the beneficiaries?
- ✓ What supportive environment does the programme develop to ensure sustainable food security?
- ✓ What is the level of participation by community members in the program?
- ✓ What kinds of partnership arrangements exist between the programme and other programmes of similar nature and how do these impact on sustainable food security?

### 1.4. METHODOLOGY

Since the researcher had a number of objectives for the study, it became imperative that various methods of research were drawn upon to ensure the reliability and validity of the collected data. The case study was used in conjunction with various methods which include group discussion, survey, document reviews, and individual interviews with different stakeholders. A review of these methods follows.

#### 1.4.1 Case study

A case study was used in this research as an overall methodology to analyse data. Bell (1987:9) explains that a case study serves "as an umbrella term for a family of research methods". Therefore within the case study, a number of methods were used as mentioned above. This was important for the study since it assisted the researcher to focus on specific details in order to understand the link of variation within a specified environment. As Babbie and Mouton (2001:283) note, "the case study is an intensive investigation of a single unit...which involves the examination of multiple variations".

The researcher acknowledges the fact that not only has the concept of food security become a buzz word among development practitioners in South Africa, but also that there has been a widespread of food security programmes throughout the country. This scenario could pose a criticism to the use of the case study method because researchers tend to generalize their findings based on a single unit. However, Bell (1987:9) argues that "the reliability of a case study is more important than its generalization". Therefore, the case study in this dissertation was not used to generalize on other programmes currently taking place in South Africa or programmes sponsored by the National Development Agency (NDA), rather, it was used as an

illustration of the conceptual framework of the study. Babbie and Mouton (2001) point to this effect of a case study in a conceptual framework. They mention that “case studies have great potential for theory development” They further say that the case study method helps in understanding the guiding principles of the conceptual framework (Babbie and Mouton, 2001:283).

#### **1.4.2. Interviews**

Qualitative research explores what is happening in people’s lives, their experiences, attitude, feelings and their opinions (Henning, Van Reinsburg and Smit, 2004). According to the Atkinson and Silverman in (Henning, Van Reinsburg and Smit, 2004:3), “interviewing has become part of life in our society”. It is through different forms of interviews that most of the qualitative data was collected. There are three forms of interviews that were conducted. These included group discussions, one-on-one interviews and surveys. What follows is a discussion on these forms of interviews and their relevance to this research.

##### ***1.4.2.1. Group discussion***

The researcher aimed not only to get insight into and understand the constraints involved in the programme, but also to encourage open discussion as one of the tools in resolving problems. Therefore the group discussion was used to assess the perspectives and attitudes of the beneficiaries and the organization (MPDC). According to Grimmer (2001:1) group discussion has been “very successful in market research, especially in cases where it is important to gain unprejudiced analysis and a clear description of various attitudes, motives and emotions in relation to particular products, and services...” He further explains that group discussion “has a high creativity potential because the participants deal with the topic intensively, stimulate each other and generate new ideas”. The group interview involved nine members of a co-operative located within uMsinga Municipality in an area called uMsinga Top.

The group discussion was not only helpful in providing information about the situation and the challenges of the cooperative members in a programme, it also served as the strategy to assist the group to start talking about the problems they have and inspired them to formulate ideas for solutions. Gray (2003:103) mentions that group interviews “recognize and mobilize the importance of interaction in social identity”. She, however, cautions that group discussions could also be a problem when certain members of the group tend to “dominate the discussion” and turn the discussion to suit their interests. It is within this context that power inequality

becomes an important issue. Those that are socially regarded as low class due to their level of education, gender, or age, may be intimidated. This could have made the data collected with this method incomplete and invalid since other voices would not have been heard. However, the researcher played a facilitative role and ensured a conducive environment in which all members could express their feelings openly. The participants were made aware of the importance of allowing other members to explain their views. The time limit for speakers was also applied.

The group discussion method also fits well within the qualitative paradigm on which the large part of this study is based. Qualitative processes of data collection have been useful in highlighting the impact of an action in the lives of the people that would not have come through in any other paradigm. As Henning, Van Reinsburg and Smit (2004: 3) note

*In qualitative research we wish to give as clear and detailed an account of actions and representations of actions... as possible, so as that we can gain understanding of our world, hopefully to use it to bring about a measure of social change*

Qualitative research however has been criticized by Chambers (2001:1) who argues that qualitative research could be unreliable. He notes that qualitative research could err in its methodology, analysis and ethics. For example, he mentions that in the process of data collection in a group interview, “the realities expressed are over-influenced by the agenda of the facilitators”. Whilst these arguments may well be justifiable under certain circumstances, qualitative research still remains a more appropriate method to get the explanation of actions from the person without relying on assumptions that might have been drawn from observation or linear methods. For example, two people may decide not to buy in a local shop for different reasons. It is through a qualitative research method that one can acquire the underlying reasons of the two people who decided independently to act in that particular manner.

#### ***1.4.2.2. One-on-one interviews***

One-on-one interviews were used in the study to get the views of certain individuals who are or were directly or indirectly involved in the programme. One-on-one interviews were useful to obtain opinions and the perspectives on uMsinga Food security programme and on the subject of food security in general. The Project Manager of the agency that funded the programme was interviewed to obtain some facts and his opinions on certain aspects of the programme. This

interview was very important as it provided facts on the identification, planning and implementation of the programme. Another interview was conducted with the staff member of an organization called Farmers Support Group (FSG) which is the partner of the Msinga Peace Development Committee (MPDC) in the food security programme. This interview was important to provide an outsider's point of view on the programme and to establish FSG's role within the partnership.

#### *1.4.2.3. Survey*

A sampling survey was used as an additional mechanism for information gathering. The term survey has been defined by Schutt (1996:266) as a way "in which information is obtained through the responses that a sample of individuals give to questions". Questionnaires which included both close and open ended questions were utilized in the surveying process. The open ended questionnaires were used to encourage respondents to elaborate further and to provide the clarity needed.

Questionnaires were distributed in a purposive sampling method. Purposive sampling method is described by Schutt (1996:164) as follows: "Each element is selected for a purpose, usually because of the unique position of that sample element". Similar to this study, two groups of people were selected, namely, the participants and the non-participants. The researcher was not interested in the exact number of participants or non-participants but hoped specifically to find the common reasons behind participation and non-participation. The researcher wanted to find the general feeling in terms of gender differences in the levels of participation in the programme. Certain people were selected for the purpose of providing specific information on the roles they play in the programme. Terre Blanche and Durrheim (1999:45) also mentioned that those "types of research that are less concerned with statistical accuracy than they are with detailed and in-depth analysis ...do not draw large or random sampling". They further state that various methods of purposeful sampling can be useful.

The questionnaires were meant to be self-administered; however due the low level of formal education in the sample population, the researcher had to administer the questionnaire by reading and writing for many of the respondents. This poses a limitation to the method as the respondent's right to privacy during the process of answering the questionnaire was compromised.

### **1.4.3. DOCUMENTATION REVIEW**

The document review process looked at four main documents. These included the organization profile, its constitution, the programme assessment report and the progress report. The conceptual framework of the study makes reference to the vital role that an organization that is running a programme should play. It was therefore relevant that the researcher examines the profile and the constitution of the organization to gain insight into the organizational details. Though certain information about the background and the objectives of the report as well as the problems encountered was obtained from the interviews, the programme assessment and the report was crucial to provide more details that were not mentioned in an interview with the relevant people.

### **1.5. LIMITATIONS EXPERIENCED DURING DATA COLLECTION**

UMsinga is a very mountainous area and many households are located up on top of these mountains. It is difficult to reach many of these houses; one needed a powerful vehicle that is suitable for the rough mountainous conditions of the area. This posed a problem for the researcher especially in the survey methods. Another limitation has already been pointed out in the study during the survey, was the fact that many respondents were unable to read. Hence the researcher had to fill in the forms for the respondents. This poses as the limitation because the respondents tended to be afraid to answer the questions openly. However this limitation was substituted by group discussions.

### **1.6. OUTLINE OF THE DISSERTATION**

Chapter One presents the background and the main arguments of the study including the objectives, the research questions and the methodology of the study. It concludes with an outline of the chapter breakdown in the dissertation. This is a critical part of the dissertation as it provides the reader with the general picture that will be required to understand the study.

Chapter Two provides the conceptual framework within which the whole study is located. It also serves as a benchmark for the assessment of the programme in the case study. It is in this chapter that the legislative framework and policies are reviewed. The clarity on the concept of food security and the main arguments of the study are also discussed in depth within this chapter.

Chapter Three reviews literature related to the study. It draws from previous studies and experiences of different people, countries and institutions both nationally and internationally. This chapter presents the policies that have been guiding the processes of food security internationally and nationally. It provides insight into the challenges of programmes of food security. In short, this is a situational analysis of the food security issue.

Chapter Four introduces the geographical area where the programme of food security has been identified by the researcher in this study. It explains the rationale behind choosing the area of uMsinga over all other areas where programmes of food security have been implemented. It presents a situational analysis of the area and the maps of the uMsinga local municipality and discusses the main stakeholders and their roles in the food security programme of uMsinga.

Chapter Five presents the findings and the analysis of the case study. It commences by providing a short synopsis of the processes and methods engaged in collecting data. This includes presentation of the sources of information and the type of data collected. It concludes with an analytic discussion based on the findings.

Chapter Six is the concluding chapter. It aims to provide conclusions and recommendations based on the research.

## **1.7. CONCLUSION**

This chapter has presented a general idea of what this dissertation is about and why it has become an important subject to be researched on. The main arguments and the research questions have the concerns and motivation behind the study. For many families, sustainable food security will remain a dream because there is currently no strategy in place which focuses on all aspects of development. Having conferences and commitments will not curb the loss of well being that comes with food insecurity. The research questions of this study query the approaches and the processes that are currently applied in the programmes of food security. The section on methodology for data collection provides important information for understanding the direction this study is taking.

## **CHAPTER TWO**

### **SUSTAINABLE FOOD SECURITY: A CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK**

#### **2.0. INTRODUCTION**

In order to understand the roots and the influences of the research problem of this study, it is necessary to provide a framework within which the issues of food security emanate. For decades, different ideologies or schools of thought have played a major role in informing the policies and the programmes of development that are being currently implemented. Hence this chapter critically reviews some of these theories, specifically the modernization and sustainable development, with the purpose of understanding their influence on the current state of food security.

The theory of modernization is one of the popular schools of thought that have had a remarkable influence on the outcome of poverty eradication programmes, (Becker et al, 1997). On one hand, the modernization theory with its emphasis on economic growth, technology advancement and the promotion of Western culture, poses a strong challenge against the principles of sustainable development (Christian, 1999; Todaro, 2000; Vandana, 2000). The theory of sustainable development on the other hand, seems to go beyond economic growth to include issues of ecological and social development. In this research, sustainable development has been identified as an alternative framework within which sustainable food security could be ensured. It is against this conceptual framework that the food security programmes will be studied, with a view to establishing its potential in ensuring food security and its sustainability. To achieve this task, this chapter will provide the definition and clarification of each of the main concepts that form the core of the study. It will then critically analyze the theories of modernization and sustainable development in relation to development and specifically to sustainable food security.

#### **2.1. THE INFLUENCE OF THEORY IN DEVELOPMENT**

Food security programs are informed by different ideologies that serve to determine their impact on the societies or the communities they are directed to. Ideologies are defined by Gil (1992: 55) as “a system of interdependent ideas (beliefs, tradition, principles and myths) held by a social group or society” He further explains that, “ideology serves as logic and the philosophical justification for a group’s pattern of behaviour...” It is important to emphasise the

issue of the interdependence of ideas such as beliefs and values as they shape the ideologies, which are then translated into policy, and then the policy informs the programmes that are developed. These ideologies have also been instrumental in the way the concept of food security has been defined.

### **2.1.1. The Modernization approach and food security**

Modernisation theory is one of the theories that has been dominant in the approaches of development for many years. Though it was practiced over many years ago, its principles have been visible in many recent development approaches such as structural adjustment programmes and macro-economic theory (Maxwell, 1991; Hines, 2000).

#### ***2.1.1.1. Characteristics of modernisation***

Modernization theory was developed after the depression of the late 1930s but it received more attention in the 1960s as part of the revival process of capitalism which emphasises capital accumulation and technological progress. Modernization basically encourages the intense use of technology as the means to develop a country's economy and promotes the free market among countries (Burkley, 1993). Capital accumulation is the way to sustain the economic growth in this theory. For example, if people engage in marketing activities and increase production, they can save their money in local banks, offshore or they can also invest in a similar activity to increase their productivity.

Proponents of modernization believe that the increase in production, will then lead to economic growth. Economic growth will create job opportunities and people will be able to earn money and then attend to their needs (Gittinger, Ceslie and Hoisington, 1987). Burkley (1993:36) noted a similar notion that "the higher income that accrues through increased savings and investment, can be used to satisfy a wider range of the people's wants enabling them to realize their greater well-being". Due to this ideology, many food security programmes concentrate on generating more income by introducing technological methods of production which increases productivity for the market (Maxwell, 1991).

The liberalization of trade by the modernization theory further allows people to have easy access to international markets. This means that the free trade system leads to the reduction of levies, which then allows products to be exported to another country. However due to the instability in food prices and the competition from international markets, domestic food producers suffer (Raikes, 1988). Raikes further states that these international food products become cheap which then depresses the price of domestic food products. Domestic food products suffer as they struggle to compete with international products that consumers are able to buy cheaper (Maxwell, 1991). For instance, South Africa imported poultry products are much cheaper than the domestic poultry products.

According to Bennholdt-Thomsen and Mies (1999: 39), the inclusion of the agricultural sector of the nations in General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade (GATT) in 1986, showed that “the main aim of agricultural production was no longer to provide the native population with food, but to produce trade goods for international export as needed by the market”. Similar views are expressed by Hines (2000:60) who notes that in the market-driven economy, “agriculture is for competition, not feeding people locally”. This free trade ideology is said to have been influenced by David Ricardo’s theory of comparative advantage where producers tend to compare the expenses involved in investing or trading in a country. For example, cheap labour is seen as one of the attractions in a country. Producers or business investors will invest in a country where there is cheap labour. If the country does not supply with cheap labour, the business will invest somewhere else. Bennholdt-Thompson and Mies (1999: 45) further note “‘increased productivity’-either by substituting this labour power by high-tech machinery or by relocating production to ‘cheap labour’ countries-is one of the key mechanisms used by the corporations to counter global competition”. They further argue that the money the poor workers get is so little such that they are unable to afford food. Instead of the investment in assisting the poor to access food, it takes up much of their time which they could be using to find the means to access food. Hence the poor countries continue to suffer from food insecurity.

#### *2.1.1.2 The barriers to modernization*

Proponents of this theory argue that under-developed countries fail in development because they do not follow the path taken by other developed countries (Webster, 1990). Rostow’s model of the five stages of economic growth provides a clear guide, as to how the

underdeveloped countries should adapt (Harrison, 1988). The Rostowian Model defines economic growth as follows:

- *The traditional phase* of the model is when the methods of development are largely primitive, with more emphasis on subsistence agriculture and other traditional ways.
- *The pre-condition* for the take-off stage, in which the constraints to development are removed and emerging economists become role models to other members of the society.
- *The take-off stage* is when there are rapid economic developments, which is accelerated as more technology is brought into a country. There is also a high rate of people who leave their countries to work in others in order to gain training on various skills. The common pattern is that skilled personnel are obtained from developed countries to come and work in an underdeveloped country.
- *The drive to maturity* is the phase when the society has acquired both technology and has been educated on how to use it and has business knowledge.
- *The final phase* is achieved if the underdeveloped country has increased its production and there is a high level of consumption that is driven by the mass use of technology.

Like Rostow, Parson cited in (Webster, 1990) argues that this theory of modernization cannot be achieved unless poor people change their attitudes and behaviour. He describes two distinctive societies, traditional and modern society. Traditional society is said to have certain characteristics, which are a hindrance to poverty relief as defined in terms of modernization. In the traditional society, there is a high level of group domination that discourages individuality and competitiveness which modernization is in favour of. Most poor communities are said to be too traditional and they therefore lack that attitude of competitiveness (Webster, 1990). An individual's success in a traditional society is regarded as being against the norms of the society, and the person who seems to be successful is ostracized by the society. A gloomy scenario of a traditional barrier is illustrated by Crewe and Harrison (1998:45) who note that, "in Malawi where belief in witchcraft is so strong, small-scale farmers, including fish-farmers,

dare not produce more than their peers for fear of being bewitched". Hence the pre-condition to take-off in a traditional society does not exist. This then leads to the failure of economic growth.

### *2.1.1.3 Criticism of modernization*

Rostow's concept of modernization is strongly criticized by the dependants theorists like Frank Gunter (Harrison, 1988: 27) who argues against Rostow's theory that "in all its variation, ignores the historical and the structural reality of the underdeveloped countries". The historical and the structural reality as simply put by Frank, is what defines the real needs of the poor as it is embedded in their experiences and their intake of the environment around them. In support of this view Bennholdt-Thomsen and Mies (1999) see modernization being a strategy to move people from the real causes of their suffering which were due to colonization. Modernization is seen as a strategy by developed countries to sidetrack the underdeveloped countries from reclaiming the resources that were taken by developed countries for their self-enrichment.

Further criticism of modernization argues that income growth is not a guaranteed determinant of a developed country. The measurement of a country's economic growth by the use of the National Growth product (NGP) is not a proper tool since it is unable to measure those activities that are not measurable in numerical terms, but nevertheless contribute to the development of the country. For example, Brown (1990:8) notes, "the trees cut down are counted as income no subtraction is made to account for the depletion of the forest, a natural asset". In most cases people in rural areas do not necessarily depend on buying food from commercial farmers or markets, they use subsistence farming methods to grow food and their harvest is not counted in the GDP or NGP. Nobody knows when their harvest has increased or decreased due to either climate changes or certain social conflicts. The only way the states can know whether there is food security or not in the household, is when the markets complain of less food being bought by consumers. Then the state might consider the cause of this to be related either to high prices or to a lack of income. Therefore other aspects that contribute to the development of a country could be easily ignored despite the fact that they have as much impact as those of economic growth. These include social and ecological aspects of development that are not considered as very important in modernization. Todaro (2000: 1) argues that:

*To concentrate on it (economic growth) exclusively is wrong for two reasons. Firstly accumulation of wealth is not necessary for the fulfilment of some important human choices.... Secondly, human choices extend far beyond economic well being*

The modernization theory is criticized by not recognizing the element of indigenous knowledge systems that also play a vital role in food security. Indigenous knowledge is local knowledge that people acquire through their interaction with one another and through their experiences within their environment. This is the knowledge they apply in their daily lives to solve any problems they come across. If people live together in a particular location, they develop common values, beliefs and practices that help them manage to resolve the issues that are a hindrance to their progress. Harrison (1988: 24) highlights that Britain's preconditions to take-off "were endogenous whereas elsewhere they were more likely to have been the results of external intrusion by more advanced society". This shows that modernization undermines other nation's endogenous capabilities to deal with the problems they encounter.

Thirlwall (1999) states that traditional agriculture has for many years been neglected in terms of resource investments due to the risks involved. He argues that it is only in recent years that the World Bank has begun lending funds to traditional agriculture. However, it is noticeable that the World Bank's investment in traditional agriculture is based on the condition that the recipient of a loan conforms to economic growth strategies. Thirlwall (1999:139) notes "the bank rightly stresses that its contribution to the total flow of resources can only be effective if appropriate national policies are pursued on pricing, taxing..."

The concept of indigenous knowledge systems in terms of playing a vital role in development is also acknowledged by many governments in Africa. The reawakening of African indigenous knowledge comes with the recognition of the major role that indigenous knowledge has played as a survival strategy or tool over the years of colonization. In a discussion paper titled 'Indigenous knowledge and the integration of knowledge systems: Toward a conceptual and methodological framework', prepared by Hoppers for the Department of Science and Technology in South Africa, indigenous knowledge systems have been defined as that "knowledge relating to the technological, social, institutional, and scientific and development including those used in the liberation struggles".

In this document Hoppers argues that:

*the acquisition of Western knowledge has been and still is invaluable to all. but on its own, it has been incapable of responding adequately in the face of massive and intensifying disparities, untrammelled exploitation of pharmacological and other genetical resources, and rapid depletion of the earth's natural resources.*

It has also been highlighted in Devereux and Maxwell (2001) that problems of food security featured more prominently in the second half of the 1970s. Since then there has been fluctuations of food availability at different times. This period correlates with the time when modernization was being revamped as mentioned earlier in this chapter. This shows that one way or another, modernization has affected the status of food security in developing countries.

In spite of these criticisms and failures, it seems that modernization continues to dominate the domains of development including food security. The failures of modernization have not deterred its proponents; instead they have come up with a more glamorised concept called globalization. Globalization, according to Devereux and Maxwell (2001), creates more opportunity for trade, but it also poses many risks, especially for Africa. They note that though GDP rate is currently growing three times more, Africa is not benefiting. The determination in applying the modernization approach shows that certain sectors are benefiting greatly from the system. If this were not the case, other alternatives would have been explored more seriously.

### **2.1.2. Sustainable development**

The concept of sustainable development has been in existence since the early 1970s. It was a response of the environmentalist movement towards industrialization that was seen as a threat to the environment. However, it became a popular concern within the circles of development after the Brundtland commission in 1987 and the Earth Summit in Rio in 1992 (Warburton, 1998). The Johannesburg World Summit on Sustainable development in 2002 was another conference where leaders from all over the world met to try and find a way forward on the issue of sustainable development.

Despite its existence for more than a quarter of a century, the concept of sustainable development remains controversial and was defined differently by different people to justify different actions. The most commonly used definition of sustainable development is the one from the Brundtland Commission report cited in Warburton (1998: 1):

*Humanity has the ability to make development sustainable – to ensure that it meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their needs.*

Though this definition is not specific on whether it refers to the environmental issues or not, sustainable development previously focused on only environmental issues. Due to the realization of the impact of other developmental factors, it is no longer an initiative or the issue of the “green people” or environmentalist. It has developed to include social and economical aspects.

#### ***2.1.2.1. Characteristics of sustainable development***

The idea behind sustainable development is that, if the main aim of development is to move the country or the people from a state of poverty to prosperity or a good quality of life, it must achieve that (good quality of life) without compromising the environment, whether social or economical and the chances of the future generations to meet their needs

Sustainable development is not an end product; rather it is a process that, if properly managed by the people to who are involved, can lead to the state of development that is sustainable. Usually, external experts or government officials plan development projects or programmes for communities and then the communities are expected to receive and implement those plans. The proponents of the theory of sustainable development disagree with this practice, pointing to the fact that the communities should play a leading role in making the decisions rather than outsiders. The debate that arises in this notion of people playing a leading role is whether people should be left alone to develop themselves.

Keye (2001) points to the two contrasting schools of thoughts that have attempted to define the role of external agents within the context of sustainable development as a process. According to the school of the ‘purist’, the role of external agents and resources is kept to a minimum, whereas the ‘managerialist’ school still sees the role of external agents as key to the process but argue that projects, managers and management system should be flexible and adaptive. Keye once again argues for the process and he notes that, “it is not what is done, it is how it is done” that will bare sustainable results. He further notes that “many projects in South Africa lack an

understanding of key social process and their vital role in developing the poor” (Keye, 2001: 281).

### *2.1.2.2. Dimensions of sustainable development*

The processes of development should ensure that it incorporates different spheres of human development. These spheres include three important dimensions on which sustainable development is grounded, i.e., ecological, economical and social development (Oelofse in Rubin and Rubin, 1992).

- **Ecological development**

Ecological development essentially calls for development that ensures the conservation of natural resources. Most food security programmes rely heavily on soil, water and air. There has been a tendency of development programmes such as those related to food security to ignore the impact they have on these natural resources and also on the environment in general. These programmes use intensive tools that yield good results but impact negatively on the environment in the long run. A clear example of intensive methods of increasing productivity which also contribute to soil erosion is noted by Alamgir and Arora (1991:62) who note that “irrigation naturally increases the productivity of the land, but it can also contribute to environmental degradation and have negative cost and distributional consequences for food-insecure households over the longer term”. There are also other methods of increasing food production which have been highlighted in literatures as being a threat to health.

However, there has been a debate about who is really is the main culprit of environmental degradation between the developing and the developed countries (Thirlwall, 1999). On one hand, the developed countries accuse developing countries that because of their state of poverty, they rely too much on the environment (Thirlwall, 1999). On the other hand the developing countries blame the developed countries for having exhausted all the resources and creating dependency on highly intensive technology through imposed economic development policies (Hines, 2000). The intensive use of technology has also been identified as one of the major contribution in the environmental degradation. The reality is that environmental degradation can be attributed to both parties (developing and developed countries). This then means that all of them have to measure and reduce their contributions to the environmental problem. In this

regard, Hines (2000: 217) notes that “for both developed and developing nations, the increasing dependence on local food resources should act as spur to improve the environmental sustainability...” The ecological aspect of sustainable development ensures that natural resources are not depleted, as they are important for the future needs and development of the community.

- **Economic development**

Economic development is the recognition that no country or community is immune to the effects of globalization and that income is required for other human needs, but it is not the determinant of prosperity. As Sen cited in Todaro and Smith (2003: 17) explains “economic growth cannot be treated as an end in itself. Development has to be more concerned with enhancing the lives we lead and the freedoms we enjoy”. Economic sustainability implies that there should be economic flow not only at a national level but also at a local level so that people are able to have access to other necessary resources for their needs.

Economic development is different from economic growth because it acknowledges other interrelated aspects that contribute to the economy of the country or the community. Todaro and Smith (2003:14) explain this kind of economic development as opposed to traditional economic development which “meant the capacity of a national economy, measured with Gross National Product (GNP) or Gross Domestic Product (GDP)”. Todaro and Smith also discuss the social systems within which economic development must be viewed. They note that social systems mean “the interdependent relationships between so called economic and non-economic factors” (2003:14). Food insecurity is a developmental problem that the traditional economists regard as a result of the failure of economic growth or lack of income. Yet most of the time, economic growth programmes do not survive in areas where there is social or political unrest. (Isham, Kelly and Ramaswamy, 2002). This shows the strong link economic development has with other aspects of development. For instance, economic development recognizes the cultural and health aspects of the community that if ignored, could result in people not buying certain produce. As a result, the producers’ profits and viability could be negatively affected. Vandana (2000) emphasis that there are ways one carries or cooks certain types of food in certain societies that only the members of the society could know. And again, in terms of health issues, Norberg-Hodge, Merrifield and Gorelick (2002:17) note that “local foods have other

environmental advantages over industrial foods. Since local foods are more often consumed fresh, they require less...processing and refrigeration..."

- **Social development**

The social aspect of sustainable development recognises the important role a strong social fabric element plays in the development of a society. The social fabric of the society includes the values, the norms and the culture that provides the strength for the society to deal with their daily life situation (Warburton, 1998). In spite of the problems that poor communities have in terms of access to food, through strong values and norms, they have survived decades of hunger. It is then appropriate that these values are strengthened by emphasising their revival in intervention processes.

The social aspects of sustainable development needs to start with people and strengthen the networks that exist among them. According to Warburton (1998: 35) "networks can offer a different form of personal experience and create the space to develop new concepts". In addition, the recognition of the social aspects of developments helps in identifying the social groupings such youth or women clubs.

Many people save their capital in banks. Usually banks discriminate against poor people by enforcing conditions that poor people cannot meet. For instance, most banks require that a person earns a specific amount and who has a regular income before they will open an account for them. Most of the time survival strategies for poor people do not meet specific time frames and this automatically denies them the right to open bank accounts. It is at this time that social networks usually take over. For example, in many African communities in South Africa, there is a collective savings strategy called '*iStokfela*', where a group of people pool their savings every month in order to be able to access a lump sum to buy food by the end of the year. This food could last for four to six months depending on an individual's family numbers. These are very important initiatives which are happening within a very organised group of the community that can enhance development and ensure food security. Schumacher in Reid (1995: 69) echoes similar sentiments when he notes that "development does not start with goods; it starts with people and their education, organization, disciplines". He further warns that "without these three, all resources remain latent, untapped..."

Social development is in fact a product of social capital from which people draw resources for surviving. Social capital is the quantity and quality of social resources such as networks, membership of groups, social relations and access to wider institutions in society upon which people draw in their pursuit of livelihoods. These all act as safety net mechanisms for meeting shortfalls in consumption needs. The quality of the networks is determined by the level of trust and shared norms that exist among network members. People use these networks to reduce risks, access services, protect themselves from deprivation and acquire information to lower transaction costs (Timothy, Drinkwater and Maxwell 2000)

However, the three components of sustainable development can be overlooked if there are no guidelines or principles that assist in the planning of a development program. Hence it is important to ensure that certain procedures and principles are followed, bearing in mind that sustainable development is a process. To this effect, the following discussion looks at the principles of sustainable development. These principles provide the framework of sustainable development which, if properly applied, could lead to sustainable food security.

#### *2.1.2.3. Principles of sustainable development*

Whilst the components or dimensions of sustainable development form the basis for a sustainable intervention, the principles of sustainable development form the pillars or the cornerstones of the programme. The major principles of sustainable development provide guidelines for planning a sustainable development intervention. These principles also serve as indicators of sustainable development. By observing the programme whether or not the principles are applied correctly, one can come to a conclusion as to whether the programme is sustainable or not. There are a number of writers who have alluded to some of the principles, such as Oelofse (in Rubin and Rubin, 1992) who mentions the basic principles of sustainable development in terms of futurity, environment, intergeneration, public participation, equity, capacity building and so on. These principles are interconnected as the following discussion reveals.

- **Futurity**

Futurity or intergenerational equity as it sometimes referred to, according to Oelofse in (Rubin and Rubin, 1992), is concerned with ensuring that the activities of development taking place today do not compromise the future generation's ability to survive. She points out that "we

should not exploit the resource base nor damage the earth's life support system to the extent that future generation cannot support their needs nor have access to a reasonable quality of life".

The aspect of futurity is also closely related to ecological issues. According to Oelofse, futurity deals with the "integrity of the ecosystem". This principle recognizes the interdependence that exists between humanity and the environment; one cannot survive without the other. Whilst ensuring that the environment is not depleted, development has to ensure that it meets the need of the current generation.

Though one cannot speculate on what would be the needs of the future generation, basic human needs do not change. What changes is the way those needs are met. For instance, every human being needs healthy food to live, however present strategies to obtain that food differ from the methods used in the past. Whilst early societies relied more on subsistence agricultural products for healthy food, today's society tend to depend on agricultural biotechnological product.

- **Public Participation**

Participation of the beneficiaries is of paramount importance in a programme of development and it has the potential of building a good foundation for a sustainable development. Shepherd (1998: 137) noted from the findings of the USAID- funded project done by Morss and Gow, that top-down projects were less successful than participatory ones. However, the problem with the concept of participation is that it is understood differently by different people. Hence it has taken different forms.

Pretty and Hines in Pretty (1995:1) mention six different types of participation and each one of them produce different results.

- *Passive participation*: occurs when people are invited to attend a meeting and then they are told what has already been decided. In this process, people are treated as passive recipients.
- *Consultative participation*: Involves people being asked question and their role is to provide the information for those in powerful position to make decisions.

- ***Bought Participation:*** In this type of participation, people are given incentives in order to participate. Once the incentives are no longer available, people do not participate.
- ***Functional participation:*** In this form of participation, people are seen as workers or tools to implement the predetermined plan.
- ***Interactive Participation:*** People participate in joint analysis, development of action plans and formation or strengthening of local groups or institutions. Learning methodologies are used to seek multiple perspectives, and groups determine how available resources are used.
- ***Self-Mobilisation and Connectedness:*** People participate by taking the initiative independently to change systems. They develop contacts with external institutions for the resources and technical advice they need, but retain control over how these resources are used. (Source adapted from Pretty, 1995)

It is imperative that a person, organisation, institution or society carefully plans the kind of impact that needs to be achieved in a programme, and then uses a relevant participatory method. For example, if one's vision is a self-reliant community in a programme, then a passive participatory method will not achieve such vision. The first four types of participatory methods usually do not lead to sustainable development because of the imposition by and domination of an external person. The outcome of these four types of participation is lack of ownership and withdrawal by the local people. According to De Beer and Swanepoel (1996) these are weak forms of participation.

The last two types of participation are regarded as the strong ones as they ensure sustainable development. Their strength is based on the participants taking the initiative and identifying resources internally and externally. These participants have a strong mobilization and networking strategy.

- **Capacity building**

Capacity building is a prerequisite for participation that is intended to lead to sustainable development. In a situation when the participants are not at an equal level of knowledge of the subject or programme that is planned, the ones that have knowledge tend to dominate or enforce their ideas. Moreover, people cannot participate effectively if their capacity is not at the level of their counterparts. For example, if people are to engage in a food project, they need specific knowledge and skills about food and the way the project is run. If they have to take a decision

about the how, when and where of the project, they need to have access to the information and must know the implication of the project to them as well as to their environment. Capacity building ensures that participants are able to engage in a discussion.

It should, however be noted that people can only participate in an environment where they feel safe and do not feel intimidated by other members of the community. The spirit of togetherness has to prevail so that people are confident enough to share and contribute openly in the process. Capacity building also relies on the community being able to identify its needs and the existing human resources. This is only possible in a community that is unified in terms of social structures and values.

- **Community Building**

According to Ife (2002) defining the term 'community' is impossible since is not an object but a 'subjective experience'. Each community has its own experiences and carries out activities to overcome the challenges that it experiences. Therefore, Ife suggests that each community should be able to describe itself in accordance with its own expectations. Community building then becomes a priority process for each community to begin to articulate its own vision and mission. Community building creates trust and security among members. For example, if women trust that they are secured, and their views are trusted, they will be able to express themselves openly. Therefore, before effective participation can be achieved, it is necessary to ensure that the people are empowered to do so through training and other means. In fact, community building is an umbrella principle that incorporates most of sustainable development's principles.

- **Empowerment**

Empowerment goes beyond skills training as it is currently practiced. It includes having access to and control of the necessary resources. For example, the issue of land is very important in most poor countries as many development issues, rely on its availability. These include housing, basic service provision, entertainment, job creation, farming, and so on. In South Africa, the availability of land is one of the impediments of poverty alleviation where communities are unable to implement some programmes due to their lack of land. In the whole country out of 68 000

cases of land claims lodged under the Redistribution and Restitution Acts of 1994, only 12000 cases have been resolved (Dempster, 2001). In KwaZulu Natal, a province where poverty is said to be widespread, of the 5883 people who had lodged claims for land in the province in 1997, only 2111 cases were negotiated and only 304 were adjudicated (Hornby, 2002). Food security programmes struggle to succeed due to land issues that are not in favour of the poor or the previous owners of the land.

The principle of empowerment, according to Ife (2002:208) is “a complete strategy of empowerment requires that the barriers to people exercising power be understood, addressed and overcome”. Empowerment is regarded the true process of radical change which challenges the dominating powers to deliver or to move away from positions that they are not being accountable to. This also ensures that when the development practitioner leaves, people are able to take charge of the project. The current practice whereby people are only invited to participate when the project is implemented, and this is done only to provide cheap labour, is not empowerment. Terreblanche and Durrheim (1999:235) mention Freire’s concept’s of empowerment, where people look at themselves as a subject rather than an object “acted upon by the environment”.

- **Self-reliance**

Self-reliance is one of the most important principles of sustainable development. According to Nozick in Shragge (1993), sustainable intervention involves the community moving away from dependency to towards self-reliance. Self-reliance, according to Galtung in (Reid, 1995:74)

*Protects a community's rights ...assert its ability –to make its own decisions about how best to satisfy the needs of its members...it emphasizes the need to respect the distinctiveness of the culture of the community . build on its traditions, and either maintain its autonomy or work for larger degree of independence from ...potential oppressive communities*

A development programme that promotes self-reliance looks within the community for wealth that can provide opportunities for sustainable development. It is important to look for the support systems that have helped the community to survive, such as their skills and culture.

The notion of self-reliance is also emphasized by Julius Nyerere, the late former President of Tanzania in his writing as noted by Smith (1998) where he says:

*Man can only liberate himself or develop himself. He cannot be liberated or developed by another. For Man makes himself. It is his ability to act deliberately, for a self-determined purpose, which distinguishes him from the other animals. The expansion of his own consciousness, and therefore of his power over himself, his environment, and his society, must therefore ultimately be what we mean by development*

It should also be noted that though Nyerere might not have had sustainability in mind when he uttered these words, the goals of lifelong learning are similar to that of sustainability. However, the lifelong learning Nyerere talks about, is more humanistic in nature. The humanistic approach does not look at the person as a commodity of some business transaction, rather stimulates the learner's strength and creativity of the person, his or her capability and nurtures the capabilities of a person in order for him or her to realize his or her goals.

Nyerere's vision of education is the core of the development strategy that would move the people from a state of poverty to a state of well being. Although one may quickly conclude that self-reliance is an end product of the process, self-reliance does not mean that communities should then be left to pull themselves out of the situation. Rahman also disagrees with the notion that self-reliance means cutting out the outside world or external support. He however warns that we should guard against the external contributions that ignore the self-determination and the indigenous knowledge of the poor (Rahman, 1993). He explains that being self-reliant does not mean rejecting external assistance. Nozick in Shragge(1993) further notes that one single person cannot possess all the necessary skills or knowledge but self-reliance promotes collective action where skills and knowledge can be exchanged through collaboration.

- **Acknowledging indigenous knowledge systems**

Indigenous knowledge systems play a central role in developing the self-reliance of the society or the community, and have been recognized by many disciplines in the development sector (Potteier, Bicker and Sillitoe, 2003). Indigenous knowledge is also referred to as local knowledge. However, it does not only refer to knowledge shared by people in a same environment. It also means the skills, the techniques or survival strategies that people possess. Potteier, Bicker and Sillitoe (2003:1) note that local knowledge has suffered from assumptions "that local knowledge was bounded, static, consensual, non-reflective and unscientific". He

argues that indigenous knowledge is dynamic, diverse and highly contested by power struggles that take place in the society. Many of these power struggles tend to undermine people's or nation's capability to improve their standard of living using their indigenous knowledge systems. Sustainable development is a framework conducive for nurturing people's indigenous knowledge to their advantage rather than their disadvantage.

The fact that indigenous knowledge systems are also scientific makes them more competitive with other global knowledge systems. These systems can also stand against both present and the future challenges. What makes indigenous knowledge more appropriate for sustainable development, is the fact that it cannot be bought. Therefore every community or society no matter what status, has access to these systems.

In concluding the discussion on sustainable development regard is taken of Munslow's view in Vahl (1995: 21) where he notes that:

*Sustainable development means moving beyond ... economic growth per se...ensuring that people's needs are being met, that the resources base is conserved, that there is a sustainable population level, that cross- sectoral concerns are integrated into the decision-making process and that people are empowered*

The components of sustainable development together with its principles, provide a paradigm within which one can begin to determine lack or presence of sustainability in an intervention. It is within this context that this research views food security programmes and their influence in ensuring sustainable food security.

## **2.2. FOOD SECURITY**

Food security is a concept which is not easy to define. Each country or society defines food security in relation to the needs or the problems they encounter in their attempts to ensure food for their people. Different people define food security differently and for different purposes. However, in most cases, the theories of modernization and sustainable development as discussed earlier have been influential in the way food security has been studied. Modernization in particular, has dominated the policies and practices of food security.

According to the European Commission's report on food security (2000), the concept of food security became popular in the early 1980s when most governments realized having sufficient food for the countries was not enough to address the problems of hunger. Food sufficiency only provides a short-term solution to food problems and people continue to suffer from malnutrition and hunger. As a result, a new challenge for defining food security has begun.

### 2.2.1. Definitions of food security

The Food and Agricultural Organization of the United Nations which is an international body that currently deals with issues of food security in both developing and developed countries, has defined food security as a situation where:

*... all people, at all times, have physical and economic access to sufficient, safe and nutritious food to meet their dietary needs and food preferences for an active and healthy life (FAO, 2002).*

The definition of the FAO has implications in the way food security programmes are planned and implemented in many countries. This perception of food security tends to concentrate on food availability as the main problem. The physical availability of food is not always guaranteed to eliminate food insecurity in many poor countries Reutlinger in Gittinger, Ceslie and Hoisington (1987). Therefore, it becomes a problem when the internationally recognized institution that is supposed to play a central role in ensuring sustainable food security, defines food security in this way. This hinders more holistic approaches that could have a positive impact in the society where food security programmes are implemented.

South Africa's definition, though almost similar to that of the FAO, recognizes the social aspect as one of the important aspects that contribute to food insecurity in most of the developing countries. Hence, food security in South Africa is defined as follows:

*Physical, social and economic access to sufficient, safe and nutritious food by all South Africans at all times to meet their dietary and food preferences for an active and healthy life (Department of Agriculture report on IFSS, 2002)*

Though the definition by the Food and Agricultural Organization (FAO) has similarities to South Africa's, it is biased towards the modernization theory in that it ignores the social

elements of food security. The social aspect is as important as the economic and physical aspects of food security. FAO, as an important structure that is driving the fight against food insecurity seems to undermine the very important component of poverty. This short-sighted kind of definitions fails to achieve sustainable food security which is the priority of many poor communities.

The inclusion of a social aspect in South Africa's definition of food security however, is more of a political stance rather than a commitment to the social process as envisaged in the Reconstruction and Development Program (RDP) of 1994 (Walker, 2002). Walker (2002:9) notes that "the RDP commitments to redistribution and to the social uplifting of the poor continue to surface as political reference points from time to time". The new macro economic policy known as the Growth, Employment and Redistribution or GEAR was introduced in 1996. It is motivated by the ethos of modernization and the approach to food security by the South African government is not very different from any other countries that pursue economic growth more than social development. Hence both definitions come short in ensuring sustainable food security.

### **2.3. SUSTAINABLE FOOD SECURITY: A CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK**

This study argues that the definitions given for the concept food security are very narrow and emphasise the modernization approach. They promote only economic growth, rather than social, ecological and economic sustainability as discussed earlier in this chapter. This study also argues that if that is the way food security is viewed, it will not be able to translate into sustainable food security for poor communities.

In this study, food security is defined within the context of sustainable development: with the view that food security has to be sustainable in order to ensure that the livelihoods of the people are secured. Food security taken within the context of sustainable development emphasizes the fact that food has more value than merely its nutritional value. It transcends from being just food security to sustainable food security. Sustainable food security in this study is viewed as the process of gaining one's dignity from the interaction and the relationship that one has with one's environment. A person can only gain dignity if his or her worth such as culture, knowledge and human rights are recognized as important in any development intervention. Based on this understanding, food security is in this study defined by the researcher in the following way:

*A state of well-being that exists in every individual at all levels of the society, which enables those individuals to access and control the resources that lead to the availability of healthy food for social, economic and environmental development*

This definition of food security places emphasis on the well being of the poor which is an important factor for a country to achieve sustainable food security.

### **2.3.1. Characteristics of sustainable food security**

Sustainable food security follows the ethos of sustainable development and is characterised by the state of well being that can be identified within the people who have achieved it. De Beer and Swanepoel (2000: 9-10) provide a clear analysis of what the state of well being entails in the following paragraphs.

#### ***2.3.1.1. Freedom of choice and action***

Part of the well being includes freedom of choice and action as a crucial element based on the principles of democracy. It enables the individuals to demand what is rightfully theirs and to be able to choose what is suitable for their conditions. Lack of choice puts people in a vulnerable situation which makes them unable to cope under difficult situations. During times of food insecurity, freedom of choice and action plays a central role in the prevention of abuse of people's rights. For example, when people do not have the freedom to choose, they tend to accept anything even something that could put their lives in danger. Ife (2002:57) also highlights a similar view where he states that "one of the major consequences of poverty is that people have little choice or power to make decisions about their own lives". One of the examples of common scenarios where people have little or no choices can be seen in most programmes of food security. Most of the time donors define for the beneficiaries what food security is and then what they think those poor people need to attain. Beneficiaries often find that they have no choice but to accept whatever is given to them.

It is only people who understand their choices that are able to resist such imposition and are able to take actions to put forward their needs. People, who have the freedom of choice, would not be forced to eat food that has a low nutritional value or which could put their health at risk. Freedom of choice could play a role increasing people's physical weakness which is due to unhealthy or food deficiency. Freedom of choice goes hand in hand with knowledge. Therefore

where the issue of genetically modified foods is concerned, people need to know the advantages and disadvantages of these foods so that they can make informed choices.

#### *2.3.1.2. Physical strength*

The physical strength of the person influences his level of participation more in social activities that benefits himself as well as the people he lives with. An unhealthy or hungry person cannot participate effectively in a discussion or in any work for that matter. It is for this reason that the urgent need of hunger has to be addressed immediately before any programme is implemented. Food aid and food parcels are necessary for ensuring that physical weakness is avoided. If this weakness is not addressed immediately, it could be too late. For instance, a child who has been exposed to hunger could be psychologically and physically affected for the rest of his or her life. Vulnerability diseases are very high amongst the people who do not have access to healthy food. For example, HIV/AIDS is regarded as being the number one killer among communities where levels of food security are very low (Devereux and Maxwell, 2001).

#### *2.3.1.3. Security*

Security is defined according to each and everyone's needs. To some, security would mean having enough money saved in a bank or having insurance, while to other it could mean having a bodyguard or security personnel working twenty-four hours around his or her home. This means that everyone has different needs that can be met using different methods. To most people security means having access to the necessary basic needs for a decent quality life. It also means being in a secured environment that is conducive for self-expression which allows one to engage in an activity that will benefit oneself and the community, without being intimidated. For example, in many communities in South Africa particularly in rural areas, women are still afraid to talk in meetings because they feel threatened and intimidated by men. Walker (2002:1) also mentions a scenario whereby a woman felt she has no rights, she notes that "Her husband came and uprooted her whole garden...she could not go to the chief –women say usually chiefs do not listen to women's stories and if you take your husband to court you are seen as unruly". In many patriarchal societies such scenarios are regarded as a way of life. It is for some of these reasons that some women would reserve their ideas in discussions. Therefore if such situations exist, the chances of achieving sustainable food security become limited, more especially since women are the backbone of food security programmes.

#### **2.3.1.4. Good social relations**

Good social relations are a foundation for any programme to move to achieve sustainable development. Good social relations in a community form a strong coping mechanism for people during difficult times. For instance, the community is able to share the scarce resources until the situation improves. This view is also expressed by Hopkins in Devereux and Maxwell (2001:18) who argues that,

*Food security stands as a fundamental need, basic to all human needs and organisation of social life. Access to necessary nutrients is fundamental, not only to life per se, but also to stable and enduring social order*

This is the recognition of an element of interdependency among people in times of facing life threatening challenges such as food insecurity. Modern ways of life have been viewed as having perpetuated more social exclusion where “mind your own business” is the order of the day (Ife, 2002:16). The situation similar to the one mentioned above is common in urban areas where people do not know each other except if they have certain defined roles that they play in that community. For instance, if one is working in the electricity department, that person will be known as electricity personnel only. Most people in cities would not bother to find out where that electricity personnel comes from, or even if he has a problem with getting food or not. These social relations form the backbone for individuals to rely on during vulnerable times. There is a Zulu proverb which says “*umuntu ungununtu ngabantu*” meaning a person’s existence relies on other people. A good social relationship is an important aspect of well-being.

#### **2.3.1.5. Good quality life**

Good quality life can also be defined by individuals in relation to the things that satisfy them. It is for this reason that an outsider cannot determine what a good quality life is for a particular community. However, quality life is usually determined by happiness, good health, good social relations, no incidents of violence, and so on. Though this aspect of well-being is usually not easy to measure, it plays an important role when communities need to cope with the pressures of food insecurity.

The shortages of one of the elements indicated above could lead to the deprivation trap. The deprivation trap is characterized by a sense of powerlessness, physical weakness, isolation, vulnerability and then poverty (De Beer and Swanepoel, 2000). It is important to note that those things that lead to well-being such as good life, social relations and physical strength. These elements differ in each and every country due to differences in perspectives and demographical features of the world. Therefore one cannot assume that what worked in country A will definitely work in country B.

The above discussion has outlined important aspects of a state of well-being through which sustainable food security can be observed or identified. These, in the main operate on an individual level. In addition to these characteristics of food security, it is important that individuals and households have access to and control over resources, a matter to which the discussion now turns.

### **2.3.2. Access to and control of resources for food security and a sustainable livelihood**

A definition of sustainable food security in this study also implies that a state of well-being should enable a person/s to access and control resources. Resources or assets form part of the sustainable livelihood framework which is required for achievement for a state of well-being. Devereux and Maxwell (2001:84) describe livelihood resources as “various types of capital-building blocks- available to people and households from which they can fashion a livelihood” and they include:

#### ***2.3.2.1. Natural capital***

Natural resources include all the natural stocks that are supposed to be freely available in the community for the community to utilize. These include both renewable and non-renewable natural resources for example water, land, air and trees. These livelihood resources have become a commodity since the early years of imperialism. Power relations have enabled other groups of people to have access to and ownership of these resources over others.

#### ***2.3.2.2. Financial capital***

Financial capital includes the financial resources that enable the people to achieve their livelihood or quality life, food security in this case financial capital. This can include cash or property that can be exchanged for financial gain such as land, agriculture and other food

security requirements. Most people regard this capital as the more important than others; hence they invest all other resources to access this capital.

#### ***2.3.2.3. Physical capital***

This capital includes development infrastructure, equipment and institutions such as roads, schools, hospitals and offices. Such resources play an important role in the achievement of quality life. For example, a school is one of the institutions where the socialisation of young people according to the norms and values of the society take place. People who do not have access to the school or education institution may feel like outcasts among the educated ones. This might later lead to an unhappy individual within a community which then has negative implications in the fulfilment of well-being. Some people have access to these institutions or infrastructures, but have no control over them due to the fact that to access and control them is dependent on other capitals such as financial or social capital. For instance, access to food in South Africa is regarded as a right for every citizen of the country. However, not everyone has access to it since it is dependent on the availability of equipment which also depends on finances. The inability to access these resources, automatically denies people a given right.

#### ***2.3.2.4. Human capital***

Human capital denotes having skills, knowledge, the ability to work, and the physical strength that enables an individual to pursue sustainable livelihood programmes that will lead to a social, economical and ecological development. Skills which can be utilized to achieve community livelihood vary in every community or society. Human capital also includes the indigenous knowledge systems that exist within the community. The access to human capital depends on the availability of other capitals. For example, in order to have healthy labourers or people who have the ability to work, access to health facilities for people at an early age is the prerequisite. If that does not happen, the chances are that those people might not be fit physically or mentally to work.

#### ***2.3.2.5. Social capital***

Social capital has been discussed in detail in the section on sustainable development. Nevertheless, social capital refers to the social structures that nurture an individual into a responsible person. It is where norms, values and ethics are drawn from an individual through relationships and networks. In fact social capital seems to be the basis of all other forms of capital for sustainable livelihood. Farming groups provide social networks which allow each

member to access infrastructure and other capital that an individual would not have managed to access on his own. In this way social capital provides both social and economical security which is important for well-being.

#### **2.4. CONCLUSION**

Whether sustainable food security is achievable or not, is a question of the commitment of the major role players to the principles of sustainable development. This chapter has demonstrated how important the role of development theories is in the way food security is conceived worldwide. It has shown the divergence and convergence of the modernization theory and sustainable development with regard to sustainable food security. On one hand, sustainable development emphasises a holistical approach in which a process that leads to a state of food security is preferred. On the other hand, modernization approach with its shortcut approach which focuses on only a single aspect of food security seems to have failed to ensure sustainable food security at a household level where it is mostly required.

This chapter has also shown that food security is more than just having access to food or having cash to buy it. It involves the recognition of people's social and ecological development. It involves not only access to but an ability to control and make choices about the resources. Recognition of these elements in a programme of food security becomes prerequisite for sustainable livelihood upon which food security is dependent. Therefore, sustainable development offers an alternative, different, more holistic approach that will strike a balance between the economic, social and ecological demands of food security.

## **CHAPTER THREE**

### **LITERATURE REVIEW**

#### **3.0. INTRODUCTION**

The previous chapter has discussed the various theories and approaches surrounding the issue of food security. It is then important that one begins to explore further how the problem of food security has been approached both worldwide and in South Africa. Therefore, this chapter explores and analyzes both international and national responses to food insecurity. Firstly, it will examine the international perspectives on the causes of food insecurity, particularly in developing countries. Secondly it will examine the international trends in responding to food insecurity. This will be done by reviewing the policies that have guided food security programs dating back to 1970s when modernization became prominent and sustainable development was beginning to emerge in the circles of development. This international perspective will focus on the activities of the World Food Program (WFP) and the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) as the international institutions that have been engaged over the years in planning food security policies and interventions in developing countries. Lastly, it will review the South African experience in dealing with food insecurity by reviewing historical and current challenges.

#### **3.1. INTERNATIONAL PERSPECTIVE**

International perspectives on food security have been influenced by the way the dominating organisations such as FAO and the World Bank have defined and understood the concept of food security. For example, in its definition of food security as noted in Chapter Two, the FAO emphasizes the importance of availability and access through food supply which takes the shape of food distribution, markets and free trade policies. Secondly, FAO emphasises the importance of safety. This is ensured through hygiene policies. Thirdly, there is the issue of increased quality through technological production methods. Lastly, the FAO definition emphasises more the nutritive value of food. In this regard FAO advocates for additional nutritional supplements in food. Genetically Modified food is not only being introduced to increase food production, but is also expected to increase the nutritional value of food (Carletto et al., 2001).

### 3.1.1. Causes of food insecurity: An international perspective

Based on the understanding and definitions of food security, the international perspective regarding the major causes of food insecurities in developing countries, is that it has been largely self inflicted (Kashambuzi, 1997). The perception is that developing countries are food insecure due to their socio-economic lifestyle. Some of these lifestyles include high population growth, too much reliance on subsistence farming, political intolerance, rigid government economic policies, resistance to macro-economic policies and lack of technology (Leisinger and Schmidt, 1994; Kashambuzi, 1997).

Arguments against the view on overpopulation propose that the perception that there is overpopulation in developing countries, particularly in Africa is a fallacy and is based on unjustifiable facts. They argue that there is no overpopulation but merely overcrowding and high population density in certain areas. This is as a result of the imbalanced land distribution in colonial times which has resulted in the minority owning a huge part of land and the majority owning less (Zipper, 1987; Musoke et al., 1990; Kashambuzi, 1997). Unfair land distribution policies caused many rural people who had formerly been farmers to migrate to urban areas in search of new ways of sustaining livelihood in mining and other businesses (Bundy in Schrire, 1992). Obviously, if the productive land where many people who had previously depended on agriculture is suddenly taken away, they will be exposed to food insecurity.

Furthermore, Musoke et al. (1990: 34-26) provide a clear description of how overpopulation has occurred. They write:

*...companies (European) actively sought new land holdings in the Native reserves for the incoming settlers, reducing the area available to Africans". He further notes that due to numerous unjustifiable policies of land distribution, Africans "were marginalized to the periphery of the economy... and a system of land reallocation confined them to less fertile and most inhospitable parts of the country*

In agreement with this view, Kashambuzi (1997:47) points out that "there is increasing evidence that soil fertility in Africa is declining" He mentions the effects of the structural adjustment programmes which led to the decrease of government expenditure. This in turn has resulted in more women and children having no access to health services, wars that have killed many children and women and the HIV/AIDS pandemic which has already killed many people. He, however, sees the need for population growth to ensure labour availability to increase the

human capital which is required for food security. He further concludes that overpopulation is indeed a wrong assumption, which has led to a waste of resources. It is then improper at this stage to suggest overpopulation as the cause of food insecurity without considering the issue of land distribution, economic policies and social dimensions and many more other factors.

One of the causes of food insecurity that is mentioned about most of the African countries is lack of access to valuable resources which then forced many African states to reject the self-sufficient policy that they have been practicing (Dhliwayo cited in Rukuni, Mudimu, Jayne, 1990). They argue that "the analysis of the 1988-89 regional food situation reveals that while the issue of adequate availability... has been more or less achieved, the goal of access was not successfully accomplished" (Rukuni, Mudimu, Jayne 1990:16). Other people argue that self-sufficiency failed in Africa due to the fact that during the time when African states gained their independence, most of the resources taken away during colonisation, such as land were never returned to the original people (Bennhodt-Thomsen and Mies, 1999).

### **3.1.2 Responses to food insecurity**

Food security is a worldwide phenomenon, which affects all countries even those that are regarded as developed. However, food security is a primary concern for developing countries since they are the most affected by poverty, and thus by hunger. International responses have over the years shown drastic changes and transformations, from the food aid, aid in funds, social grants to agriculture subsidies and genetically modified food (GMF). These responses include policies that have been developed to address food insecurity.

#### ***3.1.2.1. International policy framework on food security***

Literature shows that there have been a number of policies adopted by the international society in an attempt to overcome food insecurity. Devereux and Maxwell (2001) highlight the five stages or phases of food security policies that have been developed over different periods by the international community. The phases show a trend in the way the causes of food security were perceived in different periods. For example, the first phase, which is the period between 1974 and 1980, show that food insecurity was seen as food unavailability in those food insecure countries. Hence there was an emphasis in production for the distribution of food stocks to affected countries. This was the time when institutions such as Food Aid Convention, were strengthened. This particular response of the international community indicates that the problem

of food security was thought to be temporary or due to drought. As Devereux and Maxwell (2001) state that during this period there was a failure of crop harvest in Russia.

The second phase, between 1980 and 1985, titled Food Entitlement and Structural Adjustment was marked by the recognition that food security has its roots in the state of poverty that was common throughout the food security challenged countries. Poverty was viewed as being contributed not only by access to food resources, but also entitlements to it. Ownership of the food resources is one of the examples. Hence food security policies at this time focused on ensuring that there was increased access, which also meant increase in production levels.

The third phase which is labelled The Golden Age (1986-90) focused on strategies to integrate food security issues with national planning reviews. This correlated with the structural adjustment policies. According to Devereux and Maxwell (2001), this phase saw investment in studies on the subject of food security. Though ensuring entitlement was a concern, attention was more on its security.

The fourth phase (1990-1995) referred to as Poverty, saw drastic changes in the attitude of many donors when there was a feeling that poverty was a more of a causal factor to food security. Devereux and Maxwell (2001:26) also mention that “despite the strong degree of overlap between poverty and food security, many donors down-graded food security studies and programmes”. Seemingly, tackling food security through poverty alleviation programmes did not have as much impact as expected.

The fifth phase (1995 onwards) seems to be still a contested arena where different interest groups press for their interest. However looking at the current trends in economic policy, it appears that the current international food security policies are drawing from the economic growth policies that are currently operational in many developed and developing countries. These policies are determined by the common perspectives of the major contributors into the economy and food productions such as the World Bank, IMF. For example Stringer (2002: 8) notes that:

*Projections by FAO, IFPRI, the World Bank and others indicate that if governments pursue appropriate macroeconomic and sectoral policies and expand investment in agriculture, agricultural productivity will increase, global grain production will keep up*

*with demand, and real cereal prices will continue the downward trend of the last 50 years.*

According to Barraclough and Utting (1987) the international perspective on food security “has generally only meant sufficient supplies and stocks to ensure that market demands are met without severe shortages and violent gyrations in prices”. This perspective is based on the belief that the cause of food insecurity is the lack of income. Therefore there has been an intense use of technology such as irrigation systems and chemicals, to reach the highest production required by the markets, hoping that the increase would then translate to more income. Borlaug (2001) asserts that there has indeed been an increase in production in countries such as China and India but he also argues that this increase in production has not been able to increase levels of food security in these countries.

More specifically, international food security policy is determined to an extent by the way the economic policy of the developed countries is structured. The structural adjustment policy and free trade policies have over the years put emphasis on economic growth through markets as the phases have shown. The General Agreement on Trade and Tariffs (GATT) which is an economical policy strategy of free trade, has now included agricultural products. This sudden action impacts directly to food security and these policies have not resulted into food insecurity (Norberg-Hodge, Merrifield, Gorelick, 2002:10).

Further criticism against the free trade policies have been noted by Musoke et al (1990: 22) who states that prior to colonization particularly around the 1800s, many African societies “possessed sophisticated, military strong, politically able and economically viable civilization...” where “high level of prosperity were sustained by agricultural systems that produced a wide variety of crops, in conjunction with the products of animal husbandry and technology”.

Other reports confirm that developing countries were basically exporters of agricultural production to developed countries till 1970s (Kashambuzi, 1997; FAO, 2000). Due to the negative effects that the post-colonial policies such as economic structural adjustments in many countries and liberalization of trade policies had on the developing countries, there has been a massive increase in food imports by the developing countries (Musoke et al., 1990, Bond, 2001). A similar view is expressed by Devereux and Maxwell (2001:25), when they assert that

attempts to deal with food security through addressing the issue of food entitlement “coincided with the beginning of the structural adjustment crisis, in which poverty reduction and basic needs were made subordinate to the need for debt management, fiscal balance, macroeconomic stability, and internal and external liberalisation”. Many farmers and markets in developing countries experience too much competition from foreign investors who, due to easy and advanced processes, have their foodstuff at a cheap rate. Hence the local farmer’s products become stagnant. In addition, Lipton in (Tyagi and Vyas, 1990:100) observed that:

*Adjustment processes in development are such that, except for transition periods, the poor and have-nots do not get many benefits and the burgeoning population adds to the number of poor and undernourished*

### **3.1.2.2. The impact of food imports on livelihood of the poor**

The importation of food by developing countries is an expenditure that these countries have been struggling to afford. They have to rely on loans from different institutions such as the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund (IMF). Today, many developing countries are indebted to the World Bank, which according to many writers and political activists perpetuates more poverty and is a major cause of underdevelopment in the indebted countries (George cited in Rahnama and Bawtree, 1997). Narayan (2000: 153) observed a similar situation that “chronic indebtedness is a major determinant of ill being across study communities, and poor people are identified perpetual borrowers”. Being indebted to the World Bank has reduced the autonomy of developing countries by removing development policies of their choice and allows the World Bank and other international financial institutions to dictate the course of action (Harley and Fotheringham, 1999). All the debts that developing countries have to pay make it difficult for them to afford other basic needs, which affect the livelihood of their citizens.

Powerful institutions shape the programmes of food security both internationally and locally. FAO as an international body which receives donations from these institutions makes policies on behalf of these institutions and makes decisions on crosscutting issues in all the membership countries. Governments in those countries have to implement these policies respectively (Slater, 2003). Slater argues that this “one size fits all” policy is problematic because each country has its own specific socio-economic conditions that require specific attention and approaches. In

addition, policy implementation is expensive and it becomes difficult for governments in poor countries to implement due to lack of resources. Eventually, developing countries are forced to ask for loans to the developed institutions which increase their debts.

However, many writers on sustainable economic growth are not against trade as Sen (1999:292) argues “one must not jump to the conclusion that stopping the market would be the right way to halt famine”. However they recommend that trading should happen within the communities that have similar visions and have equal power relations in terms of their economy as Reid (1995) calls it trading ‘horizontally’. This will reduce the manipulation that occurs between countries that have unequal economic powers as it has been the case.

### *3.1.2.3 The challenges of food aid*

Food aid has been and is still one of the visible responses to the problem of food insecurity. The World Food Programme (WFP) was established in 1960 as an international structure to administer the programmes of food aid (Shaw, 2001). According to Shaw (2001:38) “food aid was provided in order to increase the levels of consumption, investment, employment and income beyond what would have been possible”. Research was carried out in 1987 by the WFP evaluation services after the food aid programme had been implemented. It tried to evaluate the impact of the programme. The research established the following:

- Food aid programme did not reach the people it was intended due to bureaucratic systems.
- The programme was not sustainable; instead it created dependency on the recipients.
- The programme resulted in many local food-farming businesses collapsing as the consumers relied on food aid.
- Open-ended food aid had no proper follow up. (Shaw, 2001:38)

The report came with the recommendations that food aid programmes should be looked at as part of a development programme, not a separate entity. Therefore the approach should consider the long-term development of the society. A multi project approach was seen as a strategy that could be linked to the broader development plans of the governments.

Another recommendation by the WFP evaluation in 1994 was that beneficiaries should be at the centre of the project cycle to ensure that food aid becomes part of the development processes of the community.

In spite of these recommendations, the WFP still faces a lot of criticism for promoting dependency and depressing the local markets (Vandana, 2000). According to Devenux and Maxwell (2001), the issue of food aid depressing prices in the local market has now been acknowledged in the evaluation study which recommended that food to be distributed should be purchased in the same country where it is to be distributed. The question is what to do if the local prices are too high or the local market fails to produce the type of food that is in demand? These are some of the challenging issues that food aid agencies need to develop a policy on.

WFP has also been criticised for not addressing the root of the problem of food security. The deputy executive director of the WFP, Sheila Sisulu, argues that WFP “would like to do more developmental work...we are concerned that our funding doesn’t adequately reflect our dual mandate” (Hofstatter and Adams, 2004:2). According to the WFP, their mandate is firstly to save lives and to concentrate on ensuring that livelihoods are secured. However, the difficulty in doing the latter is the fact that it is a long process and there a very few keen donors to such programs”.

#### ***3.1.2.4. Genetically Modified Food (GMF)***

In order to ensure the increase in food production, modern agriculture has gone to include not only chemical fertilizers that will ensure rapid growth of crops, but also the intense use of biotechnological systems that include the genetically modified organisms (GMOs) (Borlaug, 2001). Genetically Modified Organisms refers to the biotechnological process of altering genetic material from one organism to another to make other products such as crops and meat products (Human Genome Project Information, 2004). One organism can be replicated to make as many food products or to create a different products, which than create genetically modified foods (GMF).

Proponents of GMFs argue that it is the only way to solve the hunger problems in developing countries. However, there has been quite a high level of resistance from different human rights

activists and governments of developing countries against the GMF. They have based their criticism on the health hazards, environmental issues as well as long-term plans and social effects that these GMF could bring (Nottingham, 1998; De la Perriere and Seuret, 2000). For example, Nottingham (1998:28) notes that the use of a recombinant bovine somatotropin (rBST) in a cow in order to increase milk yields:

*Is likely to lead to an increase in production-related diseases, including the serious udder infection called mastitis, metabolic and fertility disorders... milk from cows with full-blown mastitis is not permitted to be used for human consumption*

Other critics argue that claiming that GMF can solve hunger “ignore the main causes of hunger and starvation” while pointing out that “increasing the amount of GMF on the planet is not necessarily the solution to feeding the hungry...” (Nottingham, 1998:156). For example, the report by the Department of Agriculture in South Africa on food availability shows that there is food in abundance, but many people still suffer from hunger (Department of Agriculture Report, 2002). This shows that the availability of food is not as much of a problem but distribution and entitlement still remains a problem. Many people would still not be able to access food because they will still have to buy it. The issue of entitlement would not be resolved by having the surplus of food. Instead, those involved in the market stand a chance to benefit more from the GMF scheme than many hungry people of the country.

Another argument on the use of GMF involves issues of intellectual property rights that many companies are using against governments who try to engage in GMF. Apoteker in (De la Perriere and Seuret, 2000: 10) note:

*The World Trade Organisation (WTO) and the U.S. support these multinationals and are trying to impose patenting on the rest of the world, which will finally give a handful of companies almost full monopoly on genetic resources by limiting the access of farmers to GMFs*

This, according to Apoteker, would not solve the problem but would perpetuate it further as the governments would not only have to buy the food, but also the information to produce it. This will mean that more loans will be required by governments of the developing countries to buy both information and technology and maybe even to buy human skills when required.

Proponents for GMF such as Borlaug argue that the notion that GMF is a health hazards is unjustified. He argues that “the intensity of the attacks by certain groups against GMF is unprecedented and somewhat surprising” (Borlaug, 2001:8). He further argues that different agencies assist in ensuring that the DNA used in crops is safe for human consumption. The arguments against the environmental effects, according to Borlaug, are in fact a contradiction of what the GMF crops do; instead the increased yields of GMF leave vast land left for other purposes because GMF only need a small area of land to yield more crops. He further notes that in fact the lack of GMF use in developing countries has resulted in deforestation because many trees have been cut down in preparation for more land and organic farming material.

Despite the fear surround GMFs, there is a strong indication that many developing countries will succumb to the use of GMFs considering the state of food insecurity that exists and the pressures from the international community. In South Africa for instance, the Genetically Modified Organism Act no. 15 of 1997 has already been enacted and this will regulate the use of GMF in the country (GMO Act, 1997). Moreover, there are three crops being piloted, these being cotton, maize and beans (Thompson, 2000). There seems to be more countries which will follow the same path towards GMF since food insecurity remains undefeated.

#### ***3.1.2.5 The Anti-Hunger program of the Food and Agriculture Organization***

The Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO), as one of the international structures that has been established to assist government in their policies and improve dialogue between relevant stakeholders, receives its funding from the World Bank. Due to this partnership, The FAO’s approach to food security follows a similar vision to that of the World Bank by supporting economic growth oriented strategies to food security. In 2002, FAO unveiled the Anti-Hunger program as a strategy aimed at ensuring sustainable food security. This program has five major areas for action, which also require financial investment. These areas include:

- Improve agricultural productivity and enhance livelihoods and food security in poor rural communities.
- Develop and conserve natural resources.

- Expand rural infrastructures (including capacity for food safety, plant and animal health) and broaden market access.
- Strengthen the capacity for knowledge generation and dissemination via research, extension, education and communication.
- Ensure access to food for the neediest through safety nets and other direct assistance. (FAO Committee on Commodity Problems, 2002)

Although the anti-hunger campaign of FAO shows signs of positive thinking towards sustainable food security, it still emphasises growth in production as a priority which is not different from its previous activities of the last fifty years or since it was established. This approach still ignores the social perspectives, which are crucial for sustainable food security.

### 3.2. THE SOUTH AFRICAN EXPERIENCE IN FOOD SECURITY

In March 2003, The Department of Agriculture and Land Affairs in South Africa conducted a public hearing on food security with the aim of establishing the best practices with regard to food security (Parliament Monitoring Group on Food Security, [Http://www.pmg.org.za](http://www.pmg.org.za)). The attendants of this hearing expressed concerns about lack of food in the households. They referred to drastic methods that needed to be applied urgently in order to reduce hunger to their societies by half by the year 2015. Some of these methods include improvement in technology and manufacturing which also includes genetically modified foods. The hearing revealed that South Africa is experiencing problems of hunger similar to any other developing country.

However the aforementioned scenario could be easily tarnished by views that are being expressed by various people about the socio-economic situation of the country. One such example is that of Cochran (2000:98) who says:

*Six years after Mandela's election, South Africa is by far the most advanced democracy in Africa... South Africa also has emerged as one of Africa's leading trading nations and a key center of foreign, including US, investment in the region. South Africa's economy alone accounts for 40 percent of Sub-Saharan Africa's total gross domestic product (GDP). Excluding oil imports, South Africa accounts for 60 percent of US trade with Africa and one-quarter of US capital investment in the region*

There are many reports which express similar sentiments to the above quote and they imply that South Africa is doing fine in terms of development. The Department of Agriculture of South Africa Report on Food Security Strategy (2000) has also noted that “at a national level, South Africa is food secured”, and the National food security indicators as tabled in the document Integrated Food Security Strategy for South Africa (IFSS) 2000) shows that maize, a staple food for South Africa, eggs and milk, have reached more than 100% self-sufficiency index. These commodities have been reaching more than 100% surplus index for a period of about 15 years. Based on these economic evaluations and the national trade calculations, one could then conclude that South Africa is indeed coping well in dealing with poverty, and indeed food security. However, arguments against all these perceptions show that South Africa cannot be regarded as “food secure” when the majority of households are food insecure (Department of Agriculture, IFSS report, 2002; Maurice Webb Race Relations Unit on NDA Report, 2002). According to Walker (2002), the historical background of South Africa and the economic system of the country encourages inequalities which then place South Africa in a similar situation to any country in Africa.

Many reports indicate that despite South Africa being regarded as “food sufficient, it is estimated that thirty-five percent of South African population, mostly Africans, is vulnerable to food insecurity” Bonti-Ankomonah, 2001, (cited in NDA report, 2002).

### **3.2.1. Responses to food insecurity in South Africa**

Like any country in Africa, South Africa has been engaged in different strategies and processes to fight hunger and ensure food security. The public hearing on food security organized by the Department of Agriculture in 2003 was more of a ‘search for new ideas’ exercise since it is the concern that current methods are not delivering sustainable food security. Some of the strategies that have been attempted include the social grants, agriculture subsidies, seed distribution, food parcels and the Integrated Food Security Strategy.

#### **3.2.1.1 Social grants**

South Africa has had a problem of poor people or people who are unable to support themselves for a long time. The Poverty and Inequality in South Africa Report cited in May (1998) estimated that 72% of the rural population of South Africa was living in poverty. In addressing this problem, various methods and strategies have been implemented to provide both short term and the long term solutions. Social security is one of the strategies that have been in place to

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ensure that poor people are provided with at least basic needs, including food security, through social assistance grants. However, it should be noted that the social policy of the previous nationalist government discriminated against other races in the country. Lund (2002: 683) points out that the social assistance grants were “introduced (in South Africa) in the first half of the century for white people, then gradually extended to reach all citizens”. The inclusion of all races in the social grant system has enabled more than 12 million people to access grants (Ministry of Social Development (2004)

There are various levels of social grants that have been provided for under the Social Assistance Act, (Act 59 of 1992), which came into effect on the 1<sup>st</sup> of March 1996. Qualifying people such as elderly, the disabled and children under 14 years old, have been able to access monies via social grants received every month. Social grants, according to Lund (2002) have played a major role in assisting communities to afford some of their most pressing needs, including food.

Though most of the monies received from the social grants is spent on food (Lund, 2002), the social grants are used to pay for other basic needs such as clothing, medication, water, education and rent. Due to the high rate of unemployment, in some cases, whole families depend entirely on the social grant of a single person to afford their basic needs. As a result, the money becomes insufficient to buy food for households.

Criticism against government’s social grants is that it creates a setback in the economic development of the country as it contradicts the government’s macroeconomic policy, GEAR, which intends to reduce social spending and increase economic growth. However the government of the African National Congress justifies the social grants based on the bill of Rights Chapter 2 section 27 (1 and 2) of the Constitution of South Africa which states that “Everyone has the right to have access to... social security, including, if they are unable to support themselves and their dependants, appropriate social assistance” and (2) “The state must take reasonable legislative and other measures, within its available resources, to achieve the progressive realisation of each of these rights” (The Constitution of South Africa, 1996). However, other critics argue that the social grants have been used by the government not only to alleviate poverty, but also to gain political support from the poor people who form the majority part of the society (SundayTimes, 14 February, 2003). After all Schmidtz and Goodin (1998: 102) argue that “welfare was meant to be a second chance, not a way of life.” Though social grants currently play a major role in curbing food insecurity, they are not sustainable.

### *3.2.1.2 The Integrated Food Security Strategy (IFSS)*

The South African government recognizes the fact that social grants and food parcels are a short-term relief; they do not solve the problem of food security. The Department of Agriculture (2002) has developed an Integrated Food Security Strategy (IFSS) for South Africa aimed at eradicating hunger, malnutrition and food insecurity by 2015. The strategy has the following objectives:

- Increase household food production and trading
- Improve income generation and job creation opportunities
- Improve nutrition and food safety
- Increase safety nets and food emergency management systems
- Improve analysis and information management system.
- Provide capacity building
- Hold stakeholder dialogue

[http://www.nda.agrc.za/docs/foodsecurity/finalFSS.pdf\(06/07/04\)](http://www.nda.agrc.za/docs/foodsecurity/finalFSS.pdf(06/07/04))

The main objective of the strategy is to see all relevant stakeholders playing a vital role and participating fully in the process. Government departments such as the Departments of Agriculture, Social Development, Public Works and Health, form the IFSS lead departments. These Departments have to co-ordinate their programme in order to supplement each other for an integrated food security program.

The IFSS is a positive plan since it emphasises the participation of the beneficiaries as its starting point. The co-ordination between departments is a crucial factor as it prevents redundancy of programmes and provides support to the community. Lack of co-ordination from the government departments and the non-governmental organizations has been the reason behind lack of sustainability of food security programs and the reason behind the wide spread occurrence of so called 'white elephants': the buildings and institutions that are left unused by the community. For example, for an agricultural project in a rural area like Inkandla, North of KwaZulu Natal, which is in the remote area, very mountainous, with a lack of infrastructure such as roads, electricity and tap water, one would expect coordination from departments. The Department of Social development together with local Non Governmental Organisation (NGO) could assist in preparation of the community for the programme and facilitate the participation

of the community. The Department of Agriculture could assist with soil assessment for the type of agricultural crops or products suitable for the area and could then provide relevant training. The Department of Water Affairs could intervene to ensure that water is pumped from the river to the area where there is a need. The Public Works Department could contribute with appropriate buildings for storage and packing of products. The Transport Department could ensure that the road is in a good condition and the Department of Health could ensure that the programme caters for correct nutritional need of the households and verify which households are affected. In that way the programme would be able to satisfy the short-term and the long-term needs for food security.

Though the IFSS emphasises the co-ordination of the major role players in food security and development, very little attention has been given to the importance of ensuring access to and control of the resources by the people. This is one of the mistakes many food security strategies have failed to address.

### **3.2.2. Challenges facing South Africa**

There are a number of challenges facing the South African government and communities in ensuring sustainable food security. Most of these challenges are the products of the apartheid policies that discriminated against people according to their race and exposed them to harsh conditions where they were unable to feed themselves. However, other challenges are found within the development organizations that are mandated to marshal the processes of food security.

One of the main challenging issues in the implementation of food security programmes currently facing South Africa is how to ensure that poor people have access to land without enforcing undemocratic and unlawful processes on those who already own it (Harley and Fotheringham, 1999). Certain policies have been developed and legislated, however from the perspectives of many South Africans, these policies have been very narrow and merely serve to undermine the root of the problem (Harley and Fotheringham, 1999).

#### ***3.2.2.1. Land reform challenges***

Agriculture is one of the main activities many people engage in order to ensure food security. Access to land and food security are two sides of the same coin since most agricultural food products depend on the availability of land and the type of soil. As a result, land issues are

regarded as the starting point for sustainable food security and development in general. Though it is not the purpose of this study to dwell on the political background of South Africa, it is relevant that the major causes of the current situation that has led to the constraints in South African's endeavours in addressing food security are highlighted.

South Africa's political history has a lot to do with people's settlement patterns and their access to arable land for agricultural purposes. Through various policies such as the Land Acts of 1913 and 1936, the Nationalist government allocated the most arable land to the minority of white farmers and allocated small infertile land areas to black farmers (Harley and Fotheringham, 1999). The inequalities in access to arable land for agricultural purposes, on which most food security programs in South Africa are dependant, have been a stumbling block for government and NGOs to implement programmes of food security (Commeey, 2002).

The land reform program of South Africa took place after 1994 as one of the ANC led government's priorities to redress injustices of the past and to eradicate poverty. The land program is divided into three programmers: the land restitution, land distribution and the land tenure (Department of land Affairs, 1996). These programmes are expected to ensure that the land is returned to those who were dispossessed of their land. The programme also intends to allow those emerging farmers to access land that has been unavailable to them previously. Through the Land Reform for Agricultural Development (LRAD), the Department of Land Affair attempts to assist the poor, new entrants to agriculture, farm workers, labour tenants and women. In this way it hopes to substantially increase black ownership of commercial agriculture. Through the provisions of the Land and Assistance Act 126 of 1993, the government aimed to provide financial assistance to beneficiaries to acquire land and to secure tenure rights through the assistance of the Land Bank and the Department of Agriculture.

Despite these provisions in the policy, Harley and Fotheringham (1999:163) argue that land policy which is "market led" is not in favour of the poor who lack the financial resources and skills to compete fairly in the market. More criticisms caution that South Africa is following the same route that Zimbabwe took 24 years ago, when the Zimbabwean government followed a willing-buyer and willing-seller approach (Wellard and Copestake, 1993). This approach has had detrimental effects on poor people and has resulted in the land invasions and riots (Sunday Times, 2004). Commeey (2002:15) also argues that the South Africa's pace of land redistribution is very slow and he warns that "the slower the pace of land redistribution, the faster the clock

on the land invasion time bomb ticks away". He further notes that the government through its Reconstruction and Development Program in 1994, planned to redistribute 30% of agricultural land within a period of five years. Instead in the eight years up to 2002, only 2% has been distributed. In recent reports, the South African government officials have been noted disagreeing with the aforementioned concerns, saying that land reform in South Africa is on the right track and it would not lead to violence as is happening in Zimbabwe (Sunday times, 2004). However, the government is also blaming the current land owners for not co-operating with the government's attempt to distributing land amicably. The government argues that the sellers increase the prices of the land which then makes the government unable to afford. Whilst the process to acquire arable land by the poor rural farmers in South Africa remains a political and an economic debate, sustainable food security battles to take root in many development programs.

### ***3.2.2.2. Development agencies and civil society organisations***

For decades non-governmental organizations (NGOs) have played a vital role in bringing about democracy in South Africa (Dangor 1997). The democratic government of South Africa recognizes the influence and the value NGOs have in the society. It is for this reason that the National Development Agency Act of 108 Of 1998 was enacted to establish a National development Agency, which is the body that will assist NGOs with financial support and any other developmental aspects that NGOs require in order to ensure that poverty is eradicated. Sustainable food security is one of the primary issues that NGOs and the NDA have to deal with. However, there are challenges facing both the NGOs and the NDA in fulfilling the obligations of poverty eradication, specifically food security.

#### **The National Development Agency (NDA)**

The National Development Agency currently provides the following services to ensure sustainability of projects:

- Funding – Provide of financial support for projects or programmes.
- Capacity Building - Provide support and build capacity to increase competency and efficiency.
- Fundraising – Raise funds for its programmes and assist any organization in fund-raising efforts for development programs.

- Research – Identify and develop a database for partners in development programmes.
- Promote dialogue and influence policy development among relevant stakeholders and partners. (National Development Agency available online <http://www.nda.org.za/ndaCbus.htm>)

The NDA receives most of its funds from the government, more specifically from the Department of Social Welfare and Population Development and the European Union. In previous years, in order to access these services, NGOs have had to submit their proposals which were then followed by the NDA to sending its Project Officer or manager to visit the NGO and establish whether the programme was fundable or not. The Project Manager would then develop a programme or project together with the community or NGO to suit the requirements of the NDA.

Though the NDA has been supporting any organization that is providing any programme of development such as early childhood development, skills training, adult education, health programmes and economic programme, it is obvious from its annual reports that most of its programs have been focused on ensuring that hunger is alleviated from the households (NDA Annual Report, 2003). One of the food security programmes of Msinga Peace and Development Committee (MPDC) food security programme in the uMsinga area, also known as Tugela Ferry in KwaZulu Natal.

In an attempt to address food shortages in households, the NDA has implemented a job creation strategy. So most programmes or projects have been business-orientated and are planned to provide job opportunities for income generation.

One of the selection criteria is that organizations must provide a sustainability plan. This states how the organization plans to get more funding for the project or programme (NDA Impact Report, 2004). This focus on sustainability ensures that the programme continues to operate even after the NDA has withdrawn its support or the project funding term has expired. This is termed “project sustainability”. However, the recent study conducted by the African Institute of Corporate Citizenship for the NDA, highlighted one major problem in the sustainability plan of the NDA. The report recommends that:

*NDA should determine if impact and sustainability is important enough criteria to include in their funding decisions and if it is, how it will be incorporated. If the NDA places a great emphasis on planning for high impact and high sustainability in line with cost, it is*

*likely that the organization will be seen to truly engage in social investment that maximizes the returns on the investment for the beneficiaries thereof as opposed to engaging in social philanthropy that focuses more on what was expended than what was achieved (NDA Impact Report, 2004:64)*

Also again the reports show mixed feelings from the beneficiaries most of whom complained about the lack of communication between them and the NDA. This leads to delays in the projects and created frustrations from the beneficiaries (NDA Impact Report, 2004). The report also criticizes the so called 'one size fits all' approach that seems to be applied in NDA projects as a problem for other areas since each area has unique features that need consideration in the process.

The NDA has recently embarked on the clustering process, which will replace the reactive process whereby the NDA responded to the proposal from each and every project or organization. Some projects have already been clustered under an already established leading organization. The Impact Reports raises a number of concerns and recommendations regarding the process of clustering such as that the beneficiaries are not properly consulted during the clustering process. One of its recommendations is that "project managers should bring together different projects to work together, share information and have an understanding of what others are doing through workshops, and this would encourage cluster formation" (NDA Impact Report, 2004: 64).

Dangor (1997) also notes that many NGOs have criticized private funders for channeling the funding through the NDA. They reckon that it monopolizes the resources under the government wing which then creates delays in the NGOs accessing the funds. A similar criticism has been highlighted in the recent NDA impact report, implying that NDA is stagnant in responding to proposals.

### **The non-governmental organizations (NGOs)**

Though NGOs have been instrumental in bringing about change in South Africa, it seems that their role in bringing about sustainable development, particularly in issues of food security in the households, is hindered by the interests of the funders that determine the programmes and the time frames (Dangor, 1997; Fowler, 1997). Donors impose their agendas on the organization which then jeopardizes the autonomy of the organizations in rendering services fairly. The strict time frame that donors enforce, prevents the development work that these

organizations need to do in advance of the project implementation. Fowler (1997: 17) observed that “projects are not where we should be starting from”. He argues that “projects are for technical type of developments such as road construction not where the human behaviour is expected to change”.

NGOs have also become a job creation strategy in South Africa. According to Dangor (1997) only one quarter of the workers in NGOs is not paid. This contradicts the definition of NGOs as noted by Honey and Bonbright's in Dangor (1997: 5) that NGOs are “private, self –governing, voluntary, non-profit distributing organizations operating not for profit...” Instead of playing a developmental role which could ensure sustainable development, NGOs have become money-making schemes and have become involved in the political interests of the governments and donors. These elements have become an obstacle for sustainable development and have worsened their chances of ensuring sustainable food security.

### ***3.2.2.3. Gender equity and empowerment***

The role of women in the provision of food security in the household has been acknowledged in many studies (Bob, 2002; Alamgir and Arora, 1991). However, there has been very little action taken towards ensuring that women play a leading role in food security programmes. Bob (2002: 16) asserts that:

*In South Africa while poor women's multiple roles have been acknowledged, there remains a weak empirical and conceptual basis to understand women's experiences and need related to subsistence farming, which remains a central aspect of enabling food security in marginalised rural context.*

Bob (2002:16) argues that the main setback in food security programmes in South Africa, is the fact whilst the majority of households are headed by women, they have “limited access and control of vital resources, such as land and water”. This lack of access to and control of the resources by women, impacts negatively on the sustainability of food security programmes. Another contributing factor to the problems of food security is the low number of women participating in decision making on food security programmes. This has been viewed as contributing to the slow progress of food security in South Africa.

### 3.3. CONCLUSION

The dominating attitudes and perspectives of the developed international countries regarding food security in developing countries needs special attention as this chapter has demonstrated. The ineffectiveness of the current policies adopted by the developing countries in search of sustainable food security impacts negatively on food security. Looking at the stages of food security as noted by Devereux and Maxwell (2001) earlier in this chapter, it seems that the fight against food insecurity is going around the circles. Judging from the kinds of debates and the new programmes of food security that are currently taking place both internationally and nationally, it would appear that the way forward is towards the promotion of production for the market. The pressure on developing countries to adopt GMFs seems to be succeeding even though it is still not clear how this process is going to ensure the food entitlement to poor people and how this will ensure that persons who do not have access to the land and water benefit. Each country will have to assess its situation in relation to GMFs.

It is also clear that South Africa like any developing country is experiencing problems of household food insecurity. However, having just attained democracy, it seems that South Africa is bound to fall into the same trap that many developing countries have. This has been demonstrated in the new strategy for food security which emphasises the market led approaches to food security. The will of South Africa to fight food insecurity is dampened by the policies that have denied the majority people of the country access to resources of food security such as land, water, and other food security inputs. These stand as obstacles and need to be addressed urgently. The principles that guide development organisations in the way they conduct their work need to be scrutinised as they seem to be compromising what they stand for and this automatically affects their performance in bringing about change in the lives of the poor.

## **CHAPTER FOUR**

### **THE STUDY AREA**

#### **4.0. INTRODUCTION**

This chapter aims to present an overview of the study area by looking at its background, the situational analysis and the food security program run by the uMsinga Peace and Development Committee (MPDC) and funded by the National Development Agency (NDA). Since there a number of food security programmes funded by the NDA in South Africa, this chapter will commence by explaining the reasons behind choosing this area as the case study.

#### **4.1. THE STUDY AREA**

The researcher has known for years about uMsinga as a result of the widespread of fights which took place in the area and which were covered by the media. It was in 2003 that the researcher joined the National Development Agency staff during President Mbeki's visit to uMsinga for an Imbizo (a traditional presidential-people interaction). It was during this time that the researcher came to see the area and its people as well the food security programme of MPDC. Although there were a number of factors that attracted the researcher in her decision to conduct a study in this area, the following features were most remarkable.

Firstly, uMsinga area also known as Tugela Ferry is the typical example of a poverty-stricken area in KwaZulu -Natal, South Africa. KwaZulu-Natal is the third among the poorest provinces in the country (Human Development Index Report, 2002). The food security programme currently being implemented in the area is funded by the National Development Agency (NDA). NDA is the South African government agency established to assist non governmental organisations (NGOs) to eradicating poverty in the country. This element fits perfectly well within the conceptual framework of this study as discussed in Chapter 2 of this document.

Secondly, people of uMsinga have unique features both physically and culturally. This makes the area stand out from other rural areas. These unique features include the physical appearance of the people where both men and women have large holes stretched into their earlobes. Their dress code is unique, especially the women's clothes where the skirts (isidwaba) made from the cow hide and their unique handwork and so on. These features are unique and they cannot be

found anywhere else in South Africa and probably nowhere else in the world. Some of the people who come from the area make unique hand work that is sold internationally. This is the area where traditional Zulu culture is still practiced. uMsinga was used as one of the routes to a Battlefield during the Anglo-Boer war took place in the late 1890s.

Lastly, uMsinga has been a no-go area for many people because of years of fierce faction fights between rivals from different villages. Like any rural area in South Africa, uMsinga was neglected under the apartheid government in terms of development, but faction fights made uMsinga known throughout the country. Hence it seems it has become one of the democratic government's priority areas for development. It was interesting how programmes of food security have contributed to peace in the area.

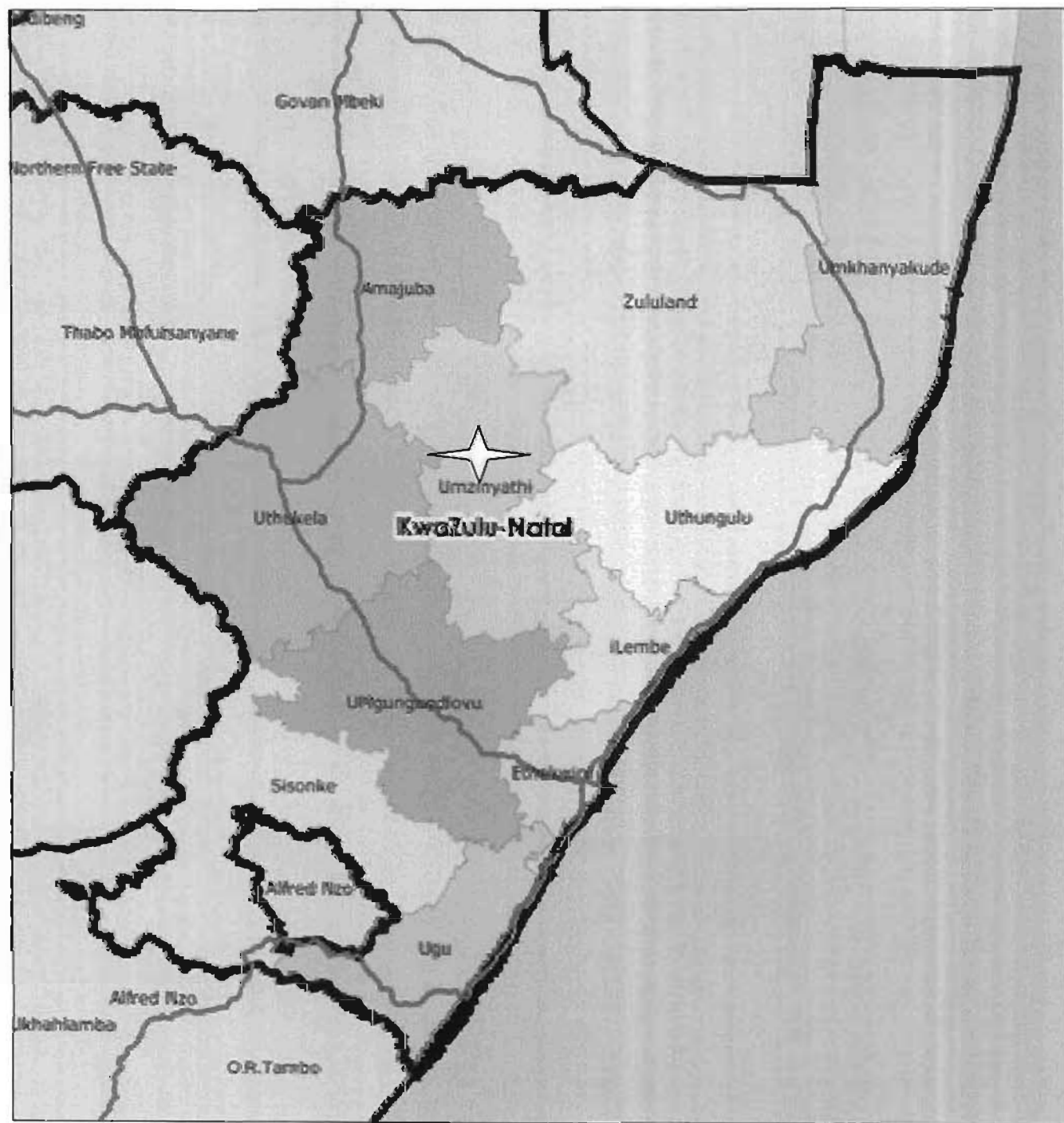
#### **4.1.1. Geographical location**

uMsinga is one of the rural areas within the uMsinga local municipality (K2244) under the control of uMzinyathi District municipality in the North of KwaZulu Natal. uMzinyathi District municipality is surrounded by a total of six district municipalities. That is Amajuba, Uthukela, Ilembe, uThungulu, Zululand and uMgungundlovu. The size of the uMsinga local municipality is 2504.402820 square kilometres. Figure 4.1. shows the geographical location of the study area within the province.

Due to the new demarcation system, the area has been divided into wards. Though the programme of food security is found throughout the municipality, the focus of this study took place across ward eleven of the uMsinga local municipality (as shown in figure 4.3). The area is still run by traditional leaders (amakhosi); hence the villages (izigodi) are divided among six traditional leaders. These villages are Bomvu, Mchunu, Baso, Mthembu, and Qamu. The study took place in two villages, Baso and Mthembu.

uMsinga is predominantly a mountainous rocky area covered with very thorny shrub trees. According to the information from the Department of health website (Department of Health, 2000) the weather tends to be extremely hot in summer and very cold in winter, with mild rainfall in summer and no rain in winter. There is not much flat land for cultivation. There is a river, uThukela that runs through the area, past the Drakensburg Mountains and on.

**Figure 4.1: Municipal Demarcation of KwaZulu Natal**



Source: Demarcation board online: [www.demarcation.co.za/infoindex.asp](http://www.demarcation.co.za/infoindex.asp)

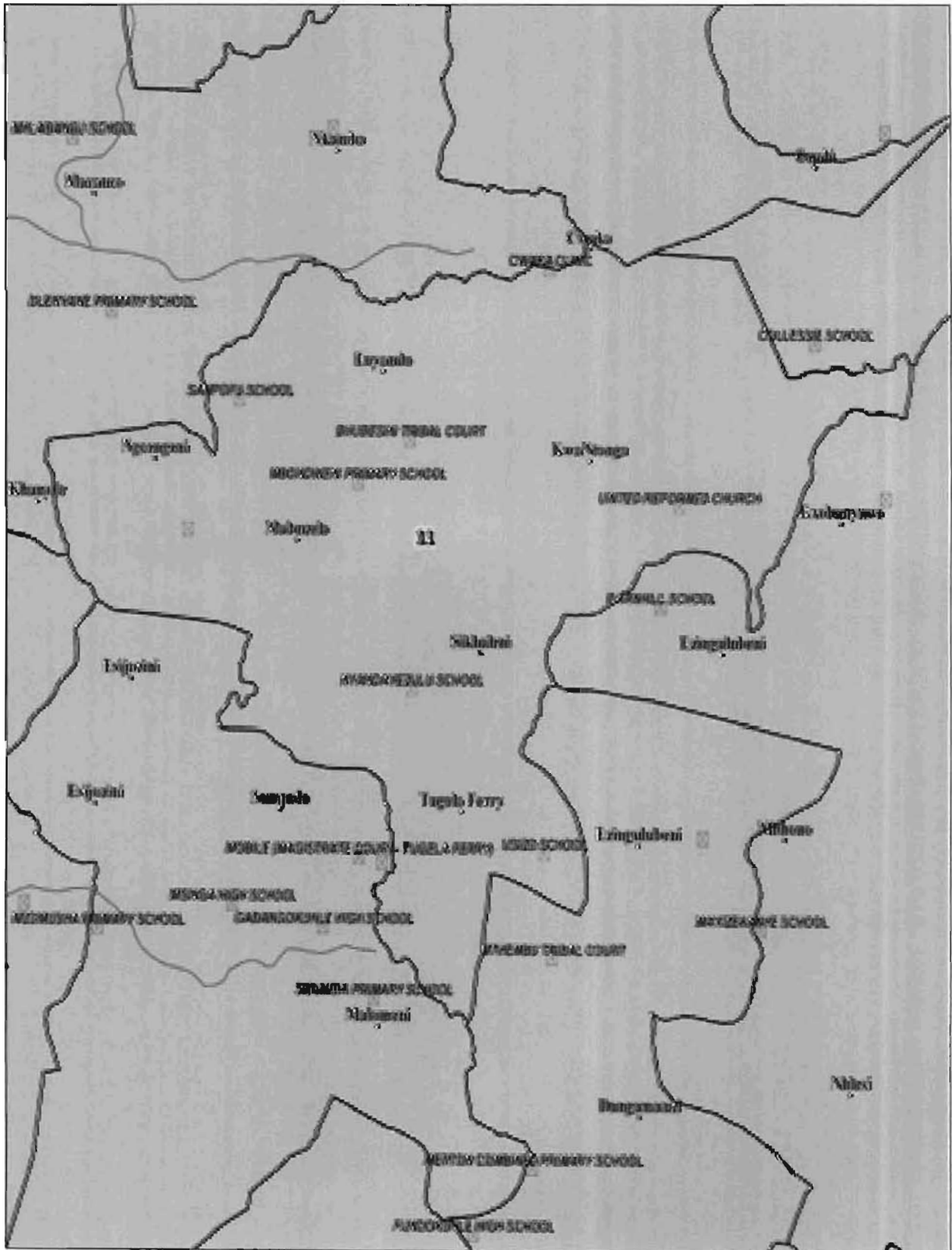
UMsinga municipality 

**Figure 4.2: uMsinga Local municipality**



Source: Demarcation board online: [www.demarcation.co.za /infoindex.asp](http://www.demarcation.co.za/infoindex.asp)

Figure 4.3. Ward 11 of uMsinga Local Municipality



Source: Demarcation board online: [www.demarcation.co.za/infoindex.asp](http://www.demarcation.co.za/infoindex.asp)

#### **4.1.2. Historical background of the area**

UMsinga was recently been in many media reports after 17 pensioners and a number of hawkers were brutally killed in a road accident. The accident occurred when a horse and a trailer passing through lost its track and collided on people who were queuing along the road for their monthly social grants (SAPA, 2003). This was yet another one of the unfortunate incidents to happen in uMsinga after the community has seen many tragic incidents of violence from faction fights to political violence (Khoza, 2002:63). UMsinga has been regarded as the “gun trafficking” area for many years. According to Khoza, gun trafficking in uMsinga started long ago in the 1800s when people started working in the mines and were paid with mostly material things including guns.

#### **4.1.3. Demographical information**

Though uMsinga is known for its faction fights and many people have written about the situation, it is difficult to access that information. However, a small amount of information about the area can only be accessed through the internet and by asking people who have been to the area for research purposes or by interviewing the local people. However, asking the local people is difficult for the researcher since people are not willing to share information with strangers. Lack of the information such as found in a resource centre or a library makes it difficult for outside people to find information. As a result, most of the demographic information about uMsinga was collected from the websites of the Statistics South Africa Database. This means that some of the information cannot be verified unless a person does a demographic study to verify some of the information presented by the Statistics South Africa.

##### ***4.1.3.1 Population groups***

According to the Statistics South Africa (2001) the population of ward 11 of uMsinga local municipality has increased from 9371 people in 1996 to 12 198 people in 2001. Whilst in the 1996 census there were neither Indian nor were Coloureds in the area and only 7 Whites were counted, the 2001 statistics show that there are now 5 Coloureds and 9 Indians that have moved into the area. The number of the whites has increased to 19. This reflects the development of a new attitude towards races which is protected in Chapter 1 no 27 (1) and (3) of the Constitution that provides every South African with the freedom of movement and residence (South African Constitution, 1996) and also reflects the availability of business opportunities in the area.

Children between the ages of 4 and 14 years form the majority of the population followed by the youth between the ages of 15 and 34. The minority population group is the elderly which is only 6% of the whole population of the area. This could be an indication that there is a great need for youth development programs in the area.

#### ***4.1.3.2 Highest education***

Statistics South Africa (2001) shows that the majority of the population have very little or no schooling at all. Those who have no schooling form 36 per cent of the whole population excluding the under four year olds. Only 321 elderly people have reached high school. The majority who have had any schooling have only managed primary education. This means that the level of formal education in the area is very low.

#### ***4.1.3.3. Employment***

The employment rate is also very low with only 9 per cent out of 5 967 people that forms the total labour force of the area. The rest are unemployed or self employed. The majority of the people work outside the area, in cities like Johannesburg and in the towns of Ladysmith, Newcastle and Greytown.

#### ***4.1.3.4 Industry***

According to the Statistics South Africa (2001), the majority of the people are more involved in their personal or community/ social development programme. There are 27% in private businesses and 19% in construction. The Statistics South Africa also shows only 6% of the population involved in agriculture and 18 % are in manufacturing of traditional attire such as beadwork, sandals and kitchen utensils such as wooden spoons and calabashes

## **4.2. UMSINGA PEACE AND DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE (MPDC)**

The uMsinga Peace and Development Committee (MPDC) was established in 1980 to restore peace to the area. According to the chairperson of the committee, there was the realisation that peace talks on their own were not helping to solve the root of the problem which was identified as poverty. The MPDC was then transformed to address issues of development that were seen to be pertinent. The organisation was registered by the Department of Social Development in 2003 under the Non-Profit Organisations Act 71 of 1997.

Currently the organisation consists of an umbrella committee made up of Board members who are made up of 6 chiefs and 7 members of the community. This committee or board is crucial in terms of making decisions and managing the organisation. Under the Board, there are members of the co-operatives. Currently, according to the committee, there are 200 co-operatives. Each co-operative consists of not less than five members. These co-operatives come from the community under the six traditional authorities. The following **figure 4.4.** shows the organogram of the organisation.

**Figure 4.4: Hierarchical structure of the MPDC**



### 4.3 CONCLUSION

UMsinga seems to be a very challenging area for a programme of food security in terms of its socio-economic factors and climate and landscape. It is even more challenging in an area where there is social disintegration due to a history of political violence and faction fights. It is however an interesting development for an organisation that was established to deal with violence issues to now move to address the issues of food security. These aspects present a challenge for an agency that plans to intervene.

## CHAPTER FIVE

### THE FINDINGS AND ANALYSIS

#### 5.0. INTRODUCTION

The aim of this chapter is to present and analyze the findings of the study as obtained using various methods of data collection. The findings include information collected from various stakeholders and role players in the food security programme of the uMsinga Peace and Development Committee (MPDC). Although there are a number of role players involved in the programme of food security in uMsinga, the researcher decided to focus mainly on those people who were and are still involved in the programme funded by the National Development Agency (NDA) and run by the Msinga Peace and Development Committee (MPDC) and those that are directly affected by the programme.

This chapter commences with a brief overview of the methodology used for data collection. It also provides a brief structure of the programme. It continues with the presentation of the findings of the document reviews that examined characteristics, the aims and objectives of the programme. It further presents the views and the attitudes of the respondents which were collected through different types of interviews and observations with regards to the MPDC programme and the concept of food security in general. Furthermore, the views of the direct and indirect beneficiaries of the programme will also be presented. This chapter concludes with a discussion on the findings.

#### 5.1. METHODOLOGY OF DATA COLLECTION

There are four methods of data collection used in the research (*refer to 1.4. in chapter 1 for clarity on methodology*). These methods include document reviews, interviews (open and closed), surveys and group discussions.

Documentation reviews include various documents such as the constitution of MPDC, the profile and the progress report of the organization. The constitution was reviewed to obtain an understanding of the accountability of structures and the legitimacy of the organization in terms of the Non-Profit Organization Act 71 of 1997 of South Africa. The organization's profile was enlightening in terms of the historical background of the organization, its aims and objectives. The profile also revealed who the partners of the organization are and what role they play.

The progress report contained information on the achievements and challenges facing the programme as well as the way forward. The progress report also outlined about the financial situation of the organization.

Different forms of interviews were used. These included one-on-one interviews with the following role players:

- The Project Manager of NDA,
- A nurse from the local clinic (uMsinga Top),
- Two staff members of the Farmers Support Group (a partner and the service provider to the MPDC on the programme)
- The Programme Director of the food security programme at the University of KwaZulu Natal, Dr Sheryl Hendricks,
- Dr Pearl Sithole from the Anthropology Programme at the University of KwaZulu Natal.
- Details on the type of data collected from each source are explained in Table 5.1. below as well as in the contents of this chapter.

Questionnaires which included both closed and open ended questions were used in the community survey where twenty five people were interviewed (*See Appendix 1: Community Questionnaire*). The survey targeted fifteen people who are participating directly in the programme and ten who are not participating (*see 1.4.2.3 of chapter 1 for clarity on selection criteria*). Those who were participating in the programme were members of the co-operative situated in a place called uThukela which is located along the Tugela Ferry, the economic node of uMsinga and those located in uMsinga Top. Another interview was held with Msinga Peace Development Committee where four people participated including the chairperson of the organization. The group discussion involved 9 members of the co-operative in a place called uMsinga Top. UMsinga Top is an area within the uMsinga Municipality but very far away from the Tugela River. Observations were done throughout the data collection process. The following table provides a summary of the methodology and data sources as explained above.

Table 5. 1: A summary of the data collection method

METHODOLOGY	SOURCE OF DATA	NUMBER OF PEOPLE /DOCUMENT	TYPE OF DATA	DATE OF DATA COLLECTION
<i>1. DOCUMENT REVIEWS</i>	-MPDC constitution -Organization Profile	2	Organizational issues, nature and progress of the programme.	31 August – 01 September 2004
<i>2. INTERVIEWS</i> <i>2.1. Group discussion</i>	-uMsinga Top co-operatives	9	Challenges facing Co-operatives	01 September- 02 September 2004
<i>2.2. Group interviews</i>	-OThukela Cooperatives -MPDC members	12 4	-Challenges facing Co-operatives -Organization historical background aims and objectives,	3 September 2004 02 August 2004
<i>2.3. Survey</i>	-Participants and non - Participants	25	State of food security and feelings about the programme	01-03 September
<i>2.4. ONE ON ONE INTERVIEWS</i> <i>2.4.1.</i>	Mr M. Mnyandu (NDA) Project Manager	1	Information about the formation and views on the objectives of the programme	27 July 2004
<i>2.4.2</i>	A nurse from local Clinic	1	Views on the state of food security in the area	02 September 2004
<i>2.4.3</i>	Farmers support group staff members	2	Clarification on partnership	03 November 2004
<i>2.4.4.</i>	Dr S. Hendriks coordinator of food security programme studies at University of Kwazulu Natal (PMB)	1	Academic perspective on food security in general	03 November 2004
<i>2.4.5</i>	Dr P. Sithole – Lecture at the University of KwaZulu Natal	1	Views on the study area -Umsinga	28 October 2004

## **5.2. THE FOOD SECURITY PROGRAMME IN UMSINGA**

The information from the profile of the organization revealed that the food security programme in uMsinga was funded by the National Development Agency (NDA) in 2003. The programme is managed by the Msinga Peace and Development Committee (MPDC) which is the organization that had been established to deal with the problem of faction fights in the area. The constitution of the MPDC revealed that the organization consists of 12 members 6 of whom are the traditional leaders and the rest are the ordinary members of the community. The organization has 200 co-operative members affiliated to it. However, only 60 co-operatives are beneficiaries of the programme funded by NDA. Each co-operative consists of not less than 5 members.

### **5.2.1. The role of Msinga Peace and Development Committee (MPDC)**

The interview with the members of the organization and the profile document review provided information on the organization, in terms of its formation, management structure and its objective. Looking at organizational issues was imperative since the sustainability of the programme requires certain elements from the hosting organization such as skills, equity and other resources. The information from the constitution and the profile of the organization revealed that the organization had been established with the aim of restoring peace and ensuring development in the area. Its main objectives are as follows:

- Identify local resources for sustainable development
- Create jobs
- Build partnerships with districts departments
- Conduct a research/survey, which will indicate the shortcomings and potential opportunities.

According to the information gathered from the profile and the interviews with the members of MPDC, another role of the organization is to mobilize and organize resources such as finances, equipment, seeds, land and fencing for the co-operatives. The MPDC also negotiates with

interested investors and partners on behalf of the co-operatives (MPDC committee interview, 2004)

### 5.2.2 The divisions of the co-operatives

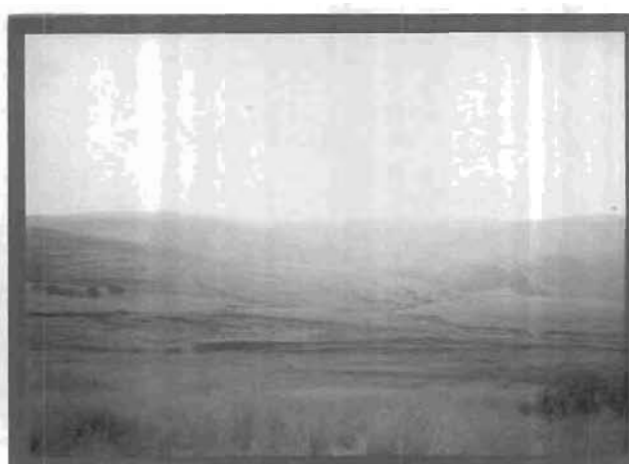
The co-operatives are divided into two categorical areas depending on their geographical location and the differences in terms of access to vital resources. There are those co-operatives that are situated along the banks of the Tugela River and the others are scattered far away from the river in the dry areas of the ward.

This study will focus on two cooperatives selected from each category. The one selected among those situated along the Tugela River is called uThukela co-operative and the one away from the river is called uMsinga Top co-operative. There are specific reasons for selecting these two. One of the reasons is that, uThukela co-op members are not only involved in the vegetable garden project, they participate in other activities of development in the area such as adult education, and youth programmes. They seem to be more progressive in their programme than other co-operatives. Therefore, this group presented a good comparative study in the research. The one in uMsinga Top was in fact a random selection within a category but more importantly, this co-op seems to be far behind others in terms of the production and marketing. This information was revealed in the early interviews with committee members. The researcher wanted to establish the cause of the unequal levels of performance between the two co-operatives. The following figures show the outlook of the two areas.

**Figure 5.1. The view of uThukela Area**



**Figure 5.2. The view of uMsinga Top**



### **5.2.3. The aims and objectives of the programme**

The information gathered from the interviews with the Project Manager of NDA as well as the chairperson of MPDC revealed that the programme was an initiative by the local people with an aim to address the problem of poverty. However, the programme had two main but related objectives:

- To increase the level of food security in the area
- To develop the economy of the area.

The interview with the MPDC committee revealed that the organization realized that they could not ensure peace and stability without addressing the problem of economic development which seemed to be one of the contributing factors in the fights. Food security was identified as one of the challenges facing the community which could also be a vehicle for increasing the economy of the area. Hence the organization looked for donors that could possibly fund the programme. It was through this process that the NDA was identified and targeted for funding the programme. The next section will try to establish whether the programme has been able to achieve its objectives or not.

### **5.2.4. Characteristics of the food security programme**

The findings about the characteristics and the nature of the organization come mainly from the observations and the interviews carried out in the two co-operatives of uMsinga Top and uThukela. The food security programme is a typical community garden that produce mainly vegetables and fruit. According to members of the cooperatives, community gardens are an extension of vegetable gardens that have been planted by individuals in their backyards mainly for their own consumption purposes. The plan of developing community gardens was a strategy to share the resources and information and also to improve the gardens from being only a source of food to be a source of income.

As discussed previously, there are two categories of co-operatives, those that occupy a piece of land along the banks of Tugela River and those that are scattered far away from the river. Each co-operative has gardens that occupy a piece of land. That piece of land is divided into small plots

that are allocated to each member of the cooperative. From the observations, it appears that the size of the plot is not a main concern or a standard requirement because the plots in uMsinga Top were wider but short in length whilst uThukela plots were longer in length. It seems that it depends on the person's capabilities to plough as much as he or she likes. One member of the cooperative mentioned that if she had had more fencing, she would have been able to cultivate more plots as there was still more land available. Each member grows any crop of his or her choice. In most cases, each plot could have up to four different types of crops such as spinach, carrot, cabbage or onion. The figure 5.3. below shows different crops in a single plot of one member.

**Figure 5.3. A plot for a single member of the co-operative**



Interviews with the members of the uThukela co-operatives and the observation revealed that water is drawn from the Tugela River and channelled through irrigation furrows lined with cement using a battery-powered pump system. For the people who have plots which are very far from the river such as those of uMsinga Top, members mentioned that in order to water their gardens, they have to carry water on their heads from the small water fountains found next to their households. If it has been a rainy season, they rely on small fountains found within their gardens. The scarcity of water for the members of the uMsinga Top co-operatives has resulted in their gardens being unproductive. Upon observation, their garden looked dry and there were few crops growing sparsely in some plots. It was obvious that this co-op is struggling even to provide for household consumption (see figure 5.4.). The uThukela co-operative is much more

advanced than the uMsinga Top co-op because they are close to the river and they have the use of an engine to draw water. Hence their garden looked green and flourishing (See figure 5.4.). However, they also expressed distress at the fact that many of the batteries for their pump have been stolen. This has resulted in members having to bring their own batteries when they needed to bring the pump. This system has crippled some members who are newcomers and are still unable to buy new batteries. Carrying a battery is also not an easy task since the battery is heavy, it requires transportation. Some members have also withdrawn from the programme due to these difficulties. The figures below show the contrast between the well-watered plots of the uThukela Project and the dry plots of the uMsinga Top Project.

**Figure 5.4. UMsinga Top Project**



**Figure 5.5. UThukela Top Project**



These two figures show the contrasting scenarios between the co-operatives of uMsinga Top and uThukela. This shows that there are disparities in terms of access to resources by different co-operatives. The people who have more resources are able to produce for consumption and others are struggling even to feed themselves. These inequalities could be the source of further conflict keeping in mind that the main aim of the organization was to restore peace between faction fights. The situation also shows that maybe the decision to introduce the same agricultural project in all areas was not an appropriate decision. In the dry areas where there is no access to water an alternative programme that would not need much water should have been introduced.

In an interview with 12 members of the uThukela co-operative, the use of a battery powered engine has its own problems. The battery was easily stolen which has meant that they have to carry it to the garden every time they need to water the garden. The battery is very heavy as a result it requires them to hire transport to carry it. They still hope that the NDA or any other funding agency would fund an electric powered engine for them. This is an indication that the project has not enabled the co-operative to be independent or rely on the available sources.

Moreover, although the irrigation system is helpful, there is a negative effect of irrigation that was observed in the field. There is soil erosion that is beginning to emerge in between the plots where water flows when pumped from the river to the garden. There is a possibility of the soil losing its minerals and becoming unsuitable for farming in future. The following figure shows the trail of water and the damage it has already done to the soil.

**Figure 5.6: Soil erosion looming in the uThukela Project area**



When members of the co-operatives were asked about the type of fertilizers they use, they said currently they use any fertilizer they can get their hands on. Modern fertilizers are the most frequently used fertilizers in the co-ops. They said that modern fertilizers are good for the quick growth of crops. This, according to the co-ops in uThukela, has been helpful to increase the size of harvest. The co-ops in uMsinga Top are currently using only cow dung manure which is the commonly used fertilizer in the area. However from the interviews it became clear that members of the co-operative would prefer to have modern fertilizers. Due to the fact that modern fertilizers are too expensive, cow dung is used as a substitute until the co-op has money

to buy fertilizers. It was also observed that though cow dung is not bought, it not easily accessible to other members of the co-operatives since not everybody owns cows. There is, however, one spot which seems to be resistant to almost all the fertilizers that have been used within one of the plots of uThukela. This situation is observable in the last two plots and in the area which has not yet been cultivated. One member said that “nothing grows here anymore; I think we need to take the soil sample to the experts who can tell us the problem”. The members said one of the possible reasons could be that they have taken over the land from a farmer who had been cultivating in the same place for many years. They said that they think the soil might have been exhausted from being overused by the previous farmer. This problem of infertile or exhausted soil could become common in more plots in future if the co-ops rely on the intense use of fertilizers as they seem to believe. Nevertheless, the cause of the problem of the plot that does not respond to any fertilizers remains a mystery until the soil is tested.

Each member works at his or her own time and pace. There is not yet an organized business or marketing strategy for the cooperative to sell their produce, particularly for some of uThukela co-operative members who have a surplus. When the members were asked about how much money the cooperatives spend on the seeds and other inputs in the project, the committee said that they do not have any figures. The lack of this information, according to the organization, is caused by the fact that they are still learning business skills. They believe that once they have acquired the skills, they will be able to gauge the progress in that regard. However, lack of business knowledge continues to cripple the objectives of the programme which is to increase the economy of the area. Already the co-operatives complained that their cabbages are no longer selling as they used to. This is due to the high level of competition from external producers who also come to sell to local customers. This according to the members in Thukela has crippled their income.

Another element which perpetuates the distress for co-operatives is the lack of a transportation system. Each member sells his or her produce directly to the buyers who drive with their vans into the plots. If that does not happen, they have to organize transport as a group to take them to the market area specifically in the nearest towns such as Tugela Ferry, Greytown, and Pomeroy. Some of them carry their stock on their heads to the public transport particularly during pension payout days. Due to the expenses in transportation, they find that only the few who can afford

transportation are able to sell their produce. This results into some crops getting spoiled while waiting for buyers or transportation. Moreover, from observation, one can point at least at two plots that looked abandoned. It seems that some members have become discouraged in looking after their garden. The figure below shows some of the vegetables looking abandoned and crops that need watering.

**Figure 5.7. : A vegetable garden in need of watering and caring**



### **5.2.5. Achievements and challenges of the programme**

Different feelings and perspectives were expressed by different respondents to the question of whether the programme has achieved its objectives. The majority of the respondents said that it is still too early to determine the success or failure of the programme. According to the progress report of the MPDC which focuses mainly on the activities of the organization and its achievement and challenges, not all the objectives of the programme have been achieved. There are certain activities of the programme that have not been carried out on which the success of the programme depends upon. One of the issues is that not all the funds have been received by the MPDC. Hence the activities are still outstanding. However there are positive outcomes of the programme that have been identified in various cases.

#### ***5.2.5.1. Curbing faction fights***

According to the Project Manager of the NDA, the programme has not yet achieved its main objective which is ensuring food security in the area. However, he believes that it has

contributed to the peace and stability that currently exists in the area. Since the programme was initiated, there has not been any violence reported in the area as had been the case previously (NDA Project Manager, 2004). It was not easy to verify this aspect raised by the Project Manager on how the programme led to the decrease in the faction fight. He explained that people are now concentrating on the project as their priority which is a positive sign for peace and stability in the area.

Another view was expressed by another respondent on the issue of faction fights in uMsinga by the name Dr Sithole from the University of KwaZulu Natal has been working as researcher and has resided in the area. In her view, it is true that there has been a decrease in incidences of violence in the area as from the late 1990s (Dr Sithole, 20/10/04). She, however, quickly added that it is not the entire uMsinga Community that becomes involved when there is an outbreak of violence in the area. It only takes place in certain villages (*izigodi*) and in most cases such incidents are not reported. Hence it is not easy to confirm that fights are not taking place.

She also mentioned that one of the problems with the issue of faction fights in uMsinga is that there are a lot of speculations about the real causes of violence in that area and some of these speculations are unfounded. She mentions that other writers have blamed the fights on the land issue saying that the traditional leaders are fighting over the land. She, however, personally disagrees with these views saying that there never was a clash over the land issue between traditional leaders. Instead there were clashes between the traditional leaders and the white farmers of previous years. She blames these fights on power struggles between rivals over social issue such as businesses, family feuds and so on.

One of the youngest members of the MPDC also expressed a similar view that the causes of faction fights are social issues and are not related to land issues. He said that they always have access to land and are happy with the way things are done in relation to land access. However, he agrees that faction fights are not as common as before the elections and he supported the views of the NDA managers that many people are now busy with the projects, so there has been a decrease in incidents of faction fights. Nevertheless, the fact that there has been a decrease in the faction fights since the late 1990s makes it difficult to see the correlation between the programme and the decrease in the faction fights. The 1990s is the period when the new

government took over in South Africa. Therefore this could also have contributed in the new hopes that people have towards the government and the improvement in their lives.

One may, however add that because of the decrease in the faction fights there has been an increase in the number of investors flocking into the area. One of those investments is the packhouse which, according to the members was funded by the Department of Trade and Industry to an amount of approximately R1.6 million. The packhouse is the building which has the automation machines which are used to process, sort and pack the vegetables. Currently the packhouse is not operating as the committee says that they are still undergoing training of how to make use of the packhouse effectively.

#### *5.2.5.2 Partnership with other role players in the programme*

A partnership is very strong when both partners have equal powers. Where there is an imbalance of powers either in terms of resources or influences, the partnership suffers (Sanyal, 1997). Based on the interview with different role players, it appears that though the MPDC is a leading organization in the programme, it tends to be subordinated in the partnership due to its overdependence on its partners. Because of this, it has lost control or autonomy in its decision making ability. Autonomy is important “to minimize the possibilities for exploitation of the people by a dominant institution” (Sanyal, 1997:26). For example, an interview with one of the partners revealed that the MPDC has been reluctant to engage in the agreement with its partners because their dissatisfaction with some of the terms of the agreement. They later accepted the offer after pressure from NDA which is their funding agency.

The concern over the partnership was also expressed by a Farmers Support Group (FSG) staff member who is working closely with the MPDC on the programme. The partnerships between itself (FSG) and other partners who are involved in the programme was “imposed by NDA to achieve its objectives” of clustering (FSG Staff member interview, 2004). Clustering is a process of grouping projects based on their similarities in nature and /or geographical location. Between the cluster organisations or projects, one of them is selected to administer the funds of the programme. Due to lack of capacity in terms of financial management and business skills within the MPDC, the NDA decided to find organizations that can provide support to the MPDC and the programme. The FSG and other organizations including Lima, Institute of

Natural Resource put forward the applications or proposals to the NDA to provide support to MPDC. The NDA then approved all applications on condition that they work together in providing support to the MPDC. One of the reasons for being selected was the fact that they were already working in the area and could offer a variety of expertise to the programme. For instance, FSG provides technical support whilst Institute of Natural Resources provides conservation expertise and Lima assist the people to negotiate about land. According to the FSG, they were not happy about the clustering but accepted it since they understood the NDA's reasons in trying to ensure that the MPDC gets all forms of support from various organizations. However, there is one problem in the process of partnership in that the problems was that partners were not informed of the new process in advance. The MPDC which is the organization which was supposed to be getting support was not well informed of the terms of reference. As a result, the partnership has suffered and the capacity building programme has been delayed for almost four months because the MPDC refused to sign a contract of partnership agreement as they did not feel there were true partners.

The role of FSG in a programme is to "provide training, advice and technical support to resource poor communities" (FSG information pamphlet). According to the FSG member, they provide financial and business management skills whilst other organizations are providing support in the soil conservation, organic farming, and crop production skills. When asked about their view in terms of the role of the MPDC as a partner, they regard the MPDC as an equal partner whose role is to mobilize communities and to act as the link between the community and themselves (partners). They believe that the MPDC stands a better chance to organize the community more than they could. Therefore the FSG values the partnership as necessary.

Partnership also requires both parties to be known and trusted by the people to whom they are accountable. Certain members of the community commented that though MPDC is a local organization, there are people within the community who still do not know its name or what it stands for. What emerged from the findings during community survey was that more than half of people who were interviewed did not know the name of the organization, but only the chairperson. They refer to it as "*inhlangano yoDlamini*" (Dlamini's organization). For example when people were asked when they have first heard about the programme run by the MPDC, 68 % of the 25 respondents said they knew about many food security programme in the area,

however they have never heard about the MPDC. If people do not know about the name of the organization, it shows that the organization lacks the public exposure that is needed for the organization which is a community mobilizer. It also indicates the lack of understanding by the community of the role of the organization. It could also jeopardize the potential of the MPDC partners working in the community and using MPDC as a link.

It seems that this situation is exacerbated by the confusion about what the organization stands for. According to the members of the MPDC, the organization previously operated within the offices of the African National Congress branch that is in the area and most of its members were quite open about their affiliation to the ANC. The Chairperson of the Committee is in fact an ANC councillor within the municipality. This causes confusion for people when the members of the organization play a double role in the community. Hence this seems to be hindering the organization in developing partnerships easily with the local partners such the local municipality. This situation could have a negative impact on the development of partnerships as many development organizations might not want to be associated with the organization that has possible political agendas. Already there seems to be obstacles to the level of collaboration between the municipality and the MPDC. This became clear during the group discussion where members of the co-operative expressed their concerns over lack of collaboration of these two service providers, the MPDC and the Local Municipality. The problem of the political association of the organization was also highlighted by the FSG staff member who expressed discomfort over the organization's reputation which could easily affect their reputation too.

It appears that the element of sensitivity in this partnership has not been attended to by the NDA as the agency whose one objective is to forge partnerships between service providers to the poor communities. The NDA seems to have undermined the rights of the organization to choose whom they want to work with. There was also a lack of transparency on the side of the NDA about its processes and its objectives. Hence the programme seems to be struggling to achieve its goals.

Collaboration is a major part of partnership. People collaborate and share resources and ideas in order to achieve a particular goal. Collaboration among co-operatives seems to be lacking and this is impacting on their business. In an interview with one member of the co-operatives as

well as the members of the partner organization, it appeared that members of the co-operative tend to be inconsistent in their pricing of the crops. This, according to the members, is caused by the fact that there is no collaboration among the co-ops or the producers in determining the price. This tends to expose them to a lot of manipulation by the customers who tend to insist on determining the price they are willing to pay. For instance, a buyer can request a producer to sell at a lower price. If that producer refuses, a buyer can easily go to another producer who will sell the same item at a lower price which sometimes is far less than the standard price. This causes producers to lose profit and find that they are unable to produce again.

#### *5.2.5.3. Job creation*

One of the main objectives of the organization is to create jobs. According to the progress report and the responses from the committee members, this objective is still a major challenge. Most people are still leaving the area to look for work in the nearest towns and those that leave to go as far as Johannesburg have not come back yet. However, one respondent who is a member of the co-operative in uThukela said that the programme has helped to extend her business to include breeding goats. This side of her business is booming due to the increase of people who are buried every weekend as a result of the high HIV/AIDS death rate, as it is the culture to slaughter a goat for the family member who has passed away.

Jobs have also been indirectly created because those who do not have their own gardens are able to work for the others. Then there are those who provide transportation when the co-operatives want to sell their products in town. Due to the demands of a programme, the organization has employed an administrator who communicates with the co-operatives on a daily basis. However, the committee agrees that it is not easy to tell exactly how many jobs have been created since there is no database or monitoring system in place. Not having a proper method to monitor the progress of the co-ops in relation to job creation, could be preventing the MPDC from identifying the problems of the co-operatives. The organization needs to know if it is making progress in achieving its objectives or not, so that it can strategize in terms of the next possible action to take to achieve its goal.

#### *5.2.5.4. Skills development*

The first part of the funding which constitutes 40% of the grant has been spent on building the capacity of the members of the organization. According to the progress report, the training assisted the committee “to function effectively and manage the projects professionally” (MPDC Progress Report, 2004:3). The report states that the reason behind equipping the committee with skills and providing the organization with necessary equipments that this is expected to increase the effective management of the programme. Capacity building includes human resource development, institutional and technical support. The committee has been trained in the following areas;

- Financial and marketing strategies
- Proposal writing
- Administration skills in terms of the efficient use of telephone, fax and computer resources.

Members agree that the training has equipped them to manage their finances more efficiently than before and they have developed confidence in writing proposals. Their worry at the moment is to be able to transfer the knowledge and the skills to the members of the co-operative who are currently struggling to manage their finances. Lack of financial management skills by the co-operatives has a negative effect on the sustainability of the programme because they are the ones who deal directly with the consequences of mismanagement of finances. For instance, if the co-operatives do not know how much they spend on their plots and how much gross and nett profit they make, they will not be able to earn enough or reinvest their money as the programme intended. Nevertheless, the report states that the training of the co-operatives is to be catered for in the second part of the budget to be released from the NDA funds. This shows that there is still a top-down approach in the process of development. This is a major shortcoming in the programme whose aim was to equip its major stakeholders with relevant skills. The co-operatives are the vulnerable group within the stakeholders and they are supposed to be a priority in development before they lose the hope and confidence necessary for self-reliance.

The report also mentions two major problems that the co-operatives are experiencing and these are

- Availability of water
- Fencing of all garden projects

As it has been discussed previously, the impact of the lack of water on the programme is of great concern. It has decreased production levels especially in dry areas such as uMsinga Top. It is also obvious that even those that are close to water, need proper equipment to draw water. The MPDC is still co-ordinating the installation of irrigation to all the gardens and plans to provide training to the members of co-operatives. The fencing of gardens is important. The group discussion did reveal that co-operatives have complaints about livestock grazing in the gardens and destroying the crops. The following figure shows the only source of water, the small stream within the garden of uMsinga Top co-ops.

**Figure 5.8. : A source of water for uMsinga Top vegetable project**



#### **5.2.5.5. Sources of food**

Different people were asked whether one could say that every household has access to healthy food. The responses on this question varied depending on the individual situation. For example, the co-operatives in the area of uThukela responded positively whereas those in uMsinga

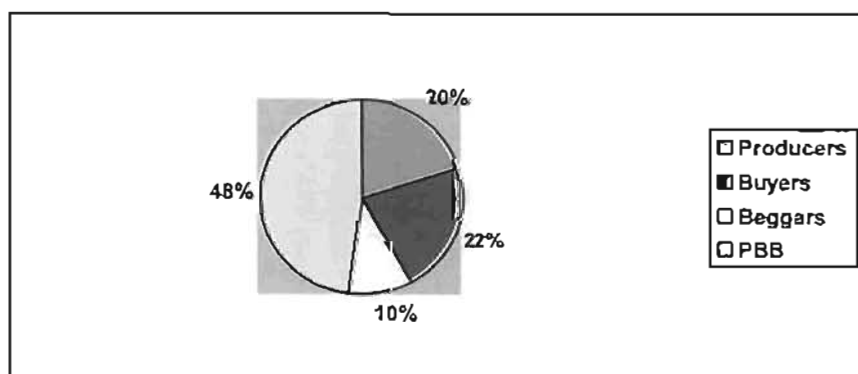
responded negatively. These two groups have different experiences in terms of accessing healthy food from the programme.

What was noticeable in the programme was the fact that the programme produces only vegetables. Vegetables provide only one group of nutrients that are required for healthy living. The survey also found that many people buy other food products such as beans, milk and porridge. The fact that the programme only caters for vegetables shows that the problem of access to healthy food by the co-operatives of community members is still a problem because they still need to access other products to supplement their diet.

In the community survey, people were asked where they obtain their food. This question was asked to establish whether the programme has assisted the community in accessing food. How is the community coping after the intervention? Several categories of responses came out of this question, namely:

- Those that produce their own food from the garden.
- those who buy from others or from the nearest shops
- The beggars (*ubananayo*)
- Those who sometimes produce, buy or beg (PBB)

Figure 5.9. : Categories of sources of food



The chart shows that out of 25 people who were interviewed, the number of people who still rely on buying from the shops and from the co-ops is high at 22 % compared to the number of producers who are at 20%. The buyers include the same members of the co-operatives, and those that are not participating in the programme. The number of beggars is quite low at 10%. However this 10% percent excludes those who are participating but who also beg. The majority

of those beggars said that they were not participating in any of the programme of food security for various reasons including either being far away from other members of the community or suffering from health problems. Some of the beggars said that they have backyard gardens where they are already able to grow vegetables during rainy seasons.

However it is noticeable that the majority which is 48 % of the respondents said that although they produce their own food, they sometimes have to buy the types of food that they do not produce particularly maize, cooking oil, milk, flour and sugar. They also do exchange their produce with others who produce different crops. They also commented that some vegetables are seasonal and very few crops are able to grow in winter. This forces them to ask or beg from others or to buy from the shops in the town.

Seasonal changes determine the state of food security in many communities. This has also been highlighted by Dr Hendriks, who is a food security programme coordinator at the University of KwaZulu Natal. She explained that research has shown that people rely on different resources of food at different times of the year due to the seasonal climate challenges which determine what they can or cannot grow. She mentioned that most people in dry areas such as uMsinga grow their own food particularly vegetables during the summer months (October, November and December) as this is a rainy season. She mentions that during this time most people have started gardens therefore vegetables and maize would be easily available. Wild vegetables such as *imifino* are also available at this time of the year. She mentions that January, February March are the not very good months for households since most people begin to focus on providing for the educational needs of their children. If anything grows it is likely to be sold for cash rather than used for consumption. As a result many people suffer from hunger during these months. It becomes much better during April and May and June since this is a harvesting period for many households. However this period does not last since by July, August and September most households do not have anything left and then they begin to suffer from lack of access to food. Therefore, she stated that food security programmes should consider this variation and should be planned in such a way that they ensure food availability all year round.

Dr Hendriks's analysis seems to correlate with the situation observed in uMsinga. The data collection for this study was done during the months of August and September (the critical months in terms of food availability). An interview with the nurse from one of the local clinics confirmed that lack of food in the area is indeed a problem particularly at this time of the year.

The nurse also produced a list of about 31 patients from different households who have been diagnosed with either Pellagra or Kwashiorkor. These diseases are related to nutritional deficiency in terms of proteins and carbohydrates in patients. According to the nurse they have introduced these patients to a nutritional programme by giving them food supplements once a month. These food supplements are provided by the Department of Health and they include beans, nutritional porridge, powdered milk and soups. According to the nurse, most of these patients are children and sometimes very old people some of whom are pensioners. These are the vulnerable groups of the community who cannot contribute physically to the programme so they seem to be neglected. This shows that the programme fails to fully address the problem of food security to ensure that all the dietary needs of the people are catered for.

### **5.3. SUSTAINABLE FOOD SECURITY**

Within the context of this study, sustainable food security has been defined as the state of equilibrium or well-being that exists in every individual at all levels of the society, which enables those individuals to access and control the resources that lead to availability of healthy food for social, economic and environmental development. In order to determine whether people have reached the state of well-being that should be displayed in their ability to access and control the resources and use those resources for their social, economical and environmental needs. Various questions were asked to verify whether indeed the food security programme in UMsinga has enabled people to access resources and control them and to determine whether those resources have led to the development of the people socially and economically while ensuring the preservation of the environment. The findings revealed the following results:

#### **5.3.1. Access and control of food resources**

The conceptual framework chapter of this study identified five aspects of capital or resources that are required for sustainable food security. These include financial, physical, natural, social and human capital.

According to the chairperson of the current programme, there is indeed the abundance of food in the areas where the organization has managed to place resources. He agrees with the Project Manager of the funding agency that whilst there is abundance of food in the area, not everybody

has access to it as only those who have the resources and the means to plough have benefited immensely from the programme. The findings have two distinctive areas, the other with at least reasonable access to certain resources and the other with scarce resources. The findings from the local clinic in uMsinga Top where there are scarce resources have also revealed the impact of inaccessibility of resources in the issue of food security.

The findings have therefore revealed that accessing and controlling the resources necessary to achieve the objectives of the programme are still a problem. It is then important to have a closer look at those resources and what their effect is in the sustainable livelihood of the people.

#### *5.3.1.1. Natural resources*

Natural resources are one of the few resources that every human being should be able to access and control to improve his or her standard of living. However, due to power domination of others, some groups of people have difficulty in accessing these resources.

- **The land issue**

Land is a natural asset of the community that could contribute to the wealth of the people and food security if it is properly distributed and utilized. Due to economical and political competition, land has been overtaken by individuals to use for their own betterment. As the result the rest of the community becomes vulnerable to development problems. In uMsinga, the food security programme relies heavily on the availability of land. When asked about the accessibility and control of land by the household or community, the MPDC committee views were similar to those expressed by the focus group and other members of the co-ops. There is an agreement that everybody has access to land. When they were asked about their security in terms of ownership and control of the land, the committee said that nobody is the sole owner of the land. It belongs to all members of the community. However, the *Inkosi* (a royal traditional leader) is the one who holds land on behalf of the people. The *Inkosi* has the mandate of the community to authorize the usage of land and its management with the assistance of *izinduna* (headman). However, the Project Manager of the NDA expressed concern over the issue of land where there is no formal agreement between the community using the land for the programme and the *Inkosi*. For instance, the land where the packhouse is built belongs to one

of the traditional leaders. The Project Manager questioned what would happen if a new traditional leader takes over and decides that he does not want the pack house in his land anymore. He argued that the community would have no legal rights over the packhouse (Project Manager, NDA, 2004).

Regardless of the fears expressed by the Project Manager, there seems to be satisfaction among cooperatives about the access to and control of the land in the area. The cooperatives and the members of the committee expressed confidence and comfort in their traditional way of land ownership. In fact members of the co-operatives said that they prefer to talk to the Inkosi rather than to go to the offices of the local municipality where they are usually ignored by the officials. It is preferable for the co-operative members in uMsinga that the Inkosi control and administer the land.

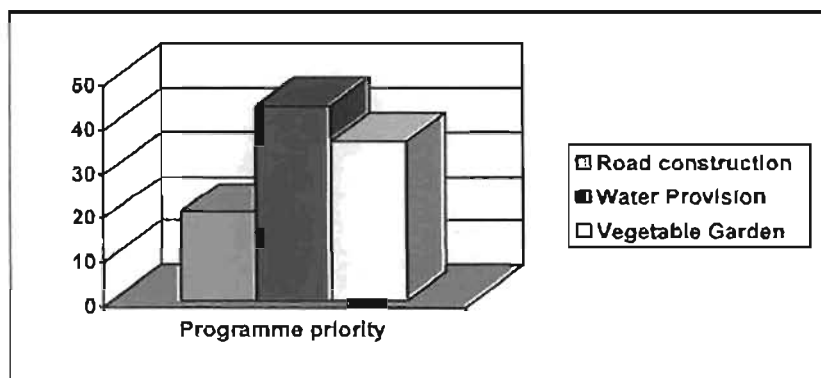
- **Access to water**

It appeared from the group discussion and the observation that water is one of the main problems hindering the process of the programme to increase the food security of the area. Though there is a river that runs through the area, the households that are far away from the river and have not been provided with tap water are unable to access it. Women from these households walk long distances to the fountains that are found in dongas and rivers (see figure 5.10. below). This takes the women a long time, the time that they could be using for the programme. Those co-operatives who happened to be close to the river and have their gardens along the banks of the river also have the challenge of drawing that water from the river to the garden. The co-operatives mentioned that although the battery engine assisted in this regard, they cannot keep it in the field because it has been stolen several times. This has affected the performance of the co-operative in looking after their gardens properly.

The bringing your own battery system has become a coping strategy for the co-ops. However it could also create division among the co-operative members when some members find that they cannot afford their own battery. If one looks around in the garden of the uThukela co-ops, one can identify at least two plots that look like they need watering.

The survey revealed that 43 % of the people who form the majority of the respondents said that if they had a choice, they would have preferred a water programme to provide before the vegetable programme. Without water, vegetables cannot survive. Although grateful for assistance they get from the MPDC and NDA, the problem of food cannot be solved before the problem of water is resolved. One member stated that “*umuntu angaphila izinsuku eziningana elambile. Kodwa umgasheshe ufe uma uswele amanzi*” (a person can survive more days without food, but cannot survive without water.) 36 % of the respondents said that food is indeed a priority (See figure 5.11 below).

**Figure 5.10: Presentation of the first three priority programme by the people**



Among the first three priority programmes mentioned by people, the Figure above shows that the majority of the people would have preferred the programme to enable them to access water. In terms of programme priority for the community, water took the first position with 44%, followed by vegetable programme with 36 % and the last 20 % said that road construction is a priority. The respondents on road construction said that they need to communicate with outside people and be able to send their produce to the market. Most people expressed disappointment at the Department of Water and Forestry for not intervening. Even those who are close to the river experience problem of drawing water from the river. They furrow irrigation system has been introduced to assist the co-operatives in watering the gardens. The fact that the findings show that majority of the people would have preferred water programme prior to the current vegetable garden, shows that the programme has not enabled the people the freedom to choose. They seemed powerless to be able to communicate with those in power about what they perceive as basic needs. This also shows that participatory methods during the programme formulation were not properly followed.

### *5.3.1.2. Financial Capital*

The NDA funding is focused mainly on building capacity among the co-operatives and organizations (FSG Staff, 2004). No money is given directly to the MPDC or the co-operatives to control or manage. The money is put directly into the accounts of the service providers who then provide the training required. This, according to the FSG worker has been a frustrating factor for the MPDC. They (MPDC) thought that they would be given the money to control and decide how it should be spent. Therefore, whilst the organization is receiving training in financial management, currently they do not have money to manage. Organisations such as FSG are given first preference as they have the capacity to manage resources. The MPDC felt being sidelined when it supposed to take decision on who should offer them training.

The idea to capacitate the organization is commendable for the NDA. However, the issue of transparency and the participatory processes that were supposed to take place before the programme was implemented, is still unresolved. The idea to have the monies administered by an external organization is of course the safest way for the NDA, but it is a loss to the organization whose capacity is supposed to be developed. It also seems that not having control of the finances by the organization has created frustration and a lack of ownership that the organization wanted.

The lack of job opportunities has been identified by the organisation as the main cause behind most of the problems in the community. Accessing finance by individuals has been made easier by the PMDC which, through the village bank, provides loans to the co-ops. The loan amounts vary from R500 to R5000. In order to access this loan, one has to belong to one of the co-operatives of the organization and possess a South African Identity Document. A person must borrow the money only for the programme of food security in order to buy seeds, manure and other agricultural implements. The money is repaid after three months in monthly instalments with the interest at a rate of 2, 5 %. Contrary to other bank policies where a person is required to bring a bank statement or a pay slip, the village Bank lends money to individuals without emphasis on whether the person has assets or not. According to the member of the Committee the challenge is that people still need to acquire education in financial management skills. Training has been delayed due to the conflict as highlighted previously.

The programme has indeed increased the access of the co-operatives to financial resources which could not have been possible in any other situation. The loan system does not only empower women who are the majority stakeholders in a programme to take financial decision independently. It also encourages the participation of more people in the programme. The fact that the organization plays a role in the loan process is an additional element as it will force the organization to show more support for the programme in order to ensure that the loan is returned. Other members of the co-ops expressed satisfaction that the programme has assisted them in making additional cash in spite of difficulties they encounter in marketing their stock. The money they are making from the programme has enabled them to pay for their expenses such as school fees, building houses and paying for funeral plans.

The co-operative members said that although there are those who are making money already in the programme through selling vegetables, making money by selling the crops is a huge challenge. There is a lot of competition between the local and the external producers. They compete over the limited consumers in the area. The external producers bring their vegetables to the market. These vegetables are packed attractively (see figure 5.11). Customers tend to choose to buy those of the external producer rather than the local ones. As a result, the local producers suffer when their stock get spoiled while waiting for buyers.

**Figure 5.11: The market place**



packhouse was also raised by the FSG personnel. According to her, the packhouse is full of the necessary equipment and it is ready to be used.

The issue of transport is a problem in the programme. According to the co-operatives, in order for the stock to be taken to the market, a person has to organize his or her own transport which is usually expensive. They said that it is difficult for those who are not well established to pay for the transport. Hiring transport is, according to the members, very risky since there is always the possibility that the stock might not be sold, but the transport still has to be paid. The worst thing about vegetables is that one cannot keep them for many days after they have been harvested. Unlike maize and other crops, they get spoiled easily.

#### *5.3.1.4 Human Resources*

The way the programme has been formulated, it demands skills from the community such as marketing, bookkeeping, which very few people have. The programme demands very little of the indigenous knowledge of the people which in this case becomes a problem. Although farming has historically been practiced in the area, it had been predominantly for household consumption purposes. The programme requires that people use new technology and technical skills for its success and these skills are not available in the community. Lack of these skills is, according to the committee, contributing into a programme not achieving its objectives.

The committee members have been trained by the FSG and other service providers in skills such as business, financial and marketing management and proposal and report writing (MPDC Progress Report, 2004). The committee admits that there has been an improvement in their proposals and the report writing skills and financial management. These skills have assisted the committee to attract more attention from potential investors to the programme. For instance, the Department of Trade and Industry has shown an interest in terms of partnering the MPDC in the programme. This would not have happened if they had not acquired the necessary skills to attract potential investors. The progress report mentions that skills will be transferred to the co-operatives. This is regarded as one of the successes of the programme.

The interview with the FSG worker revealed that there is already training offered to members of the co-operatives whom they referred to as Master farmers. According to the FSG worker, their strategy is based on realizing that even though they would like to train everybody in the community, they could not afford. As a result, they opted to select a few people in the area whom they called Master farmers. Once these Master farmers are trained, they will then provide agricultural advice and support to the co-operatives. Each Master Farmer is paid for his or her services provided to the co-operatives. The payment of Master farmers is a temporary arrangement between the FSG and the Master Farmers. Once the programme reaches the end of its duration, there will not be any payment to the Master Farmers. The Master Farmer payment plan is based on the assumption that those who have been trained will continue to assist the co-operatives. No one knows how the lack of payment for this service will affect the Master Farmers and the programme. The programme was set to run for a period of eighteen months. Due to the delays previously discussed, the programme has gone for an extended period which is against what the donor wants. The possibility exists that the monies that the programme has not yet utilized could be returned to the donor. This has put pressure to the organisation to rush the programme to spend as much as they can before the time frame expires.

The rushing of the programme affect the processes and the principles of sustainable development as discussed in Chapter Two. It is also a problem because sustainable food security could not be achieved if the necessary steps of the programme are going to be overlooked in favour of reaching the time frame.

Training of the co-ops is very important in this programme and should be perceived as an emergency. The lack of training especially on soil conservation is showing in some of the plots. The co-operatives rely immensely on the furrow irrigation method to water their crops. Furrow irrigation is the method where parallel channels are dug in between the crops for water to flow along and in this process, the crops are watered. An irrigation scheme needs to be set up by people who are aware of its impact on the soil. The furrow irrigation scheme that is currently being used by the co-operatives in the programme contributes to soil erosion as figure 5.6. shows. It is possible that for the next few years, this small pothole (shown with an arrow in figure 5.6.) will be much bigger as time goes. Moreover, most of the top grass has been removed from the soil. Instead of making compost, it is thrown haphazardly far away from the

garden. In other cases, these co-operatives members have used heavy equipment such as tractors to cultivate the soil. In the process, huge furrows have developed which could lead more water flowing through and causing more soil erosion. The fear is that by the time the co-ops learn about these issues of soil conservation, much damage would have been done.

#### *5.3.1.5 Social Resources*

Social resources include the access to institutions that promote the social development of people in terms of membership or groups, gender equity and networks that exist in the community. These social networks assist individuals to access services that are due to them. According to the policy or the constitution of the MPDC, individuals are not accepted. Only those that are organized as co-operatives with at least 5 members are allowed to affiliate and be registered with the organization. The reason for insisting on at least five members is to ensure that each co-operative has the leadership structure which will enable the co-ops to account to the organization as well as to the members of the co-operatives. The structure consists of a Chairperson, Secretary, Treasurer and deputies. Co-operatives are also registered with the municipality to be considered for any projects that might affect them. This strategy should work well as it promotes collaboration among co-operatives.

The programme has resulted in a social gathering strategy where other forms of problems are shared and resolved (Discussion Group uMsinga, 2004). According to one of the members of the co-operative, working in groups has not only helped members to solve the food problem they are encountering in the project, but members are also able to share personal problems and receive advice from each. In Msinga Top, one woman said *“ngaphambi kwaloluhlelo ngangingakaze ngikhulume neningi lomama abahlala kulendawo”* (Although she knew other women in her area, she however never had a chance to talk to them and know them better). The programme has encouraged them to talk to each other. They have learned that other members have been involved in other forms of projects such as poultry and sewing. This has made them consider putting together their resources to pursue other projects if this gardening project is not helping them out.

However, there was also lots of anger and disappointments expressed by members of the co-ops in the focus group discussion. They felt that they had been abused by powerful and educated

people who had used them to fight against one another. They were promised fencing by the local municipality who later withdrew their assistance after having heard that they were getting other assistance from the MPDC. The co-operatives felt powerless to fight against these two institutions who obviously do not like each other. One member openly expressed her anger where she said "*Badlala ngathi ngoba singafundile*" (The educated people are taking advantage of the uneducated). Due to the tension between the municipality and the organization, the garden of the co-operatives in UMsinga Top is struggling to produce enough food for household consumption. It is important to note that this is the area where the incidents of Kwashiorkor and Pellagra were reported.

Social resources also include indigenous knowledge systems that play a vital role in food security. In order to overcome the problem of fertilizers that are expensive, the co-operatives have made use of natural manure from cow dung. Cow manure is easily accessible and it does not cost any money. The disappointing factor in this is that this practice seems to be a second option for the co-ops who cannot afford the modern fertilizers. Cow manure is an important asset for the community that is within their powers to access and control.

Other evidence of indigenous knowledge that has been used as survival strategy by the co-operatives is the use of tree branches to secure the plots from invasion by the livestock. However in this process, some forms of guidance or skills are necessary to ensure that the chopping down of trees does not cause another conservation problem in the area,

Although there are a number of resources that the community does not have access to, it appears that most of these resources are within their reach but due to the amount of inside squabbling between service providers, these resources do not reach the community. There are many institutions available to help in the area such as the Department of Agriculture, Municipality and the State Hospital that should be playing a major role in helping the community to reach its position of sustainable food security.

### 5.3.2. LEVELS OF PARTICIPATION IN THE PROGRAMME

Participation of the community in all the stages of the programme is the essential part of sustainable development. There are different types of participation methods which were discussed in Chapter 3 of this document. These participation methods produce different outcomes. They determine the response of the participants in the programme. The uMsinga food security programme reveals that not every community member participates in it. It also shows that there are different levels of participation. For instance, there are people who participate at the planning level of the programme and those who participate at the implementation level. Participation also involves who participates, where and when. The MPDC food security programme also shows differences in representation in terms of gender, locality and status within the community. The current status of the programme reflects these differences of representation which then determine the sustainability of the programme in the community. These representative participation levels are discussed below

#### *5.3.2.1 Community participation*

The aim of investigating the type and the level of participation, was to establish the role and the influence of the indirect and direct beneficiaries in the programme. It was also meant to identify the type of participation in the programme. The survey was done randomly in the community using a purposive sampling method (*see chapter 1 for clarity*). The respondents were asked about the time of their involvement in the programme (See Appendix 2). The findings from the survey reveal the following.

Out of 25 respondents, 36 % said that they had heard about the programme only when it was implemented, followed by 24 % who said that they had heard about the programme when it was launched in the area. There is an increase in the number of people who said that they were part of the planning process at 16 %, slightly higher than the number of those who were part of the plan at 12 %. The most interesting part is the last category where 12 % of the respondents said that they had never heard about the programme. Table 5.2 below explains the findings clearly.

Table 5. 2: Levels of participation

<i>Time of Participation</i>	<i>Number of Respondents in each category</i>	<i>Respondents in percentages</i>
Planning	3	12
Application	4	16
Launch of the programme	6	24
Implementation	9	36
Never heard about	3	12
TOTAL	25	100%

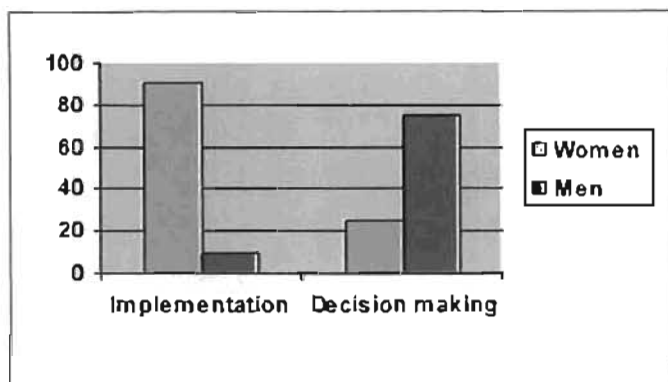
The table shows that very few people participated during the planning process, 12 % compared to 24 % and 36% of the number of those who were part of the launch as well as the implementation stage. The fact that only 12 % of the 25 people interviewed say that they had never heard about the programme, creates uncertainty to a sustainability of a programme which is expected to improve the state of food security in the area. This means that the organisation used a weak form of participation where people are only consulted to be told what to do and be used only for their labour.

### *5.3.2.2. Participation of women in decision making*

Many writers have noted the important role women play in the food security situation of the households. Alamgir and Arora (1991: 204) stress that “any effort to raise rural food security must therefore address the needs of women as producers and income earners...” The only way one can begin to understand the needs of women, is to find out from them by involving them in all levels of the programme. One of the noticeable elements in the programme of uMsinga food security is the low level of women participation in decision making, despite the fact that women are in the majority in almost all the co-operatives of the organization. For instance, uMsinga Top had only women in their cooperative. However the puzzling factor is that whilst the women present the majority of the cooperatives, the Board is dominated by men. The board represents

the decision making body which affects the work of the co-operatives. The interview with the administrator revealed that out of 12 members, only 3 are women. The graph on figure 5.15 below shows these aspects.

**Figure 5.12: levels of participation in terms of gender**



The graph shows that over 75% percent of men participate in the decision making level whilst only 25 % of women are part of the decision panel. The graph also shows that women are in the majority at the implementation level of the programme. This poses some questions as to the objectives of the programme in building the capacity of the beneficiaries. It is obvious that women form the majority of the beneficiaries. One would have expected women to form the majority at all levels.

Lack of support for women in the programme is also one of the problems encountered during interviews. Women were observed walking a long distance carrying logs of wood on their heads to the fields to fence the garden. They also carry cow dung to the garden. This kind of work looked very hard for women without transportation. Gender inequality in terms of participation of the community delays the success of the programme. This is caused by the fact that there is no sharing of responsibility between men and women in the programme. Women were also asked about why men were not participating as much as they should in the programme. Some women said that currently in their programme there is not much cash made, only food to feed the children. As a result the programme is not a main attraction for men who want to work for cash. The women are in the majority because they are the ones who have to know what is to be eaten every day. This shows that the attitude of the society towards food programmes has not changed.

Food security does not affect women only. If the programme is to ensure food security, it must change those traditional attitudes and stereotypes that do not contribute to the development of the community. It should also instigate active participation of men at all the stages of the programme not only where decision making is involved. One woman said that inviting men to help is very expensive. If you call them it means you are taking them away from the activities where they would be drinking beer. Therefore if you invite them to participate, they will want you to brew traditional beer so that they are able to drink while working. "Making beer these days costs a lot of money and takes lot of time' one woman commented.

### *5.3.2.3 Participation of the organization in formulation of the programme*

Though the Project Manager of the National agency expressed confidence in the fact that the programme was an initiation of the community, it was revealed in the interviews with other partners in the programme that there was not much consultation in the formulation of the programme in terms of the funding procedures and the responsibilities. This became clear in the confusion that led to the delay to the programme. According to the FSG staff it was not clearly stated to the MPDC how the money was to be used and how they were going to contribute. There has been an imposition of the decision by the NDA on the beneficiaries which in this case is the MPDC.

## **5.4. DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS**

Accessibility and control of the resources by the people for social, economical and ecological development is a prerequisite for sustainable food security. If people still lack both access and control of the resources, the chances are that any programmes that require those resources will be unable to make an impact to the lives of the beneficiaries. It is true that it might be too early to determine whether the uMsinga programme has indeed led to sustainable food security in the area since it only began a year ago. According to the information gathered from the members of the SFG staff, the programme to build the capacity of the beneficiaries was planned to last for eighteen months. Therefore if only six months are left before the programme ends, most of the work should have been done by now. Moreover, by looking at the processes that

have been applied during the formation of the programme, it is unlikely that by the end of the programme there will be sustainable food security. The findings will be assessed in order to understand whether these findings point towards a positive direction of sustainable food security. The discussion will view these findings in relation to their contribution to the economic, social and the ecological development of the community.

#### **5.4.1 Economic development**

One of the objectives of the programme was to develop the economy of the area and to ensure food security. Economic development within a context of sustainable development, emphasizes equal opportunities and the utilization of local resources at a maximum level (*refer to chapter 2 for elaboration*). From the findings, it is clear that the programme was planned to ensure economic growth. The NDA programme emphasises the skills of economic growth to be offered to the beneficiaries of its funds. The notion of economic development as demonstrated by the activities is that the market should be increased inside and outside the area. This has resulted in the type of training that has been offered to the members of the organization. To elaborate further on this, the discussion outlines the following themes and how they impact on the food security in the programme.

##### **5.4.1.1 Finances**

Finance is an important resource for economic development. The findings have shown that the programme has put more emphasis on cash cropping as a means to food security. Cash cropping means that crops are sold for cash. According to Sithole and Testerink in ( Rukuni, Rukuni, Mudimu, Jayne, 1990: 226), “the underlying simplified, hypothesis here is that cash earned from cash crop sales can be used for the purchase of food”. In the findings it appeared that 48 % of the co-operative members do buy food even though they are producers. Some specified that they use the same that they get from cash crops. However, it also emerged that co-operative members also use the cash crop money to pay for other needs such as school fees and building houses. Hence the cash cropping system in the area seems to contribute indirectly to food security in those households where cash cropping occurs.

There are many other issues that were revealed by the study which pointed at the basic requirements for the development of an economy as planned in the programme of the MPDC. In order for the programme to satisfy the market, production has to be increased. The co-operatives use the fertilizers that help the crops to grow at a faster rate than the normal rate. There are different opinions expressed with regard to the use of technological products in order to increase production and its impact on the state of food security. However the situation in uMsinga shows that currently there are many other resources still needed before income is accumulated from the programme. One of the resources identified is the equipment.

The problem the co-operative members are encountering is the capability of members to collaborate in addressing problems that hinder their success business wise. For instance, the issue of transportation, water and batteries should be addressed by all the co-operatives and find a solution that can benefit all parties involved. So far it appears that due to the difficulties with regards to transport and the battery, there is a small group that is benefiting and this could perpetuate more economic inequality in the community.

There is also a risk of the loan from the village bank not being paid back if the members fail to make a profit from their produce. In uThukela for instance, there is still no uniform practice on the pricing of crops. The co-operatives still lack training on how to price their stock in order to be both affordable to the community or consumers while still ensuring that the prices make a reasonable profit for the producers so that they can continue producing. Affordability of the production to the consumers will ensure an increase of food security in the community. Due to this lack of standardization, many producers find that they are exploited by buyers. The co-operatives should be able to determine the price in their area. However it seems that this cannot happen in a current situation where people are not working together in the programme. The failure of many members to make a profit will put a strain on the bank and might lead to its liquidation. If this happens, it would mean the failure of the programme to ensure economic development in the area.

It is clear that co-operative members cannot avoid competition from other areas as the constitution and the economic policy of South Africa allows for free trade. However, the problem of competition does not seem to be caused only by the fact that external producers

have their crops attractively packaged; it also results from the lack of diversity in the crops being sold by the co-operatives. For instance, the cabbage is no longer selling as it used to due to the fact that every single co-operative and external producers are selling it. The co-operatives need to identify what other produce they can grow in the area that is not currently being sold and diversify into a more varied crop.

#### *5.4.1.2. Land issue*

Land is a natural source of economic, social and ecological development. The food security programme relies on its availability and whether people are able to access and control it. It is sometimes argued that communal land restricts or hinders the process of development of farmers. As a result it impacts negatively on programmes of food security (Ndlovu cited in Rukuni, Mudimu, Jayne, 1990). In uMsinga this did not seem to be the case among the people who were interviewed.

Also in the study it did not appear that there was a problem of land shortage as other studies have implied. Members of the co-operatives pointed to a vast space of land next to their plots which they said they are planning to cultivate in future if they have energy. However, the fencing of the plots was regarded as a challenge for the co-operatives. The progress report also mentioned this as one of the challenges. This contradicts the fears noted by Ndlovu about communal owned land that it “retards the more adventurous farmers as they cannot be allowed to fence and develop sections of the grazing land’ (Ndlovu in Rukuni ,Mudimu, Jayne, 1990: 246). Once again, according to Dr Sithole, in her experience as a researcher in the area there has never been a conflict or complaints over land in the area. However, one may not totally ignore the concerns of the Project Manager as there has been evidence of corruption or abuse of power in other areas or communities. It is therefore important to find a proactive solution to the possibility of land disputes over the ownership of the packhouse.

#### *5.4.1.3 Water issue*

Although water is a natural source of food security, it has become an economic commodity that a fortune has to be spent on. Though the community of uMsinga is fortunate to have a river running through its area, they still lack access to it. Water is an asset that should enable those

who have the garden to grow as much as they can. However, getting water to the garden is not easy. As a result, water has also become a commodity that only those who can afford to pay for the equipment, can access and control. As shown in figure 5.12 that the majority of the people believes that the success of the programme lies in the availability of water. Hence it should have been addressed prior to the current programme.

#### **5.4.1.4. Road issue**

Having access to transport facilities includes having a proper road. Twelve percent of the respondents felt that the programme suffers from the lack of a proper road. These are the group of people who viewed the programme in terms of cash-cropping or business. Not having a proper road to enable the community to communicate with other communities or to transport their goods, affects the business. They argued that if the programme is expected to create jobs, and improve the economy, roads should be accessible to the external and internal community. Respondents felt that road construction is beyond their capabilities. The Department of Transport would need to play its role in the provision of the road. So far the only accessible road is the one to Tugela Ferry where government departments and shopping centres are found, and not in areas where the poor communities and where projects of food security are located. The road plays an important role in the economic development of the country as well as that of the community. Hence it needs an empowered community to take the issue head on to the relevant authorities.

#### **5.4.2 Social development**

In his paper Rodrik in (Isham, Kelly and Ramaswamy, 2002: 66) argues that “when social division runs deep and the institutions of conflict management are weak, exogenous shocks trigger distribution conflicts”. The situation in uMsinga seems to correlate with Rodrik’s views. The study revealed that other important activities of the programme have been delayed due to what is referred to as conflict of power relations. Power relations in the context of uMsinga seem to stem from different causes such as political influence and economic and social status. Incidents of abuse of power are not only within the community but between the funding agency and the NGOs that are involved in the programme. According to the Chairperson, the initial aim of the MPDC was to restore peace in the area that has been riddled with faction fights for many years. Though subtle, the new forms of conflict as mentioned earlier by the members, affect the

development of the area and are taking their toll on the community and their attempt to attain sustainable food securities. To elaborate further on this, it is important to look at the following themes that emerged from the findings.

#### *5.4.2.1 A threat to community initiative*

The most important motivational factor in the programme for the members of the organization is the fact that the programme did not emanate from community initiatives. The members were already involved in the programme at an individual level. The NDA, which is the funding agent, did not come to the community to suggest the type of intervention they wanted, but has followed in the directions of the MPDC. This would have been a very promising scenario in terms of sustainable food security, if the NDA had continued to follow what the MPDC had proposed. However, it appears that the NDA came to the community with its own plans which seemed to contradict the initial plan of the MPDC. It failed also to communicate its intentions and processes to the community in terms of changes in the programme. This has also negatively affected the important relationship or partnerships the programme should have built between the organization and other organizations.

#### *5.4.2.2. Political tension as a threat to sustainable food security.*

The political tension has already been identified as a factor threatening the programme. Those people who belong to other political parties might easily be sidelined when they are supposed to participate. Even though the committee clearly stated their partiality in terms of the programme, it seems its neutrality is not being communicated on to the local people. The delays in the programme of women in uMsinga Top showed a clear conflict of political interests between the two service providers, the MPDC and the local municipality. Since both parties or service providers are working towards a common goal which is to assist poor communities to access resources for food security development, instead good co-ordination should have been used to come up with an amicable solution.

#### *5.4.2.3 Powerlessness and mistrust*

The sense of powerlessness and mistrust among the co-operatives was identified in the study. The lack of social coherence between the members of the co-operatives and the leadership

seems to contribute in the mistrust and powerlessness of the group. Though the co-operatives members were not satisfied about the structures, they felt that there was nothing they can do. This is a bad signal of hopelessness by the beneficiaries in the programme. The group discussed this issue of water scarcity with much anger towards those they regard as those “in power” for not responding to their needs. But there was also a sense of powerlessness and fear from the group. They said that they did not know what to do as they are also not listened to by the authorities when they go to their offices. The words “their offices” were said without mentioning whose office they were talking about. Fear is a threat to the food security programme as many people might resort to withdrawing every time they encounter a problem. Fear and mistrust is one of the disabling elements in development. Using the word “their offices” also means that the members do not feel the sense of ownership with those offices, even though the offices are there to cater for their needs.

The majority of the beneficiaries in the programme are women. However, they seem to play a minor role in the organization, especially at the decision making level. One of the reasons given for the problem is the low level of formal education among women. Statistics South Africa (2001) shows that 30 % of the total population of the uMsinga area has no schooling and which the majority of these are women. A lack of formal education is a challenge for the economic intensive programme the organization has adopted. What the findings have also discovered is a negative attitude towards the educated by those who regard themselves as uneducated. This is due to the level of neglect the group of the uneducated have been exposed to. This situation demonstrate that there is a problem of social empowerment in terms of motivating those with non-formal education, in order for them to feel confident to contribute into the programme at a decision making level. The beneficiaries have no access to and control of the information that affects them. Lack of recognition of the input of the majority of the beneficiaries in the programme, is also cause for concern.

#### *5.4.2.4 Networking and partnership*

Information sharing has been one of the instruments used to sustain the community against diseases, hunger and violence. The organization has already created networks between itself and other departments and other organizations which put the organization in a more positive position for sustainable development. However it appears that lack of communication among

the partners threatens the partnership and this will impact immensely on the programme as the findings have shown. This was evident when the MPDC refused to sign an agreement of partnership.

Collaboration at lower levels of the community also seems not to be happening. As a result, there is inequality. The effects of inequality vary according to each community. With a history of conflict in uMsinga, inequality could trigger more conflict as Rodrik (Cited in Isham, Kelly and Ramaswamy, 2002:67) mentions that “when people see some living in luxury while others are impoverished, it creates social unrest that typically culminates in the overthrow of government, disruption of the local economy and collapse of foreign investor confidence”. Isham, Kelly and Ramaswamy (2002:76) also argue that “conflict prevention is better than conflict resolution”. The study revealed that almost all members agree that they do at some stage ask for food or borrow money from other people. This included even those who are producers. This means that there is already a culture of sharing among the people and that the programme needs to encourage more.

#### **5.4.3 Ecological development**

Ecological development looks at those elements and activities that lead to caring for the ecosystem within any development process. The food security programme of uMsinga relies immensely on the environment especially the climate, the soil and water. To ensure that one deals with the early warning signs of ecological damage should be a priority.

The findings have shown that ecological development in the programme has not been addressed as one of the priorities. As a result early warning signs of natural resources depletion are clearly beginning to occur on the soil. For instance, a lot of rich compost thrown away by the members when removing the top layer of the soil as a result the soil remains barren when the upper layer has been removed. It then demands them to add fertilizers as the top soil which has compost is no longer there to provide minerals for the crops. This shows that there is an urgent need to teach the co-operative members about the value of the topsoil as the most fertile soil. The reliance on the modern manure has resulted in an increase in production but has become a source of inequality among members as they begin to compete for resources. They have to borrow money from the bank to buy fertilizers.

The use of the furrow irrigation system seems to be impacting negatively on the soil. From the findings, it appeared that a lot of guidance or training is necessary to ensure that the co-ops use the system appropriately.

## 5.5 CONCLUSION

The aim of this chapter was to present the findings about the effects of the programme of food security in uMsinga and to establish whether the programme could lead to sustainable food security. Most of the respondents thought that this question had been asked too early. Maybe it should have been done five years after its implementation and even ten years since development is a process not a result. Whilst partly in agreement with their views that development is a process not an end in itself, it must be stated that the current activities of the programme are the foundation and the determinants of sustainable food security in the area. The findings and analysis of this chapter have been able to highlight some of the important features of the programme and how these features could contribute or hinder the realization of sustainable food security in uMsinga.

- It appeared that the programme of food security in uMsinga puts more emphasis on economic development rather than anything else. This has been evident in the objectives, resources used, and the training offered to the beneficiaries of the programme. The study has shown how this linear approach to food security has created more division among the co-operatives and has impacted on the environment. For example, there are those that are thriving and those that are struggling due to inequality in terms of accessibility and control of resources.
- Due to the overemphasis of economic growth in the programme, the opportunity to address socio-ecological problems has been missed. The processes of the programme have not been able to identify and deal with the stresses and the shocks of the community which obviously forms the core factors in sustainable livelihood. Evidence of anger and apathy were identified in the study. These are the signs of despair that can hinder any development and which economic development alone cannot deal with. Therefore, the programme on its own has come short to addressing the root problem of the area.

- The study points to the serious problem of the power struggle between the organizations and the funding agency as well between the organization's leadership and the co-ops. On the one hand we see a funding agency determining the process and in a way creating conflict among partners, thus jeopardizing the success of the programme. On the other hand, the organization seems to be neglecting the importance of participation. This has resulted in dissatisfaction amongst its members. Undermining of all these important aspects of sustainable development seems to be detrimental to the programme to achieve sustainable food security

# **CHAPTER SIX**

## **CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

### **6.0. INTRODUCTION**

This chapter aims to provide the conclusions and recommendations of the study. Having explored the concept of food security from the international, national and community level, it is important to look back at the milestone this study has taken and answer the “so what ?” question. Therefore, the first part of this chapter is going to present the reflections of the study by looking at whether the objectives of the study have been achieved and whether the questions of the researcher have been answered or not. The second part will provide the suggestions or recommendations of the researcher in terms of the possible approaches that need to be explored further in food security as a concept and in the programme of the case study.

### **6.1. WERE THE OBJECTIVES ACHIEVED?**

The main objective of the study was to gain an insight into the programme of food security. That is, what it entails, how it is done and what the approaches and policies are which guide the programmes of food security. Most importantly, the aim was to see how the concept of food security is incorporated within the approach of sustainable development in order to lead to sustainable food security.

#### **6.1.1. Gaining an insight into the food security programme**

It is clear from the literature review and through the study that the issue of food security is taken seriously in South Africa. This has been visible in the number of interventions and people or institutions involved in the issue of food security both public and private. This dissertation has served as a small window through which those elements that indicate sustainable food security and those that discourage sustainable food security in the existing programmes, can be examined.

One of the intriguing findings when paying a closer look at the subject of food security, was that there is no single definition of food security or a means of measuring what programme could be regarded as food security. However, there is agreement that food security does not only refer to the availability of food. Rather, food security includes other elements related to poverty which vary from community to community and country to country. Hence, it is only

appropriate that each country or community defines food security in relation to its own objectives and the problems encountered. Unfortunately, almost all the interventions tend to follow a “one size fits all” approach. That is, they put emphasis on economic growth. This type of approach is the one that is also dominant in the programme of uMsinga (*refer to 5.3.1.4*). The study has indicated inequality and uncertainty beginning to show among the stakeholders due to the nature of the programme.

Although South Africa does not have a food security policy in place yet, its new programme called Integrated Sustainable Food Security Strategy (ISFSS) seems to move towards ensuring that there is enough food production for the market (*see 3.2.1.1*). This approach has not come as a surprise as South Africa is part of the global society in which economic growth has taken precedence over social development. Therefore, it should be expected that the programmes funded by the government follow an economic growth approach. The uMsinga Food Security programme coincides with this approach and the commitment of the South African government to the policies of macro-economic policy. This is stipulated clearly in the objectives of the programme as well as the type of training members of the organisation are undergoing. The training places great emphasis on increasing the production to supply the market. This would mean more income for the people. Due to this preoccupation with trying to meet market standards, it seems the programme is unable to achieve sustainable food security as defined within the conceptual framework of this study. For instance, the study shows the community still does not have access to the basic resources. They also seemed to be afraid to challenge the structures that are not delivering as they were expected to. The direction the programme has taken show signs that could lead to increased income and wealth for a few people. This is the source of inequality that already exists in many societies in South Africa and other developing countries (Gupta, 2000:4). This would further increase inequality, which is already a problem in the community.

### **6.1.2. Assessment of the food security programme of uMsinga**

In the assessment of the uMsinga Food security programme with regards to planning, implementation and resource input, the study has revealed the following:

#### ***6.1.2.1. Level of participation in the programme***

The planning of the food security programme did not follow all the principles and processes of sustainable development such as interactive, self-mobilisation and connectedness participation

(refer to 2.1.2.3. for clarity on types of participation). The level of participation during the planning stage of the projects stood at only 12% percent of the respondents (See 5.3.2.1). This shows that only the few people had a say in the planning stage of the project. The study has also shown how this low level and the type of participation contributed to the misunderstanding between the MPDC and the NDA with regard to the partnership. Due to this misunderstanding, the programme has suffered delays and has created the wrong expectation within the community and the stakeholders. Low levels of participation have also contributed to the priority needs of the beneficiaries, such as the availability of water, not being addressed.

#### ***6.1.2.2. Security of ownership of the resources***

Sustainable food security is also about feeling secure not only physically, but also in terms of ownership of the resources. One of the questions the study was trying to answer was whether people access resources and whether they have control over those resources. The study revealed that there is still a lack of access to and control of the five resources of the livelihood framework by the beneficiaries in the programme (refer to 5.3.1.). Lack of access to and control of these resources by the beneficiaries has the potentials to affect the programme as the findings have revealed. For example, the social capital that could be assisting the group draw resources from each other does not exist. The two scenarios (shown in figure 5.3 and 5.4.) illustrate unequal access to and control of resources by the two co-operatives. This situation makes it difficult for the programme to contribute to the sustainable food security of the people.

#### ***6.1.2.3. Understanding the culture of the people***

The study also revealed a tendency of the elite or service providers to undermine the culture of the rural people or poor. For example, the findings on the land issue disproved the notion that insecure land rights exist on communal land. The study revealed that the community or the co-operatives did not have a problem with the control of land by Inkosi.

### **6.1.3 Gaps and mismatches in the uMsinga food security programme.**

There are a number of gaps and mismatches that were identified in the programme. These gaps and mismatches were identified within the context of sustainable development and sustainable food security. The gaps and mismatches are based on the objectives and the activities of the programme which obviously were not fully aligned with the principles of sustainable development. To elaborate further on this, it is important to look at the following themes:

### *6.1.3.1 Social development for sustainable food security.*

The community of uMsinga has for so many years, been exposed to social upheaval and poverty due to faction fights and neglect by the previous government. This is a community where mothers and children witnessed the killings of their loved ones and the burning down of their homes. One would expect a more holistic, cautious approach from donors when intervening. It seemed that the programme has instead shifted the main focus of the MPDC completely from its initial objective, which was to ensure peace and security. The study showed that the programme has not done much to strengthen the social fabric of the community from which support systems can evolve (see 5.3.1.5.). As a result the community is divided and does not care about the sufferings of other people. If this was not the case, there would not be people who are said to be suffering from the hunger whilst there are those in the same community who are making plans of increasing their business. The community that had social solidarity would have created a plan or a strategy to address the problem of those who cannot afford to buy and cannot participate. This is an indication of a lack of social togetherness that the programme should have made as one of its objectives.

### *6.1.3.2 Meeting the priority needs of the people*

The vegetable garden is a type of programme for which availability of water is a prerequisite. The current situation in uMsinga is that in many areas, there is still no water for consumption. The programme is taxing on women whose duty is to walk long distance to draw water in order to water their gardens. The issue of water should have been a priority in the programme, not only for the success of the programme but also to reduce the strain on women. Though it is understandable that the programme could not have waited for the slow bureaucratic process of the Department of Water Affairs to deliver, there should have been visible processes that the community is taking action to demand their rights. Like food, water is a basic human right which is guaranteed in the Constitution of South Africa. The situation in uMsinga is the reflection of a lack of freedom of choice and results from the lack of empowerment activities within a development programme. Freedom to choose goes with understanding one's rights. It is only through that understanding that one can begin to take actions. This notion of rights and action is also cited in O'Neill (1986:115) where he says that "basic rights require action and not mere forbearance". He further argues that "there is no way in which 'doing nothing' can secure freedom from torture, any more than it can secure freedom from starvation". In addition, Andrews also mentions that a community is empowered if it able to challenge "power relations at all levels" such as government and other institutions including the dominant global systems.

The state of sustainable food security cannot be achieved if the aforementioned scenario does not exist.

Meeting basic priority needs also means that the programme of food security needs to address those urgent needs of the community. The findings of the study showed that there is a severe problem of malnutrition in many households. In most cases, it appeared that there is a shortage of the type of food that provides nutrients such as proteins and iron. The uMsinga programme has not provided safety nets in the interim period while the food security takes root. Such safety nets could be in the form of food parcels, sanitation and health facilities. This shows the gap that the programme is not addressing.

#### **6.1.3.3. *Gender equity in all levels of the programme***

It has been mentioned earlier in this document and in other literature that women play a central role in most food security programmes (Alamgir and Arora, 1991:87). This should also be reflected in the decision making level of the programmes. The study has shown that whilst women form the majority of producers in food security programme of uMsinga, their level of influence in terms of decision making is very minimal (*see 5.2.2.2.*). For sustainable food security to succeed, it needs to target the empowerment of women as they are not only the majority in the programme, they are also already very involved in food security issues. Therefore there should also have been a strategy to ensure that they are empowered to participate in the programme rather than to complain about them being not educated.

There was anger and pessimism from women, which was caused by having no say in the programme. They also feel excluded in the decision-making process. The voices of women are not heard as they are not part of the decision making body. One would argue that there should be another programme where these issues would be addressed. However, it is also true that people participate in programmes that they have interest in. There is no other appropriate programme that would interest a large part of the community as much as the one of food security. Therefore an intervention could have capitalised on this aspect.

#### **6.1.3.4. Partnership in the programme**

There is an English proverb which says that “charity begins at home”. The South African Integrated Sustainable Food Security Programme has placed the partnership and collaboration of service providers and communities as a crucial factor in bringing about sustainable food security. Therefore, for any community to establish partnership and collaboration with outside people or service providers, it should ensure that a partnership is already formed within its premises. MPDC seems to be unable to form a strong partnership with its local municipality (*refer to 5.2.2.2.*). This situation is aggravated by the hidden agendas that service providers tend to pursue unguarded. As a result there is no co-ordination of activities in the programme which then affects the sustainability element of food security and beneficiaries as in the case of uMsinga.

The study has also indicated that there is a problem in terms of power relations where the donor (NDA) imposes on the beneficiaries (MPDC) (*refer to 5.2.5.2.*). The NDA has sacrificed the principles of sustainable development by dictating who the MPDC should work with. The result of this imposition has been articulated in the study (*refer 5.2.5.2.*).

In conclusion the study has indicated that sustainable food security challenges the stereotypes to development approaches and processes. It has also shown that current food security programmes are still planned as once-off activities which go against the principles of sustainable development. The study shows that the institutions, experts and development practitioners still need to look at an intervention as more than just as a project but as a process of returning the dignity that people have lost over the years.

## **6.2. RECOMMENDATIONS**

The recommendations presented in this section are based mostly on the implications drawn from the findings of the case study and also from the general outcome of the whole study on sustainable food security.

### **6.2.1. A consortium for role players**

The study has shown that food security involves different people from different institutions who are expected to play various roles to accomplish one goal: sustainable food security. However, the study found a lack of collaboration between major institutions in the area of intervention. This became clear in the case of uMsinga when the local municipality planned to offer the same

assistance as that MPDC. Due to this lack of collaboration, both service providers (MPDC and uMsinga municipality) have failed to address the problem of the co-operatives.

This lack of collaboration also seemed to be evident also among the beneficiaries as in the case of uMsinga Top co-operatives and uThukela co-operatives (*see 5.4.2.4.*). To avoid redundancy in activities and conflict between role players, it is recommended that a consortium of the service providers in the area is established so that roles and responsibilities can be defined. According to Fowler (1997:114), in a consortium members are “obliged to deliver on commitments entered into and share the blame or cost when a member fails to do so”. It is within this consortium that differences in opinions and procedures can be dealt with. He further notes that “consortia often have a grass root operational focus that seeks to move away from separated...to a more comprehensive, joint approach for higher impact on an increased scale’. The consortium can also be helpful to provide support to members in areas where they are being exploited by the funding agencies. Lack of collaboration became obvious in the case of uMsinga where the organisation lost its autonomy due to pressures from the funding agency.

A consortium is also necessary for the members of the co-operative in the area so that they can share resources and information. More importantly, to unite against any abuse they may encounter from the service providers. This process will not only begin to build economic bridges between members, it could also be instrumental in building social networks within the community. For example, in an area like uMsinga where there has been conflict, people would find that they need each other. Obviously a consortium cannot be effective if some of the members have no capacity to carry out their responsibilities. Therefore, processes of empowering members will need to be implemented prior to engagement.

### **6.2.2 Increasing accessibility of institutions to the community**

One of the major problems identified in rural development, is lack of institutional and infrastructural support. Whilst this is sometimes the case, in some areas such as uMsinga, the relevant institution for the programme to draw resources from, is available. The problem that was observed from the study is that these institutions are not increasing their accessibility to the community they serve. This is also referred to as public relations. The institution can make it difficult for the community to use it if it sends out intimidating or undermining signals. For instance, in the case of uMsinga, members of the co-ops complained that they were ignored by

the officials in the municipalities (see 5.3.1.5.). They thought this was because of their lack of formal education.

In the case of the MPDC, members did not know the exact name of the organisation and they seemed to be confused about what the organisation stands for. Therefore there should be a deliberate strategy for the service providers to encourage members of the community to know about the institutions that exist in the area and how they could access the resources from them. These strategies could include periodical community gatherings where they can each explain what they do and how the community can participate. In that way, community members will know what to expect from whom and what are the constraints the service providers is facing in delivering the resources

### **6.2.3. Food security as an empowering process**

The study has shown that sustainable food security is more than making food available to the community. It is also about the process taken to ensure food security in the area of intervention. No matter how much resource there are in the community, people might still be unable to access them and it may be difficult for them to control them. This happens when the community is not empowered to take initiative to access and control those resources. The process of food security should be an empowering process. Empowerment does not only include technical skills as we have witnessed in the case of uMsinga (see 5.3.1.4). It also includes the identification of those community members that are disadvantaged due to their gender, race or social status. It includes the strategy to empower them with the necessary skills to participate effectively at any level. In the study, the low level of women participating in the decision making was identified. According to Gupta (2000:4) the process of empowerment includes the mobilising of people, especially the poor and marginalised to enable people to organise. According to Rahman (1993:18) mobilisation is an “emotional stimulating” process where ‘inner urges’ are expressed collectively for a common purpose. Mobilisation processes vary in each and every community since communities are not static. Rahman warns however, that mobilisation processes should not be imposed but should be drawn from individual interests. Those interests could include economical, social and ecological interests. It also includes allowing people to build awareness of their own situation, the factors influencing their situation and their options for change. This will lead to capacitating and education for change in their forum.

Gupta's process of empowerment shows that no one can prescribe for poor people what kind of education they need. It is only them who would know their challenges and what relevant education can assist them to reach a state of self-reliance. It is, however true that this kind of change or action cannot happen in a community where there is social breakdown. It is at this juncture that community building becomes a prerequisite for any development, including food security.

#### **6.2.4. Building community**

*“A community in which people know and care about each other is the basic building block for all other civilised activities, whether commercial, political, social or spiritual...and there is no better caring than to create a local economy which meets the basic needs of everyone of our neighbours...”* (Hines, 2000:38)

Community disintegration which results from violence is one of the causes of food insecurities identified by many writers (Maxwell, 1991:5). The quote above echoes Hines sentiments in terms of a community that cares about each other. In the study, it was revealed that food security is indeed a problem and a main concern for the community and the element of the community caring for each other did not show. For example, the programme has led to the growth of a new group of business people whilst in the same community there are people who cannot even afford the basic needs such as water and food. A community building strategy serves as prerequisite for sustainable food security to benefit all the members of the community as it restores the sense of belonging. A sense of belonging according to Ife (2002:123) is necessary to develop a sense of obligation as he explains that “being a member of the community should not therefore be a purely passive experience but should also involve some level of active participation”. Ife's statement indicates that there are times when the community is not actively involves in community activities. Therefore community building involves the following activities:

##### **6.2.4.1 Community conscientization**

It might be difficult to know the community's interests if one uses information from other communities or studies done on the community. It is advisable to find out directly from the people. In most cases, intervention strategies begin by assessing the needs of the people. During the assessment process, communities become the subject and the sources of information.

In a conscientization process, the assessment or research process becomes a learning process whereby communities can learn not only about each other or their problems, but also about how their problems relate to the broader spectrum of the society. Rahman mentions the Participatory Action Research (PAR) methods whereby people play a leading role in the research (1993:5). However Rahman's PAR goes beyond external researchers working with people, it involves people themselves doing the research. He notes:

*By people's own research and own praxis. In this way, we sought to unify the priorities- helping people to develop their intellectual capabilities and collective self-knowledge and to assert themselves as equals with any other intellectual's trend (Rahman, 1993:5).*

In the study of uMsinga Food security programme, some members of the co-operatives were quoted as saying that the elite or the educated were manipulating them for their benefit. A conscientization process could remove the feeling of subordination and inferiority that seemed to be a problem in the programme. The community will realise that the kind of knowledge and power they possess is not inferior to that of the elite. The criticism of conscientization is highlighted by Ife (2002: 125) where he notes that it can become simply a form of "ideological indoctrination". This could happen in a situation where the method and procedure to the conscientization or research is redesigned by the community with assistance from outside.

Conscientization leads to self-reliance. Self reliance means valuing one's own resources for the improvement of one's life. This view correlates with Dr Hendriks view that food security should not rely on cash availability but should encourage people to value what they produce. Rahman (1993:18) explains that being self-reliant does not mean rejecting external assistance. He quickly warns however, that any external resources used "at the cost of one's autonomy of choice and action, current or future" should be rejected. In a study of the uMsinga food programme, one of the problems identified was the lack of freedom of choice by the beneficiaries of the programme. For instance, though their priority was water, they accepted the programme that focused solely on providing food as they had no choice but to accept what they were offered.

#### ***6.2.4.2. Organisation participants and the community***

Community conscientization results in people organizing themselves around the problem that they have identified and developing strategies to address it. For example, in the study of

uMsinga, it was revealed that due to lack of organisation among the co-operatives, they were unable to come up with the strategy to solve the problem of being neglected by the municipality and the organisation that was supposed to work with them. Though organisational structures are sometimes a hindrance to effective participation as the existing structures dominate the process (Ife, 2002:125), it is also up to the conscientization process to encourage people may begin to question the existence of those structures as to their effectiveness in solving the problem at hand. This is also highlighted by Rubin and Rubin (1992:64) who note, "Central to empowerment is a willingness to challenge formal authority and to escape dependency on those in power". They however quickly point out that "challenges to formal authority rarely involve dramatic confrontations or revolutions actions". It involves proper planning and sharing of information and other resources.

#### ***6.2.4.3. A need for emergent food intervention for a healthy life***

In the study, it was also found out that though there is a food security programme in the area, the majority of people said that they buy most of their food (*see 5.2.5.5*). Also in the interview with the nurse it emerged that there are people in the area who suffer from malnutrition diseases such as Kwashiorkor and Pellagra resulting from protein deficiency. This shows that there is a need for the programme to include a wider variety of crops that are rich in different nutrients such as protein, iron and carbohydrates. If the area or the soil is not suitable for these types of crops, then it means that the programme should explore other means of ensuring that these other proteins are provided. This is in fact the time when a partnership with an external organisation becomes important for the programme. The programme should identify those partners that produce different food for bartering, buying, skills exchange and so on.

The situation in areas such as uMsinga Top calls for emergency intervention that will keep people alive until proper processes of food security like the ones that have been mentioned above take place. The study showed that there are households that are vulnerable to food insecurity because of various reasons and they are in need of immediate intervention. This calls for all service providers working in the area to develop a strategy of responding to the emergency situation in uMsinga Top. The question most people who have written about or spoken about is how do we ensure food aid without creating dependency? After all the reason behind establishing food security programmes is to avoid food aid which has been viewed as creating dependency. For instance, everyone will want free food claiming that they are sick and

starving. In addition, Maxwell (1991:83) notes that emergency food interventions “contribute to rural people’s strategies for avoiding destitution during famine”.

#### **6.2.5 Address the issue of water as the beneficiaries’ priority.**

In the study, it became clear that members also practice gardening in their backyards for household consumption. But most of those staying far away from the river had a problem accessing water. The programme has not been able to assist the community to address this main problem which is one of the causes of food insecurities. If the main aim of the programme is to increase the levels of food security in community, it should ensure that the first step of food security is availability and should then move to other spheres of food security. After all, people cannot be able to participate in conscientization processes unless they have eaten. Though cash cropping is important, it should not replace the backyard garden that most people have been dependent on for food.

#### **6.2.6. Caring for the soil.**

Rural people rely mostly on the soil for food security, therefore it is important that they take care of it for their present and the future needs. Though new methods of technology might be useful to increase production, it is important for the members to choose those that are not creating harm to the environment. This also means that the community should be able to identify when such soil damage occurs and what they can do to prevent it.

### **6.3. CONCLUSION**

In conclusion, sustainable food security is attainable when the urgent needs of the community are addressed. Moreover there is a deliberate strategy to engage in community building processes that will ensure that the social fabric is rebuilt for economical and ecological development to take off.

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# APPENDICES

## APPENDIX 1

Questions for the National Development Agency (Project Manager)

### RESEARCH ON FOOD SECURITY AND SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

1. Can you briefly describe the processes involved in identification of the MPDC and the programme?
2. What were the main objectives of the NDA in funding the programme?
3. During the programming period, what was the role of the committee?
4. When and how was the community involved in the programme?
5. What challenges you experienced in the programme formulation and implementation?
6. Who are the major partners of the MPDC in the programme?
7. One of the NDA criteria in selecting a programme is the sustainability element, how does NDA define sustainability? What is it that you look for? Is it a programme or the organisation sustainability? Or the sustainability in the area?
8. What elements you identified in the programme that made you decide that MPDC programme is indeed sustainable?
9. Do you see the MPDC programme leading to food security in the areas?
10. In one of the documents by NDA ( Inqophamland, 2004), the chairperson of the MPDC has been quoted saying there is "food abundance in the area". Do you agree with this statement? If yes would we then say that every household in the areas has access to healthy food?
11. Despite food abundance, what other development achievements has the programme done for the community due top the programme?
12. What are the programmes you forsee as a threat in the programme in ensuring food security?
13. When the NDA funding funding period of the programme elapses, are you confident that the programme is sustainable and that it will continue to provide with the needs of the community?
14. The MPDC was established to restore peace in the area. Would you say that the programme has managed to ensure that peace is restored?

## APPENDIX 2

1. When and why was the organization established?
2. How did you learn about the support of the National Development Agency?
3. What have been the successes and the challenges of the organization?
4. How was the food security programme identified?
5. What were the objectives of the programme?
6. Have those objectives been achieved?
7. How many members do you have in the programme?
8. How does the person qualify to be a member of the MPDC programme? Do you need skills, location?, etc.
9. What do members benefit from being affiliate with MPDC?
10. What roles do beneficiaries of the programme play within the organization?
11. How does the programme ensure that all members of the community participate in the programme?
12. Since your initial aim was to restore peace in the area, how has this programme influenced peace in the area?
13. Has the programme achieved food security in the area, if yes, in what way?
14. What have been the most challenging issues in the programme? And how have those challenges been resolved?
15. Besides financial assistance, how else has the NDA been assisting the MPDC?
16. So far how has been your relationship with NDA?

## APPENDIX 3

### COMMUNITY QUESTIONNAIRE

#### RESEARCH ON THE FOOD SECURITY PROGRAMME IN THE AREA\

#### SOURCES OF FOOD IN THE AREA

1. Where do you get most of your food?

Buy from the market in town	1
Shop in the local market	2
Farming	3
Other	4

2. What are the problems you encounter in getting food from your source/s?  
.....  
.....

3. What have you done to solve the problem of food?  
.....  
.....  
.....

4. Do you think food is the main or a serious problem in the area? If yes, explain why you think so. If no, what is the main problem that you think needs to be addressed urgently and why?  
.....  
.....  
.....

#### LEVELS OF PARTICPATION IN THE PROGRAMME

5. What is the role of uMsinga Peace and Development Committee (MPDC) in the area?  
.....  
.....

6. When did you learn about the food programme run by the MPDC?

During the planning phase	1
During the implementation phase	2
During the launch of the programme	3
During the application phase	4
Never heard about it	5

7. How did you learn about the programme?

From the meeting called by MPDC	1
From other community members	2
From imbizo called by Inkosi	3
From meeting called by the NDA	4
Never heard about	5

8. What role, do you or your family play in the programme?

A Member of the MPDC	1
A staff member in the organisation	2
A worker in the field	3
A worker in the packhouse	4
None	5

If your answer is No. 5 of Q.8, what prevents your from participating in the programme?

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9. If you were given money by the NDA, what programme would you have started?

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10. Has the programme assisted you to access food? If yes, how? If no, why do feel that it has not?

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11. Besides having access to food in the area, what other problems has the programme helped to solved and how?.....

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12. Would you say that the programme has improved you life for better? If yes, how? If no. Why do you say so?

.....

.....

13. How would you describe improvement the programme has made in the community?

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14. How do you think the programme could be improved to ensure that satisfied the needs of the community?

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.....Thank you for you co-operation.....

## APPENDIX 4

### Questions for the Farmers Support Group (FSG)

1. What is the area of focus for FSG in community development?
2. How did you get into partnership with Msinga Peace and Development Committee?
3. What kind of support do you offer to MPDC as a partner?
4. How does MPDC contribute in the partnership?
5. So far, how has the partnership fulfilled your expectations?
6. What are challenges you are experiencing in this partnership?
7. Being the partner that is located in the urban area, how do you view your reception by the community or the beneficiaries?
8. How has your partnership with the MPDC influenced or hindered the success of the programme?

## APPENDIX 5

### Questions for Dr Hendrieks

#### **A. About the new food security programme in the School of Science and Agriculture.**

1. What is your area of focus within the programme?
2. Can you explain about the nature of the programmes of food security offered by the school? For an example, when and why was the programme introduced. What is its vision and mission?
3. How has the programme changed since it was introduced and why?
4. How is food security defined in your programme?
5. How does the programme involve the students in the current food security? Programmes either at government or community level?
6. What kind of problems have you identified in those programmes (community programmes, government programmes)

#### **B. Nature of the food security programmes**

7. What is your general assessment in the approaches on food security programme currently being implemented at a community level?
8. Which development approach/es would you regard as appropriate to ensure sustainable food security in the household?
9. I understand that there are debates currently going on in an attempt to develop a food security policy. What are the central issues you think this policy should address?