LEARNING DEMOCRACY

A CASE STUDY OF LEARNING DEMOCRACY IN A PERI-URBAN COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT PROJECT

Marguerite Smith

This thesis is submitted in fulfilment of the academic requirements for the Degree of Master of Education in the School of Community Development and Adult Education, University of KwaZulu-Natal. All work for this thesis was completed at the former University of Natal.

Supervisor: Professor Astrid von Kotze

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I. ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

II. DECLARATION

This thesis is submitted in fulfilment of the academic requirements for the Degree of Master of Education in the School of Community Development and Adult Education, University of KwaZulu-Natal.

I, Marguerite Amanda Smith, student number 202524605, hereby declare that this dissertation is my own unaided work, unless otherwise stated. It is submitted for the Degree of Master of Education, to the University of KwaZulu-Natal in Durban. Neither this dissertation, nor part thereof, has been submitted before for any degree or examination at any other University. All work for this thesis was completed at the former University of Natal.

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Summary of tables, graphs, sketches and pictures in order of appearance.

1. INTRODUCTION – DEVELOPING THE RESEARCH IDEA

The 1996 constitution of South Africa was adopted as the supreme law of the Republic so as to establish a new society based on democratic values, to 'improve the lives of all citizens and to free the potential of all persons by every means possible' (1996:Section 27). Every person now has certain inherent rights which were denied to most prior to the 1994 elections. All persons have the right to dignity, and the right to have their dignity respected and protected. The State agrees, 'within its resources as outlined in its macro economic strategy GEAR' (Beck 2000:195) to take reasonable legislative and other measures to achieve the progressive realization of people's rights and to have these rights respected. There is a major shift in the way society is governed. Government legislation reflects the move away from the harsh, discriminatory laws of the past, to a new social order based on democratic principles.

Most welfare organizations are willing to embrace the new dispensation and some are well advanced in the transformation process which embraces the developmental approach to social welfare.

This research looks at two such organizations within the context of a case study. Its purpose is not to detail the difficulties and tensions faced by the organizations in terms of the implementation of a developmental approach to social welfare, but rather to explore how two groups of people from very diverse backgrounds, politically, historically and economically, learn to work together on a developmental project during a time of monumental change. It details how the two organisations made progress together in spite of their many difficulties and differences, to bring each phase of the Project to fruition during the period October 1997 – October 2001.

I use the actual geographical names of the Project during the research but the names of the organisations and the participants have been changed to protect identities.

1.1. THE PROJECT

The study looks at two organisation which came together to work on a common project. The Project began with a request from a small community based organisation (OTHANDWENI) to a larger urban based organisation (AGEWISE) for help. The help

involved acquiring legal documentation to prove ownership of some land in the Amaoti community. OTHANDWENI had dreams of establishing an old-age home on the land but they were denied the fulfilment of their dreams because they could not access the right authoritative voices to help them.

The Project is in a peri-urban community with a population of 600 000. The community is under-resourced, with above average unemployment. High levels of political unrest had made it difficult to sustain service delivery in the community but the two organizations (AGEWISE and OTHANDWENI), working together, managed to bring the first two phases of the Project to fruition. In the research, what I refer to as the Project is a village for pensioners and disabled people, and for children orphaned by the Aids pandemic. It is presently under construction (2003).

Phase 1, started and completed in 1999 included fencing a section of the land and levelling it before moving a pre-fabricated training school unit on to site.

Phase 2, started in 1999 and completed in July 2000 included the construction of a multi-purpose hall, ablution block and three shops.

In April 2001 a meeting with the broader community was held to establish the level of support for Phase 3 which would include sheltered housing for the elderly, disabled and the orphaned children left in their care, and a special unit for those who could no longer look after themselves.

I was asked to conduct a research programme in the area on behalf of AGEWISE, Project Shelter 2002, to find out what the community members wanted and expected from the phase of a project being planned in the year 2002-3. The Shelter 2002 Quantitative Research posed various questions of the participants, who were selected at random. The answer to each question was limited to one of a number pre-selected as likely to be most appropriate. While the result of the research produced enough evidence on which to base the decision to proceed with the Project, it lacked insight into a deeper understanding of the people in the community, especially those involved as participants in building the Project. Another kind of research was needed, namely research that would explore the diverse backgrounds of the two groups of people and question what made them work together on the Project during a time of turmoil and rapid change in South Africa.

1.2. THE RESEARCH QUESTION

The people involved in the development of the Project were two small groups of individuals. Some represented a well-established, large, formal welfare organisation (AGEWISE) and others a newly established, small community based organisation (OTHANDWENI). They had had to make radical changes in the delivery of services. Both the groups were established and functioned primarily to care for older persons. They had to learn how to work together during times of great change and survive together in spite of many difficulties, to bring each phase of the Project to fruition. In many ways this can be seen as a microcosm of the country, as its many peoples learned to work together. I explored this learning within the context provided, by asking the questions:

- how do two diverse and disparate groups work together to create a successful enterprise?

- and how is this process also a process of learning to work democratically?

THE RESEARCH PROBLEM

How do two diverse and disparate groups work together to create a successful enterprise?

How is this process also a process of learning democracy?

AGEWISE
- Predominately White
- Large Organisation
- Deep Resources
- Established Infrastructure
- Experience in Dealing with Government
- Experience in Dealing with the Elderly
- No Clear Vision for Amaoti

The Project

OTHANDWENI
- Predominately Black
- Very Small Organisation
- Little or No Resources
- Limited Infrastructure
- Clear Vision for Amaoti
- Support of Community
- Knows the issues but is not sure how to resolve them

The project's development will provide the case study for this research

Chart: Diagram Depicting Research Problem

As depicted above the Project provided the Case Study for this research. Its development was determined by the relationship established between two very diverse groups of people. In the diagram above on the left is AGEWISE, a previously white organisation which had developed a strong infrastructure and a wide range of

influential contacts and supporters. The organisation had no clear vision for the development of the Amaoti community. They had skilled social workers who were experienced in dealing with older persons; they had little experience of development work. On the right of the diagram is the small, newly established OTHANDWENI. They had a dream for their community but they did not have the resources, or the contacts necessary to make their dream come true. They were already well known in their community and they enjoyed high level community support. They wanted help from AGEWISE.

The research probed the relationship which these two groups built over an extended period of time, October 1997 – October 2001, as they developed a successful enterprise.

The starting point for this research was to explore the diverse backgrounds of the two groups, and to explore the history of these two groups of people and what made them work together on the Project during a time of turmoil and rapid change. The research questions must be understood in the context of a changing South Africa.

1.3. THE CONTEXT: A CHANGING SOUTH AFRICA

The National Party came to power in 1948, whereupon government legislated for an apartheid system. The whole fabric of society was organized, funded and controlled along racial lines, including the systems of education, health and welfare. People were forbidden to associate with those of another race group except on the terms and conditions developed by the apartheid government.

The government adopted a welfare system based on the UK system which had adopted the theories of Beveridge and Keynes (Giddens 2002:16). In the South African context of the time this translated into the provision of an 'affluent welfare state' (Marais 1998:29) for whites. The system operated along the discriminatory, racial lines imposed by government. It guaranteed white workers jobs and this enabled them to access loans and enable them to buy and build homes and care appropriately for their children. Vast resources were expended by the state in 'education, health, cultural, recreational and sports infrastructures and services for whites' (Marais 1998:29).

The white trade unions won collective bargaining agreements and defended the privileged position of white people against any attempts to cut wages by elevating the lowly-paid people of other race groups. The great majority of black people were ruled

out of the 'circuit of production, distribution and even consumption' (Marais 1998:29). Access to all but menial jobs was restricted and education was specifically designed to 'equip blacks only with the rudimentary requirements required for entry into the lower ranks of the labour market' (Marais 1998:29). Some black people managed to rise above the economic level allowed by government but for most black people very low wages did not provide enough to feed and care for extended family members and there was little expenditure available for housing or medical care. There was no safety net provided for black people by the state.

Many private initiatives by church and private welfare groups offered a number of care mechanisms to help provide services to other race groups but, in the main, these services were rendered along strict racial lines, as government policy and funding dictated.

The Government developed a 'residual' social welfare system which decreed that social welfare was a privilege and not a right. It excluded the majority of the people from the system and it also insisted on conditions being met for eligibility before services could be rendered. The system resisted any movements towards change and the involvement of the recipients of services in the decision-making processes was positively discouraged. Few recipients of services, for example, had a voice in the government or in welfare bodies that made decisions concerning them. The system did not provide opportunities for learning which could empower or enlighten the recipients so that their future actions could help them towards self-fulfilment and enrichment. There was no identifiable process by which most of the recipients of services could make representations to authoritative bodies. In order for a group of people to form a body to represent and provide services for people in need they had to conform to the prevailing welfare norms which were subject to the apartheid legislation; hence registration certificates under the then National Welfare Act and the Fund Raising Act indicated the race group to be served. Registration had to be applied for through the various departments of welfare, each of which dealt with one specific race group. Social work was case-work driven and there was little or no support for community or development work. Funding from the Department of Welfare, in the form of subsidies, did not recognise work not linked to individual case work. People working in the welfare field, and the various recipients of services provided, were made powerless to effect meaningful change.

This changed with the new government which designed and implemented new welfare systems. Rapid change was expected of welfare organisation such as AGEWISE and OTHANDWENI.

1.4. POLITICAL CHANGES

The release of Nelson Mandela and the unbanning of the ANC in 1990 led to the first free and fair elections in South Africa in 1994. South Africans managed to transfer power from an authoritarian, racist regime to a democratic government. South Africans of all races and creeds were free to celebrate differences and diversity in a new rainbow nation. The country changed from a racist, apartheid past to a multi-party democracy. For the first time the majority of people had the right to exercise the power to elect their representatives to government and to question the actions of both local and national government officials.

That South Africa managed to transfer power from an authoritarian and racist regime to a liberal democracy without a major conflict remains a world-recognized, momentous achievement. This happened through a protracted and heavily negotiated system of pact-making during which some individuals and groups had to compromise in order to assist the process. Nothing could stop what Cyril Ramaphosa called 'the democracy train' (Beck 2000:188). Lodge (Lodge 1999:68) argues that a liberal democracy does not mean very much when there is a situation where one party dominates the political arena; specifically where the party is also a national movement and is dominated by one race. Certainly the election results in the country seemed to indicate that voting, in general, reflected racial affiliations. The exception was in KwaZulu-Natal, where the electorate divided the votes between the ANC and the IFP, and in the Eastern Cape, where class and wealth determined the voting patterns.

Political tension between parties aggravated tension in the provinces and at times led to violence in the townships. In Amaoti, for example political violence robbed the community and the Project of some good leaders (See Chapter 4 for more detail). In spite of the violence however, there remained a commitment by most political leaders, particularly at grass roots level, as can be seen by the involvement of many local councillors in The Project, to continue to co-operate as they worked to fulfil the promise of a new democracy. New political structures at national and local level endeavoured to be more inclusive and democratic.

The achievements which South Africa has made are acknowledged.

'Since 1994 South Africa has possessed all the institutions and mechanisms which are normally understood to constitute a fully fledged liberal democracy. These include a universal suffrage, based on proportional representation, for a range of legislatures, national, regional and local; a multiplicity of political parties; a constitutional court, a constitution which itself guarantees an extensive range of freedoms, many of them entrenched by a bill of rights; a number of commissions concerned to protect specific kinds of rights, including an Independent Electoral Commission; a Judicial Service Commission which helps to restrain politically partisan court appointments; privately owned newspapers and broadcasting industries' (Lodge 1999:68).

In spite of this, South Africa remains 'one of the most unequal societies, with Namibia the only country in Africa worse off.'[1] There are historical reasons why this is so, but sentiments both in South Africa and elsewhere (the World Bank, for example) are questioning why, after nine years of democracy, a more equitable society does not exist. This concern is shared by people in the local communities, such as in Amaoti where the Project is under construction, where the people have not yet seen the anticipated physical signs of their new democracy.

Expectations were high after the elections in 1994. The new government embarked on an acceleration of the transitional process, and the new constitution was introduced in 1996 as the supreme law of the Republic and was adopted to establish:

'A society based on democratic values, social and economic justice, equality and fundamental human rights and to improve the quality of life of all citizens and to free the potential of all persons by every means possible' (Constitution of South Africa 1996).

Proposed new legislation indicated momentous changes in the way people would be governed, and people expected major transformations in health, education and welfare systems. The Project under investigation provided real evidence of people taking the new legislations seriously.

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[1] Ramphele Mamphele, World Bank Director quoted in the Daily News 24th April 2003.

1.5. ECONOMIC CHANGES

The ANC developed the ambitious Reconstruction and Development Programme (RDP) to provide for a better standard of life for all South Africans. The RDP called for the state to invest in development and nation building. It anticipated that this investment would result in better economic growth fuelled by people-driven initiatives. Jobs would be created and wealth redistributed. It recognized the need to deliver:

> *'Modern and effective services like electricity, water telecommunication, transport education and training to the people in an environment of peace and security' (Marais 1998:180).*

The goals of the RDP were to 'alleviate poverty and reconstruct the economy' (Beck 2000:194) to provide 'growth, development, reconstruction and redistribution'. In order to achieve these stated goals, the government needed to:

> *'promote economic growth in conjunction with economic reconstruction and social development' (Beck 2000:194).*

Government approved the RDP in June 1994 and during its first year many initiatives resulted in better services to the vulnerable in society. These included free health care for young children and pregnant mothers, school feeding schemes, land reform, the provision of housing and roads, clean water and electricity. However, it soon became evident that the problem could not be solved simply by these initiatives. Unemployment remained very high and the majority of people in poor rural areas remained without basic services. Part of the problem was determined to be the lack of capacity of local and provincial officials to carry out the RDP programmes. There were simply not enough trained and skilled people to implement such an ambitious and far-reaching initiative. Another problem stemmed from the legacy of apartheid, which encouraged:

> *'Rent boycotts, non payment for services and bond payment refusals' (Beck 2000:194)*

and left Local Government Departments without sufficient funds to operate and provide amenities.

In 1995 President Mandela launched his Masakane (Let us build together) campaign to encourage people to pay for the services they received. This initiative had limited

success, and people continue to avoid payment for basic services which many people view as their right.

By 1996 the terminology of the RDP changed significantly and refocused on efficiency of service delivery and sustainability. The emphasis was on a growth-driven economy. 'GEAR (Growth, Employment and Redistribution policy) was introduced in March 1997' (Beck 2000:195). This policy aimed to create jobs and a more equitable distribution of wealth by tariff reforms and partnerships between the private and the public sectors. The new approach was market-driven and strongly influenced by world financial leaders, such as the World Bank and the IMF, whose strategies included lending policies associated with programmes aimed at reduction in public spending and taxation, and a move towards privatization of provision of public services. GEAR, drawn up by a group of economists, was probably based on a Reserve Bank model similar to that used for the apartheid governments and was immediately dubbed 'neo liberal' (Beck 2000:195).

GEAR promised to increase annual growth by an average of 4.2 %, create 1.35 million new jobs by 2000, boost exports by an average of 8.4 % and drastically improve the social infrastructure. One of the significant ways in which this was to be achieved was by drastically cutting state spending, the intention being to 'drive the budget deficit down to 3 per cent of GDP by 2000' (Marais 1999:161).

The subsequent reduction in government funding for welfare and education is significant and has resulted in major changes within these sectors. The major changes that AGEWISE made are documented in Chapter 4. Welfare and Education Departments have had to accept a need to make the best use of existing resources and to operate within the constraints of existing budgets. The draft copies of the social welfare policies indicated a move towards a more market-driven, macro-economic policy favoured by such western financial power houses as the World Bank and the IMF. The neo-liberal view that markets and not social welfare needs should be the major role player in the delivery of social services led to a massive reduction in public spending and an emphasis on sustainability. This more centre right approach, encapsulated in the South African government's GEAR Policy, emphasized fiscal discipline and sustainability and resulted in severe budgetary restrictions, cuts in government spending and a move towards privatization. The major shift in government's approach to the delivery of welfare services and the new funding policies presented welfare organizations with many challenges, as they determined how to transform and to present services in innovative ways, working according to a new set of

values and concepts and within the new budgetary restraints. The GEAR policy was expected to provide for economic growth which would result in social development. This has not happened: jobs continue to be shed not only in industry but also in the welfare sector as subsidies are reduced or curtailed, and there is a deepening level of unemployment and poverty in the country. Part of the problem is that private welfare organizations are now trying to reform and transform by implementing the new Social Welfare Policy whether or not they are still funded, based on criteria no longer appropriate as enforced by the previous government. The social policy of the country is affected by the economic policy GEAR. Where there is limited funding available for the implementation of welfare policy, there will be severely restricted service delivery. The constitution and the various government policy documents led to a very high expectation of participation and involvement in service delivery. Problems within the welfare sector are encountered because delivery is not always possible in the current situation. An example of this is funding which the members of fledgling OTHANDWENI did not receive through the RDP for their old-age home.

The welfare system is still in transition and delivery of services is seen to be slow. The system requires the promulgation of new legislation and the repealing of virtually every aspect of the old. Welfare organisations like AGEWISE report that this is now happening, and new policy documents are drafted after consultation with professionals and the recipients of service. This is proving to be time-consuming, but the outcome is expected to be a more participatory service delivery. Expectations are high that there will be a correspondingly high rate of service delivery, specifically to the previously disadvantaged people in the rural and peri-rural areas.

1.5.1.   Financing Policy

The Financing Policy for Developmental Social Welfare Services of 1999 provided for the aged in the policy framework for the transformation of social welfare services. The guiding principles detailed in Clause1.6.3 of the Financing Policy states that older persons should have access to:

- A continuum of care ... to the least restrictive and most *empowering* services with programmes appropriate to their individual needs ...

- empowerment opportunities ... promoting the resourcefulness of ... older persons by providing *opportunities to use and build their own capacity* and support networks and act on their own choices and sense of responsibility.

- Rights ... as established in the constitution and international conventions ratified by South Africa (Clause 1.6.3.).

Again these clauses highlight a major paradigm shift, not just at policy level but, as the various clauses suggest, a people-centred, more democratic approach is expected at every level of society and for all people, including the elderly.

Finances are not yet (8/03) available to support these initiatives.

1.6. SOCIAL CHANGES

South Africa has moved from a racially divided society, where the development of segregated townships enforced racial divides, to a democratic future in a rainbow nation in which all the people, irrespective of race and ancestral background, are equal before the law. Government service has changed from exclusive and concealed to a more inclusive and transparent determination and delivery of service. Lock points out that:

> *'probably the most difficult tasks in the creation of a socially integrated democracy in South Africa are those carried out by the local government, for it is over local allocation of resources that the material conflicts between the different communities are most evident' (Lock 1999:41).*

The majority of the people of South Africa had great expectations of the new democracy. Many anticipated an immediate improvement in their life-styles, in the delivery of basic services, in better health care and education and most looked to their local government bodies to allocate resources and provide services. The Constitution of South Africa compels the state to 'develop a comprehensive social security system' (Section 27 1996:108). It affirms:

> *'the universal right to social security, including appropriate social assistance for those unable to support themselves and their dependents, mandating the state to take reasonable legislative and other measures within its available resources to achieve the progressive realisation of each of these rights' (Constitution of South Africa section 27 1996:108).*

The social security goals aim to redress past injustices and ensure social justice:

> 'improving the quality of life for all South Africans by alleviating poverty and suffering and freeing the potential of each citizen' (Taylor 2002:9).

In order to identify and then address the crucial gaps in the delivery of social services, an inter-departmental task team convened by the Department of Social Development was established in 1999. Of significance is that a senior social worker of the AGEWISE was a member of this team and her knowledge of government thinking had an impact on the two organisations. The task team recommended a move towards a:

> 'More comprehensive and integrated social security structure and that a common revenue collection system be investigated to support the recommended structures' (Taylor 2002:154).

The delivery of services and the alleviation of poverty are critical issues of deep concern to the people in South Africa. Much has been achieved, Statistics South Africa 1995 and the October Household Survey and 2002 Labour Force Survey quote some very impressive figures such as:

- 8,339,054 people gaining access to clean water,

- 3,803,160 people connected to the electricity grid and

- 1,462,628 subsidized housing units completed or under construction (2002).

However delivery is seen as inadequate by people at grass roots level and many people are frustrated by a lack of visible signs of their new democracy. Government is conscious of these problems. They are highlighted in the various clauses in the new legislation and policy documents going through parliament at this time (11/03). The new welfare system actively seeks a more inclusive democratic approach to service delivery and a focus on empowerment of the people, so that they are enabled to build a better life for themselves. How will this happen?

1.6.1.   A new Social Welfare System

Government has adopted a new Social Welfare System which has moved away from the policies that had governed the past. It provides for a Developmental Social Welfare

System which is characterized by re-affirming that social welfare is a basic human right available to all citizens:

> 'Social welfare thus becomes a right and not a privilege' (Gray 1998:144).

It seeks to:

> 'integrate social welfare with economic development based on the premise that social development cannot take place without economic development and that economic development is meaningless unless it is accompanied by improvement in the social welfare of the population as a whole. The objective of social development is to bring about a marked improvement in the well being of the people in society and this is brought about by the provision of health services, education, housing, urban and rural development and land reform' (Department of Welfare 1997 cited in Leppens 2002).

People have expectations that their basic human needs will be met by government. There is little funding available through government sources to provide for everyone's basic needs and this situation causes problems at community levels as people and organisations, like AGEWISE and OTHANDWENI, work within new policy guidelines.

It is appropriate at this point to look at the new Welfare Policy.

1.6.2.   New Welfare Policy

After the 1994 elections, the first draft document produced by the Minister of Welfare and Population development entitled 'Towards a New Social Welfare Policy and Strategy' (1995) established major changes and emphasized that service delivery would be to the previously disadvantage communities.   This and subsequent government white papers indicated radical change in the delivery of services and called for a more equitable, people-centred, democratic approach. The white paper for social welfare in 1997 clearly outlines the principles, policies, programmes and recommendations that underpin the new Developmental Social Welfare System in South Africa.   This document is particularly relevant to this research because it prepares a new, inclusive democratic system to replace the old, authoritarian exclusive system.

What is particularly relevant is the fact that the state bodies and most welfare organisations, including OTHANDWENI and AGEWISE, were ill prepared for a total change in the way they operated. I have listed below some of the important clauses in the new policy document. Following each quote I have phrased a question which highlights the difficulty of implementation. The project I will be looking at has to deal with, and overcome, each of these implementation challenges.

- Clause 7 (b) for example recognizes the need for partnerships between the Government the Community and the Private Welfare Sector in order to achieve an effective system.

How will this happen when there are no initiatives planned to assist the implementation of this new approach and the funding policy does not provide adequately for the new initiatives?

- Clause 10 provides for programmes that promote non-discrimination, tolerance, mutual respect, diversity and the inclusion of all groups in society and emphasizes the groups not to be excluded, including older people.

How will the people work together in this new democratic method when they have little or no experience of how to approach this new methodology and have little in common with each other?

- Clause 16 introduces the concept of sustainability and emphasises that services must be financially viable, cost-efficient and effective.

How will the people who work with the elderly, children and the vulnerable, develop sustainable projects and create meaningful initiatives that will provide more than income for a limited number of the more able-bodied people?

In Chapter 8 of the Policy document, pages 70-72 specifically deal with the policy concerning the aged.

- Clause 82(l) states that community development approach will inform community-based interventions to meet the needs of the elderly (Government White Paper For Social Welfare 1997).

How will the developmental approach, which is new to many of the formal welfare organisation, be implemented when the people at community level expect food, housing and jobs?

1.6.3. The South African Policy for Older Persons

The South African Policy for Older Persons is now in its eleventh draft (3/4/03). In its preamble it states as its vision:

> 'A society in which people are enabled to age with security and dignity and to participate in their communities as citizens with full rights' (S.A.Policy for older persons).

This clause is particularly relevant because it raises the question of how the various people will be enabled to participate with full rights. The 2003 South African Policy for Older Persons is very specific in its view on ageism and the need to provide for an environment in which:

> 'the role of older persons as attractive, diverse and creative individuals making vital contributions should be promoted' (S.A. Policy for older persons).

The draft of the Policy reinforces the plan of action adopted at the 2nd World Assembly on Ageing and details eight issues concerning older persons and proposes that these issues can be addressed by achieving specific objectives. For example the policy states that 'older persons are to participate fully in society and development' and that this can be achieved 'by the recognition of the social, cultural, economic and political contribution of older persons to society'. Older persons are to have:

> 'Access to knowledge, education and training and this can be assured by promoting equality of opportunity throughout life with respect to continuing education, training and retraining as well as vocational guidance and placement services; and full utilisation of the potential and expertise of the persons of all ages, recognising the benefits of increased experience with age' (S.A. Policy for older persons).

Society expects:

> 'Radical changes in the delivery of services and a change of attitude towards a more inclusive, people centred, democratic approach' (S.A. Policy for older persons).

How will this happen?

The policy requested specific actions in order for older persons to be given the opportunity to participate more fully; namely, that society recognizes the social, political and economic contribution made by older persons to society. What the policy did not do was clearly bridge the gap that existed between the policy and the procedures, and the actualizing of these systems in practice at community level. It did not give clear instructions as to how the high expectation of service delivery was to be met and by whom. South Africa has a history of systemic abuse, racial segregation and people who have had little in their lives to prepare them for monumental changes. All South Africans, including the formal welfare organisation like AGEWISE and the community based organisations like the OTHANDWENI, are the products of the apartheid system, an authoritative, racist system where there was little or no opportunity to practise democracy or to know what it means. Although democracy is spoken of in both education and welfare policies, it is not clearly defined and it is not clearly established how it may be possible for people with so little preparation to adopt a democratic approach to working together in specific situations. All the changes at a national and local level are part of the process of building a democratic country. The Project provided an opportunity to explore how this was reflected at the local community level through the eyes of the participants.

1.7. THE RATIONALE

My job was to create awareness in all sectors of the community as to the ageing process and the needs of older people. I found myself teaching in many schools and educational institutions and also within the corporate and business sector, working closely with highly trained social workers, government officials and community leaders. I made myself familiar with the social welfare system, particularly that related to older persons as it existed and operated during the apartheid years. I continued to learn about the changing welfare systems as South Africa journeyed from an apartheid past to a nation built on democratic principles. I wanted to know how the momentous changes taking place in the country would also change the social welfare system, particularly as it related, in practice, to care of the aged. I questioned how the people would learn to work together in a more participatory way, when there was little in the past that had prepared them for this way of working together. It is these questions that underlie my research into the project work at Amaoti (also known as "Amawoti") and the two groups that drive the project.

1.8. GENERAL INDICATION OF THE RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The research used a qualitative methodology and a case study approach, as detailed in Chapter 3, to look at the way two groups of people came together and worked to develop a Project. Using the words of the participants it describes what happened at the different stages of the development as the participants worked together in the context of political, social and economic change.

The following methods of data capture are indicated: participant observation, interviews, focus groups and the use of projective techniques, the collection of documents and photographs. These techniques form a rich landscape of emotive interaction.

The changing relationships displayed by the two groups as they work together can be investigated to see what learning behaviour has, either consciously or unconsciously, been displayed and whether or not the learning process was also a process of learning democracy.

1.9. THE ARRANGEMENT OF THE DISSERTATION

Chapter 1 has given the background to the Project, including a broad history of the political, economic and social situation in a changing South Africa and drawn attention to the issues that have most impact on the participants who work in the field of welfare dealing with older persons. Research questions were posed and an overview of the research methodology identified.

Chapter 2 defines and then explores the concepts and theories of learning and democracy. The chapter provides a theoretical background to the case study and assists with the development of a framework of learning democracy for and within a specific context.

Chapter 3 establishes the research design and methodology selected for the study. It states the focus of the research and why the qualitative paradigm was selected as the methodology. Sub-sections of the chapter deal with the Case Study approach within a qualitative research methodology, indicating the limitations of this approach. Methods of data capture including the use of focus groups and of projective techniques are included.

Chapter 4 situates the research. The chapter explores the history of the Inanda and Amaoti area, and how recent events are changing the situation. It looks at the two organisations that are central to the Project and examines the way the organisations came into being and how they function today.

Chapter 5 presents the case study. The data is separated into two time periods in line with Project milestones. The first section begins with background information from the interviews and the focus groups within the period 1987-1997. This section describes the informal relationship between the two groups. The second section starts with the formalisation of the relationship and then focuses on the period 1997-2001 as remembered by the participants during the in-depth interviews and the focus groups. Both sections of this chapter aim to record the chronological sequence of events in the voice of the participants. The spoken words of the participants are produced verbatim and printed in italics for ease of reference.

Chapter 6 analyses the findings from the case study. It draws together information from the interviews and focus groups and describes how two diverse and disparate groups work together to create a successful enterprise.

Chapter 7 draws from the literature review and from the previous chapters and substantiates the notion that the two groups go through a learning process. It analyses key moments, described in detail in the previous chapters using the democratic actions as tools for analysis, and determines how the two groups developed a better, more participatory way of working together.

Chapter 8 concludes by analysing some of the insights gained through the study. Learning from experience can only happen on the basis of critical reflection, and my conclusions are offered as a contribution to a better understanding of how groups of people in 'the new South Africa' come to work together on a common project in a more democratic way.

Appendices and a comprehensive bibliography follow the above chapters. The bibliography references all paper, book, internet, government and personal sources.

2. CONCEPTUAL/THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

2.1. INTRODUCTION

Theorists have developed many ways of viewing, measuring and interpreting learning. It has been defined as an act, as a process or as an experience of gaining knowledge and skills. When learning occurs it allows the movement from beginner to expert as new knowledge and abilities are acquired. I make the assumption that learning requires an increase in knowledge or skills, that the knowledge can be used for a practical purpose or for abstracting meaning from what we do and that it is a process which allows us to understand.

On the one hand there is the approach to learning which explores learning as an internal psychological process which leads to a gain in knowledge. (Knowledge development is detailed by Usher and Bryant 1989 and Peters et al 1991). Psychologically, learning is strengthened by the brain as it builds new pathways and increases connections that we can then rely on as we seek to learn more. Tesser (1995) describes how we learn by the formation of cell assemblies and phase sequences. People learn by building these assemblies and sequences. Most of this type of learning is formal and takes place in educational establishments. It involves abstract knowledge, taken away from the everyday happenings of life that would make it real, and it is still generally equated with 'individual learners, educational technique and course provision' (Foley 1999:2).

On the other hand theorists such as Foley challenge this type of learning and asked for a more 'interpretative and critical' approach (Foley 1999:2). Learning such as described by John Dewey in 1916. Dewey viewed learning as:

'The transmission, by means of communication, of habits of doing, thinking and feeling from the older to the younger ... a communication which includes ... the ideals, hopes expectations standards, opinions of members of society' (Dewey 1916 reprint 1966:3).

John Dewey believed that learning developed from experience and social interactions and his early work has formed the basis of many theories since 1916. This learning is often unrecognised. It remains unexplored because it is not just about learning in the psychological sense, building new sequences, but it has more to do with experience

and background which allow us to learn new concepts and create new ways of behaving and doing. It takes place in a multitude of environments and for a never ending number of reasons, some never articulated.

2.2. SOCIAL THEORIES OF LEARNING

I started the review by looking at popular education because it evolved from community work; it begins at a local level and focuses on problems or deficiencies which the community takes action to change. I then looked at work which emanated from the Popular Education Theory, in particular, learning explored in social movements and in social action as they are clearly identified as having developed within the framework of Popular Education Theory. I then looked for more information regarding learning in groups. Popular education facilitates groups, assisting them to identify their problems and to formulate plans to make changes. I studied collective learning as devised by Kilgore (1999:191) to help me to understand how this learning takes place and then looked at learning ideas within a specific community project. To do this I use the work of Lave and Wenger (1998:11) who offer a theory of situated learning as a tool for analysing learning in the context that reflects how knowledge and skills are obtained and applied in everyday situations. The Project is not a formal learning environment and the two groups of participants are not 'doing' learning but they do work together over an extended period of time in an informal situation and during times of conflict. I am specifically looking to understand learning in informal situations:

- learning in groups: constructing a collective identity,

- learning in conflict situations.

That learning takes place is undisputed but what is debatable is the type and value of the learning and exactly how it takes place. To find answers to these questions and to understand informal learning more fully I explored The Popular Education Theory, first detailed by Paulo Freire in Brazil in the 1960s.

2.3. LEARNING IN POPULAR EDUCATION

People usually associate learning with schooling and they expect a planned intervention with the ultimate goal of preparing the learner for employment. Adult education is often seen simply as a means to perpetuate social and economic systems. Popular Education is different; its priority is 'to work among the many rural and urban

poor who form the vast majority of people in most third world countries' (Freire cited in Rick 1997:7). This theory holds that 'learning is a collective or group process beginning with the concrete experience of the participants, leading to reflection on that experience in order to effect positive change' (Freire cited in Rick 1997:7-12). Freire suggests that:

> 'People who get together, and have a common goal they want to achieve, even in a difficult environment, learn informally and incidentally, motivated by a sense of common purpose' (Freire cited in Rick 1999:7).

His students learned to read and write through discussion of basic problems they experienced and through the realization that they had the power to change their existence by reflecting on the problem, making appropriate decisions as to how the matter could be improved and by then taking action. The term Freire used for this process was 'conscientization' (Freire cited in Barr 1999:15). Freire criticised the traditional role of the educator and the role of the teacher as a depositor of knowledge. He maintains that the situation where the teacher acts and the students are acted upon is oppressive. However the teacher has authority of knowledge which is earned and not given (Freire cited in Kilgore 1999:193).

Learning is confirmed as an informal process and one driven by a need to bring about social change. In addition, learning is identified as a group or collective process and one in which everyone learns. The group is motivated by the knowledge of the power they have to bring about changes. There is a shared vision or goal which motivates the group.

The idea that the realization of the use of power facilitates a process of change is pertinent to this research. The French scholar Foucault is of interest. His interest is in 'soft' and 'secret' forms of domination, for example the power that allows others to speak and with what authority. Foucault sees people as 'governed or controlled by discourses' (Foucault cited in Foley 1999:15). I will look for the use of and the withholding of power both as a tool to bring about change and as a barrier to its taking place.

2.4. LEARNING IN SOCIAL MOVEMENTS

Social Movements have been described as 'important learning sites' (Welton 1993:261). John Holford (1995:45) however, maintains that there is a need to move away from:

> 'the appreciation that social movements are important phenomena in the learning process of the individuals (and even collectively of the groups and organizations) which compose them, to a view that they are central to the production of human knowledge itself' (Holford 1995:111).

The scope of social movements is vast. The case studies, produced as examples of social action capable of bringing about meaningful change, are remarkable; they tell the story of people learning in action. People learn about themselves, how they fit into their society and how they interact with others to help change their society: 'to hold that social movements are simply important learning sites is sociologically naïve'. They are much more than this (Griffin 1991:261). Foley (1999:14-26) for example, in his theoretical discussion of ideology and discourse and their relationship to learning in emancipatory struggles, looked at three very different case studies of women learning in community and workplace struggles in the USA. His insights are pertinent. His work demonstrated how the nature of the learning in social movements had certain broad commonalities. The women, for example, demonstrated a gain in confidence and useful skills and knowledge and they each developed a 'critical understanding of how power works in society' (Foley 1999:26).

Each generation seems to have its own social movements as well as any number of theories to explain and make sense of them. In the 1930s, for example, North American sociologists, worried by the growth in communist and fascist movements, drew on the theory of collective behaviour to focus their efforts on explaining why people participated in social movements. They saw this participation as 'irrational, even pathological'. This belief was rooted in 'social psychology and structured functionalism and reflected its origin in the study of people's (supposedly irrational) behaviour in crowds' (Tesser 1995). Because of the strain and emotional discomfort of some unstructured situations, people would begin to participate in a variety of spontaneous social movements, to aid or avoid the process of social change. Social Movements never take the shape predicted by theorists or activists, and they never appear or disappear to a recognizable time schedule. As Foley has stated:

'While important lessons can be learned from other struggles, there are no formulas; each struggle has its unique dynamic' (Foley 1999:26).

The learning identified is informal and unpredictable. Learning takes place as people take action to make social changes.

To explore how learning can take place in a volatile and broader situation where there is not one focus but a multiplicity of goals and where the individuals within the group are constantly changing, I look first to the theorists who have researched learning in social action.

2.5. LEARNING IN SOCIAL ACTION

Foley (1999) explores the ways in which people learn as they experience life. His work outlines a pattern which can be used to distinguish learning taking place as people experience their lives. He states that learning is much more powerful in an arena of tension, but he also maintains that relationships of domination are learned. This learning is significantly different from formal education, as it is more complex, contradictory, and demanding. The people, he maintains, engage in discourses and practices of social struggles in a very specific time frame and situation.

He suggests that the most significant learning occurs:

'informally and incidentally, in people's everyday lives. And some of the most powerful learning occurs as people struggle against oppression, as they struggle to make sense of what is happening to them and to work out ways of doing something about It' (Foley 1999: 2).

His primary interest is in learning how people learn in emancipatory struggle and he is convinced that understanding this is essential to the development of truly democratic politics. He views learning and education as very complex, with the notions of context and conflict as central issues within the learning environment. He agrees with McIntyre (1996) who believes that 'a phenomenology is most powerful if it is contextual, if it is social' (Foley 1999:12).

The learning Foley describes enabled people to become conscious of their ability and right to act and to the fact that their actions could make a meaningful difference.

Foley agrees that each struggle is a unique and dynamic learning opportunity. He suggests that

> *'satisfactory accounts of learning through struggle make connections between learning and education on the one hand and analysis of political economy, micro politics, ideology and discourse on the other and that by exploring the relationship between these variables a framework for analyzing learning and social struggle in diverse situations is possible' (Foley 1999:3).*

He lists five recommended questions as pertinent to the exploration.

- 'What forms do education and learning take?

- What are the crucial features of the political and economic context? How do they shape education and learning?

- What are the micro politics of the situation?

- What are the ideological and discursive practices and struggles of social movement actors and their opponents? To what extent do these practices and struggles facilitate or hinder emancipatory learning in action?

- What does all this mean for education? What interventions are possible and helpful?' (Foley 1999:3).

These ideas mark adult learning as significantly different from formal education. Adult Education is challenged. Foley views it as a system:

> *... this focuses on individual learners, educational technique and course provision,*

which, Foley maintains:

> *'excludes so much of adult learning' (Foley 1999:3).*

Adult learning is a complex and diverse sphere of human activity as central to human life as work or politics. He discusses the informal learning that takes place, for example, in the workplace or in communities and draws attention to the fact that in many instances the learning is such situations is:

'often incidental – it is tacit, embedded in action and is often not recognized as learning. The learning is therefore often potential or only half realised' (Foley 1999:3).

What is meant here is that rote learning often takes place simply by people repeating actions over and over, adjusting what they do to make it more efficient or more comfortable or more worthwhile. Learning is by doing not by planned cognition: the thought process becomes conscious when someone interrupts the cycle and asks for clarity - then many learning opportunities can be identified.

Learners in case studies reported upon by Foley expressed 'surprise and delight at the learning that was revealed' (Foley 1999:3). He described how women in Australia campaigned to save a rain forest and by doing so they experienced both instrumental and critical learning. Learning takes place incidentally as the learners focus totally on their actions. Foley maintains that this learning needs to be exposed so that its full value can be realised. In a development project, the people involved are not focused on learning, except where it pertains to skill development, therefore much of what is learnt by the participants would in fact be incidental.

Foley accepts that there are any number of learning methods, each with validity. He suggests that incidental learning is significant and that once it is 'exposed' it will enable individuals within groups to identify with each other. Their shared learning experiences may assist in building group identity.

Learning is reputed to be enhanced by conflict and struggle. Foley suggests that we can understand human history if we view it as a series of struggles, one group with another, where one group tries to dominate the other. He gives as examples the domination of slaves by their owners and examines the view of paternalism as an ideology which allowed 'slave owners to feel and appear virtuous' (Foley 1999:7). The slaves found ways to struggle against their situation by 'taking advantage of the paternalism and using it' (Foley 1999:8). Foley cites the use of Christianity as an example of this: the slaves were forced to go to church and they used the information which suited them to form their 'own religion founded not on racial hierarchy but on equality and mutual obligation' (Foley 1999:8).

This is significant for this research because AGEWISE was established during the apartheid years and operated along strict racial and paternalistic lines. The organisations have to change the way they operate in line with new government

systems. OTHANDWENI was founded in the new democratic era but the members have a history of paternalistic intervention. This is explored in more detail in Chapter 3.

How then does learning take place when there are very diverse groups involved and there are multiple goals? To explore this further I look at the collective learning theory.

2.6. THE COLLECTIVE LEARNING THEORY

The work of Kilgore (1999) emphasises differences and allows reflection on complex relationships that exist, aiming to explain how and why learning takes place in groups.

The 'group', which Kilgore defines as two or more diverse people, is understood to be 'the learner and constructor of knowledge'. It is the group's focus on their joint vision of social justice which motivates the group to act 'mostly in conflict with other groups'. Social action is taken in response to threats to social injustice, which Kilgore lists as homelessness, race and gender discrimination, weapons build-up and pollution. Kilgore cites Kasl and Marick (1997) to affirm that individual learning theories do not adequately explain 'a group as a learning system,' and Brown, Collins and Duguid (1989:192) to affirm that they do not 'necessarily situate the learning process correctly between knowing and doing'.

Kilgore views the theory of collective learning as a process which is positioned at the intersection of critical theory, (social renewal) and postmodernism (creation of space for the previously marginalized) (Collins 1995) and suggests further that 'collective learning places would be found where order arises from chaos and rich understandings are the result' (Kilgore 1999 citing Collins 1995:192).

Kilgore suggests that in order for social change to happen the group must have a strong social vision. She suggests that where no social vision exists one must be constructed by the group, and with a collective identity established in this way the lack of a social vision can be overcome. How this lack of a social vision affects learning, Kilgore explores by drawing from the work of Habermas (1989 cited in Kilgore 1999:193). Habermas explores the notion that natural social evolution develops within 'the system institutions' for keeping society safe and individuals relieved of the responsibility for meeting their physical needs. The reciprocal development of the life world:

'promotes individual growth and democracy, benefiting the system with ideals and ideas for improvement and mechanisms for democratically maintaining social order' (Kilgore 1999:193).

Kilgore debates the relationship between the system and the life-world and suggests that the magnitude of the intrusion of capitalistic/control systems into the life world results in a 'loss of wisdom' and offers as a reason the idea that learners cannot make sense of their lives because there is no 'critical reflection' as the life-world is 'colonized' by, for example, transnationals who have no:

'articulated principles of social justice and no administrative mechanisms for developing them. They are guided only by specific objectives of material growth, efficiency technological progress and global economics' (Kilgore 1999:194).

Kilgore is suggesting that a focus on an outcome which is linked to economics or technology will act as a barrier to learning and she suggests a way of refocusing so that critical reflection can take place, thus removing the barrier to learning. She achieves this by challenging the colonization and seeking to 'develop human codes of morality'. This is achieved by the construction of a 'collective identity,' defined as:

'a shared understanding of ends, means and field of action that provides a sense of continuity and permanence to the community' (Melucci 1995 quoted by Kilgore 1999:197)

and she uses Vygotsky's (1978 cited in Kilgore 1999:198) zone of proximinal development (ZPD) to help in the construction process. The ZPD is the distance between two determined levels of competence, one already developed at a specific time, and the other the new level achieved after intervention by a teacher or adult or peer guide.

Kilgore points out that this fails to indicate the further development stages taken by an individual which puts the learner beyond the teacher. Kilgore suggests that the potential for collective group learning is limited only when the diversity of the individuals and interactions with other groups is limited. 'A group has infinite development possibilities because of the diversity of the members'. She warns that group dynamics can be destructive:

'there is the potential for conflict, as diverse ideas and experience collide and that society needs to consider what is needed in response to the differences, the construction of moral norms is fraught with conflict, particularly in the post modern era in which diverse voices are entering with increasing frequency the public debate' (Kilgore 1999:195).

She sees the necessity for conflict for collective development: 'some arise to defend the status quo others to challenge it'. Collective action develops a sense of solidarity. This strengthens the group by motivating individuals to belong and to participate. Kilgore also points out the implicit threat of individuals compromising their own ideals and values because of the force of the group. Gamson (1992:495 cited in Kilgore 1999:200) suggests this may be overcome by keeping 'social relationships liberating rather than having them become a new and a more subtle form of oppression'.

In conclusion Kilgore (1999:196) suggests that the theory of collective learning would:

- 'be located in a local context within a larger social movement,

- examine how individual community members come to understand and participate in the construction of a collective identity yet maintain their own unique identities,

- include explanations of how communities develop and maintain a sense of solidarity,

- compel individuals to participate in collective social action stemming from a shared social vision' (Kilgore 1999:200).

Differences would be central in understanding the internal interplay among members of the learning community.

Research of this would include:

- 'the social, economic and political context of collective social action taken by a local community,

- other groups with which learning communities interact' (Kilgore 1999:200).

Conflict would be central in understanding the external interplay among the larger groups.

Educational practice, Kilgore believes, is not enough to ensure social change. It must include 'a vision of social justice'. Her collective learning theory is offered

> *'as a tool to enable researchers to examine how people construct shared visions of social justice and learn and act together to promote these shared visions' (Kilgore 1999:201).*

The learning explored here concerns learning in groups and the interaction between peoples from diverse backgrounds. There is a gap in this theory which is its focus on the need for a shared vision of social justice. The suggestion is made that this can be overcome by the participants developing a strong moral code and buying in to a system which enhances the group. A learning process constructed by the participants results in a collective identity and shared vision. There are tensions and conflicts which arise from participants who have diverse and divergent interests, and both Foley and Kilgore agree that learning is enhanced by situations of conflict. Learning here is seen as a powerful tool for constructing collective identities.

The Project development is linked to 'the system'. On the one hand it is driven by the new government policies which dictate that interaction between groups should be democratic, and on the other it is aligned to the economic dictates of the organisations, the donors and the government's funding policy. That the system has negatively impacted on the life-world is a potential barrier to learning, which Kilgore suggests can be overcome by building a collective identity.

I need to explore the idea that learning can take place in many and varied situations, and that it can be not only a tool to help construct collective identities but also a tool to be used to gain more knowledge from the situation, the environment in which the participants find themselves, and the actions that they take to move the project forward.

For this I look for a theory of Situated Learning.

2.7. SITUATED LEARNING

As the Project is clearly situated in a very specific time and place, and as it is necessary to understand individual and collective learning processes in and through action I look at situated learning as described by Wenger (1998).

Etienne Wenger places learning in the context of:

'lived experiences and in the belief that learning is as much a part of our daily lives as eating and sleeping' (Wenger 1998:266).

The assumption is that learning is 'fundamentally a social phenomenon reflecting our own deeply social nature, beings capable of knowing' (Wenger 1998:3). The primary focus of Wenger's theory is on 'learning as social participation'. He defines the process by which participants construct their identities in relation to the communities in which they practise and he theorizes that it is this participation which shapes what we do, who we are and how we interpret what we do.

He details the components necessary to characterize social participation as a process of:

- learning as community (learning as belonging)

- learning as practice (learning as doing)

- learning as meaning (learning as experience)

- learning as identity (learning as becoming) (Wenger 1998:5).

Wenger then takes this idea further and explores what is required to support learning and what matters about the learning process, for example, participation is discussed in detail, and from many perspectives. He views education as 'a mutual development process between communities and individuals, one that goes beyond socialization' (Wenger 1998:263). He questions the role of reified knowledge for educational purposes and suggests that in fact it may lead to 'a very brittle kind of understanding with very narrow application'. He points to the need for a 'balancing act, the primary focus must be on the negotiation of meaning rather than on the mechanics of information transmission and acquisition' (Wenger 1998:265). He agrees that the mechanics of learning however, do need to be available to the learner. These he lists as processes of perception and memory, development of automatisms and skills, accumulation and processing of information, structuring of activities and changes in behaviour. He concludes by saying that if the 'meanings of learning are properly attended to then the mechanics take care of themselves' (Wenger 1998:266).

Learning here is taking place as we live and as we act. To identify the learning needs reflection on past experience, the context that has shaped experiences. The participants belong to their communities but also to communities of practice. Lave described how, in order to become a member of a community of practice, a newcomer

had to establish a 'way in', a way of belonging and identifying with the group. Within a community of practice interaction is critical as the learners, the new members, interact with other established members of the group and learn from them. The new members gradually move from outside the group to the inside as they learn about the group and how it functions. They become accepted as legitimate and able to participate. To learn further requires full participation and practice and ultimately as Kilgore has suggested, it needs a collective identity, a sense of belonging.

2.8. INFORMAL LEARNING

From the literature review it is clear that informal learning is powerful and meaningful. It has no established barriers and is driven by the individual's response to the environment. Learning can take place in other than formal settings and the environment plays an essential part in the learning process.

The Project is situated within an informal community settlement and is thus a rich environment for opportunities of learning to be observed and experienced. That the learning has the power to change the environment is relevant to this research, but I am more interested in looking for learning that changes the way people behave and work together. I accept that this in turn can change the environment substantially, but what I am looking for is the way it changes how people work together. Is it because of a learning process? As the research concerns learning democracy and deals with ideas and values much of the learning, I anticipate, will be incidental.

The theories I have reviewed agree that informal learning is enhanced by conflict situations and environments of trauma and tension which force learners to re-assess accepted norms and values. During the development of the Project there are times of great conflict and tension and this impacts on the relationship between the two groups. Learning in conflict situations is discussed in more detail below.

2.9. LEARNING IN CONFLICT SITUATIONS

The literature review supports the idea that situations of conflict and tension have the potential to enhance the learning process, provided that there is a shared vision which binds the group together, otherwise there is the risk of conflict within a conflict. The learning identified by both Kilgore and Foley is informal and driven by a powerful, shared social vision, which seems to be the one undisputed prerequisite for social

action. People struggle to make sense of their lives and they work together to make social changes. Some of the most powerful learning occurs as people struggle against oppression, as they struggle to make sense of what is happening to them and to work out ways of doing something about it.

The Project is clearly situated in an arena of conflict and of great tension at times. I am looking for learning as it takes place, as the participants work together during times of conflict and during times of peace and positive participation. The learning identified as taking place during these times of conflict may be enhanced, but it is possible that the learning is given too much emphasis simply because it is in response to conflict. Other important learning may then not be seen, or may be viewed as less important.

2.10. LEARNING IN GROUPS

The learning explored in the literature review concerns learning in groups and the interaction between people from diverse backgrounds. Kilgore suggests that where there is no single common vision the participants can developing a strong moral code which all agree to abide by and thus buy in to a system which enhances the group: a learning process constructed by the participants' results in a collective identity. I would anticipate that this would be possible but that it would take time and there would have to be powerful reasons to encourage the groups to buy in to the system. There would also have to be enough space for them to develop a new identity based on moral codes of behaviour.

There are tensions and conflicts which arise from participants who have diverse and divergent interests and both Foley and Kilgore agree that learning is enhanced by situations of conflict. Learning in conflict situations is seen as a powerful tool for constructing collective identities. Within the Project development there are opportunities for inter-group conflict which will be explored. I will establish what norms and values bind the groups together so that the work can continue.

2.11. THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK OF LEARNING

From this review of the literature concerning learning, I have selected the works of Kilgore, Foley and Wenger from which to design a framework of learning. I have built a theoretical framework around the four components which Etienne Wenger states are necessary to characterize social participation as a process of learning.

- Learning as meaning, as experience: is a way of talking about changing our ability as individuals or groups (collectively) to experience life and the world as meaningful.

- Learning as practice, as doing: is a way of talking about our shared historical and social resources. It provides a way of sustaining mutual engagement in action.

Wenger looks at the way people build identities and suggests that learning provides a way for people to interact and change.

- Learning as community, as belonging: provides us with a way of talking about the social configurations in which our enterprises are defined as worth pursuing and our participation as recognisable as competence.

- Learning as identity, as becoming: is a way of talking about how learning changes who we are and creates personal histories of becoming in the context of our communities (Wenger 1998:5).

Within this learning environment I have introduced other voices because nothing is fixed or certain. Wenger's voice is assertive because his opinion is sound but other people's ideas have impact. 'People learn as they live, through their experiences, in their struggles' states Foley (Foley 1999:1). Wenger would agree and remind us about the 'way of talking about how learning changes who we are' (Wenger 1998:5). Kilgore warns us that we need to 'develop human codes of morality' (Kilgore 1999:194). Kilgore and Wenger suggests that there are tools necessary to help us identify the learning process underway and when used effectively the tools can help the learning process and so enable a change to take place. In this framework nothing is fixed: the four key elements to learning as devised by Wenger (1998:5) are interconnected. Each element could be the primary focus: they are mutually defining. Likewise each 'other voice' is interconnected and could be the primary focus. The learning theories of these three voices will be used to help me make sense of what is happening during the Project's development. They are selected because they best fit my need to identify learning in a specific situation and learning with a focus on identifying specific actions which I have identified as democratic actions. Because there is also a strong indication from both Wenger and Foley that participation is a major requirement in the learning process and because it is clearly identified as a democratic action by theorists who document democracy, I have included Pretty's typology of participation as an addition

to the framework described, in order to determine levels and values of the participation during the development of the Project. (This is described in detail later in the chapter.)

I accept, as a truism, that learning is a life-long process, and that during the development of the Project learning was being created from the daily activities of those involved. In my definition learning leads to and brings about changes in behaviour with action as its starting point.
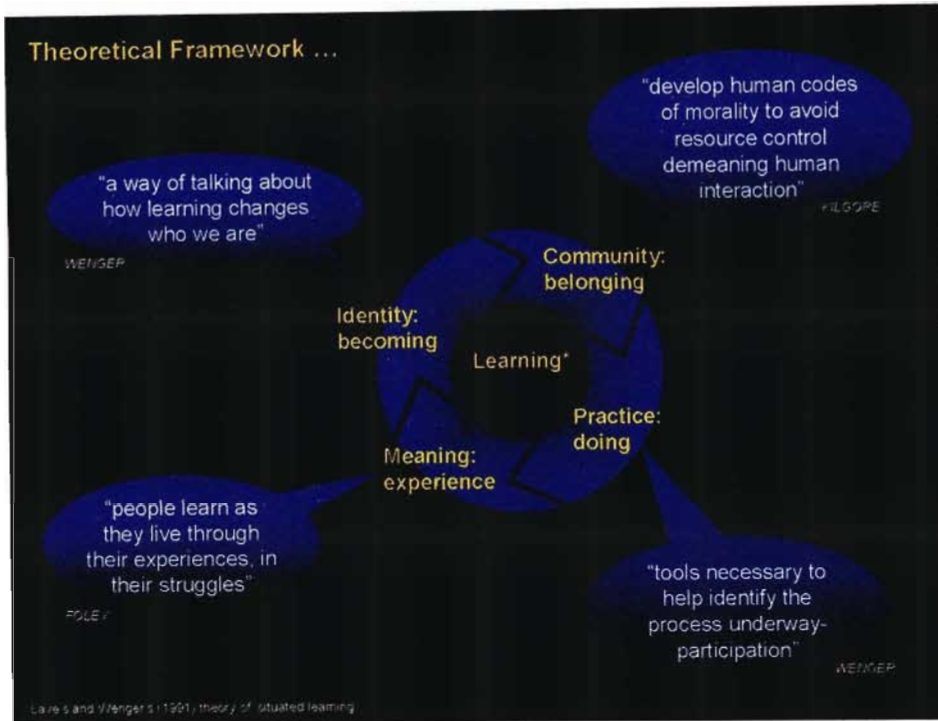
Chart: Theoretical Framework

The next part of the chapter seeks to find a definition of democracy and some values, behaviours and norms which are generally accepted as having to do with democracy in action.

2.12. DEFINING DEMOCRACY

In the world today, there is a resurgence of democracy as an ideal and as a way of organizing society. Two major obstacles to democracy, fascist and communist regimes, have tumbled, and there is a swing to democratization as European countries democratize in order to qualify to join the supranational European Union. There is a new feeling to this democracy. It is no longer fixed in the classical white male dominated tradition, but is responding to the changing world and finding new forms. People are talking about democracy here in South Africa and questioning its role in their lives. The subject is debated in radio and television programmes and it appears

as editorial comment in our local papers and the call is for a new type of democracy. Whether or not the new forms will in fact result in more or less, better or worse democracy is not known, but there are theorists (Giddens 1998; Martin 1999) who hotly debate the issue. There is reason to be highly critical of democracy. We can cite as fact that democracy has had centuries to achieve a world democratic society and it has failed. For many people particularly in Africa, democracy has not lived up to expectations and for many it is far too difficult a concept to concretize into meaningful actions which would impact positively in their world, a world where many citizens find themselves alienated from the politicians who represent them. This is an important view of democracy but one that I will not debate at length. Instead I will concentrate on the view of democracy as something worthwhile which has core values that are still relevant in modern times and acceptable across the world's many social and cultural divides.

The information I need for this research comes from finding out how others view democracy. I have looked at a wide range of literature and discovered that this is no easy task. There are many and varied definitions of democracy and many ways of interpreting it, but for my purpose the basic definition first determined by the Athenians is a good place to start.

Democracy as a concept is derived from the Greek root word '*demos*', meaning 'the people' and '*kratein*' meaning 'to rule'. In its most simple form democracy is direct in that it allows all the people to participate in all the decision-making processes.

Although the history of democratic theory started with Pericles' affirmation of the value of democracy (Blaug and Schwarzmantel 2002:21). It was Herodotus who first identified democracy with equality, the principle of majority rule and with political responsibility. The concept of democracy has always been associated with the rule of the people and these characteristics first noted by Herodotus have been repeated in many subsequent definitions of democracy. Even at this early stage the differences in the operational interpretation of the ideal varied enormously. The Athenians limited the operational aspects of democracy to 'free males' and not to the majority of the people who included women, slaves and non-citizens. They were therefore not fully democratic but, in spite of these flaws, the Greeks did offer some key principles for a workable democracy. For example their democracy:

- allowed for full and *equal participation* in decision making processes and an understanding of the *joint responsibility* that equal participation engendered,

- encouraged vigorous *free debate* and applauded initiative and creative thinking,

- designed systems of government that allowed for and encouraged *joint decision making* and *resolution of conflict* in every aspect of life,

- enabled the economy and the country to flourish because this *holistic approach to government* meant a 'buy in' to the systems. People were motivated by their shared vision of a strong undivided society within their city state or polis, working to achieve common goals (Blaug and Schwarzmantel 2002:21).

These four key principles hold strong for democracy today. It is obvious that the Athenian model of democracy was possible because it was contained within a very small geographical area and the people had a strong sense of belonging that resulted in a high level of participation and response to calls for civic duty. The difference between ancient and modern democracy is brought about by the complexity of modern life and the sheer number of people involved. What I find useful in this ancient model is its simplicity, as well as:

- similarities between the city state or polis and the structures within the peri-urban community in which the Project is situated,

- commonalities between the philosophy of Ubuntu and the Athenian democracy,

- key principles which are still relevant today though interpreted differently by modern theorists.

I accept the definition of democracy as determined by the Athenians and the four guiding principles detailed as necessary for learning democracy to take place. Three key points from the Athenian democracy are noteworthy in terms of this research.

- Abuse of power is seen as a threat and has to be dealt with on a number of levels: political, economic and social. The most appropriate way is to divide the power across multi-individuals or groups, such as in the military for example.

- A constitution or similar document (Bill of Rights, Record of Understanding) must be agreed by and acceptable to all and it must not be easy to change.

- There is an ultimate trust in the authority of knowledge. The Greeks for example allowed that military decisions were made by the generals and not by a democratic process. In modern democracies, authority is given to

professional bodies such as the Medical Councils and the Police to act within predetermined and agreed-to boundaries. There are different kinds of knowledge; professional knowledge and status became an issue during the Project development and is debated in Chapter 6.

Democracy needs a number of protective checks and balances in order for it to work effectively, and there has to exist an ethos in society which allows the government to govern. People have identified a number of values which must exist in order to have a democratic government. Greek society, for example, identified for itself:

- equal participation

- open communication (free debate)

- joint decision making

- an holistic approach to government with decision-makers changing on a regular basis.

South Africans have a vote which enables them to participate in the politics of the country. The final constitution was presented in 1996 after the Constitutional Assembly had voted by more than two thirds majority that it was acceptable. The constitution provided for a liberal democratic system which protects basic human rights. The diversity of language and culture is recognised and protected, and provision is made for the participation of smaller parties in the legislature in a manner consistent with a democracy. The Judiciary is independent and there is separation of power among Executive, Legislature and Judiciary. There is a system of organised provincial and local government departments with exclusive and concurrent powers allowing and empowering them to perform effectively (McQuoid-Mason et al 1994:125).

The constitution is regarded as supreme, and any law of the legislature or action of the Executive which conflicts with the constitution may be declared void by the Constitutional Court or the Supreme Court.

Included in the constitution is a chapter on fundamental rights. The provisions set in this chapter establish a minimum set of norms with which public bodies must comply (McQuoid-Mason et al 1994:125). South African democracy is in its ninth year and although it is lauded throughout the world as unique and momentous, many view it as not having achieved its true goals. Some say in fact that South Africa is still one of the most unequal societies in the world.

That this is so becomes evident at community level where democracy is not necessarily having an impact on the daily lives of the people, and government is seen as failing to deliver.

South Africans had to negotiate a way to a democratic solution and in doing so accepted, as a way to move forward, compromises and agreements with which the majority could live. A liberal democracy was designed and the government instituted a system to include in the processes of government a number of checks and balances to prevent abuse of power. Previously I have listed a few ideals of democracy which were first identified from the Athenian model of democracy and I can now add: a tolerance and respect for individual and group rights and the presence of independent social, political and economic institutions, as those generally acceptable as representing a liberal democracy.

That South Africa has a working democracy is not disputed but what made it work once the negotiations were over and the system was in place? I believe that this is answered by finding out about learning democracy, and to continue identifying the process I need to find out what others have said about learning democracy.

2.13. LEARNING DEMOCRACY

As South Africans celebrate their new democracy, in Europe there is an impulse for change. Throughout the West, the past decade has witnessed an erosion of belief in the capacity of democratic institutions to intervene effectively in shaping social and economic life and to help solve the most pressing problems (Giddens 1998; Haynes 1996). Revitalization, reconceptualization and reformulation of democratic forms not only in the developed, capitalist democracies but across the world, is seen as an urgent necessity and learning is seen by some as one of the tools most likely to be effective in bringing this about (Harber 1997; Martin 1999). In South Africa's welfare and educational policy documents there is a focus on lifelong learning and on providing within the systems a way forward to democratization through participation and democratic behaviour. Franz Poggeler (1996:265) postulates that learning democracy must be a process of 'convincing' because:

> 'the change from one political system to another (for instance from dictatorship to democracy from an authoritarian to an open and liberal system) is not only a change of law and organisation, but also a change of mentality' (Franz Poggeler 1996:265).

He poses the question: what are the essentials of democracy – in political life as well as in adult education? And he begins to answer this by exploring the situation in Germany during its many years of crisis and war and draws the conclusion that the demand for liberal and political education was greater in times of crisis than in the periods of simple needs and economic prosperity. It is also a fact, states Poggeler, that adult education received significant impetus from crises before and after revolutions.

Friedenthal Hasse (1996:136) appears to agree that this is so. She seeks to understand how a crisis situation becomes such a strong means of achieving 'deep-reaching change':

> *'Critical and transcending learning can occur in disadvantageous circumstances, in undemocratic systems' (Friedenthal Hasse quoted in Poggeler 1996:133-136).*

Her aim is to research the process of relearning, of changing or restructuring the knowledge base in order to understand the meaning of the change. She accepts that the tools for such understanding do not exist. She researches the knowledge base required in order for citizens to learn and practice democracy. Democracy she defines as:

> *'A system which more or less has to correspond to a certain level of information and continuous learning in the adult population' (Friedenthal Hasse 1996:133-136).*

She asks:

> *'What knowledge is indispensable to the competent informed and critical citizen and on the other hand what knowledge is needed to secure the system of democracy?' (Friedenthal Hasse 1996:133-136).*

This research does not look at what knowledge is required to enable a citizen to be sufficiently informed to take part in the electoral process. However Friedenthal Hasse also indicates that there will be certain elements of knowledge that are prerequisites for democracy to happen in society and this is of more interest for this research. Friedenthal Hasse first offers as an element of democratic 'literacy' and she then points out how difficult it is to make any assumptions in this field.

'History has taught us that great European revolutions occurred around the time when one half the male populations were literate. It has also taught that literacy levels do not necessarily lead to democratization' (Friedenthal Hasse 1996:133-136).

She leads us to assume that although it is essential for citizens to learn the system and maintain the knowledge base which enables the system to work, it is also vital that citizens constantly involve themselves in a system or process of relearning the knowledge base, changing and restructuring it to meet different needs.

There are 'minimum elements that relate to all democratic concepts'. She believes that one of these elements is knowledge of what the elements are and she lists:

'Concepts of human rights, human liberties and equality of human beings (Friedenthal Hasse 1996:133).

Friedenthal Hasse will continue to seek a new type of political literacy which crosses political ideologies. For this current study the relevant point that knowledge of how the system works is important. It links to the idea Kilgore put forward that to de-colonize the life-world, knowledge of how it was colonized is essential, only then can changes be made.

As early as 1916 John Dewey wrote that in educating for democracy the focus must be on the idea of education as:

'a freeing of individual's capacity in a progressive growth directed at social aims' (Dewey 1966:3).

Ian Martin (1999:90-101) agrees with John Dewey, but sounds a warning bell as he urges Adult Educators to 're-occupy the political and curricular space in which citizens make democracy work'. He suggests that the government (in the UK) is interested in lifelong education only in so far as it can aid the economic growth of the country. Adult learning is reduced to 'training for work' (Martin 1999:95) and the learner to either a producer of another's wealth or as a consumer or customer. In this way Martin debates the role of adult education as being any more than a commodity. The view that adult learning, in the 'historical and social context of capitalism, serves to devalue both educator and learner by commodifying the learning process' (Martin 1999:95) is debated by other leading theorists (Collins 1995; Kilgore 1999). 'As educators', Martin reminds us, 'we should focus on our real interest which is to develop people to their full

potential as whole persons or rounded human beings' (Martin 1999:93). Part of this holistic development has to include an active involvement in political issues which are pertinent and meaningful.

This agrees with the original Greek concept of government discussed earlier in the chapter. Adult learning traditionally originated in the struggles of ordinary people to improve their lives. A meaningful part of this learning was to be active citizens engaged in political and social actions. Martin asks for adult educators to reaffirm this traditional role and to actively seek ways to politicize lifelong learning as learning for democracy. In order to achieve this he suggests that what is needed is a 're-theorization of radical adult education in terms of learning that takes place in the intermediate space between private lives of individuals and their public lives as citizens' (Martin 1999:99). Lifelong learning for democracy must, according to Martin, re-occupy this 'creative space' and allow people, once again to learn to be active citizens in a democratic society and moreover to recognize that their capacity for learning and changing has always been the key resource for making democracy a way of life (Martin 1999:101).

Martin concludes by offering as a solution a need to:

> 'stretch the discourse of citizenship implicit within the current policy agenda for lifelong learning in order to make the work of adult educationalists once again part of the unfinished revolution' (Martin 1999:102).

There seems to be consensus that not enough is actually known about the type and level of education required to address the issue of learning democracy. There are many examples of teaching democracy in schools and a number of theses documenting acceptable or recommended ways to behave democratically within quite formal and well-structured environments.

It is generally accepted that

> 'No part of the learning experience in the future will be more important than to learn how to transform our traditional democracy to (a new) type of democracy ... So that our citizens feel an ability to be directly involved with decisions that will impact their lives at a local level' (Smyre 2002:2).

This theme is topical. In the daily newspaper, *The Mercury* (10/4/03) the editorial comment reflected on President Mbeki's warning against the danger of being 'force-fed democracy Iraq-style, if African States do not get into place their own democracies'.

The threat of military intervention by western democracies in the political arena is viewed as unlikely. However, the very real possibility of the West demanding 'norms and models of democracy which are rooted in their own experience, not Africa's', is perceived as very real, and the threat implied is that failure to comply would result in the withdrawal of the western democracies from exercises like the New Plan for Africa's Development (NEPAD).

> *'Africa needs therefore to institute its own homemade versions of democracy and make them work. To be accepted internationally they would have to satisfy such criteria as: regular; free and fair elections; government accountability; and the rule of law' (Editor: Mercury 10/4/03).*

In addition the editor suggests that the criteria could be modified 'in all kinds of ways from western norms' to fit with particular conditions of African society. It is probably impossible to successfully force-feed democracy if the underlying conditions are inappropriate. Africa therefore needs to nurture those conditions, notably economic growth, at the same time as democracy is developed.

In a democracy it is accepted that people enjoy some measure of choice in the rules that govern them and the leaders who implement those rules. It is understood that members of society need to find commonalities of experience that unite them rather than divide them so that democracies can survive and flourish. How this should happen is not clearly defined. There are some readily acceptable elements necessary within a democratic structure, that define the structure as democratic and there are any numbers of views on the subject, all of which have bearing on societies, particularly those undergoing momentous change. There are lists of prerequisites necessary for democracy to happen (in schools for example) and there are a number of vehicles available for modern society to help democracy flourish. What does not seem to be available in any meaningful format is an understanding of how democracy is learned in other than formal, structured situations where the process of democratic government is detailed, especially where there are no historical and obvious commonalities of experiences that unite.

John Dewey (Dewey 1966:5) said that each generation has to learn its own form of democracy. The editor of the *Mercury* suggests that South Africa formulates its own

kind of democracy. It may in fact be possible that democracy is 'force-fed' by powers outside the control of the community but the ultimate shape and form of the democracy cannot be pre-ordained nor is it likely to be sustainable if the people, the citizens, do not own the process.

The democracy of this century in Africa may well be different from that known by John Dewey but perhaps there exists a 'learning process' which aids better understanding of democracy and a keener knowledge of how it can be learned and practised. In this research I identify how learning democracy can take place in a very specific community environment. To facilitate this I developed a framework of learning democracy.

2.14. A FRAMEWORK OF LEARNING DEMOCRACY

McQuoid-Mason says that 'people in democracies around the world support many of the same basic principles'. He refers to these as 'signposts of democracy' (McQuoid-Mason 1994:16). For democracy to exist these signposts must be visible and adhered to. Many of the ones listed by McQuoid-Mason become, he agrees, 'part of the constitutions or bill of rights in democratic societies' (McQuoid-Mason 1994:16). He lists thirteen signposts:

- Citizen participation, which he determines as a right and a duty.

- Equality, which he further defines as meaning that all people are valued equally and have equal opportunities.

- Political tolerance, which allows for people not in power to speak out and to be heard with respect.

- Accountability, which holds all people responsible for their actions.

- Transparency in government so that all people are made aware of what is decided.

- Regular and free elections.

- Economic freedom which means that government allows ownership of property and that free markets should exist.

- Control of the use of power by structuring government, so that no one individual or group can usurp absolute power.

- Bill of Rights, which defines the rights of the people and limits the power of government.

- Accepting the results of elections.

- Human rights which should include freedom of expression, of assembly equality and education.

- A multi-party system, to avoid a situation occurring where the country has only one party and the result is a dictatorship.

- The rule of law consistently, equally, fairly enforced (McQuoid-Mason et al 1994:16).

Each of his signposts has appeared and been identified at least once previously in the literature review. For example Herodotus identified participation, equality, majority rule and political responsibility. The Athenians adopted joint decision making, free debate and a system which allowed for resolution of conflict and division of power as the key principles of democracy. The constitution of South Africa included in addition: human rights, the right to diversity of culture and language, a free judiciary, tolerance, accountability and transparency.

The identified key principles and democratic signposts are very useful, but because I need to concrete them and make them measurable and because I do not wish to explore the government's electoral or judicial systems or how people learn about the systems I draw from the work of Staffan Larsson as it refers to people working together in study circles (1999:200-216).

2.14.1. Staffan Larsson's Aspects of Democracy

Larsson developed an interesting way of viewing democracy as a 'chain of aspects' that are linked together in a learning process, that he says ultimately leads to democratization. He highlights seven different aspects of democracy as a way of presenting and making sense of democracy. Larsson's seven aspects offer a comprehensive list and it is these aspects that I use, with some alterations, to provide me with a better tool for identifying and understanding learning democracy in the context of the Project. I have listed Larsson's aspects of democracy and added a short

explanation taken from his work published in the International Journal of Lifelong Learning Page 212, vol.3 June 2001.

STEFFAN LARSSON'S ASPECTS OF DEMOCRACY *

EQUAL PARTICIPATION
- All people must be involved
- Act in solidarity for delivery of decisions
- Responsibility of people based on power of people

HORIZONTAL RELATIONS
- Citizens form relationships in order to transcend isolation of individual.

DELIBERATIONS
- Ordinary people must use relationships as platform to form standpoints on issues that are vital to them – must be free / independent of forces trying to shape minds.

KNOWLEDGE THAT INFORMS STANDPOINTS
- To be able to make wise decisions
- Deliberations must be informed based on what participants judge important.

RECOGNITION OF DIVERSE IDENTITIES
- Participants must be able to form opinions and act from standpoint according to their identities, interests, views – they must respect diverse identities and views.

INTERNAL DEMOCRATIC DECISION MAKING
- Each participant must have impact on process – what to discuss – what to decide.

ACTION TO INFORM SOCIETY
- Must be able to take action that has effect.

* AS RELATED TO STUDY CIRCLES

Chart: Staffan Larsson's Aspects of Democracy.

In the framework I change 'horizontal relationships' to 'constructing quality relationships'. Horizontal relationships deal with the quality of individual relationships. I need to be able to identify groups building quality relationship by co-operation and collaboration. 'Deliberation' I rename 'Communication'. The basic idea is to acknowledge how people engage with each other. In all other respects I find Larsson's

work appropriate. This re-worked list I used to provide meaningful prompts in the discussion guide for the Focus Groups and for open questions derived from each 'democratic action' (see Chapter 3).

Participation is identified as both an important tool for learning (Wenger 1998:6) and as an aspect of democracy (Larsson 2001:201). I find Pretty's Typology of Participation useful since it provides a clear indication of the level at which participation is indicated at each stage of the Project.

2.14.2. Pretty's Typology of Participation

I use Pretty's Typology of Participation as described in Mowforth and Hunt, (1998:241) and described below:

1. Manipulative Participation simply pretence: people sit on official committees but have no power.

2. Passive Participant told what has been decided or already happened. Involves unilateral announcements by the project manager without listening to people's responses. Information shared belongs only to external professionals.

3. Consultation Participation is by consultation or by answering questions: External agents define problems and information gathering processes, and so control analysis. Process does not concede any share in decision making; professionals under no obligation to account for other people's view.

4. Incentives Participation by contributing resources (labour) in return for food or material assistance given. There is no process for individual to have stake in the outcome and no learning or skill development has taken place.

5. Functional Participant seen as means to achieve project goals especially at reduced cost. Groups formed to meet project objectives. Involvement may be interactive and involve sharing decision making, but tends to arise only after major decisions have already been made by external agents; at worst, local people may still be co-opted to serve external goals.

6. Interactive People participate in joint analysis, development of actions plans and strengthening of local institutions. Participation is seen as a right not just

as a means of achieving project goals. The process involves interdisciplinary methodologies that seek multiple perspectives and use systemic and structural learning processes. As groups take control of local decisions and determine how available resources are used, so they have a stake in maintaining structures and practices.

7. Mobilisation Participation by taking initiatives independently of external institutions to change systems. They develop contacts with external institutions for resources and advice that they need but they retain control over resources and the use of resources. Self-mobilisation may spread and develop further if government and NGOs provide an enabling framework of support. Self-mobilisation may or may not challenge existing distributions of wealth and power.

2.15. CONCLUSION

I use Wenger's idea of negotiating meaning from the practices of everyday life and in particular his components necessary to characterise social participation as a process of learning (Wenger 1998:5) to establish a central point of contact. I build on this as I look for supported 'informal learning', 'learning in groups', and 'learning in times of conflict'. These components enable groups to construct a collective identity which can act as a strong motivation where there is no one social vision.

I am able to confirm that there is no definitive definition of democracy or clear, unequivocal means to understand what it is. There is no learning democracy process which I can apply to the informal situations such as is described in Chapter 4. There are, however, a number of norms, values and aspects which various theorists have confirmed as being required for democracy to happen. From these and from Steffan Larsson's 'Aspects of Democracy' I have established seven Democratic Actions. These are: Participation - participating as equals. Quality Relationships - building quality relationships. Communication, communicating honestly and openly. Knowledge - accessing and sharing useful knowledge that informs standpoints. Diverse Identities, recognising and respecting diverse identities. Internal Democratic Decision Making fully participating in internal democratic decision making and being able to take Action to Inform Society. In addition I use the work of Pretty to determine the level of participation experienced by the two groups during the Projects development.

The literature review has enabled me to establish a number of learning modes and to confirm that each can be identified. I have established a number of democratic actions using the work of Steffan Larsson and others as detailed above. These I will use as tools to establish the learning process, as indicated by the participant groups as they move towards or away from democracy. The following chapter establishes the research design and methodology selected for the study.

3. THE RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY

The purpose of this chapter is to establish the research design and methodology selected for the study.

The chapter begins by stating the focus of the research. It then explains why the qualitative paradigm was selected as the methodology and looks in detail at the qualitative approach to research. Sub-sections deal with explaining a Case Study approach within a qualitative research methodology, indicating the limitations of this approach. The following methods of data capture are indicated: participant observation, interviews, focus groups and the use of projective techniques, the collection of documents and photographs. The final section deals with the methods of data analysis and pertinent ethical issues.

3.1. THE FOCUS OF THE STUDY

The Project was selected because it provides an opportunity to examine how two groups of people from diverse and divergent backgrounds negotiate their relationships as they work together in a specific and unique context. This will serve as the basis for an investigation into whether or not the participants are learning anything as they work to bring the Project to fruition and if the learning is also about learning democracy. The review of literature has provided the tools I will use to identify how the two groups work together: participation for example is held to be both a necessary aspect of democracy (Larsson 2001:201) and a major component of the learning process (Wenger 1998:5). During the development of the Project and during the time the two groups worked together participation will be evidenced. How learning to work together in a better, more participatory way, changed the way the two groups related to each other will help determine the learning democracy process. The Project involved a small number of participants who worked together on the project over an extended number of years, and it is contained within a localized geographical area.

3.1.1. The paradigm selected for this study

Guba and Lincoln (Guba E.G. and Lincoln Y. (1988) quoted in Creswell J 1994) suggest that a paradigm is 'a world view that defines for its holder the nature of the

world and the individual's place in it'. Creswell (1994:4) presents a number of assumptions associated with the two paradigms, qualitative and quantitative, which help to 'concrete' the world view suggested by Guba and Lincoln. A paradigm is explained as 'a system of interrelated ontological, epistemological and methodological assumptions'. These assumptions answer the questions concerning the nature of the reality, the role of the researcher to that researched and the process of the research.

Using these distinctions as a guide, I selected a qualitative paradigm for this research, because it allows greater flexibility in respect of data collection, observation and interpretation, and there is a better fit between the research questions and this methodology, in that the research depends on the 'multiple and shifting realities' (Ely et al 1991:2) of the participants in a real life, volatile, situation.

To explain this further, it is necessary to understand the difference between quantitative and qualitative research as quantitative and qualitative researchers approach their work from different world views.

3.1.2.   Quantitative research

'There is an objective world which exists independently of the people in the world. The quantitative researcher views reality as objective, out there independent of the researcher. Something can be measured objectively by using a questionnaire or an instrument' (Creswell 1994: 4).

Quantitative researchers collect observable facts and then study the relationship between one set of facts and another. 'The techniques used are likely to produce quantified and, if possible, generalisable conclusions' (Bell 1999:7). In this paradigm events that happen in the world are governed by 'natural laws and understandable mechanisms that researchers can discover for themselves', by using theory to make an hypothesis which must then be tested by 'objective study' (Mark 1996:206-207).

The researcher is considered to be independent of the process, and the results obtained are said not to be biased in any way but remain value-free. The researcher tries to operate without reference to her own set of values and beliefs. This is accomplished by 'entirely omitting statements about values from a written report, using impersonal language and reporting facts, arguing closely from the evidence gathered in the study' (Creswell 1994:6). The quantitative approach holds that the researcher should remain distant and independent of that being researched. For example 'In

surveys and experiments, researchers attempt to control bias, select systematic samples, and be objective in assessing the situation' (Creswell 1994:6). Concepts and variables are well defined from accepted definitions, and the researcher uses a deductive form of logic 'wherein theories and hypotheses are tested in a cause and effect order' (Crewell 1994:7). These concepts have to be selected prior to the start of research and they remain fixed throughout the research.. The researcher does not 'venture beyond these predetermined hypotheses', and so the research is context free.

The most distinctive characteristic of this type of research is its empirical nature and the set of unchanging standards and procedures which indicate that the findings of the research are sufficiently defined to allow other researchers to test them, thus demonstrating the 'empirical warrant' (Cuff and Payne 1979 cited in Cohen and Manion 1980:23). This approach is criticized by Cohen and Manion when it is used to 'quantify the process and interpret the human act' as 'the justification for any intellectual act lies in the effect it has on increasing our awareness and degree of consciousnesses' (Cohen and Manion 1980:24). Quantitative research, they suggest, is limiting when used in other than scientific studies simply because it presents a misleading picture of the human being as predictable. It expects repetitive and invariant results and concentrates on the external quantifiable aspects of humanity, disregarding the subjective world and often ending up with a:

> 'pruned, synthetic version of the whole, a constructed play of puppets in a restricted environment' (Cohen and Manion 1980:25).

The continued critique on this kind of research, in spite of many successes, remains essentially about the research view of the world as one in which the notions of:

> 'choice, freedom, individuality and moral responsibility' are excluded (Cohen and Manion 1980:260).

Quantitative research remains useful in many situations and this approach was successfully implemented in Project Shelter 2002. The results were useful in determining future actions, but they were not revealing of a deeper understanding of the participants as human beings, for which a different approach was required.

3.1.3. Qualitative research

Qualitative research differs in that it is more concerned with understanding human beings, and their subjective understanding of the world. Researchers want to:

> 'find out people's perceptions of the world, they seek insights rather than statistics and they doubt the existence of social facts' (Bell 1999:7).

Qualitative researchers do not seek to 'explain behaviour in terms of universally valid laws or generalizations, but rather to understand and interpret the meanings and intentions that underlie everyday human action' (Mouton 1986 cited in Schurink and Schurink 1988:30). In qualitative research reality is constructed by the participants, as they tell of and interpret for themselves the world in which they live. This constructed reality is recorded faithfully by the researcher, who seeks a deeper understanding of experience from the perspective of the participants. People's words and meanings become the primary data for analysis.

The researcher, in the qualitative stance, interacts with the participants, by either living with them or, as is true in my case, by observing them over a long period of time and by actively collaborating. The distance between the researcher and those being researched is thus minimized, and in this way there is an opportunity for a more honest, open, free and unhindered exchange of stories between the researcher and those being researched.

This has implications in other respects; for example the language of the research is informal and definitions evolve during the study. It is first person and personal, and the researcher is free to admit to:

> 'the value laden nature of the report and actively report her values and bias as well as the value nature of information gathered from the field' (Creswell 1994:7).

Selection of Qualitative Methodology

These significant distinctions between the world views, the reality, the relationship between the researcher and those researched, the role of beliefs and values, and the language of the study all lead to a different process of study. In this research the qualitative methodology is selected because this approach is best suited to research

efforts where a holistic or thick description of a particular phenomenon is sought. Here inductive logic prevails. This differs from quantitative research in that:

'research does not concern itself with testing a theoretically derived hypothesis but aims to ask genuinely open questions that will allow and encourage a better understanding of the realities of others. The idea is to draw from the detail of the data collected and to discover important aspects of the research topic. The information is rich and context bound and it is from this that categories emerge from informants, rather than identified a priori by the researcher. This emergence provides the rich context bound information leading to patterns or theories that help explain the phenomenon studied' (Creswell 1994:7).

3.2. CASE STUDY

The focus of this research is a community development project in a peri-urban area during the building of Phases 1 and 2 of a three phase Project to provide a village for the elderly, the disabled and for Aids orphans of Amaoti in Inanda during the period October 1997 – October 2001.

The case study is particularly well suited to this research because it offers the opportunity to select one specific area of study on which to focus within a particular, known situation. This facilitates a better understanding of what is happening. It allows flexibility in that it is possible to use interviews as the main source of information, as well as other methods of collecting data. The case study approach allows the participants to speak for themselves, while enabling the researcher to concentrate on specific situations and to attempt to identify the interactions and relationships at play. It is much more than a simple story or a description of events when the focus is on phenomenon within a real life context.

The Project is under development and the participants are real. The context is volatile, unpredictable and sometimes violent, and often outside the control of the participants, yet there are identifiable phenomena taking place as the participants respond to the pressure of transformation and rapid change. This context is discussed fully in Chapter 4.

Other writers have noted that it is important to define the boundaries of the case study in advance, so as to limit the scope of the work. The Project has a clearly stated beginning and a predictable end. Yin (1984:50) urges that cases selected for research

should be atypical, because, a 'unique case selection' aids the researcher in challenging existing theory and generalizations and leads more readily to learning opportunities. The Project presents a 'unique case selection'. The case study documents how the two groups of people work together to complete the Project during a period of rapid change.

The uniqueness is evident over a period of time and on a number of levels.

- Diversity of the two groups: age differences, cultural differenced, historical backgrounds.

- Economic diversity; power and access to resources; power of authority: on the one hand the OTHANDWENI has local knowledge and authority and without them the Project can not go forward and on the other the AGEWISE has authority of expertise and wealth and again without them the project cannot go forward.

- On a purely human level there is the diversity created by the level of commitment to the Project and the people it serves.

3.3. QUALITATIVE METHODS OF DATA CAPTURE

Maykut and Morehouse (1994:45) say that the most relevant way to collect data in the methodology is within the context of the case study. The researcher, they say, needs to be familiar and comfortable with the 'natural setting' for 'the natural setting is the place where the researcher is most likely to discover, or uncover, what is to be known about the phenomenon of interest'.

Information collected for this research is dependent on people's words, expressions and body language and thus it

> 'requires methods which allow the researcher to capture language and behaviour' (Maykut and Morehouse 1994:45).

The methods most often recommended and included in this research are observation, participant observation, interviews, and focus groups using projective techniques. Documents and photographs are collected as a source of data for the study.

3.3.1. Participant observation

Participant observation is, for the reasons stated above, an obvious choice for the method of data capturing. I originally sought permission from the two groups to do this research and indicated that I would be using a qualitative method of data capturing. Permission was given by all the participants, but I record that some of the group did not fully comprehend what research was about and others were so disillusioned about research that they commented that 'it doesn't lead anywhere' (Interview MP 7/03).

What was interesting about working on this research was that as my status changed from Divisional Manager, responsible for income development within the organisation, to CEO, so did my level of participation - but not as originally anticipated. Ely et al (1991:53) for example, talk about the different levels of participation and how the level would probably increase over time. In my case the opposite was sometimes true. For example, early in the research I was free to comment and debate and the participants responded without inhibition. I was totally at ease with the dual role of participant and observer. However by the time the Focus Groups were held in July 2003 (detailed later in the chapter), I was a silent observer in the AGEWISE group and not encouraged by the participants to join in. I was comfortable with this role and the four participants were relaxed knowing that I was sitting with them. The four people in this group included two Board of Management members and two social workers. They each referred to me as having taken part in the development of the Project when it was appropriate or necessary to do so. They accepted the explanation, given by the facilitator at the beginning of the session, that I was there to listen and not to influence the discussions. The shift from participant observer to silent observer did not adversely affect the discussion flow or the content of the discussion. This group was comfortable with this arrangement.

By contrast, in the OTHANDWENI focus group, I was not allowed to be a silent participant for long but was actively encouraged to join the group as it enthusiastically created collages and discussed the power relationship of the 'marriage' between AGEWISE and OTHANDWENI. I taped all the interviews and the focus groups and transcribed them at the end of the sessions. Ely et al (1991) caution that observation is not scientific and it cannot be absolutely true nor is it objective. The observations are based on what the researcher sees and records and can only be held valid if the researcher notes any contradictory values and biases which would unfairly colour the outcome of the research. Where this is relevant it is recorded.

3.3.2. Interviews

For the first interviews I decided not to have formal interviews but rather to keep them very informal. The purpose was to 'let the people speak' about the project as they experienced and understood it with little questioning from me. I interviewed the main participants over an extended period of eleven months. A total of nine individual interviews were held with the main participants. Each interview was approximately two hours long. These were with the chairpersons of each of the two organizations, senior staff members of AGEWISE and the most prominent members of the OTHANDWENI committee. A further three small group interviews, of approximately three hours, were held, one with two senior staff members of AGEWISE, one with senior members of the OTHANDWENI committee, and one with a senior staff member of AGEWISE and a member of the OTHANDWENI committee. The outcome was rewarding and I anticipated some really in-depth follow-up interviews. The small number of individual interviews is simply a result of the small number of participants who have played a meaningful role in the Project's development. Other interviews with, for example, community members were not considered relevant. Their input would be limited to information given to them at public meetings, organized and controlled by the participants, or would be concerned with the history of the area or the organizations not particularly of value in helping to understand the relationship between the participants. I did have an informal meeting with the Induna of the area who expressed his pleasure at the progress that had been made, but he was unable to contribute further. Two further committee members of OTHANDWENI, who would have contributed very significantly, have died.

I had decided to ask a Zulu speaker to come to the relevant follow up interviews, because I was anxious to have clarity on some of the issues raised in the informal interviews, and I considered my lack of language skill an impediment to good communication. However, my change of status stopped these from being a good option and I redirected my efforts to Focus Groups.

The interviews held are listed in Appendix B. What are not documented is the many 'off the cuff interviews', some as short as a few minutes which have helped clarify points. The senior social worker at AGEWISE and the chairperson of OTHANDWENI are the main contributors and their efforts on my behalf are recorded. I held one formal interview with the past director of AGEWISE, and as he is no longer in South Africa I e-

mailed him a short questionnaire with specific, background information questions which had arisen as a result of the focus groups.

3.3.3.   Focus Group interviews

Focus group interviews are particularly demanding of the interviewer. There has to be an extended preparation time, so that the participants never feel that the situation is out of control even though it may well be! I constructed a particularly detailed and comprehensive discussion document in order to give as much guidance as possible to the direction or flow of the groups. As Richard Kruegar and Jean King have said 'Focus Groups are not precise formulas that can be followed rigidly but rather human social experiences' (Krueger and King 1998:xviii). It is necessary when using an external facilitator to give more detail than otherwise, since the level of knowledge about the project will be limited. I found this limitation an advantage, since questions were asked which would otherwise not have been and a bigger advantage was the untold patience that the new interviewer had with the participants as they repeated stories already told (This is covered in Chapter 5).

3.3.4.   Use of Projective Techniques

A projective technique is defined as

> 'any situation or stimulus which encourages the individual to project part of him or herself or an idea onto an external object or into the interview situation itself' (Kruger and King 1998:xviii).

Projective techniques were decided upon because of the diversity of the groups and the educational level of the participants. I wanted the participants to really share their experiences and these techniques are valuable because respondents are less likely to feel anxious, threatened or embarrassed about sharing their deeper feelings and ideas.

They are really powerful tools for developing a fuller understanding of people, but they are not new ideas. I was first introduced to them in 1970 at a school for the deaf, and I was amazed how much the teachers could learn by utilizing this method of communication.

3.4. FOCUS GROUP FLOW DESIGN

The initial face-to-face interviews that were conducted helped to assess various participants in the Project, their attitudes about the relationship between the two organisations, and how the relationship evolved over time. On the strength of these interviews I decided that two focus group discussions should be conducted, one with AGEWISE members and one with OTHANDWENI members, because, as Kruger and King (1988:5) have stated, focus groups are a powerful method of 'uncovering the anatomy of participant perceptions and behaviour'.

Having two separate groups allowed participants to explore their feelings about the interaction between the two organisations without concern about repercussions from members of the other organization. As some of the content matter of these groups is sensitive, it was decided that projective techniques would be used so as to allow participants to transfer their feelings about these issues onto other situations or people.

The focus groups were conducted on home ground identified by the participants as a suitable, comfortable venue. AGEWISE chose their board room for the first focus group and OTHANDWENI the training school at the Project.

3.4.1. First Group

The first focus group (FG1) was attended by the chairman, the treasurer and two staff members of AGEWISE and the facilitator. I attended as a silent observer. It lasted four hours and thirty minutes, it was recorded and transcribed.

The initial flow (used for AGEWISE group) was as follows:

- Introduction.

- Collages (to create a visual representation of what the project symbolised at its inception and now, years later).

- Plans and expectations (reasons for joining with the other group).

- Personification (to explore the relationship and power dynamic between the two organisations in 1994 and in 2003).

- The Project (a step by step account of what happened at various stages through the project).

- Word association.

- Award ceremony with Liker scale (assigning the democratic criteria to various stages of the Project – has the learning of democracy happened?).

The outcome can be summarised as follows.

- Group session was too long – participant fatigue occurred, reducing the focus and quality of content.

- The Project step was found to be relatively redundant, as it merely brought up a lot of the same issues which were spontaneously raised at various other times during the group discussion. It wastes a lot of time.

- The Likert scale was found to be difficult to relate to the extent of democracy at each point in the project. This was hence abandoned as a technique during the first group and abandoned entirely for the second group.

3.4.2. Second group

The second focus group was attended by seven members of the community of Amaoti all of whom are associated with OTHANDWENI. These included the chairperson, past chairperson and another three past members, the person from Legal-wise who attends all the joint working committee meetings as a member, and the facilitator of the workshops who became a member of the Village committee established later. It lasted almost six hours and was recorded and transcribed. I attended as a silent observer but was asked to join the group because I was perceived as a person who 'knew about the project' (FG2). I joined as a participant observer but soon realized I was also acting as facilitator as discussions were very flexible and, at times, volatile. Keeping a track of what the participants were referring to became difficult for the facilitator.

Flow change used for FG2 OTHANDWENI:

- Introduction.

- Collages (to create a visual representation of what the project symbolised at its inception and now, years later).

- Plans and expectations (reasons for joining with the other group).

- Personification (to explore the relationship and power dynamic between the two organisations in 1994 and in 2003).

- Word association.

- Award ceremony (assigning the democratic criteria to various stages of the project – has learning happened?).

The outcome of this second group can be summarised as follows:

- The guide was shortened.

- The personification worked well, leading the group from the power dynamic directly into elements which were necessary for good group interaction and then also explaining the progression of the relationship over time. For this reason the flow was adapted to include the later components into the earlier personification exercise. Participants felt relatively comfortable talking about sensitive issues within the context of the personified marriage of the two organisations.

The discussion guide is attached as Appendix A. There was a problem transcribing the second focus group because of a church service taking place in the hall next door to the training centre where the group was meeting. This prevented clear identification of speakers. Because of the interactive technique used, many sentences were started by one speaker and concluded by another. Where possible I identify the specific speaker.

3.5. COLLECTION OF RELEVANT DOCUMENTS

Documents are an important source of data and I have had access to a wide range of documentation concerning both organizations. These include an early written and recorded history of the organizations, draft policy documents and legal instructions, fund raising proposals, board papers and minutes of volunteer meetings, staff training manuals and brochures and pamphlets, in some cases dating back to 1953.

Most of this has proved useful to confirm information given in interviews, specifically dates and decisions made. The problem was more one of selection and then cross checking to see that the information in the documents was relevant to the research and a true reflection of the situation at the time and not simply someone's personal point of view. I found that it was very beneficial to be able to talk to the people who have intimate knowledge of the documentation, and this is what I have done in instances where there is some doubt about the validity of the content of a document. For example, the Chairpersons of the two organizations were able to show me their constitutions and many of the minutes taken during meetings of the members. Both these people had written information about the history of their organisations. I met the Chairpersons during the normal course of the working day and would ask for clarity on specific points where it was necessary. I also had numerous very short informal meetings with the senior social worker of AGEWISE to confirm information contained in policy documents. These are not recorded individually.

The information from interviews and the focus groups also assisted with corroboration.

3.5.1. Photographs

I have included some photographs. Wagner (1979 sited in Maykut and Morehouse 1994) promotes video taping and photography as acceptable means of data capturing. I was cautious in the use of a camera since many people dislike having their photographs taken but it has proved a useful tool for describing the projects development.

3.6. DATA ANALYSIS

'The analysis of the data begins when there is sufficient accumulated information for the salient aspects of the phenomenon to begin to emerge. The salient aspects are then followed up by either interviews or collection of document, or both, in order to illuminate the aspect which is meaningful to the participants. What is important cannot be predetermined by the researcher the focus of the inquiry must be from the participant's perspective' (Bogdan and Biklen 1982 quoted in Maykut and Morehouse 1994).

The very diversity of the groups and their different perspectives made it difficult for me to initially clearly identify a way of analysing the large amount of data I had collected

both on taped transcriptions and in documents. There was an enormous amount of information given to me all of which needed to be collated in a way which made it understandable and relevant to the research questions.

As a first step in this process I used the interviews and documents to record the case study as a chronology of events. From this document I then identified the periods during which the participants in the interviews and focus groups had identified the most significant changes. These appeared to take place in quite specific time frames. Initially I identified three very broad time frames but on further analysis it became possible to clearly identify five time frames within the overall project development from 1997-2001. I started my analysis with this information and, because there were significant actions taking place during each time frame which influenced subsequent actions, I called each broad time frame an 'action period of influence' (API).

Within each API I identified the main actions and it was possible to then select some key moments that changed the relationship between the two groups as they worked together on the Project and either enabled it to move forward or hindered progress. Although there are many key moments highlighted by the participants I identified a total of seven to use for analysis purposes. These were selected because they were most significant in terms of the research questions. I list them for ease of reference at the beginning of Chapter 6.

From this additional information it was possible to see clearly how the relationship changed from one period to another, to identify what had caused the changes and what actions were taken as a result to help or hinder the process of working together.

The interviews provided the broad detail of the way the groups worked together but it was during the focus groups that the most significant details emerged. The use of projective techniques worked really well, eliciting more pertinent and honest responses.

I used the information from the literature review, the APIs, the key moments and the information gathered from the focus groups, particularly the collages, personification techniques and the metaphor to examine how the groups learned to work together in more detail, drawing the conclusion that the two groups had taken part in a learning process as they worked together.

I further analysed the relationship development and the actions taken at the key moments within the APIs by taking each of the democratic actions adopted from

Larsson's 'Aspects of democracy' (Larsson 2001:199) as a separate heading and looking to see at what level that action was evidenced at each of the APIs.

Participation is also analysed in terms of Pretty's typology of participation because I had identified participation as a prominent aspect of both democracy and learning. I used an established scale which indicated a measurable level of participation at the different stages of the relationship.

I also drew from the case study a number of additional themes which were evident throughout the APIs. Each of these was analysed as a separate research finding.

3.7. LIMITATIONS AND ETHICAL ISSUES

3.7.1. Limitations

Attention is drawn to the limitations imposed by the case study approach and by the fact that I am a single researcher and also a participant observer. The major limitation as far as case studies are concerned is described by Yin:

> 'Case studies have been done about decisions, about programmes, about the implementation process and about organizational change. Beware of these types of topics, none are easily defined in terms of the beginning or end point of the case' (Yin 1994:137).

This has been overcome by selecting as the case study a specific community project and the two groups of people who are developing the Project to find out how they and others in a similar situation learn to work together. According to Bell, it is necessary for the researcher to share the same experiences as the participants 'to understand better why they acted in the way they did' (Bell 1999:13). I do not wholly agree with this view. It is necessary to spend meaningful and productive time with the participants so as to become known and accepted by them and to be then in a position to allow the participants to speak for themselves.

Because this research depends very heavily on a small number of key participants, the method of research is heavily dependent on the researcher being accepted by the participants and the ability of the researcher to, at least partially, integrate into the situation and the context of the research. Initial contact with the participants established that there would be little, if any, resistance to the research taking place,

and before proceeding with the proposed research document I established that each of the participants would be willing to assist with the research. The participants willingly agreed to be interviewed and to have their interviews recorded. That the researcher has to be accepted by the participants who must be willing to participate is relevant, and in my case this was originally not a problem but became one when my status within the group changed. Edwards and Talbot raise this problem and caution against assuming that access and acceptance would be given automatically (Edwards and Talbot 1994:12). The long and natural process of assimilation within the two groups over a period of years gave me a sense of belonging, and acceptance by the participants was something I took for granted. I did not anticipate a problem and fortunately the original narrative interviews were already completed when my change of status within the group made it necessary to revalue at the situation. My attempt to re-interview was not successful. One participant wanted to take the tape recorder home to make sure the information was correct, and another spoke in short sentences and gave only facts. The participants willingness to 'help me' was made evident but at this stage I became anxious that the research might not proceed because it did not seem likely that I would obtain any further full, free and meaningful dialogue.

This anxiety was overcome by using focus groups and by appointing a completely unknown facilitator to run the focus groups. These took more time to design; in fact, I ended up with eight draft copies before I decided to use projective techniques within the Focus Groups.

Critics point out that there is the real problem of representativeness. They query if the participants can be representative of others in a similar field of operation, and a similar context. It is unlikely that another project will be established in the same or very similar context as this case study. From this point of view it is unlikely to be representative; the groups' experience of working together could however enable others to determine a better course of action.

It is important that the selection of the case study could be defined within a specific time scale within a predetermined context, that there would be free access to information, and that permission to undertake the research was negotiated in advance. The data captured in this way was informal and non-standard, in that each interviewee dictated the content and the length of the interview. The data collected enabled me to establish the APIs which would form the basis of the in-depth interviews to be conducted later and also to confirm that the participants would take part in the focus groups at a later stage in the research.

3.7.2. Ethical Issues

I took the opportunity afforded by the initial interviews to cover pertinent ethical issues which may have arisen later. That the research was welcomed and the participants agreeable to contribute, was established. It was agreed by the participants that the rule of confidentiality would apply in all cases and that no personal names would be divulged, but permission was given to use the names of the organizations and geographical locations if required. I decided not to use the names of the organizations to protect the identities of the main participants.

Participants would be free to assist with the interpretation of their contributions and to dispute information and feedback.

No discussion as to individual or group values and prejudices took place.

In addition I then confirmed that I would need to acquire the help of a facilitator for the focus groups. I explained the reason for this and the participants agreed that an 'outsider' would be more likely to obtain better results from the groups. I agree with this but also take cognizance of what Edwards and Talbot (1994:42) noted: that it is inevitable that the researcher is a participant observer in the qualitative research methodology but that it should be acknowledged fully. The facilitator, who is a graduate and has a working knowledge of community development projects dealing with environmental issues, ran both focus groups from prepared discussion group documents (attached in Appendix B).

3.8. CONCLUSION

A qualitative paradigm was selected as the methodology for the research, and the case study approach adopted within the qualitative research methodology, because it allowed for the greatest flexibility. The approach is ideal because it allows and concerns itself with listening, hearing, recording and understanding individuals' perceptions of the situation of which they are a part. The situation and the participants are real and actively involved in action in a specific time and place.

Chapter 4 explores the research in context; its purpose is to situate the research. It re-introduces the economic, social and political forces which have an impact on the Project and which were introduced in Chapter 1.

4. THE PARTICIPANTS IN CONTEXT

The purpose of this chapter is to situate the research. It looks at some of the contextual realities which have bearing on the Project.

The first part of the chapter describes the geographical location of the Project and outlines the demographics of the Amaoti area as it is today. The chapter then explores the history of the Inanda and Amaoti area which helped to form social norms pre-1994, and how recent events are changing this situation.

It looks at the two organisations which are working together and which come from very different backgrounds, examining the way the organisations came into being and how they function today.

The conclusion draws together the major issues which have bearing on the Project.

4.1. INTRODUCTION

There are two groups of individuals. One group (AGEWISE) is predominantly white and it represents an organisation established in the apartheid years to help only the white elderly people. The ethos of the organisation is rooted in a thick layer of culture, which includes an 'appreciation of the philosophy of philanthropy and the need to assist those less fortunate' (JC 7/03) than them. Traditionally, services rendered by the organisation were paternalistic in nature and gave little credence to the need to develop services which would empower and liberate those in receipt of the service. The organisation, though prominently caring for females, was structured in such a way that in most cases decision-making and financial control rested in the hands of a few white, male individuals. The education and welfare systems of the past favoured the white population and enabled an organisation like AGEWISE to build an infrastructure of highly skilled professionals working in a well subsidised environment, caring for one sector of the community.

The other is a small community based organisation (OTHANDWENI) controlled and run by volunteers who have worked together for a number of years assisting pensioners at pension pay points in the Amaoti district of Inanda. The group became a formal organisation with the help of senior staff of AGEWISE on the 19th February 1994 and at that time it had a handwritten constitution setting out aims and objectives and the

problems in the community that made it difficult to render services to the elderly (See Appendix E). The organisation is not registered with the appropriate government structures in order to achieve NGO status. OTHANDWENI organize and manage home-based services themselves. Financing is not available from the State and recipients pay a small fee to help the volunteers contain costs. Members express concern about the fragmentation of their community, and the level of violence, the Aids pandemic and lack of infrastructure that continues to make it difficult to operate. The high level of illiteracy is also of concern as is the fact that the traditional respect for elders and of Ubuntu is no longer appreciated or practised.

Both these organizations reflect the legacy of apartheid years and have developed their services in line with the prevailing norms. Both organisations have a history of giving to others and of service to the community. They approach the way they give from different perspectives. The political, economic and social welfare system prior to 1994, as detailed in Chapter 1, made it difficult for two organizations from radically different backgrounds to form relationships, and, as in this case, most developed independently, following the dictates of government. Post-1994 the new welfare and education policy gave people the right to freely associate and made it a priority to develop services in previously disadvantaged areas.

4.2. THE HISTORY OF INANDA[1]

Much of the history of the Inanda area is strongly linked to land ownership and usage. This is important as the issue of land became central to the development of the relationship between AGEWISE and OTHANDWENI.

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[1] Although not always quoted directly from text the information in this section is mostly taken from:

1, Hughes 1998 'The *city closes in'*. Ed. by H Maylam P. and Edwards *'The peoples city'*.

P. Kaarsholm, 2001 *Generation, Violence and Cultural Styles: The Micro – Politics of a KwaZulu-Natal Slum Settlement.* The Danish Centre for Holocaust and Genocide Studies. Report 4.

One hundred years ago, Inanda was a very successful rural community and Amaoti a small forested area where local people collected wood. There were very few white people living in Inanda. The small number of Afrikaner farmers who worked the land for a short period had all left the area by 1843, leaving behind them only the names they gave to the land they worked. The Project is situated on 'a Portion of subdivision 481 of the Farm Groeneberg' (as per lease agreement clause 1.1.1.).

In 1840 extensive tracts of land were given to The American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions as a mission reserve. The Inanda seminary still owns a great deal of this land, but most of it was sold off to 'converts' and individual Africans became owners of freeholds for the first time. An African middle class of intellectuals and political leaders began to emerge.

Indian indentured labourers arrived in the area from about 1860 to work mainly on the large coastal sugar farms. From 1870 they had the right to quit their indentured labour and farm themselves. No legitimate authority had made provision for released indentured labourers to acquire land to farm. At first, many of the sugar farm labourers, simply rented plots in the Inanda area. These were fairly small, from three to twenty five acres, but they soon began to contribute meaningful quantities of food for the local market, particularly maize, the staple diet in the African home.

Throughout the period 1880-1890, magistrates reported very favourably about the 'real agriculturalists' (Hughes 1998:300) that successfully farmed the land in Inanda and continued to keep famine at bay for an increasing local population. Other business activities made the Indian population in the area successful, such as hawking or keeping small trading stores to cater to the growing population. The success of the Indian population in Inanda became a cause for concern and anger among the African population. One man, James Matiwane, noted in 1881 that 'there seems a prospect that the coolies will elbow us out of the country' (Hughes 1998:302). And indeed it did appear to be possible, since Indian land ownership sharply increased from about 275 acres in 1890 to seven times that figure by 1910.

In comparison, there were only eleven African landowners at this time, who together owned 456 acres, one being James Matiwane. In 1890 John Dube bought 200 acres to establish the Christian Industrial School and the farm called Ohlange, but the acquisition of farmland by Africans dwindled as the rate of acquisition by Indians increased, particularly between 1911 and 1930. Large farms were often sub-divided into lots of between five and thirty acres. By 1930, as much as 52% of the land was

owned by Indians and 46% by Africans. This was in spite of the 1913 Land Act which recommended that a large part of Inanda be demarcated for African occupation. The 1913 Land Act froze any further African freehold land purchases in the area and drastically reduced the mission reserve holdings. Most plots belonging to Africans were very small, between five and ten acres, to a large extent farmed by the women of the area while their husbands worked in the city.

Inanda lacked infrastructure, was without roads, services or permanent housing units. There was a growing awareness among the local African population of the need to organize a movement to protect their land rights, and in 1920 attempts were made to form a farmers' association. John Dube asked the readers of the local papers to act as advocates on behalf of the African farmers but there was little response.

Under the 1936 Land Act, large tracts of land became designated 'release areas' which enabled the government to hold land 'in trust' for African occupation. In Inanda, farms earmarked as release areas 33 and 34 were to be acquired by the state for African occupation. But there was no plan detailed for occupation or a time frame given for occupation. At this time Inanda was home to the second largest population of Indians in Natal (almost 25 000), and the Africans had struggled to retain a foothold in the area. The 1936 Land Act gave no physical advantage to the African farmers and, by 1969, only one small farm was added to the South African Native Trust. The 1936 Land Act also seriously threatened the Indian farmers, resulting in the decline in the number of Indian-owned and operated farms in the Inanda area.

Another direct result of the act, exacerbated by economic conditions compounded by drought, was a major decline in agricultural activities and a sharp increase in the sub-division of land for sub-letting. The few remaining local people in Inanda who had managed to secure their land ownership responded to the many hardships by further sub-dividing their land. The difference now was that the land was no longer farmed by the tenants but simply occupied. Shacks became an ever increasing feature of the landscape and Inanda was fast becoming an urban informal settlement.

As the city of Durban expanded, so the number of people seeking accommodation increased, as did the number of job seekers arriving from different locations throughout South Africa. The local people were trapped in a poverty cycle: as landlords they depended on rents paid but tenants could not always afford to pay their rents because of unemployment, and often caused more difficulties for themselves by taking loans from loan sharks. Landlords were also unable to charge rents which would improve

their living standards, because they could not get tenants who could afford to pay. Inanda seemed destined to be a poor, underdeveloped area.

The situation was further compounded by the clearance of the Cato Manor area of Durban. Many people did not qualify for the housing provided in KwaMashu in the North West, and these people formed the basis of the 'urban tenants' who settled as squatters in Inanda. Although they brought with them a flow of funds, only the landowners and the traders benefited from the greater number of consumers.

By 1980 the land was densely occupied, much of it by people from other areas who had found work in the factories of Durban. Many were not Zulu speakers but spoke Xhosa or other African languages. The increased social pressures caused by the rapid urbanization resulted in violent clashes between, for example, the Zulu and the Amapondo, and between Indian and African. The youth of the area were held responsible for the level of crime in the community and political tensions in the country added fuel to the already inflamed situation in the township. Each sector of the community, the youth, the elderly, the owners and the tenants, the proper house dwellers and the shack dwellers each vied for more recognition, power and services. Their efforts were made fruitless and the situation further inflamed by the government's methods of intervention. In 1980 the South African Development Trust acquired two blocks of land (and their tenants) in Inanda which became known as Inanda, Newtown A. It was developed as a self-help scheme funded by the Urban Foundation and a township was established.

The 1982 the apartheid government plan for Inanda seemed to determine the removal of Indian landowners and a transformation of Inanda into a formal African township, but there was no forced removal of Indian landowners from the area. The climate of mistrust continued to fuel pockets of intense hatred, and this at times had a negative influence on the Amaoti community (which is discussed below) and also on the Project discussed in Chapter 6.

4.3. THE HISTORY OF AMAOTI

The community of Amaoti shared the history of the greater Inanda region, with all its tension and violence. The forced removals from Mkhumbane (Cato Manor) resulted in the vast increase in settlers to the area, and in 1986 the area became a refuge for the Amapondos who fled the violence on the South Coast. Many were housed in army tents. Subsequently shacks made from cardboard and waste material appeared, and

the area became 'shack land' with 'squatters' in residence. Politically, this rendered the Amaoti area in limbo, since squatters were not recognized by local and provincial government as anything more than temporary residents. Infra-structure such as schools, clinics, roads and electricity were viewed as unnecessary for the area.

In 1985 political unrest was high and confrontation between the United Democratic Front (UDF) youth and the police, backed by the elders of the Inkatha Freedom Party (IFP) continued to destabilize the area. The local people saw the police as openly backing the IFP or acting as a 'third force', whose intent was to destabilize the community further. In Amaoti, the Indian members of the Police's 'Internal Stability Unit' were accused of racist attacks on Africans, particularly the youth. Frequent attacks on Indians in their homes and on their land continued and there were reprisals. Large numbers of Indians left the area never to return (Hughes 1987 as cited in Kaarsholm 2001).

A war raged in Amaoti. The dismissal of the IFP meant that the Quadi chief lost authority, and civic structures dominated by ANC youth came into power. These were mainly young men who had left school to fight in the 'struggle' and who had achieved prominence as leaders. They were considered 'young progressive' (red head bands) and they controlled an 'upper court', which many community members considered the authority in the area. Many local residents accepted the court system imposed by the youth and considered their judgments to be just and fair.

A lower court existed, controlled by 'older conservatives' (green head bands). The members were old men, considered to be 'traditionists' and resistant to change. They were accused by some in the community of abusing their power (Ainslie and de Haas 1995)[1].

In Amaoti there developed a strong network of formal and informal structures, including the youth and the elders, and in the local elections in 1996 two ANC councillors, Mr. S Khumalo (5,365 votes) and Mr. G.Phewe (4,272) won office. Councillor Phewa, a Zulu, a shop steward, an activist and a local land owner, had the full support of youth in the area: 'Mr. Phewa is the one on our side' (DCFH report 2001:22). Mr. Khumalo was supported by the more conservative elders, many of them Xhosa speaking. These two councillors could not agree on the distribution of power or on the formation of structures

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[1] Taken from DCHF report 4 Preben Kaarsholm 2001.

to govern the area. Violence erupted and the community was once again in a state of war and members of civic groups and forums were intimidated and abused. Supporters of Cllr. Khumalo were accused of trying to kill Cllr. Phewa and force him to leave Amaoti. Cllr. Khumalo's home was burned down and he was suspended from the Durban Metropolitan Council while his case was being investigated. He continued to work in the Amaoti area, 'armed with a gun and campaigning against crime and the lack of respect of the youth' (DCFH report 2001:24). On 2nd February 1999 Cllr. Khumalo was shot dead in central Amaoti by a man called Songqengpe, who was himself shot dead while trying to rob a policeman of his pistol at a local hospital. The months that followed were filled with reports of violence. The youth accused the elders of instigating and carrying out acts of violence against them, and the leaders in the community accused the youth of perpetrating acts of terror and intimidation against the local community members. In addition different groups of youths fought for supremacy in the area and many supporters of each side were killed or maimed.

In the November 2000 local elections, Hlengiwwe Hlophe, who had been the common-law wife of Cllr. Khumalo, stood against Mr. Phewe as the candidate for ward 53 and won. Cllr. Hlophe remains the councillor for Ward 53 and is therefore councillor for the community in which the Project is under development. She is a member of the Project's newly formed Village Development Committee. Cllr. Khumalo and Cllr. Phewa were both members of OTHANDWENI.

The area is more settled today (8/03). The people from the Inanda, Amaoti district have lived in fear of on-going violence and intimidation. They have struggled to maintain a foothold in their own community and have had to cope with rapid change. The area has seen some results of the RDP, in that there are now roads, water and electricity supplies to the area, but for many of the people, including the elderly, life has not changed significantly. There is still a high level of poverty, illiteracy and homelessness. In addition the people are now suffering as a result of the Aids pandemic.

One small group of volunteers has made efforts to improve the lives of the elderly in the Amaoti area. They are the OTHANDWENI volunteers and they are all residents or landowners from the area. The chairperson and her deputy can be classed as being among the more affluent members of the community, because they are land owners and also trained nurses. They are held in high esteem by the community members, many of whom are illiterate, and in spite of many difficulties they have been able to

make good progress with their plans to provide services for the elderly people of Amaoti. Their history is detailed below.

4.4. OTHANDWENI ORGANISATION

Delivery of Welfare Services in the Amaoti area was limited to the payment of State Old Age Pensions and Disability Grants, and to assistance rendered by local effort, sometimes supported by larger private welfare organizations acting as mentors.

In the early 1980s small groups of independent volunteers helped the pensioners who were collecting their pensions from the various pension pay points in the Inanda area. One such group was unofficially led by a local retired nurse, who owned a butchery in the area and was a well respected land owner. Over a number of years the need to visit and support people too old and frail to help themselves was identified, and the volunteers expanded their services to include visits to the sick and delivery of food and medicines. They called themselves the Pensioners Committee.

In 1990, at a time when the then President F.W. de Klerk repealed the legislation underpinning apartheid (the Reservation of Separate Amenities Act, the Natives Land Act, the Group Areas Act and the Population Registration Act), the volunteers began to see themselves as part of the rapid change taking place in the country as a whole and within their community. One of the positive outcomes of the new freedom was the establishment of more formal groups to deal with pertinent problems.

> 'We started attending meetings in A section Pension Forum and Inanda Development Forum as we attended at them at home it is then we realized the need of home based care. More members joined us until we were 25 members. Registration was R15.The need of keeping records arose and job descriptions, meetings operated as a club, until a constitution was made. So we have become a strong organisation' (VM 4/03).

In 1991 The Pensioners Forum was established with the purpose of coordinating the feeding schemes and the rendition of services to all pensioners in the area and to deliberate and solve problems jointly.

On 19th February 1994 the OTHANDWENI was established. It was founded in the tradition of the informal NGO sector, and established a more developmental approach as it responded to local needs by mobilizing the community to take action. It received

no government subsidy, nor did it have the capacity to access donor or government funding. It continued to rely on volunteers, mainly women, and it had very few organizational systems. It earned a good reputation in the community, because it continued helping the sick and the frail, and the youth with training so that they could be care givers. The members of the committees changed quite regularly, but a core of founder members remained active. These volunteers take people who are too frail to stay in the community to a home for the frail aged at a distance from Amaoti, and it was this that prompted the Chairperson to try to obtain land to establish a home to care for the elderly.

The group was well organized and had specific goals and objectives which the community leaders supported.

> 'We had a bank book in March 1993 and opened the account with R1' (VM 7/02).

The organisation worked hard to get land to operate well.

> 'The struggle went on (and) with the help of Z G, who was a civic at the Inanda Development Forum (I.D.F) standing for Amaoti ... we finally got a form to be signed by the civic to prove that we were serving the elderly of Amaoti. The form was signed by Mr. Phewa (Councillor for the area) and was returned to the I.D.F when others were also there. When the land was granted the surveyors (Z S.) were to go and do the surveying. The following numbers were given:

> Clinic plots 33-46

> Pay point hall plots 60-76

> Old age home site plots 47-61'.

In 1994 The Natal Provincial Office informed the OTHANDWENI verbally that the land was 'granted' and they issued a large map (see photographs) indicating the site allocated to them.

Having secured the land the committee went to visit a home and a day Care Centre to learn 'some of the things to run a Day Care Centre' (VM BM 7/02).

The Chairperson also met with a leader of a local religious group who produced draft plans for an old-age home for the people of Amaoti. Because of the high levels of

violence in the Inanda district at the time, many services were curtailed, including the feeding scheme (operated by AGEWISE with the volunteer help of the pensioners). The Pensioners Committee continued to meet and render what help they could. They met in the home of one of the members and deliberated on the future of the care of the aged in the community.

In 1993 the Pensioners Committee approached AGEWISE, an organization which had helped establish a service centre in Newtown A for the elderly people and had also assisted with providing a feeding scheme at pension pay points in the Inanda area. Initially this approach was for help with providing food to the pensioners at the pay point. AGEWISE was at this time withdrawing from the Inanda community because the funding for the feeding scheme was becoming a problem, the level of violence in the area had increased to a high level and it was no longer considered safe for two white females to be working in the community. However OTHANDWENI kept in touch with AGEWISE and had a meeting with the senior social worker every 'Monday at 10am' (VM 7/02). The Senior Social Worker at AGEWISE helped the group to re-write their constitution, and to obtain documents for OTHANDWENI to apply for registration as a private welfare organisation and to try to obtain a Fund Raising Number. In 1994 the organisation held its first meeting and established its first goal: the building of an old-age home. It was at this time that the Chairperson and committee members realized that they had no formal document giving them legal access to the land and no way of accessing the necessary funding to realize their dream of an old-age home.

They elected to form a partnership with AGEWISE so that they could proceed with their plans, and a formal approach was made by the Chairperson to AGEWISE.

4.4.1. Legal and financial status of the OTHANDWENI

Although the group has a written constitution and has acted in a way which resembles a formal organization, they remain an informal community-based organisation in that they did not register with the Department of Social Welfare and they do not have a NPO (Non Profit Organisation) number. Although the OTHANDWENI Committee has a bank account with a small balance the organisation is not financially independent and operates under AGEWISE patronage. The Project has its own bank account which is controlled by the accountant and Board Members of AGEWISE.

4.4.2. Structure of OTHANDWENI

There is a voluntary Committee which consists of a Chairperson, who is the founder and President of the Organisation and a number of people asked to serve on the committee by the Chairperson. Informal notes of meetings are kept by the Chairperson and an AGM is held each year. The committee structure is flexible and the members are not necessarily voted onto the committee but more generally respond to an invitation via the chairperson.

OTHANDWENI started to form stronger relationships with the staff members of AGEWISE. They met at the Inanda Pensioners Forum each month and they soon became known to each other. The history of AGEWISE is detailed below.

4.5. AGEWISE ORGANISATION

During the late 1950s, a small number of men belonging to an established club in Durban adopted caring for the aged as the annual theme of their community service programme. The members, together with their wives and friends, delivered food and clothing to the poor, elderly white people who were living in the inner city in appalling conditions of neglect and starvation. The focus was on 'poor relief'. A few women from the town were already engaged in providing food and essential items to the destitute people of the town through a benevolent society and there were other individuals and groups rendering service to the poor and needy. Each, in line with the prevailing government dictates, was founded and operated along racial lines.

The service club members were all young white males, and each enjoyed the privileges of educational and social standing within the (white) community. The delivery of basic needs to ensure persons survival was viewed, at this time, as welfare. There was no recorded endeavour by service club members to understand or implement a service which would ultimately lead to the empowerment of the individuals 'helped'. In this way the 'need' was often perpetuated.

The historical and cultural background of the service club members had instilled in them an understanding that 'with such privilege came responsibilities and a requirement for service to mankind' (Quote JC). Most of the group entered the service of others through the Service Club movement, with quiet determination to do good. Their privileged position in society enabled them to access much needed resources,

which they could then utilize for the good of others. Few, if any, would give of their personal wealth in any significant way, but most would 'work tirelessly as volunteers to achieve their objectives' (Quote JC). When the 'year of service to the aged' was at an end some of the members decided that the elderly people they had assisted during the year needed to have a representative body to speak and act on their behalf.

The group recognized that South Africa's Social Welfare programme at the time was still very heavily dependent on private initiatives, specifically in the provision of basic needs such as housing and food. A small number met in the home of one of the most active members on 17th October 1958 and they drafted the first constitution which stated that the organisation would be

> 'conducted on an entirely unsectarian basis and the area in which contributions will be collected, and in which the services will be provided by the Association, shall be the Magisterial district of Durban' (AGEWISE first Constitution 1958).

The objects of the association were listed as:

- the elimination of distress amongst aged white persons

- the promotion of the welfare and happiness of aged white persons

- co-operation with other organisations to achieve the first two aims and to assist other organisations to achieve similar aims amongst the aged of all races (AGEWISE first Constitution 1958).

This established the organization as aware of the need to render services to all race groups, and willing to participate, within the rules of law that existed, in efforts to enable like-minded organizations established in other 'group areas' to help themselves.

In 1958 the group established a formal welfare organisation, registered with the Department of Social Welfare, specifically to render services to white elderly people in the city and obtained a fund-raising number and tax exemption from the State.

In later years the organisation became affiliated to The South African National Council for the Welfare of the Aged and joined the Community Chest.

A significant number of the original Service Club members are still, in 2003, active members of the Board of Management. The most active member is currently both The Honorary President and The Chairman of The Board of Management.

The first donation of 50 pounds was received from the Service Club and the first Social Worker was appointed in 1958.

4.5.1. Services

Increasingly the organisation began to work in other communities. Strong social work input from very early days, and government financial support by way of subsidization enabled the organisation to render appropriate and meaningful service to the elderly people, and they were specifically designed to 'help keep the elderly members of the community active for as long as possible and to provide frail care for those in need of nursing care.' In 1987 a community based organisation (CBO) in Wentworth, then designated a coloured area, approached AGEWISE to ask for help to establish a home for the frail aged from coloured communities in KZN. A significant contribution by the State, through the House of Representatives, of an interest-free loan and considerable fund-raising efforts, made the building project possible and the home was completed in 1989. The Chairperson and representatives of the CBO were invited to join the Board of Management of AGEWISE and the CBO ceased to exist. AGEWISE continues to render home-based and outreach services in the community.

Although established along racial lines AGEWISE saw itself as 'operating within the confines of the then Welfare Policy by responding to the needs of the aged of all race groups' within 'the parameters set by government policy and funding availability.' The senior social worker believes that AGEWISE was:

> 'Essentially ahead of its time. It chose to develop and render community services at a time when the focus was on institutional care. It also elected to render services to other race groups at a time when this was discouraged' (ML 11/02).

Although the lack of freedom to integrate services and provide facilities for mixed race groups was enforced, the organisation acted for and on behalf of many groups who were not able to access services for themselves. It did this from a belief that it was 'a right and good thing to do' (JC.2003) and not from any wish to expand. Seven of the groups helped by the organisation now stand alone as independent organisations and although AGEWISE key personnel serve on their various committees, only a few remain strongly linked to the organisation in a meaningful way and only one has been

absorbed into the organisation totally, at the request of the members of that organisation.

The senior staff has a 'well founded reputation for being 'available to other organisations to answer queries and represent others in government and financial debate about the care of the aged and welfare matters. Staff members are regularly invited to meet with government officials about the new welfare policy and procedures (ML 7/03). As stated in the original constitution there is an on-going involvement and desire to 'promote and assist any group involved in care of the aged' and vulnerable. In recent times this has included children orphaned by Aids and disabled people left without care givers due to the pandemic. The help that is given is usually social worker driven, with the Board of Management keeping their involvement to strategic or (capital) financial decisions (JC 2003). The intervention is often paternalistic and does not always encourage self-sufficiency and independence (FG1 and FG2). The social agency began to develop a track record of mentoring smaller organisations and helping them to develop services. However in order to continue to receive subsidization from the State, it continued to render services in such a way that the racial groups did not mix.

In 1989 the organization became involved in the Inanda area where a small group of volunteers wanted help for pensioners and disabled people who queued for many hours in the open in order to collect their pensions and grants. AGEWISE responded by obtaining a subsidy from the Department of Nutrition to provide food each pension day. It then raised funds for a service centre (completed in 1992 and handed over to the community) and a vehicle to assist the pensioners at Newtown A pension pay point.

By 1990 AGEWISE staff and volunteers rendered similar assistance at four other pay points.

In the same year the organization was approached by the Catholic Church to help develop housing for the coloured community in Sydenham. The Church donated the land, and AGEWISE raised funds to develop a small village to house needy elderly and disabled people. This project was not government funded and AGEWISE and the church render services to all race groups although the village was established in a government designated coloured community. AGEWISE, at this time, was aware of a 'climate of change in the country' (MP 7/02) and responded to the request from the elderly of the area to house those in need, irrespective of colour.

In 1992 an AGEWISE senior staff initiative resulted in the formation of The Inanda Pensioners Forum. Its purpose was to co-coordinate the activities of pensioners' committees at pay points and to deal with common problems collectively. The programme was supported by the Social Security Department. It remains active today (2003). The Amaoti pensioners' committee was represented by the resident who was to become the president of OTHANDWENI. AGEWISE staff and the pensioner's representative formed a strong relationship which developed over time.

Since 1992 AGEWISE has tried to act as a multi-racial organisation in that no facility or service is deemed solely for one sector to the exclusion of others. It continues to render a large variety of programmes and services, including some that are aimed at preparing people of all ages for their own ageing process; such as,

- pre-retirement Counselling

- schools Awareness Programmes

- community Awareness Programmes.

Some programmes and services are aimed at providing early intervention in situations where, without intervention, the person would likely need institutionalisation: These services include the following.

- Community based services such as Meals on Wheels, Home Help and Social Work Counselling.

- Service Centres, Clubs and Special Groups: (Therapy, Stroke, Alzheimer's, Alcohol and Drug Rehabilitation).

- Rehabilitation and Respite Care.

- Skills training and Capacity Building.

In addition, the organisation responded to the need for accommodation for the vulnerable elderly who have only a state old-age pension to live on, by providing sheltered housing in special secure buildings. It also provided for the more economically stable, 'at risk' age in the community by providing housing units on a life right basis. The residents have 'the right to: life, freedom of association, privacy, self reliance, and self determination, and to a continuum of care, at a fee that they can afford' (AGEWISE brochure 2002).

In addition AGEWISE staff participated in the Durban Regional Welfare Liaison Committee in July 2002, the purpose of which was to determine the level of transformation within the welfare sector (in accordance with the conditions of subsidy as outlined in circular 1 of 2001 from the Department of Social Welfare and Population Development). AGEWISE documented positive changes taking place in all areas determined as relevant by Circular 1 of 2001.

SOCIAL AGENCY WORKLOAD 1997 TO 2001

	95/96	96/97	97/98	98/99	99/00	00/01
▦ INVESTIGATIONS	368	610	643	545	500	477
▪ AVE. CASELOAD	617	591	309	322	298	260
☐ COMM. WORK PROJECTS	98	108	206	324	420	468

NUMBER OF ENCOUNTERS
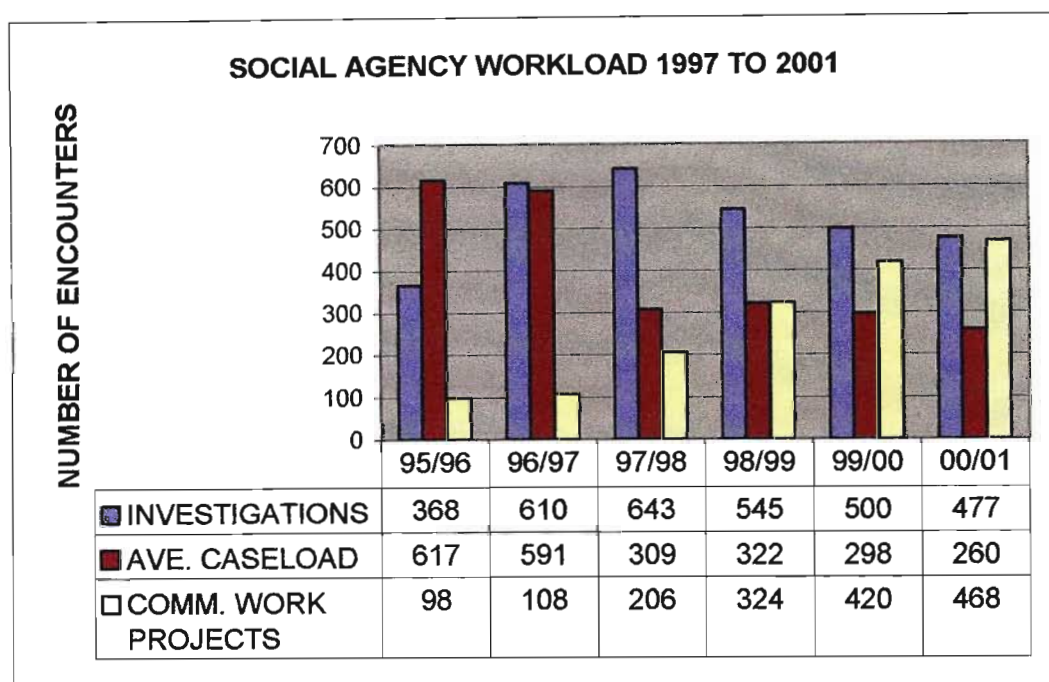
Graph: Social Agency Workload of AGEWISE

The graph reflects the social agency workload transforming from being primarily casework orientated to service the white community, to Community and Group Work, servicing primarily the previously disadvantaged communities. This trend has included the development of a range of outreach programmes in the Inanda area, including the community development Project which is the focus of this research. The staff levels also indicate a strong movement towards transformation. The trend reflects changes at all levels of social work activity to include people of all races. The Board of Management is still predominantly white and male. However there is an appreciation of the need to change.

4.5.4. Financial Status of AGEWISE

The organisation was more than adequately funded in the past from government sources. Since 1994, however, subsidies for the aged have reduced by upward of 10%

per year. Subsidies are now paid only for sub-economic, extremely frail elderly people. All race groups are entitled to the same subsidy. However this funding source is viewed by the welfare sector as totally inadequate to care for the aged, and many organisations have had to become actively involved in major fund raising activities. Many organisations have closed. 'Sound business principles and careful management plus continuous support from the community have enabled the AGEWISE organisation to stay financially sound' (Chairman of the Board 2002). At the time of the approach from OTHANDWENI, AGEWISE was undergoing a downsizing and consolidation programme in order to stay financially viable. During the period 1994-1998 over 400 staff members had been retrenched and the number of frail care beds reduced by half (HS 2/02). The Board of Management expressed concern about the future of AGEWISE and a wish for care to be taken so as not to 'over extend' (MP FG1).

4.6. CONCLUSION

The Project is situated in a unique context. It spans the years 1997-2001, a time of momentous change in the history of South Africa. Political, social and economic changes made at a national level impacted on the people at community level. The new government policy documents gave people the hope of improved education, welfare and health services and detailed a new approach to the delivery of service which would be participatory. The promise of a better life is still unfulfilled for many of the people at community level and yet the government has achieved more in the almost ten years than was ever imagined possible by the world at large.

The fragmented community in which the Project is situated is in many ways a microcosm of the country. The community has a violent history of turmoil and intimidation and although the community is working towards a better future the progress is seen by many to be slow. The people are not made aware of the many changes at national or provincial level in a way that is useful to them and because of the high level of illiteracy many people, especially the aged, are often dependent on others for information and support. The local system of government is often in conflict and the people are not able to rely on their councillors to deliver services or leadership. Violence often erupts in the community and this, added to the high level of deaths due to the Aids pandemic, has reduced the number of potential leaders and skilled people in the community.

The different peoples of South Africa have not had many opportunities to develop ways of interacting and dealing with each other in the normal activities of daily life other than in the ways dictated by the government of the past. Because of the separation of health, education and welfare services and facilities, and the laws which kept each race group within a specific geographical area, which deemed that each group and each culture remain isolated, there is no history of people associating freely across the many social, cultural and racial divides. People in the new South Africa are learning how to bridge this gap and build new ways of working and living together.

Many small community-based organisations seek help from established organisations who they perceive as likely to be able to assist. The two groups who come together to work on the Project come from entirely different and diverse backgrounds. Both have been subjected to a past of racial division and unjust laws. One has benefited to an extent which allowed for the establishing of facilities and services to a specific race group and the other is newly established in an effort to assist the previously disadvantaged community that was not able to access facilities or services during the apartheid years. Both groups strongly identify with the care of the elderly of the community. The business of both is managed at community level by women and both respond to the dictates of the new welfare policy in their joint effort to make a successful enterprise together. This enterprise, the Project, is the case study of this research.

Chapter 5 presents the Case Study.

5. THE CASE STUDY

This chapter presents the empirical data collected with respect to the case study. I have separated the data into two time periods in line with Project milestones. The first section begins with background information from the interviews and the focus groups within the period 1987-1997. This section describes the informal relationship between the two groups. The second section starts with the formalisation of the relationship and then focuses on the period 1997-2001 as remembered by the participants during the in-depth interviews and the focus groups. Both sections of this chapter aim to record the chronological sequence of events in the voice of the participants. The spoken words of the participants are produced verbatim and printed in italics for ease of reference.

5.1. THE PROJECT AND THE PARTICIPANTS: 1987-1997

The Inanda feeding scheme was established in 1987 by AGEWISE to assist the pensioners collecting their pensions at the government pay points. Pension distribution at the time was a long process and pensioners had to wait many hours in the open. A social worker of AGEWISE was asked by a local leader in Inanda, Newtown A (see Chapter 4) to find a way to help him feed his people as they queued. Two problems were identified by the community leader as of critical importance. The first was task driven and had to do with the physical well being of the pensioners and disabled as they queued for hours, and the other had to do with changing the process and improving the system of pension pay outs to prevent the perceived ongoing corruption by officials and community members, which left pensioners with little or no money.

The senior social worker of AGEWISE became interested in the area. She saw herself as having *'specialised knowledge which would be helpful to a community that was new to her'*. She saw herself as *'as a social worker doing community work, and the opportunity to work in a new community as offering her a chance to try ... doing development work in a black community'* (ML 7/02).

At this time, organisational social work emphasis was still on case work and community services, and AGEWISE social agency staff responded in their traditional way. There was an awareness of the different developmental, approach, although it was not yet in practice.

'You know when we trained, we trained in community work, the concept of developmental work had not in fact been developed ... We were learning before the books were there ...' (ML TM 7/02).

The social workers in the field continued to be seen as providers of material assistance and in line with the traditional response expected AGEWISE to be able to find a way for bread, soup and fruit to be delivered every pension day, and to obtain a sponsored vehicle.

In 1992 the senior social worker of AGEWISE attended a newly formed pensioners' forum to help address the problem of corruption at the pay points. She undertook to write appropriate letters to lobby government officials to take action (ML 7/02). The press were also taken to view the situation in the townships, in order to solicit support from the larger community.

AGEWISE was able to provide food and assistance to those pensioners who could not access their pensions, and it was not long before a further five pension pay points were serviced by AGEWISE (SA files: Inanda Feeding Scheme: 9/91-2/94). By this time, funding was available through the Department of Nutrition for the basic food items (Minutes of National and Social Development Programme District Committee 4/11/92). This greatly enhanced the ability of AGEWISE to deliver to the additional pension points. AGEWISE, represented by two staff members, the income development manager and the senior social worker, involved itself in the work of the local volunteers in Newtown A. With the help of foreign donors AGEWISE was eventually able to provide a structure, consisting of prefabricated units welded together, as a pension pay point at one of the sites, which offered some shelter on pension days. This unit was operational in August 1992 and handed over to the community (AGEWISE Social Agency Committee minutes 9/92). A community leader and his wife ran a community centre from the units.

The volunteers who were to become OTHANDWENI and the staff of AGEWISE had met at the pensioners' forum and shared a joint concern about the plight of the aged in the Inanda community. The volunteer, who was to become the Chairperson of OTHANDWENI, was a trained nurse, a land owner and a business woman in the area: she owned butchery (VM). She was approached by the community of elderly people and asked to find help for them. She remembers this time:

'so the community wanted people to assist the elders so they drew me where I was in my small business to come and assist so we saw the grievances of the

elderly so we started from there ... we keep talking about sorting things' (VM 7/02).

The Volunteers were unable to source funding and approached an AGEWISE senior social worker. The Chairperson recalls that OTHANDWENI:

'didn't have funds and we had no idea where to collect funds ... so I thought I must link to this woman ... so I made ML my friend' (VM MB 7/02).

The AGEWISE senior social worker remembers meeting with the Volunteers and that at this time they were concerned about a specific problem in the community to do with,

'the pensioners at the pay point ... In that, people were being paid out in the open on a property belonging to a shop, and they were concerned that the people had no shelter, they also had no toilet or water facilities' (ML 7/02).

AGEWISE was trying to continue to fund services at five pension pay points but found it difficult because the Department of Nutrition had stopped the subsidy programme. When the Volunteers approached the senior social worker for help she was unable to offer any:

'the original request to us was would we extend our feeding scheme to their pay point, but at the time we were extended to capacity and also the Dept. of Nutrition had withdrawn their subsidy for feeding schemes for the aged (National Nutrition & Social development Programme SA files 8/4/93). So we in fact were not able to undertake that commitment to them' (ML 7/02).

Within a year the violence in the community had reached a level where it was considered too dangerous for AGEWISE staff to work in the area. Services to the pension pay points were withdrawn and AGEWISE was no longer able to render service to any group in the community:

'there was a lot of violence in the area, and our truck which used to supply food was hijacked for the second time and AGEWISE considered it to be a bit dangerous' (ML TM.7/02) (1992/3 Chapter 4).

In addition to working at the pay points the pensioner volunteers also rendered a nursing service to the house-bound people in their community. This they funded themselves. When an elderly person became frail the volunteers arranged to take them to a 'frail-aged home some distance from their community' (VM 7/02). This

prompted the leader of the group (VM) to consider the possibility of building a home in the community. This desire was expressed to AGEWISE. The senior social worker of AGEWISE recalls that,

> *'they also were then interested, I don't quite know how they got to this point themselves, that they had decided that they wanted an old age home. What then started happening was that they would start calling at the AGEWISE offices' (ML 7/02).*

The pensioner group from Amaoti continued to meet with a senior staff member from AGEWISE and talked about their plans to get land on which to build an old-age home. The Chairperson remembers those visits.

> *'We met with ML to talk about the problems of getting funding for building on these sites. We kept on visiting her at AGEWISE offices every Monday at 10am' (VM 7/03).*

At this time there was a lot of confusion about the systems and the policies which were in force. The Volunteers were informed by the 'civics' in Amaoti that they had a need for a constitution if they were to be able to access land in the area on which to build an old-age home. 'We needed the constitution to put pressure on local officials to support ... we came to ML to make us a constitution ... we made it with ML and applied to Pretoria' (VM 7/02). There were a number of follow up meetings at which the senior social worker 'explained things':

- How the volunteers had to register with the Department of Social Welfare once they had a Constitution ...

- How it was difficult to register for a Fund Raising number because of changes to the Fund Raising Act.

The whole structure of the welfare system was at this time in transition and the new systems were not in place (Chapter 1). The senior social worker explained to the volunteers that registration for a fund raising number was probably no longer possible. Because of the many changes in legislation taking place at a national level in the country, it was 'prudent' to wait and see whether or not the whole system of registration would change. Although registration with the department went ahead the Chairperson remembers that:

'Everything came back (from Pretoria) and we were attending meetings ... so LM said not to worry ... so I left that application for a fund raising number' (VM 7/02).

A constitution was produced in February 1994.

'Obviously they chose their own name ... they were very excited about the constitution' (ML 7/02) (See Appendix F for constitution).

The Volunteers called a public meeting in Amaoti and asked the community to help them choose a new name (Focus Group 7/03). In 1994 OTHANDWENI came into being and the leader of the volunteers (VM) became Chairperson. OTHANDWENI had been informed verbally by the Natal Provincial Association (NPA), that they had been issued a section of land on which to build a home for the aged (VM MB 7/02).

The land was held in trust by the State, having been donated to the community by a local land owner many years before (See Chapter 4). After the general elections in 1994, the Province's employees had no access to the people who had authority to confirm transfer of ownership of the land, and there remained a vacuum of authority for a number of years. Possible donors of time, effort and resources were unwilling to risk expenditure on land that could not be confirmed as being owned by OTHANDWENI. Over a period in excess of two years OTHANDWENI made numerous attempts to move the Project forward. They continued to meet with the staff of AGEWISE each Monday but no progress was made with regard to the land issue.

During the years that followed it became increasing difficult for the Chairperson and her committee to gain access to people who could issue her with a legal document which transferred the land ownership to OTHANDWENI. What was available was a large map of the area with the land distribution to OTHANDWENI marked on it and a letter from the Amaoti Civic Association which asked that the land be confirmed as belonging to OTHANDWENI.

There was continued informal contact between OTHANDWENI and AGEWISE. The two groups met together regularly in the offices of AGEWISE to identify needs. This is recalled by the social worker of AGEWISE:

'We responded basically to their requests ... My continued contact with them was via the Inanda Pensioners Forum' (ML 7/02).

Sheltered housing and life care was provided to protect the elderly from the social problems encountered:

- The high rate of crime and violence in a community where the elderly are seen as soft targets.

- The lack of kin support for aged persons due to emigration of kin, dysfunctional families and Aids.

AGEWISE continues to acknowledge the need to provide frail care in special units for those who need twenty-four-hour nursing care. The frail care units have always been viewed as the 'last resort' (Senior Matron AGEWISE 3/02) for the elderly people. The organization stresses the need for the elderly and vulnerable to be kept in their family and community surroundings, supported by community services until such time as there is no alternative but to place them in care.

This policy makes good economic sense. It is far cheaper to care for people in their own homes with support services rather than to place them in care.

4.5.2. Legal and organizational status of AGEWISE

The private welfare organisation is registered with the Department of Welfare. It has tax exemption status and is registered as a non profit organisation.

A voluntary Board of Management has overall authority and control of the organisation with particular reference to policy-making. The Board of Management consists of:

- a President (who is the Founder)

- a Life Vice President (The Founder's wife)

- a Chairperson (who is also the President and Founder)

- two Vice Chairpersons

- a Treasurer and ten further members.

Of the fifteen board members:

- thirteen of the fifteen members of the Board are males.

- two members of the Board of Management are female.

- one member is a black male.

- there are in addition two co-opted members: the Chairperson of the OTHANDWENI and Vice Chairperson.

The 132 staff members are mostly employed as nurses and social workers. They are led by a chief executive officer (CEO) and five senior people who manage the day to day activities of the organisation. They determine and implement responsible procedures and processes. There is a large number of outsourced staff, and over 800 active voluntary workers.

4.5.3. Transformation Plans of AGEWISE

AGEWISE is conscious of the need to transform fully in line with government expectations. This consciousness plays a critical role in the development of the working relationship with the members of OTHANDWENI and is therefore detailed below. The nature of the AGEWISE organisation is typical of the formal welfare sector, as it operated under the Apartheid system as described previously. It conformed to the requirements of government policy which was heavily influenced by Western theories and operated predominantly by providing institutional and community-based services. The new welfare system spells out the importance of formal welfare organizations re-orientating themselves towards developmental social welfare. Social work staff are aware of the urgent need to address the inequalities of the past and render services to the previously disadvantaged, and to render services in a more democratic way. Social work staff are often at the forefront of the momentous changes organizations have to make in order to change. This is the case with AGEWISE, who appointed a full time developmental social worker to assist them in the process (ML TM 7/02).

The organisation has registered as a Non Profit Organisation (NPO).

Long delays at government departments have delayed AGEWISE's new constitution from being ratified. It is currently (8/03)still under review to 'carry out one or more public benefit activities' as defined in section 30(I) of the Income Tax Act in SA' and to determine a more holistic approach to service delivery for the future.

Contact between the two organizations continued between 1993-1997 on an informal level, in that there was no official report given to the Director or AGEWISE Board of Management (AGEWISE Board papers 1993-1997) concerning the staff working with the members of OTHANDWENI. AGEWISE staff explained that this had to do with the situation in the country at this time:

> 'When they started calling at the AGEWISE offices, I think one needs to bear in mind at this time though, that all this was happening under the old South African government. And at this stage welfare was an own affair, and AGEWISE was not registered to deal with black aged, and neither could we get registered to deal with black aged; because government policy was that black aged should in fact retire to the homeland. This in fact was an unrealistic policy but it did exist. So the work we were doing at that time was actually informal ... I think technically it was illegal on paper but because of the other political developments in the country at that time I don't think people were particularly applying the laws' (ML 7/02).

During this time the Volunteers of OTHANDWENI and the social worker of AGEWISE had tried unsuccessfully to gain documentation to prove ownership of land that had been allocated to them by the Natal Provincial Administration. The Chairperson of OTHANDWENI remembers making visits to the NPA office:

> 'Now when we went to Mayville they said "no the office is changing everyday"... there were new white faces ... they did not know about us ... we must get proof of the land. So we went to Civics for proof' (VM 7/02).

The formalizing of the relationship between the two organisations was delayed because of the massive changes taking place in AGEWISE due to the changing welfare system (Chapter 4). AGEWISE was unable to commit to further involvement with OTHANDWENI. This is explained by the senior social worker:

> 'At that time AGEWISE was undergoing a rationalization programme due to financial constraints and in fact we were curtailing some of our services. The social agency staffing was cut by 50%. I put VM and some of her committee members in contact with the Provincial Branch of the National Council for The Vulnerable, and I actually introduced them to a social worker in the area, hoping that the National Council for the Vulnerable would continue to assist the new OTHANDWENI to develop and also to mentor them' (ML MT 7/02).

This arrangement worked well for a time. The Chairperson of OTHANDWENI recalls that: *'in 1995 The social worker for the council (helped) us to be stronger and to raise funds'* (VM 4/03), but OTHANDWENI continued to visit AGEWISE offices to speak to the senior social worker and to seek advice about getting the land. The senior social worker remembers that the relationship with the National Council faltered:

> *'... the social worker that they worked with did in fact leave the National Council and it seemed that there was a break down of communication between the National Council and OTHANDWENI. And I remember VM coming in and feeling insulted that they had said to her that she must start running a club under a tree, and she was insulted about that, and so there was a breakdown in the relationship. I am not exactly sure about that because I was not directly involved'* (ML 7/02).

OTHANDWENI approach a religious group working in Inanda to help them. At the time there was a great deal of community unrest and the Aids pandemic was becoming a new major issue of concern which people were reluctant to address. The religious group considered the plans that OTHANDWENI had but, as the Chairperson recalls, they were not able to assist them:

> *'We started getting somebody who we thought was going to help us ... but it failed ... Because people have suffered through changes in politics that they have no homes ... people fought and sons died and they saw this HIV and said they cannot do anything for us'* (VM MB 7/02).

In 1996 the Chairperson of OTHANDWENI approached the senior social worker of AGEWISE with a formal approach to *'join hands with AGEWISE to work hand in hand to alleviate the pain, poverty of vulnerable people of Amaoti'* (VM 4/03).

The Chairperson of OTHANDWENI explained her problem as not being able to build on the land and not having received funding from the RDP:

> *'The RDP did not fund us ... we have got a plot but we can't raise funds ... I have got a problem'* (VM 7/02).

The minutes of AGEWISE Board Meeting: Directors report of 15th September.1997 state:

'A meeting was arranged with the committee of OTHANDWENI in order to discuss how they would fit under AGEWISE's umbrella and what the nature of the relationship and project would be' (Ref. 5.7 page 3).

The Directors report to the Board of Management of the following month states that:

'A meeting was held with representatives from the above OTHANDWENI and they had agreed to fall under AGEWISE umbrella. A further meeting was to be held whereby a decision would be taken as to what type of project we would be looking at to assist them' (Ref. HS clause 7.6).

The approach by OTHANDWENI for a more formal relationship came at an opportune moment for AGEWISE as explained by the senior social worker:

'*The political situation in the country was very confusing for the people trying to 'amalgamate all sorts of government structures ... And the long and the short of it was that we couldn't get any sense out of anyone. Then the South African Government, the Department of Welfare, decided it was going to change the Welfare System and I was one of the people invited to serve. It was called The Discussion Group on Ageing*' (ML MT 7/02).

The major outcome of AGEWISE involvement in Government discussion groups was an immediate sense that radical changes would have to be made to meet new criteria for the delivery of services. The senior social worker reported to the Board of Management in July that she had been associating with OTHANDWENI since 1991 in the capacity of a volunteer and that she was of the opinion that AGEWISE could be of assistance to them. She explained further:

- that previous emphasis on institutional care of the aged was shifting radically away from old age homes,

- that government financing policy would reflect this move and no longer fund old age homes,

- welfare organisations would be expected, in terms of the new policy, 'to work in a developmental method' and to offer a more holistic and democratic service delivery and to work in previously disadvantaged communities. (Board Papers: 1997 Ref. 5.9.4).

The changes in the Welfare Policy prompted the senior staff of AGEWISE to suggest to the Board of management a more formal approach to working with OTHANDWENI:

> 'So the situation had changed completely, and I think that AGEWISE also at that stage was looking for an opportunity to get involved in development work, and I was actually asked by the Director, what my thoughts on the matter were, and I at that stage felt that our contact with OTHANDWENI was something that could be developed to the benefit of both organizations' (ML 7/02).

The Director of AGEWISE readily agreed with his staff: 'When this was brought to my attention I suggested it was a good idea and we could look at this one' (HS 7/02).

Three Members of the Board, the Director and staff of AGEWISE visited the land and became enthusiastic supporters of the endeavour. The Board of Management papers of 25th August 1997 ref 1.7 report:

> 'The Director and Board Members and senior staff visited the site and were impressed with both the site and the main role player VM. The Director is to call a meeting with her in order to ascertain if they wish to formally fall under the AGEWISE umbrella'.

The chairperson of OTHANDWENI remembers the AGEWISE visit to the site.

> 'ML called the AGEWISE people ... you were there, the Board of Management members came to see the place how big it is I showed them ... They brought different people to help and so on and so on' (VM MB 7/02).

One of the OTHANDWENI committee members remembers the formal approach from OTHANDWENI to AGEWISE in September of 1997 when OTHANDWENI approached AGEWISE and 'actually used the words' could they:

> 'come under the AGEWISE umbrella in order that the two organisations could develop the Project together' (KZ 5/03).

5.2. THE PROJECT AND THE PARTICIPANTS: 1997-2001

The Four years between 1997 and 2001 are selected because it was in 1997 that the two groups joined together to form a relationship so that they could begin to develop services in the community. In 2001 the first two phases of the Project were completed

and decisions had to be made concerning the further development of the Project. The two events give a chronological framework to the case study.

5.2.1.   1997

1997 was significant because it was during that year that the two groups joined together in order to build the Project.

The AGEWISE Board's involvement, prior to the formal approach by the OTHANDWENI Chairperson and the subsequent visit of some Board Members to the site in Amaoti, was described by the President during the first focus group as:

> 'Virtually nothing, except from a management point of view and to approve proposals' (JC FG1:1).

The then Chairperson remembered that the work in Inanda (re: prior 1997 and to do with the feeding scheme)

> 'Came up from time to time in discussion, but not formally. I think one would be fair to put it that way. There was awareness, but quite an uncertain awareness. By then I think I was in the chair and it took a lot of steering and convincing to take the next step'.

A formal meeting took place to discuss the organisations joining together. The minutes of the meeting between the Board members and OTHANDWENI stated that the OTHANDWENI request to come under the AGEWISE umbrella would be approved at the next Board meeting in October 1997 (Ref. 5.9.4:1997). The social worker remembered the committee saying:

> 'Yes, let's go ahead with the Project. We needed to go with it in terms of our transformation goals and they need our expertise and credibility' (ML FG1:3).

The two groups formalised their relationship and focused on the 'whole horrific thing of trying to obtain the land ... we were in that for years' (ML FG1:3).

The land issue had become a completely 'nightmarish experience' with the two groups being 'shunted from the NPA to the Metro and back again' (HS 7/02).

One of the major reasons for this was that the area had been rural and a township had never been declared. (In fact the area is still not declared a Township as of 9/03 MS).

> 'So the land was not in the hands of the Metro but under the jurisdiction of the old NPA, the province, and I think this caused a lot of confusion and delays and people didn't want to make decisions with regard to the land' (ML 7/02).

The AGEWISE social worker worked with government departments to help formulate new welfare policy and realised that the aim of OTHANDWENI to have an old-age home was unlikely to be realised. She remembers informing OTHANDWENI of this:

> 'Obviously with the change in the welfare policy one had to convey the fact (to OTHANDWENI) that the aspiration or a vision of having an old age home in the area was something which was highly unlikely to be achievable ... Government focus was definitely not geared towards old age homes (ML 7/02).

The explanation was accepted by the OTHANDWENI Chairperson who re-directed the OTHANDWENI efforts to fulfil their original need as written in their first hand written constitution (Appendix F):

> 'so interestingly enough OTHANDWENI went right back to its original expression of interest which was to provide shelter for pensioners, to provide a pay point which had shelter and water and toilet facilities and was secure and safe' (ML 7/02).

On 10th September 1997 OTHANDWENI met formally with AGEWISE and expressed a wish for the two organizations to join together. The special meeting was held in one of the AGEWISE facilities, attended by the Chairperson of each organization and committee members and two staff members from AGEWISE.

At the September Board of Management meeting, AGEWISE approved the request from OTHANDWENI and invited two representatives of OTHANDWENI to join the AGEWISE Board of Management.

At a meeting on 1st October 1997 the staff of AGEWISE and OTHANDWENI met to 'flesh out' (ML 7/02) the plans for the future. The main item on the agenda was the land issue and decisions were made concerning how to deal with this:

> 'The land issue was to be addressed and letters obtained from the NPA to confirm the plot numbers and the Director and staff of AGEWISE would

accompany the Chairman of OTHANDWENI to the NPA offices' (Minutes of meeting 1/10/97).

The joint meeting of the two groups attended by eight OTHANDWENI volunteers and two senior staff of AGEWISE took place and ambitious new plans were made to 'make a market garden, to have a block-making facility and a bakery. To fundraise for building a community hall which would be the pension pay point, an architect would be found free of charge and Rotary Clubs would be approached to assist' (Minutes of meeting 1/10/97).

Clause 7 of the minutes state 'it was also decided that we should request more land so as to condense all the concepts/building together' (Minutes of meeting held 1/10/97).

The October 1997 Board of Management Minutes of AGEWISE confirm that there was a formal recognition of the relationship between the two organizations and that they would 'look at a joint undertaking'. AGEWISE then took an interest in the development of services in the Inanda area and became formally involved in the acquisition of the land and with planning for the development of the Project to take place.

The AGEWISE Board of Management gave only guarded approval of the two groups working together. There was deep concern expressed by a number of members regarding the possible financial implications of a joint venture.

The problems were succinctly expressed during the focus group discussions:

> *'My view is that there were basically two things. The main one was being able to raise the finances to proceed with the project and the other was to have an organisation, which was familiar with development work' (JC FG1:5).*

Some members including the President and the Chairperson at the time believed that AGEWISE had made the right decision in:

> *'Joining up with them (OTHANDWENI) and deciding to go ahead.'*

The other board members reluctance was explained as:

> *'Mainly financially based. There were some board members who said that this should not cost AGEWISE one cent, and so it was a very strong condemnation of the Project' (MP FG1:5).*

The two groups continued to work towards obtaining the land. The Director of AGEWISE became involved in seeking clarity on the land issue, although he met with the same frustration as the staff and volunteers had.

> *'It took ... without exaggeration probably sixty phone calls, ten or twelve visits to government officials, tears, threats and every form of persuasion trying to get that land ...*

> *The major problem seemed to be that everyone had lost their memory... we showed them photographs of sod-turning ceremonies ...' (HS 7/02).*

In spite of all this effort it was a 'lucky break' that put AGEWISE in touch with a government official who could suggest a way forward.

> *'When we met him, things started to move forward ... he suggested that as the township was not declared we needed a lease drawn up ...' (HS 2/02).*

Another year went by and AGEWISE continued to pressurize provincial government offices to gain access to someone who was prepared to make a decision.

5.2.2. 1998

Activities in 1998 included:

- In February: the appointment of a social worker by AGEWISE to do development work in the Amaoti area.

- In April the invitation to OTHANDWENI from AGEWISE for two of their members to become co-opted members of the AGEWISE Board of Management.

- In May the Chairperson and Vice Chairperson of OTHANDWENI attended the AGEWISE Board meeting for the first time.

Despite the slow progress of acquiring the land the Project was continuing to move forward in other areas. Funding proposals were sent out describing the proposed Project and requesting support and in February of 1998 AGEWISE, at the request of OTHANDWENI, appointed a social worker to undertake development work in the Amaoti area.

OTHANDWENI was not involved in the process of choosing a social worker: The AGEWISE senior social worker explained this:

> 'The actual choosing of the social worker, because really we would have to follow a prescribed pattern, because (she) would be in a subsidized post laid down by the Department of Welfare, so there must be manoeuvrability, but they weren't involved in actually interviewing of the prospective candidates ... They knew we were interviewing and I had told them that AGEWISE (Board of Management MS) had given permission to employ a Zulu speaking social worker to work in the area with them' (ML TM 7/02).

The new social worker (TM) was introduced to local people by the Chairperson of OTHANDWENI:

> 'She went along and introduced the Social worker to who she thought she should be introduced, which was actually a good thing' (ML TM 7/02).

The OTHANDWENI remember at this time took the social worker to meet important community leaders. '... to the Induna and to meet people who would help her in the working' (KZ 5/03).

The social worker, appointed by AGEWISE, was to do developmental social work as detailed by AGEWISE in the Amaoti area.

The process underway to acquire land was extremely slow and there was little to show the community nor was there much, for the social worker to write meaningful reports of her activities as a developmental social worker. At the interview she confirmed this lack of progress.

> '... you did not know what to write because you could not show movement' (TM 7/02).

She was also very afraid of working the area. She had heard of the history of violence, and that the AGEWISE staff had been hijacked:

> 'I remember I was very afraid to go there alone, She (the Chairperson of OTHANDWENI) was very supportive, I must say, you know she actually came with me almost three times a week, even if there were no meetings, but she would make sure she takes me there' (TM 7/02).

In April of 1998 the Director of AGEWISE made a request to the Board of management 'to be allowed to co-opt two members of OTHANDWENI onto the Board (HS 7/02). He suggested that although the choice of members would be for OTHANDWENI to make, one would be an astute, young, black councillor from the Amaoti area and one would be the Chairperson' (Board papers 21/4/98:2.4).

In May of that year at a meeting of OTHANDWENI two members were selected from the committee to attend the AGEWISE Board meeting scheduled for later in the month, the Chairperson (VM) and the Vice Chairperson (MB).

AGEWISE invited the Chairman and Vice Chairman of OTHANDWENI to attend the next AGEWISE Board Meetings as co-opted members and in October 1998 the Chairman and Vice Chairman of OTHANDWENI became full members of the AGEWISE Board of Management.

The Chairman of the Board remembers that they:

> 'Invited Ms VM and MB the Chairman and Vice Chairman of OTHANDWENI to join the Board as representatives of OTHANDWENI ...' (MP 2/02).

The Director at the time remembers that 'these two ladies attended the Board meetings. They had difficulty with transport but they made an effort and attended seven or eight meetings' (HS 2/03).

The AGEWISE Board Papers of the 27th October 1998 indicated that they were still tenacious in the pursuit of the land despite the slow progress:

> 'In regard to this development we are currently awaiting permission to lease the land for a nominal figure' (Ref. 7.8.5 AGEWISE).

And in November of that year the Board paper reflected little progress:

> 'HS and MS had visited Mrs B. from the government and she had informed them that she had received a notice to investigate the application. By this time only the Director and MS were still attending meetings. Over the years the team of people attending meetings to do with the land has dwindled from seven to two' (Ref. 1.7 AGEWISE).

The end of 1998 arrived and the lease had still not been signed.

5.2.3. 1999

1999 was an eventful year as a working committee was formed to decide on the way in which the two groups would work together on the Project and in June of the year the lease was eventually signed by the State Attorney and permission given for the development to go ahead. The site was fenced and the prefabricated training school moved onto site. Phase 1 was complete. Plans were submitted for Phase 2.

On 22nd February 1999 AGEWISE and OTHANDWENI held a meeting. 'No agenda was drawn up for this meeting as it was informal and open but minutes were kept' (Working Committee Minutes 3/99:2).

A number of issues were clarified:

- The meetings of the two groups would be called 'working committee meetings'.

- Local labour would always be used in the construction of any facilities.

- The funding raised (to that date) was for the skills training programme and the crèche.

During this meeting MS received a telephone call from the Director to say that the lease for the land was available to OTHANDWENI/AGEWISE for ten years at R10 per year.

However in late February 1999 the Board papers reflect another set back:

> 'A further meeting had been held ... with Frs., AGEWISE was requested to write a motivation for a 99 year lease and hand deliver it to Mrs. B for delivery to Mr. B of the Department of Local Housin' (Ref 5.4 AGEWISE).

In March the Board heard that:

> 'Mr B had been transferred to Cape Town and that AGEWISE should get a lease drawn up, once this was in order a meeting with representatives of the Housing would meet with OTHANDWENI and AGEWISE ... Thereafter the lease would be signed by VM of OTHANDWENI and a Board Member of AGEWISE'.

At the same meeting the OTHANDWENI chairperson expressed concern at the slow progress as this was causing problems for them in the community 'that we had nothing to show' (MB 7/02).

AGEWISE consulted an attorney who was asked by AGEWISE to draw up a lease. The senior social worker remembers the way this lease came about:

> 'There wasn't a meeting to determine what went into the lease at all ... But at the weekly meetings held in Inanda minutes were kept of all the decisions taken at the Board and these included decisions about any documents written about the project so OTHANDWENI would have agreed to the documentation, including funding proposals, which ultimately was used to help draft the lease if you remember we were meeting weekly then and those proposals (fund raising) of course had been approved by not only the Chairperson but by all the people who attended those meetings' (ML 7/02).

The chairperson of OTHANDWENI reported to AGEWISE that OTHANDWENI had held an AGM on the 24th April 1999 but the attendance had not been good. She felt that in spite of this the 'community structures still supported the Project' (Minutes 3/5/99).

A meeting of the working committee was called on the 7th May. The only item on the agenda was for MS VM MB and TM to jointly construct a letter to the Mayor asking for support. The letter was hand-delivered on the 15th May (Copy: working committee file 5/99).

Later in May 1999 the lease was taken by MS and the AGEWISE lawyer to a meeting with the State Attorney Mr R and during the discussion MS explained that the lease was essential for the development of the land to proceed.

The May Board Meeting reported this visit and the news was given that 'the lease would in all probability be signed towards the end of the month' (Board papers:5.3 LWW).

On 14th June the lease was signed by VM (OTHANDWENI) and HS (AGEWISE).

Although the names of both organisations appear as parties to the lease:

- Clause1.2 refers to the tenant AGEWISE as having 'formed an association with OTHANDWENI'.

- Clause 3 determines that the lease will terminate when the site is registered in the name of the tenant (AGEWISE).

- Clause 7 gives the Tenant the right to develop the site.

- Clause 9 refers only to the 'disbandonment' of AGEWISE and does not refer to the OTHANDWENI.

On the following Saturday a community meeting in Amaoti, attended by ML and MS from AGEWISE was held in celebration of the news. The Chairperson of OTHANDWENI held the lease high above her head and showed the people that at last they could build their Project and MB on behalf of OTHANDWENI thanked AGEWISE for 'their hard work in bringing it about' (Minutes 7/02) (Photographs Appendix B).

The community had been told at many functions over the years that the Project would begin. The chairperson of OTHANDWENI signed the lease and expressed her relief because 'people started to see light' and to begin to believe 'what they were told at parties' was actually 'going to happen' (VM 7/02).

The Director of AGEWISE reported at the July Board of Management meeting:

> 'That the property was now leased in the joint names of OTHANDWENI and AGEWISE and, that on the 19th June to celebrate the development of the Project, a celebration was held attended by 250 people including the Mayor of the North Central Council and two Councillors from the community and the local Induna' (Board Paper 6/99:1.5).

The Minutes of the 21st June OTHANDWENI Project Development Meeting, confirm the attendance at the meeting of two staff members from AGEWISE, the Chairperson of OTHANDWENI and two of her committee members. They discussed ideas for the development of the site. Twenty ideas were listed including a tourist centre and the growing of indigenous trees and a note was made that the 'fencing will be done during the following week and the prefab will be moved during the week 28th June to 3rd July 1999' (OTHANDWENI: minute 21/6/99:1).

From this point on there was a rapid development of the site and by the 27th July Board meeting it could be reported that;

> 'The fence had been erected and the training classroom has been put in place. VM and the social worker are busy sourcing quotes for the equipment and

> *furnishings which will be funded by Rotary and plans had been submitted for*
> *the community hall, toilet block and kitchen unit' (Board papers 27/7/99:5.5).*

Phase 1 had been completed and the plans for Phase 2 already submitted.

The committee members of OTHANDWENI remember this time of rapid development.

> *'Now the place was fenced ... we were told of the account for fencing from*
> *where we got the pricing ... now we got a prefab but we don't know how to start*
> *... it was from AGEWISE premises ... it was transferred to the centre it was for*
> *teaching so it was transferred to us ... many asked whether it was going to be*
> *used for a crèche...' (VM MB 7/02).*

On the agenda for the OTHANDWENI Development Project Meeting of 5th July 1999 was the use of the training school. An idea was put forward by those present to start an after-school centre and the social worker was requested to 'consult widely about the idea ... especially among parents'. The minutes read:

> *'It was agreed that the after school care centre would be a feasible service ...*
> *The morning would be used for skills training and the afternoon for after school'*
> *(OTHANDWENI file 5/7/99:1).*

The group was asked by the Chairperson to look for a suitable trained person to run the after-school centre.

Building Phase 2 of the Project faced a setback in October 1999 when the builder withdrew from the Project because of 'safety and theft' but there was news that funding had been received to proceed with the community centre and the other facilities on the plan (Board papers 26/10/99:4.5).

A working committee meeting (10/99) highlighted the problem of getting qualified people to work on the Project. It was agreed that professional people from outside the community could be used only when there was no local person of the same calibre. All labour would be local. The social worker reported that an OTHANDWENI Special Project (bank) Account had been opened (Working Committee Meeting. 10/99).

In November a new builder had successfully tendered to build the hall, ablution block and the shops and would start building early in January 2000 (Social worker report 11/99).

In December the volunteers organised a big community party and a children's holiday (Social worker report 1/00).

5.2.4.   2000

The first part of the year was one of high activity as both AGEWISE and OTHANDWENI focussed on the building underway. The two groups attended site meetings every week. A teacher, who was also registered as a social-auxiliary worker, was appointed by AGEWISE to run the After School Care centre (ASC) on 25th July 2000. Phase 2 was completed and on 1st August 2000 both the centre and the After School Centre became operational.

The first site meeting regarding Phase 2 was held on 17th February 2000. Representative from both organisations attended together with the architect, the builders and a local councillor. The use of labour was fully discussed and 'it was agreed that local people would be trained and employed on site. They would be sourced by the local councillors'. Local problems to do with access to water, electricity, and labour were all handled by OTHANDWENI. 'Funding and problems associated with legal matters were handled by AGEWISE' (Site meeting minutes 2/00). The early part of the year was one of activity. Minutes of meetings during this time focus on 'getting the job done'. The involvement from both organisations is recorded and the building activities moved forward with relative ease. Completion of Phase 2 of the Project was dated as 30th May 2000.

Plans for what would happen once the centre was opened were discussed at the OTHANDWENI Development Project Meeting in June 2000.

- VM proposed that a qualified security man be hired. AGEWISE agreed to finance this for a period of time until the centre became self-financing. This was confirmed at a later meeting:

  'After Phase 1 was completed there was an urgent need to employ security guards in order to look after the property AGEWISE agreed to pay the wages of three men on a loan basis until April 2001' (Minutes special meeting with volunteers 14/9/00).

- MB informed the meeting that Dr X had agreed to run a free eye-care service from the hall.

- VM suggested that all OTHANDWENI volunteers be issued with name tags. (OTHANDWENI development project meeting 6/00).

In July of 2000 the working committee met and detailed how the shops were to operate and how the After School Centre (ASC) programme would 'operate in co-operation with but separate from the OTHANDWENI programme for pensioners' (Working Committee Minutes 19/7/00). For the following weeks, the social worker's report confirms that 'an auxiliary social worker for the centre has been appointed and will assume duties on 25th July ... her registration with the council is underway ...' (Social worker report minutes 4/8/00).

The building of the large multi-purpose hall, toilet and shower block and three shops went ahead mostly untroubled by violence or theft. In July 2000 Phase 2 of the Project was completed. It was opened ahead of schedule in front of a large crowd of provincial and local dignitaries. The opening of the multi-purpose centre was seen by everyone as a milestone in the development.

The AGEWISE senior social worker commented on the completion of the building:

> 'I think that the way we have worked with the community has also made them realize that we are not a fly-by-night kind of organization. I think that they have developed some confidence in us and have actually seen concrete things being done' (ML TM 7/02).

And the chairperson and vice chairperson of OTHANDWENI remembered that:

> 'We had visited many places choosing the design and so on ... And then we had meetings when we had to choose ... So during the building we attended meetings very well when it concerned the building ... We never missed ... until the end. There was open communication, which was well done until the end then things started to go wrong (VM MB 7/02).

That things started to go wrong within a week of the opening of the centre is also remembered by the senior social worker of AGEWISE.

> 'The builder had handed over the multi-purpose service centre and we (AGEWISE and OTHANDWENI) were ready to start operating ... it was actually at this stage where it became apparent the AGEWISE expectations, or rather mine, maybe the social workers, and OTHANDWENI expectations, that would

be at that stage the Chairperson and OTHANDWENI members, were diverse in terms of the role function' (MI 7/02).

'In fact to me at one stage that it was as though the Chairperson had thought that now that the building operation was over and we had handed over this building that possibly AGEWISE would now withdraw, and that she would almost single-handed run the show' (ML 2/03).

The development social worker remembers the time;

'they wanted, once the centre was up, to have a shop to have beer or something for selling ... it was a shop and a bottle store that people thought they could run in the centre ... forgetting we are welfare organizations even that was a cause for concern from OTHANDWENI side ... Of course the grocery shop was put up by AGEWISE. We trained people to work there, we stocked the shop ... but they did not do a good job' (TM 7/03).

OTHANDWENI raised several issues with the Staff of AGEWISE and a special meeting of the working sub-committee was called on 16th August to 'discuss operations of the OTHANDWENI/AGEWISE centre and to work out a system that would be applied there'. There was no agenda. The meeting was attended by staff members, the Director of AGEWISE who chaired the meeting and the Chairperson and two committee members of OTHANDWENI. Issues raised included:

- that there was an After School Centre and not a crèche,

- the role of young volunteers who were not being paid,

- that two women OTHANDWENI had selected for working in the After School Centre had not been appointed.

The OTHANDWENI chairperson commented that 'in practice the situation was completely different to the one she had envisaged'.

AGEWISE referred to the recorded minutes of all the meetings and discussed in more detail 'why the After School Centre had been established and not the crèche'. (Minutes sub-committee 16/8/00).

The OTHANDWENI vice-chairperson then reminded the meeting that at a previous meeting it was agreed that volunteers would work as volunteers for three months and

then receive an honorarium. She stressed that she did not know the After School Centre was for school-going children.

It was minuted that:

- In future meetings would be held every month and be called The Working Committee.

- Other AGEWISE staff was to be asked to prepare operational procedures with regard to 'maintenance and finances, particularly with regard to operating the shop and the take away and banking' (Working Committee Minute 16/8/00).

Problems were highlighted at other meetings held during the month of August 2000. These included the relationship between the social worker and OTHANDWENI chairperson and the different views of a social worker's role versus a development worker's. The social worker reported that she 'found it difficult to explain the concept of developmental social work to the chairperson of the OTHANDWENI' who she considered had an *'autocratic way of dealing with people and was sometimes reluctant to seek full consensus from the community'* (TM 7/02).

The OTHANDWENI chairperson confirmed that she had worked to help the social worker find out about Amaoti and the community needs. She further commented that she was now expected to accept AGEWISE way of:

> *'doing things as a social worker as a nursing person to ML it was out ... seemingly this was not working when there were times when things were quite bitter, but for a way forward we had to accept'* (VM 7/02).

The social worker began to report that there was a change of attitude towards her and the teacher who was appointed by AGEWISE to run the after school care centre.

> *'I don't know they changed ... people suddenly were questioning my role ... questions like Was there no social worker in the area to do my job?'* (TM 7/02).

The vice-chairperson of OTHANDWENI expressed the feeling of the OTHANDWENI members:

> *'We didn't feel good because we thought it was going to have a crèche'* (VM 7/02) ... *We had to come down and accept ... accept AGEWISE way of doing things as a social worker'* (VM 7/02).

The development social worker recalls one particular meeting in July:

> *'I remember at one meeting the Chairman of OTHANDWENI stood up and said once the centre is done there will be jobs for the people ... You know what that means in a place like this where unemployment is high. There were only five jobs; the rest of the work was for volunteers' (TM 7/02) (Recorded in social work diary 7/8/00).*

> *'I do have a document where she allocated jobs ... But in the same breath she would say people are going to volunteer' (TM 7/02).*

> *'There was confusion in the area about the role of volunteers' (ML 7/02).*

A number of issues were raised over the next few weeks and recorded in working committee minutes.

Difficulties were encountered when the shop and the take-away business were opened by OTHANDWENI and failed to operate well. The Chairperson reported at a meeting of the working committee on 4th August that she had had a meeting with the staff to discuss the shortfall and the reasons were accepted. It was recorded that the two 'would operate separately' in the future. At the meeting AGEWISE decided that the kitchen staff should pay back the money which could not be accounted for (Working Committee minutes 4/9).

On the 11th August the volunteers held a meeting in the centre at Amaoti and decide to 'down tools'. The strike was to last until the question of pay was discussed. (As recorded by special meeting on 17th August called by OTHANDWENI and Civic Association chaired by Chairman of Civics).

At a special meeting later on the 11th September in the AGEWISE social agency, the government welfare programmes were presented and the business plan for the following year tabled. There was no agenda for this meeting attended by two social workers and the director of AGEWISE and the chairperson and the vice-chairperson of OTHANDWENI. The aim was given by AGEWISE to 'discuss the way the centre would recruit members and to clarify the roles of all the people' (Minute of Special meeting 11/9/00).

The chairperson of OTHANDWENI responded by saying that:

'The community only wanted local people working in the centre and do not welcome people from other areas.

That before committing herself to the welfare programmes she would 'discuss them' with OTHANDWENI first' (Minutes of special meeting 11/9/00).

And the meeting came to an end.

The relationship between the two organisations had changed since the opening of the centre on 1st August, and another special meeting was called on 12th August by OTHANDWENI and the Civics and attended by the development social worker AGEWISE. At this meeting it was recalled:

- That AGEWISE deciding that the lost funds should be repaid... this was seen as 'unjust'.

- The members of the committee were not aware of the arrangement made between AGEWISE and the Chairman of OTHANDWENI to pay an honorarium after three months from the profits of the shop as recorded in 17th July minutes tabled.

- That AGEWISE attributed the loss to large number of people (17) working in the shop and had suggested two instead.

A number of suggestions were made to AGEWISE by the Chairperson:

- That AGEWISE retrench the volunteers and re-allocate them to other jobs as listed.

- An urgent meeting be called with the Director of AGEWISE.

- The subject of allowances be clarified immediately.

- The big document (welfare programmes) be discussed with OTHANDWENI and the Civics.

- The social worker was instructed to report back to AGEWISE and convey AGEWISE's response by telephone the same day.

This elicited a response from AGEWISE and the Director attended the special meeting on 14th August in the centre at seven in the morning. There were twelve people from

the Civics and the Director from AGEWISE listed as having attended. The OTHANDWENI chairperson did not attend. The meeting was chaired by the chairperson of the civics.

At this meeting the Director of AGEWISE listed the successes of the partnership and how AGEWISE had worked with OTHANDWENI to obtain the land and build the centre. He talked about the agreement with OTHANDWENI that AGEWISE would build the facility and OTHANDWENI 'would see to the operating' once the infrastructure was in place ... that the Chairman of OTHANDWENI had assured AGEWISE that 'the Project would sustain itself' but 'concessions had had to be made'. AGEWISE had agreed to pay the security men, had appointed a social worker/auxiliary worker to help in the centre and the ASC ... He reminded the group about the agreement about the shop ... and the funds made available for stocking the shop but other than that it was OTHANDWENI who operated the shop and the take-away. He expressed concern that no meeting had been held to discuss these activities, and he questioned the selling of liquor and the building of the structure for the butchery. In concluding the meeting the Director of AGEWISE agreed to the funds already given and spent on stocking the shop being viewed as a donation and suggested that if the *volunteers at the shop want to be paid they should work hard to make profit*. He stated that AGEWISE was 'prepared to work hard and remained committed to the alleviation of suffering in the community but was not prepared to be insulted or disregarded'. The Director of AGEWISE left the meeting and the chairperson of the meeting (the civics chairperson) commented that 'things had gone wrong because they had been misinformed'. One of the volunteers asked if five of them could meet with AGEWISE to discuss allowances. This was to be arranged (Minutes of Special meeting chaired by Civics 14/8/00).

A meeting just 4 hours later was attended by the OTHANDWENI Chairperson and the Civics member who had chaired the earlier meeting. Because the Civics member had knowledge of the welfare business plan, he was selected to chair this meeting. He recommended that two further meetings be held. The first meeting would deal with operating issues and the second would develop the plans for two workshops. The plans would include workshops to develop organisational skills, banking, capacity building and implementation of plans (2nd Special meeting chaired by the Civics 14/8/00).

The operating of the shop and take-away was reported as doing well during the next week but the shop was losing money and AGEWISE staff, after failing to sort out the problems, sent the AGEWISE accountant to help train the volunteers and setting up

procedures. 'He expressed concern about the number of people working in the shop and ... suggested that at the end of each day the till slip and cash should be given to Mr Ng for reconciliation and safe-keeping' (Reported in the minutes of the Working Committee Meeting 28/8).

A letter on file from the Director to his senior staff dated 18th September states 'I must confess to being extremely hurt and disappointed in the recent turn of events ... And given the number of years that we have been involved with the Project I am surprised at the apparently divergent views which are emerging' (Letter signed HS 19/9/00).

On October 2nd 2000, 23 members of the public including councillors, civics and the senior social worker from AGEWISE, attended the OTHANDWENI meeting chaired by the chairperson of the Civics. At this meeting the chairperson of OTHANDWENI responded to a question from the chair concerning the 'bar' and the 'take-away' and explained that they were opened with a view to 'training the youth in entrepreneurial skills ... for hands-on experience' (VM Minutes of Meeting 2/10/00). She apologized for having done so. The chairman set the rest of the agenda:

- ensuring everyone participates fully

- discuss financial and business plan

- possible support for shop from AGEWISE

- training for OTHANDWENI (Agenda attached to minutes of meeting 2/10/00).

Many of the issues that had appeared as problematic were again discussed. A question from the chair was answered by the AGEWISE social worker regarding the reporting procedures:

- a working committee meets every Monday

- the Chairperson and Vice Chairperson sit on the AGEWISE Board

- the local councillors are always kept informed.

The welfare programmes were then detailed and explained, and the financial statements tabled showing income and expenditure.

The chairperson asked if OTHANDWENI could open a bank account and get a fund raising number. The Chairperson of OTHANDWENI said that she wanted to be independent of AGEWISE but 'work together as partners'.

The AGEWISE social worker explained how the other service centres operate under the AGEWISE umbrella and suggested that OTHANDWENI needed to 'establish a track record in order to prove to possible funders and the department of welfare that they have the capacity to function independently' (Minutes special meeting 2/10/00).

Training was discussed and the social worker explained that plans were already in place and operating. Training had started in 1999 and City Business Training Centre would be holding a five day workshop in business skills but the process had been delayed by the situation. The Chairperson of OTHANDWENI commented that the youth did not need training as they had certificates (Minutes of Special Meeting 2/10/00).

On 11th October 2000 a group of people toyi-toyi inside the complex and tried to chase the social worker and the teacher away. (ML TM 7/02, also recorded in diaries ML, also ref: SAAHA file minute 11/00).

The developmental social worker remembers:

> 'I found the gates were locked and the people in the centre had been told by the Chairperson not to open for us … That was quite bad … you just felt people had used you until they got something that they wanted and now they want to get rid of you … I even came to you and said I don't know what is going to happen … maybe I will lose this job. I thought that we would just abandon it, forget about it all if of a sudden the people are not wanting us to work with them' (TM 7/03).

An emergency special meeting called the next day, 12th October was chaired by a member of the Civics. He expressed concern about the happenings of the day before. The youth attending the meeting stated that they had had two meetings the day before one with OTHANDWENI where they had been

> 'Instructed to tell the social worker and the teacher that they should stop working at the centre from 11th October. They were no longer required at the centre by OTHANDWENI … and that they should inform the feeder schools that the ASC has been closed' (Minutes of special meeting 12/10/00).

They held a second meeting later in the day to inform the social worker of AGEWISE what had happened and to ask the social worker to 'convey to AGEWISE that the youth volunteers would like to be paid and provided with skills so that they can get jobs' (Minutes of special meeting 12/10/00).

The AGEWISE Director at the time intervened in the situation:

> 'I think the only way we got it under control eventually was by saying, that if it was not going to be run properly, we are leaving, we are going, they can have the service centre, we will give up all rights to it, we will give the land over to them and we won't be contributing anymore, money or anything else' (HS 7/03).

The AGEWISE Director instructed his senior staff to 'continue to work towards completion of the Project'. The senior social worker was 'instructed to work full time in the area for a period of two months to try and sort out the situation' (HS 2002). The senior social worker's diary reflects numerous meetings (October/November 2000) with OTHANDWENI and that the organisation was represented by only one or two people VM and MB. At a meeting on 31st October a suggestion was made that the youth join OTHANDWENI as members to strengthen the organisation and this was agreed. The next OTHANDWENI meeting was to be held on 25th November.

The Chairperson of OTHANDWENI remembers that:

> 'So each time they (AGEWISE Director) came it was because of fire ... they tried to block the fire. It couldn't be blocked off and they even got mad on one of these days. 'Mrs VM we are leaving you.' 'Ho leaving me?' 'Yes.' This cannot happen this way. So we cooled down for things to happen' (VM 7/03).

> 'Things went on and again we met and we shared ideas, we had to continue' (VM 7/03).

Further discussion was held as to how the OTHANDWENI home care group could be properly trained and perhaps funding sourced from donors or government for their home care services:

> 'What seemed to be lacking was clear understanding of what the home care service was and who was involved in organizing it. We had a series of meetings with people who said they were home carers but there were no evidence of their visits and no records of how many people were visited' (ML 2/03).

> 'Training took place and it was explained to OTHANDWENI that proper records were needed, because 'it was a government requirement' (ML 2/03).

Although the two groups worked together, the situation remained quite tense.

In November substantial funding was promised for the development of Phase 3. AGEWISE changed their approach to the situation:

> 'Having reflected on some of the things that had actually happened, we felt we needed to broaden the base of our liaison with the community and our contact with the community, because our village for the community would not be limited to only the elderly but also to the disabled and children orphaned by aids' (ML 2/03).

> 'Substantial funding was received to begin the development of the cottages for the community and this decided AGEWISE to take a different course of action' (HS 7/03).

At about the same time the Chairman of OTHANDWENI decided that it was time to strengthen her committee and at the Annual General Meeting of OTHANDWENI in November she approached a representative of the Amaoti Civic Association to serve on the OTHANDWENI committee. The new committee member soon became Chairperson (the past Chairperson moved to President of OTHANDWENI) and co-opted others to assist in the process of clarifying the nature of the working relationship between the two organizations.

In December the new Chairperson and the social worker arranged a five day business training workshop conducted by the Business Centre for all the OTHANDWENI volunteers and AGEWISE staff.

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Further seminars, to be conducted by an external facilitator, were planned in January of 2001.

> 'Yes then we organized the seminars. One part was commissions and reports and the other was actually to strengthen the community but ... I could see that ... Actually the relationship was not in a position that I thought it would be in after those meetings' (SN 3/03).

The new Chairperson tried to encourage outside involvement in the OTHANDWENI affairs and eventually organized a further workshop for both OTHANDWENI and AGEWISE with an external facilitator 'to help him to make sense of the situation' (SN 3/03). He had met 'on numerous occasions with the social workers of AGEWISE' and commented:

> 'I was not sure by that time whether I was aligned with either of the sides' (SN 3/03).

He expressed his opinion of the situation at the time:

> 'I also knew that OTHANDWENI was still a new organisation as compared to AGEWISE, so I expected the nature of the relationship to be AGEWISE mentoring OTHANDWENI and at a certain stage, when they can do things on their own, they would agree with AGEWISE to leave. I thought it was premature of AGEWISE to leave and there was very little that was transferred in terms of skills and shared experiences. That was my view of the relationship' (SN 3/03).

There were also external factors impacting on the project identified by the Chairperson of OTHANDWENI and confirmed by the social worker. This was to do with the political situation as described in Chapter 4:

> 'There were two strong councillors in the area and I (the Chairperson) was working closely with the one, while the other was suspicious of my involvement with AGEWISE ...'

> 'These things were a hindrance to the processes and when one councillor was shot and killed the situation was made tenser' (SN FG2).

However a new committee structure was agreed to by both OTHANDWENI and AGEWISE. There was to be a large Village Committee which would be attended by community leaders and both organisations. 'It was devised to bring in more community people' (TM 2/03). The first Village Committee met on 2nd August 2001 and its two sub-committees were formulated very soon after that. The 'technical committee' was to 'deal with the building and site meetings' and the 'operating committee' was to 'deal with the people moving in to the village and how and by whom the village would be managed and maintained'. The Director of AGEWISE offered to draw up the terms of

reference for the two committees and present them to the next meeting (Terms of Reference: AGEWISE file SA1).

The new chairperson of OTHANDWENI brought in an outside facilitator who conducted the two workshops to determine the problems between the two organisations and to offer some solutions. One of the members of OTHANDWENI remembers one of the workshops attended by both organisations:

> 'We had a workshop and then in the workshop we are talking about partnership. We were all there and so I believe on those meetings everybody was on partnership and so things went well. After that workshop things went smoothly' (MZ 5/03).

This workshop was held over five days from Friday 9th October 2001 to Tuesday 13th October 2001 and the facilitators were two Zulu speaking skilled people. The workshop highlighted most of the problem areas and explored the need each group had of the other. Three broad areas of concern were detailed as:

- Responsibilities not agreed upon

- One individual provides skills to organisation

- Communication breakdown

While the workshop was seen by everyone to have helped the two groups to 'see each other more clearly' (SN 3/03) there was no immediate plan to follow up on the discussions or to negotiate a workable partnership agreement. The main reason for this was that the new Chairperson left and the written report back was not received for many months. The Chairperson gave as his reasons for leaving:

> 'The reports were a bit delayed and given that I was unemployed myself I had to look for employment' (SN 3/03).

> 'I can understand the difficulty (of working with) that senior social worker. It was a situation that if you agree with her you will be seen, I deliberately withdrew, other than getting a job, because I could see that I was beginning to be useless ... I cannot be in a position where I have to be silent about things ... So I decided that if I am no longer of any use to OTHANDWENI it is pointless to be part of it' (SN 3/03).

The previous Chairperson, who had become the President, was again the Chairperson of OTHANDWENI.

The funding for Phase 3 was progressing but AGEWISE senior social worker remembers;

> 'we were a bit nervous at this stage of embarking on stage three, because we did not quite know what we were in our relationship with OTHANDWENI because there was still a lot of conflict going on and hidden agendas' (ML 2/03).

A number of initiatives were made to enable the Project to move forward.

AGEWISE Board asked 'that a survey be held in the community to ascertain that the cottages were wanted and that the people would be happy to live in them, and further that they would be willing to pay a small rent' (Board Papers: 4.9). Project Shelter was undertaken (3/02) but support for the project was given at the October Board of Management Meeting (Board Papers 10/01).

> 'When it became clear that adequate funding would be provided by donors and that donors had much enthusiasm for the project the attitude of our Board became also more positive' (MP 2/03).

Again Phase 3 was possible because funding had been promised, the new committee structure, which included more community people who were interested in the village concept, met regularly. The first Village Committee had met on 2nd August 2001 and its two sub-committees were formed very soon after that (Terms of Reference: AGEWISE file SA1). These committees operated well. The chairperson of OTHANDWENI was attending, contributing and chairing the new committees (Social worker reports 11/01). The organisations both worked toward establishing Phase 3 of the project. Plans discussed at the meetings included a number of initiatives to confirm future actions. A community meeting would be held in November to inform the people of the plans for the future. An extended Board of Management meeting would be conducted and it would include community leaders and specialists in the field of caring for the aged and children. A survey to ascertain the level of support for the idea of community sheltered housing for the vulnerable of Amaoti, would be conducted in March the following year.

Once the AGEWISE Board of Management was convinced that the Project was the right thing to do it committed AGEWISE to going ahead with the Project as per the Board of Management Meeting (Board Papers 10/01:1).

6. RESEARCH FINDINGS: EVOLVING RELATIONSHIPS

This chapter analyses the evolving relationship between the groups described in Chapter 5. It is presented in two sections: the first draws together information from the interviews and focus groups and identifies the key moments in each Action Period of Influence (API) and then analyses how the two groups developed a working relationship in order to move the Project forward. The second looks at the themes which can be seen to flow from one API to the next. The chapter addresses themes such as the use of silence, negotiation of professional status, the oscillating source of power and the need to understand conflict because the themes evolved across each API and had impact on the development of the working relationship. The following chapter takes the relationship base and seeks to probe more deeply as to whether learning took place, and if so was there evidence of democratic learning.

6.1. INTRODUCTION

Two groups of people from entirely different backgrounds formed a relationship and worked together to bring a community developmental project to completion. The Project now stands as a testament to the two groups and to the potency of social forces which can be generated within small group interaction in order to make a successful enterprise. The interaction between the two groups extended over a period of four years and it was varied and contradictory, conciliatory and damaging, marshalled and refined.

The product, in the form of Phase 1 and Phase 2 of a three phase Project, comprises a multi-purpose hall, toilet and kitchen facilities, a large training centre and three shops. The complex sits within a fenced area; hopefully fulfilling the promise of a better life (FG1) for those previously disadvantaged people (ML 7/02) first identified as in need by the volunteers of OTHANDWENI and the developmental social worker of AGEWISE.

Certainly, if success is measured by the tangible assets or by the number of users of a facility, then the community facility is a success since it is used by thousands of pensioners who collect their pensions every month protected from the elements, and by the community for funerals and weddings, school activities, literacy programmes and church services. There is satisfaction with the product:

'This time now we got the best and everybody can see we got the best. At the end of it all we got the right thing we are very proud of it' (MT 5/03).

'The village is proving to be very successful. The President reported on his visit to the Project stating that it was a lovely village and AGEWISE can be proud of it (AGEWISE Board Papers Minute 4.4: 2/03).

The process by which the first two phases of the Project came to completion is not so easy to measure. It cannot be equated with efficiency or cost effectiveness but has to do with looking beyond the product, the achievement of building, to the process of two groups of people working together in the daily activities of life. The process was not easy. As the story unfolded the complexity of the interdependence of the two groups became evident as the participants actively engaged in making the enterprise a success.

What evolved as the case study progressed, was a realisation that there were many issues to which the participants referred frequently and that these were contained within broad time frames. In order to help determine how the two groups worked together I isolated five broad time frames and described them as action periods of influence (API). Within these broad time frames, specific actions and critical moments were identified which influence other subsequent actions. I selected some which I list here for ease of reference.

API 1 (1997). The organisations join together

- The key moment identified here was the decision to join together taken at a special meeting on 10th September 1997 (AGEWISE Board Papers 10/97)

API 2 (1998-1999). The acquisition of the land and the lease

- The key moment identified here was the declaration by the Vice Chairperson that they are 'tired with all the running about' (VM 7/02).

API 3 (1999). The appointment of the staff

- The key moment here was the appointment of the teacher by AGEWISE on 4th August 2000.

API 4 (2000). The management structure

I have identified 3 key moments during this API:

- The OTHANDWENI Chairperson visit to the Chairperson of the AGEWISE on 4th August 2000.

- The AGEWISE's threat 'to leave' 11th August 2000.

- The attendance of both parties at the workshop as the third defining moment of API 4.

API 5 (2001) Working with the new structures, into the future:

- The key moment here was the announcement at a public meeting in July 2001 of substantial funding for the development of Phase 3.

6.2. API 1 THE ORGANISATIONS JOIN TOGETHER (1997)

OTHANDWENI had a clearly defined goal 'to build an old age home' and acquire the land on which to build an old age home. Before the formal relationship was realized, the group had already achieved:

- formalization of their group into OTHANDWENI in 1994

- a hand written constitution (Appendix E)

- verbal confirmation of ownership of a large tract of land (In 1994 the NPA issued a map with plots named and numbered.)

- considerable local support for the Project from local leaders (The Induna and local councillors were members of the OTHANDWENI committee.)

- support from the youth ('Community work was more in the hands of the youth' (FG2))

- identified and gained access to information and expertise (Induna, Civics, Pensioners Forum, NPA).

None of these achievements automatically meant that they would have access to the information that they needed in order to move forward as we shall see when the

partnership unfolds. Yet it did give the group status in their community and success strengthened their commitment to the achievement of their goal. Their achievements also led the AGEWISE Board to believe 'that they (OTHANDWENI) were an organization who had a committee structure and everything else,' 'an organization which was familiar with development work' (JC FG1:5). This led to a high level of expectation in terms of OTHANDWENI's ability to perform to an organisational level accepted as normal by AGEWISE and this led to later problems between the groups, as we shall see.

The OTHANDWENI group had local power, a high level of authority and was confident and focused on activity and the 'competition' for local resource. The OTHANDWENI Chairperson was tenacious in her endeavours to secure recognition. The group had already become valuable as an organization because they were seen by the community as a group who were able to bring about changes to improve the social condition of the community. They had a clear idea of the work that needed to be done before they made any attempt to join with AGEWISE.

The AGEWISE Board and staff members remembered (FG1) that at this time the Board of Management of AGEWISE knew 'virtually nothing' (JC FG1:1) about the work the staff had done in the township and they had only an 'uncertain awareness' (MP FG1:1) of the pensioners who were to become OTHANDWENI. They had previously instructed the staff to withdraw from Amanda because of a lack of continued funding and because of the increased levels of violence in the area. They were busy dealing with the financial worries of AGEWISE (FG1 and FG2.) as they worked to survive in a changing environment. Of particular concern was the government's changing financing policy which had reduced subsidies for frail-aged homes each year since 1994 (HS ML 7/02). At this time AGEWISE was concerned with its own survival and was embarking on major restructuring of its facilities in order to curtail huge financial losses. There was no intention of expanding services to other areas and there were Board of Management members who were positively against any expansion.

The following changed this:

> On 10th September 1997 the committee of the OTHANDWENI made a formal request to AGEWISE to 'come under AGEWISE umbrella' (CS: 109).

> The senior social worker had attended a government task team to discuss care of the aged and returned to AGEWISE with information that new Government

legislation would determine that organizations like AGEWISE should work in previously disadvantaged areas and in a more participatory way (ML 7/02).

The staff of AGEWISE and the volunteers of OTHANDWENI had already established an informal relationship and this encouraged the senior social worker to speak on behalf of OTHANDWENI to the Director and through him to the Board for a more formal arrangement to be made 'to the benefit of both' (JC FG1).

The two groups who were electing to join together came from diverse and different backgrounds and the interaction in the focus groups indicates that each had strong preconceived notions about themselves and about each other before the relationship became formal.

During the focus groups the participants acknowledged that they came from very diverse backgrounds and that they had anticipated that there would be differences and inequalities: poor versus rich, black versus white, female versus male, ignorant versus arrogant (FG1 and FG2) and yet they determined to join together in spite of these perceived inequalities in the relationship.

In the personification exercise both focus groups determined independently that AGEWISE was: 'male, white, rich (had assets), knowledgeable 'has contacts' (Personification Technique FG1 and FG2). The OTHANDWENI was 'female, young, poor, and ignorant with few friends but many sympathizers' (Personification Technique FG1 and FG2). In addition the AGEWISE saw itself as 'forceful' (FG1) while the OTHANDWENI saw this as 'arrogance' (FG2).

There was also an anticipation and understanding of the problems within their own communities which each group would encounter should they join together. Using the metaphor of a marriage OTHANDWENI saw the 'husband' as AGEWISE and the 'subservient wife' as OTHANDWENI who could not explain to her family why she had married someone from outside her community. They acknowledged that the husband would have problems with his family (identified as others on the Board of management, donors and clients) because of working with OTHANDWENI who was black and poor. It was agreed that his presence in her community would cause his wife major problems in her family (FG2). This metaphor clearly indicates a realisation that the different background of the two groups would impact on their relationship. Their independent communities of practice would question their need to join together and community members would be 'sceptical' and 'suspicious' of it (FG2). AGEWISE confirmed these opinions (FG1) adding that the major difficulty they would face was convincing the

other board members of AGEWISE to support the relationship during a time of such change and uncertainty. There was an acknowledgement that AGEWISE would be most concerned about further financial losses (MP FG1; FG1; ML 7/02). The focus groups clearly identified a deep understanding of the problems that would lie ahead for both organisations should they join together.

There is a keen understanding by both groups of the significant differences in the way they perceived each other but at the time there was a silent acceptance of the need to go on with the relationship in order to fulfil their independent needs. AGEWISE adopted both a practical and humanitarian approach to the idea of working with a community-based organisation.

> 'This particular Project is considered worthwhile from both a strategic and a moral view point' (Board Papers Minute 1.7 25/8/97).

Each group's preconceived notions about the other, formulated by an understanding of their independent histories (as detailed in Chapter 4) and by impressions gained by the short interaction between the groups prior to the first formal meeting, led each group to be cautious.

The OTHANDWENI group expected to deal with a new situation, one perceived however as already 'familiar' (SN FG2) and likely to follow an established pattern. They based their expectations on their previous experience that emerged as one that had been established by other people who had tried and failed to develop projects in the community. Projects were started but not finished, leaving the community no better off and not in a position to complete the project alone (SON VM TM FG2).

That there was a large half-finished structure in the community was described as 'an example of development work' (FG2). This was identified by FG2 as a major reason for 'distrust', 'anxious' feelings of other people working in their community. And part of the 'heavy price of hope' (identified in the collage in Appendix C) that they anticipated they might have to pay. At the very beginning of FG1 AGEWISE expressed opinions which suggested that interaction with other groups would be a further financial burden on the organization (FG1).

On the other hand AGEWISE (FG1) remembered very clearly the identified needs: to work in under-resourced areas (ML FG1); to adopt a developmental approach (TM FG1); and to empower previously disadvantaged people (JC FG1).

A recognition of the major threat to AGEWISE which was identified as:

> 'Mainly financial based. There were some Board members who said that it should not cost AGEWISE one cent, and so it was a very strong condemnation of the Project' (MP FG1:5).

OTHANDWENI recognized the potential of working with AGEWISE and the fact that they had exhausted all other avenues open to them.

They identified their needs clearly - to obtain resources and to be mentored (FG2):

> 'We had to join hands with AGEWISE so that they can be our partners' (KZ 5/03).

As can be seen, each group had a powerful need of the other and it was this that initially bound them together and allowed collaboration to take place. AGEWISE was responding to pressures which threatened its existence in terms of the new government legislation and OTHANDWENI to the pressures from the community to provide resources (As discussed in Chapter 4.).

There was no one joint social vision which brought these people together. The clearly stated aims expressed by the two groups at this stage of their relationship were different and there was no clear indication yet of how the relationship would unfold.

In spite of the difficulties anticipated, the collages made by each of the groups indicated how each group had sought to benefit from the proposed joining together (in particular collage AGEWISE FG1 'Then' in Appendix C). The AGEWISE group indicated a sense of moving into unknown territory. They wanted to be a part of 'developing a new South Africa'. There was also the awareness of the magnitude of the decision that was to be made and that there was a need to carefully study the situation: 'What's the problem? Why should we care? What's the solution?' The group felt that they where 'looking for direction in a changing environment and that they would benefit from their relationship with OTHANDWENI, because they believed it to be an organisation that would help them 'stay in touch' ... They viewed their efforts in this regard as 'building blocks to a better future' (Collages JM Then, FG1 Appendix B).

The collages of FG2 reflect the enormous power of the leader of OTHANDWENI. As the story unfolded it became obvious that this power was not acknowledged or understood by AGEWISE. It is evident here. The word leader is placed top left 'but is too small' and 'her' picture 'a lady with problems' is placed in the centre, the focal point.

Like the collage of FG1 there is little in the collage to deny the deduction that both groups were embarking on a journey of discovery and they were entering something new and strange, 'Setting the wheels of change in motion', and that they questioned whether or not it was 'possible'. The black piece of paper denotes the awareness of problems ahead, the unknown and the anticipated (FG2 Collage 'Then' Appendix B).

Joining with AGEWISE was the first compromise that OTHANDWENI made in order to move the Project forward. 'It was a heavy price but there was hope we were inspired' (FG2). They were 'inspired' because OTHANDWENI had knowledge that the staff of AGEWISE had already worked in the township since 1989, as described in the background to this chapter, and during that time they had successfully implemented a project for the community, then handed it back to the community and provided ongoing informal support. It can be deduced that OTHANDWENI would have similar expectations. The group was aware that working with AGEWISE would probably mean a gain in resources: 'The main object is OTHANDWENI wanted resources' (FG2 7/03).

So the decision was made by the Chairperson of OTHANDWENI to approach AGEWISE and ask for a more formal relationship. The AGEWISE staff approached the AGEWISE Board 'through the Director' (ML 7/02) with the request and the process of making a formal relationship possible be started. As far as AGEWISE was concerned the relationship moved from very informal to formal once approval of AGEWISE working with OTHANDWENI was obtained from the AGEWISE Board of Management. This formality was reinforced by the invitation to representatives of OTHANDWENI to attend AGEWISE Board of Management meetings. There was an expectation as far as AGEWISE was concerned that this formality also meant that 'a certain way of doing things' i.e. the AGEWISE way, would be accepted as normal. This would include 'proper record keeping', 'it was a government requirement' (ML 7/02) and that the Project would be 'developed in the same way as all the other AGEWISE projects had been developed' (JC FG1). There was a tacit acceptance that the social work department would now 'work in a different, developmental, way' which was 'territory they did not understand' (FG1). In the focus group OTHANDWENI confirmed that they had no experience of this type of formality and 'did not have those things' (FG2). There was a discussion about meetings and the importance of record-keeping, and agreement that these things were needed. The Chairperson commented, in the interview, that she recognized that 'nothing can be done without a meeting' (VM 7/02). The concern that the members of AGEWISE wanted 'to develop OTHANDWENI' in a mirror image of themselves was recognized by the focus group (FG2). They further

expressed concern that the two groups did not clearly define what was intended as a result of this formal relationship and did not clearly define the role of AGEWISE Board Members. It was this that caused problems later.

The AGEWISE Board members had a high expectation of OTHANDWENI because they had anticipated that OTHANDWENI:

- had a committee structure and 'everything else',

- were familiar with development work,

- had, potentially, a 'young, astute councillor' who would become a member of the AGEWISE Board of Management, thus helping their transformation plans (FG1).

The Director of AGEWISE had wrongly led the Board members to expect 'a young astute male' who would, the presumption can be drawn, contribute to the AGEWISE meetings (Directors report: Board papers 4/98). When the Board met the OTHANDWENI representatives were the Chairperson and her Vice Chairperson, two *elderly females* (Board Papers 6/98).

There was an expectation of the OTHANDWENI 'expressing themselves' (VM 7/02), of 'talking' (KZ 5/03) and of having a 'role to play' (FG2). The OTHANDWENI representatives were asked for comments at the Board meetings, as were all members, but they are never recorded as giving any (Board Papers 1999-2000).

The Board members of AGEWISE remember that their attitude was simply directed at 'getting on with the job' (JO CK FG1). They continued to function as they always had and did not perceive a need to change the type of discourse between the members (ML, MS verbal agreement of observations 9/03).

Focus group 2 had similar expectation of OTHANDWENI in relationship to their interaction with AGEWISE. Using the metaphor of the marriage the focus group identified OTHANDWENI as young and female and determined that the husband would 'sometimes boss' the lady. This metaphor, translated into reality, anticipated that OTHANDWENI as the wife, had little expectation of an equal relationship with full participation and open communication with AGEWISE as the 'husband' and 'boss' (FG2).

OTHANDWENI and AGEWISE acknowledged that they came from very diverse backgrounds; they recognised that they would have problems in dealing with each other and with the communities in which they independently operated. They accepted that they each had a powerful need of the other and that there would be benefits for each group. They independently made a decision to go ahead with the relationship.

6.3. ANALYSIS OF RELATIONSHIP IN API 1

OTHANDWENI determined a course of action that would move their project along by doing the following:

- They identified their needs: resources and mentorship (FG2).

- They determined that they needed a powerful lobbyist who would help them access 'authority' in order for them to begin to build an old-age home on land they perceived as theirs (SN FG2).

- They relentlessly pursued their goals until they achieved 'successes' (FG2).

They made their first compromise quite deliberately in order that a working relationship could be formed and their goals accomplished. They looked for a 'powerful partner' who would help them 'access resources and act as their mentor'. In the focus group the participants remembered that they were aware that in forming a relationship with AGEWISE they would have to accept that it might be 'a heavy price' but on reflection they determined that they would pay the price. This referred to the fact that previous developments had not been completed and the local people had not been empowered to continue successfully alone.

AGEWISE were not actively looking for work in the Inanda Township at that stage. They had recently withdrawn because of the violence and lack of funds and they feared the cost of a relationship. This attitude changed when it was made clear to them that the new government expected organizations like theirs to work in previously disadvantaged areas and in a more participatory way.

The decision to join together, taken at a special meeting on 10th September 1997 (AGEWISE Board Papers 10/97) was the key moment that defined API 1 because the decision involved risks for both organisations. AGEWISE's risk, at that stage, was one of financial loss and loss of Board member support. The 'heated discussions' at Board

level generally had to do with the cost of staff, transport, operating, and capital (MP FG1).

There were also grave and obvious risks in terms of the future of OTHANDWENI, such as loss of autonomy and loss of potential assets (the land).

Beyond the risks for each individually, there was a further common risk which emanated from the lack of open and honest communication about their different positions and their expectations of the relationship. There were other issues not clearly identified as problems at that time but identified by the focus groups in hindsight as probable causes of the conflict later, in particular:

- role of Board Members,

- understanding of relationship and terminology: 'formal', 'under umbrella',

- conflicting visions for the Project.

There were barriers to learning which existed at that time. There was no 'joint social vision' (Kilgore 1999:191) which brought these people together. The clearly stated aims expressed by the two groups at that stage of their relationship were different and there was no indication of how the relationship would unfold. Clear communication did not happen and that put the process of their working together at risk. The two groups did not communicate what they expected of the relationship.

Each group clearly belonged to, what Wengers calls, different 'community of practice' (Wenger 1998:45) and as they joined together, the question arises as to whether the two groups will in fact develop a new community of practice jointly as they work together. The question arises whether or not the two groups would recognize the problems and deal with them effectively. Would they learn to work together, not just towards the fulfilment of the Project but also as partners in a 'joint social vision'?

6.4. API 2: ACQUISITION OF THE LAND AND THE LEASE. (1998)

As the two groups began to work together in the formal relationship, the major task at hand was to secure the land. At this stage AGEWISE needed knowledge of the situation in the community and about the project to date, and OTHANDWENI needed

knowledge about the government structures and how to deal with them. The two embarked on a joint mission to secure the document giving legal ownership of the land. All other considerations, such as the development of the working relationship, lost impetus in pursuit of this one common objective. This was an oversight which would prove detrimental to both groups later.

The land was perceived as belonging to OTHANDWENI for two reasons. The first had to do with the history of the area (see Chapter 4):

> 'Land in Amaoti is not like in Inanda ... Inanda land belongs to the chief ... In Amaoti the land belongs to the people ... It was given to us by the white land owner' (MV 7/02).

The second reason had to do with a map and plot references given to OTHANDWENI by the local office of the NPA. The map given to the group showed that they would be able to build an old-age home. The importance of this history was not fully realized by AGEWISE and this caused poor decisions to be made concerning the lease as we see later.

However as discussed in Chapter 5, the changes at a National Government level brought OTHANDWENI activities to a halt at a local level where it became impossible to obtain written proof of the ownership of the land. This forced the group to actively seek a formal mentor who would enable them to access resources even though there was awareness that this 'hope' would extract 'a heavy price'. 'It was not clear to us which shape it would take' (SN FG2).

At this stage OTHANDWENI felt disempowered because their efforts to obtain legal documentation confirming ownership of the large piece of land, and the funding request through the RDP for the development of an old-age home, were unsuccessful. Once again the changes in government policy determined changes at local level:

- the government would no longer support old-age homes

- the government required development in under-resourced areas to be multi purpose (Chapter 1).

This resulted in the second compromise that OTHANDWENI had to make in order to win approval from AGEWISE and their support. The ideal of an old-age home was changed to that of a multi-purpose hall and pension pay point.

OTHANDWENI and AGEWISE met to make greater efforts to secure the land and they failed. It was only a 'lucky break' (HS 2/03) that gave them renewed hope. There was a possibility of acquiring a lease which would act until the township was declared. Both groups worked through the long process of acquiring the lease. They went together to local councillor offices and to local government officials as they planned and acted upon advice from different people. No progress was made.

The two groups continued to meet every week to seek a way forward. At a meeting held in October to 'flesh out' their plans for the future, the main item on the agenda was acquiring the land and it was at that meeting that the Director said that he would go with OTHANDWENI to the NPA offices to help 'resolve the issue' (HS 2/03 and Agenda OTHANDWENI/AGEWISE meeting 1/10/97). The lease had become the driving force, and it provided the motivation necessary to keep the groups working together. However as the level of interaction deepened on one level it was becoming shallower on another. The participants of OTHANDWENI were gradually excluded from participating in the negotiation with government bodies and legal representatives who were being pursued in order to obtain documentation. OTHANDWENI at this stage referred to AGEWISE in all matters.

This was not seen by either group as a problem at that time. Meetings were chaired and agendas set by the social workers and letters written by the staff of AGEWISE (MS ML 9/03). A probable explanation for this can be deduced from the fact that OTHANDWENI was at that time represented, not by the nine people who originally attended meetings but, by only two people: the Chairperson and the Vice Chairperson. The Chairperson had reported that at the AGM on 24th April only a few people had attended. The reason for this is easily understood: the length of time between the community first hearing of the plans to develop the land and the job beginning continued to increase and the 'lack of something to show' (VM 7/02) led the community to doubt that 'there would ever be a light' (MB 7/02). This 'lack of hope' (SN FG2) caused the community representatives to stop attending the meetings and this left only the two 'ladies' (FG2) to represent them. The Chairperson and her Vice Chairperson expressed their feelings and opinion about the situations: 'It was at this stage now AGEWISE problem' (VM MB 7/02) they were 'tired and needing a rest after all the running' (VM 7/02).

The minutes of the meetings from this time recorded that the content was agreed to by all the people at the meetings and at this stage the language had to do with the acquisition of the land and seeking authority to move ahead with the Project. There

was however, little reference to input from OTHANDWENI. AGEWISE proceeded as 'they thought best' (HS 2/03) and employed a lawyer to take over the 'whole horrific thing' (ML 7/02) of the land issue. The lawyers of AGEWISE drew up the lease for the land and the representatives of AGEWISE negotiated the detailed content in keeping with what the AGEWISE senior social worker had told OTHANDWENI about the new government legislation.

The content describes exactly what the Project would achieve, the structures that would be built and the people who would be served. Included in the various clauses of the lease are the plans for the buildings:

- Including in Clause 1.2 'to care for the most vulnerable, elderly, disabled and aids orphans … Developing a small village'.

- Clause 1.4 anticipates that the village will: 'comprises a community centre, accommodation for the elderly and destitute, skills training centre, crèche, a day-care centre, an orphanage'.

And the first written explanation of the partnership:

- A partnership which gave AGEWISE title of 'Tenant' Clause 1.2 in association with OTHANDWENI and therefore the right to the development and the right to determine the use of resources (Lease document attached as Appendix 3).

The drafting process of this document caused problems later, but at this stage neither the staff of AGEWISE nor OTHANDWENI drew attention to the potential problems as they were totally focused on the Project.

Within months of the signing of the lease on 18th June 1999, Phase 1 of the development was completed: the land levelled, fencing completed, a prefabricated training centre moved onto the site as a training school. There was a huge community celebration because the Project was now 'visible'. The resources anticipated were being realised. Much later, when there were other reasons to fuel a conflict situation, the lease became a major problem and the contents had to be changed, and the use and operating of the training centre became an issue.

6.5. ANALYSIS OF RELATIONSHIP IN API 2

As identified the process of gaining access to the land was a prolonged and painful one.   Expectation of success and delivery of service had remained high in the community.   However the continued reporting 'at parties' (MB 7/02) that there was 'nothing to report' de-motivated the members of OTHANDWENI as can be deduced from the small number of people who attended regular meetings and by the poor attendance at OTHANDWENI AGM on 24th April 1998.   This meeting was a critical moment in the working relationship of the two organizations because at that point the Chairperson of OTHANDWENI expressed the view that the land issue was an 'AGEWISE problem' and that she and her Vice Chairperson were 'tired with all the running about' (VM 7/02).   It can be inferred that from this point, if not before, the senior social worker adopted a social worker–client relationship with the remaining representatives of OTHANDWENI 'who were in their seventies' (ML 7/02).   This personal prejudice was confirmed later by the senior social worker's words when she referred to it 'being ridiculous to expect people in their seventies to understand' (ML 7/02) and that 'her client group expects the social worker to know things'.   And again by her use of language when she refers to her intercourse with the 'ladies'.   For example she explains, how she 'told' or 'informed' (ML 7/02) OTHANDWENI and not 'asked' or 'discussed with' OTHANDWENI on issues of importance, such as the lease.   Later the comments of the new development social workers also reflected this attitude.   For instance, she perceived that her task of doing 'development work' in the community was made difficult because the people she asked to help her make decisions became concerned: 'you are the social worker you must know' (ML 7/02 TM 7/02).   These thoughts were not expressed as having to do with this particular situation. However it does appear to be possible that the social workers adopted a social worker-client relationship with the two elderly people now left to represent OTHANDWENI. The two groups were not developing what Larsson refers to as horizontal relationships (Larsson 2001:201) but over time a classical top down relationship developed, which led to problems later.

That defining moment of API 2 led to a consequential behavioural change: OTHANDWENI were disempowered by first the lack of community input and larger representation of the community on the OTHANDWENI committee; and then by AGEWISE adopting an attitude of social worker-client relationship with the Chairperson and Vice Chairperson, considering them as two elderly ladies rather than equal partners. This resulted in a re-enforcing cycle of non-participation, particularly involving

major decision making. The relationship changed from partners jointly seeking a solution to a dominant AGEWISE seeking a solution for OTHANDWENI. As a result OTHANDWENI representatives stopped attending the formal meetings with high officials who were to determine their future. They subsequently signed a lease document which gave AGEWISE tenant status and the right to develop a village and control resources.

The OTHANDWENI Chairperson transferred the problem of obtaining the land and gave the AGEWISE authority to act regarding the lease issue. OTHANDWENI were aware that in making the land issue belong to AGEWISE there was a transfer of authority 'it is a AGEWISE problem' (VM MB 7/02) that it would be used to access 'decision makers' (FG2). This power was initially viewed as 'good' because it was used to access 'authoritative voices' (SN 3/03). Both focus groups described that time as 'frustrating'. They used words like 'anger and distress and concern' (FG1 and FG2). The staff of the AGEWISE and the members of OTHANDWENI still needed each other but there was a change in the relationship: as AGEWISE became more powerful OTHANDWENI lost, or gave up for a time, its position as leader and was reduced to two 'tired' members who were now 'informed' of the process underway. AGEWISE had taken the position of leader. This right would be contested later however.

Just eight months into the relationship a stage of transition was reached. The Levels of participation at this stage indicated a decline. There was still interaction at community level, and meetings held with low level government officials at a higher level. OTHANDWENI no longer participated or if they did, at Board Meetings for example, the major decisions had already been made or were made in such a way that OTHANDWENI representatives were unable to participate.

The two groups worked together in spite of the tensions created because of the long delays. Both groups had a shared goal, to achieve the lease of the land and this held the groups together. The working relationship between the two groups was marked by inequalities, OTHANDWENI had no decision-making powers, their participation in meetings was a sham but there was excellent progress in the task-driven arena where the two groups enjoyed the glow effect emanating from the success of the Project and the obvious approval of the community once they could see that Phase 1 of the Project was completed and ready for use.

The two groups had not recognised the problems identified in API 1 but rather compounded them.

The two groups had the shared goal of acquiring the land but would it be sufficient to hold the groups together in spite of the unequal relationship developing and the power of AGEWISE? Will the groups be able to learn how to work together in a better more democratic way now that AGEWISE is in control of the process?

6.6. API 3: THE APPOINTMENT OF STAFF

In 1998 OTHANDWENI had voiced the need for a social worker to work in the community and this had been taken up as a challenge by the AGEWISE senior social worker. When one of the social worker posts became available in her department she appointed a developmental social worker with a plan to do 'development work' in Amaoti. She 'followed the procedures laid down by government and appointed a skilled, Zulu speaking, developmental social worker in terms of existing legislation and in terms of AGEWISE policy' (ML 7/02).

AGEWISE fulfilled the 'expressed need of OTHANDWENI' but without full consultation and without participation from the OTHANDWENI leadership. This was not perceived as a problem initially. The 'post' (ML 7/02) was accepted by OTHANDWENI because they had asked for a 'social worker to work with OTHANDWENI' (VM 7/02) and there was the expectation that the social worker would be 'directed by the OTHANDWENI leader' (VM 7/02), who was a 'qualified nurse' (VM 7/02). The new social worker reported to AGEWISE but she visited and worked closely with OTHANDWENI. The Chairperson provided the new developmental social worker with a 'way in' (Lave and Wenger 1991) to the community, she introduced her to the local structures, made her familiar with the local leaders, showed her how to avoid 'dangerous places' and helped her in the daily tasks.

The social worker reported that she, in turn, tried to encourage the Chairperson to include the community more. She reported that she 'considered that the OTHANDWENI Chairperson had an autocratic way of dealing with people and was sometimes reluctant to seek full consensus from the community' and as 'developmental social worker' she had to point out that some of the tasks OTHANDWENI wanted her to do were 'not appropriate' for a social worker (TM 2/03).

This opinion of the Chairperson of OTHANDWENI as an autocratic leader was upheld by the new Chairperson of OTHANDWENI much later when he remembered first taking over the task: 'it looked like there was VM and MB from Umlazi they were the opinion makers. There were those who just came to rubber stamp' (SN 3/03). In FG2 the

community members agreed that OTHANDWENI 'was the Chairperson' and one speaker expressed the opinion that 'that is wrong'. In FG1 the name OTHANDWENI was interchangeable with the name of the Chairperson. This was highlighted by the development social worker: 'Anyway if I say they, the chairperson, I think she has accepted it and she represents the organization ... one wouldn't know what the rest of the organization was thinking of a particular issue' (TM FG1 7/03). As was established in the collage, the leadership of OTHANDWENI was firmly established as belonging to the Chairperson: she made decisions. This became more significant later when the role of the senior social worker was also determined.

OTHANDWENI had attended a meeting with AGEWISE in July 2000 and at that meeting the need for a teacher for the After School Centre had been discussed 'and agreed to' and the members there had been asked to try to find 'qualified people'. The Chairperson found two local women but these were not appointed. Instead AGEWISE appointed 'a qualified teacher who would be registered with the council as she was also a social auxiliary worker' (Social worker report Minute 4/8/00). OTHANDWENI anticipated that staff in the Project would report to them. That the professional staff reported to the senior social worker of AGEWISE was of concern. AGEWISE had again taken a leadership role and appointed staff to the Project without full and open communication and OTHANDWENI had not participated. The efforts by OTHANDWENI to find local people to work in the After School Centre were ignored. This would cause serious problems later.

There was a growing list of problems which were not attended to at that time and once the building of Phase 2 was completed the decline in the working relation was rapid. Other events added to the unavoidable 'fire' (VM 7/02) which would rage later.

6.7. ANALYSIS OF RELATIONSHIP IN API 3

Once the need for a social worker was expressed' by the OTHANDWENI Chairperson the AGEWISE senior social worker took action to identify and appoint a developmental social worker in line with AGEWISE policy. AGEWISE took the lead without consultation. They did not consult OTHANDWENI in the decision, nor did they invite full participation in the allocation of duties.

The appointment was a critical decision and the power relationship between AGEWISE and OTHANDWENI was clearly established. AGEWISE arranged meetings set the agendas and appointed the staff with little or no input from OTHANDWENI who, it can

be assumed, were still considered 'elderly clients' (ML 7/02). The relationship at that moment was non-participatory and unequal. It can be assumed that the relationship was held together by the force of the tensions between the two groups. OTHANDWENI remained afraid that AGEWISE would withdraw and leave then without the resources they wanted and the information they needed to acquire the resources themselves (FG2). The tension in the AGEWISE organization was primarily caused by the knowledge that the OTHANDWENI leadership was still powerful in the community and AGEWISE would be unable to access the community except through OTHANDWENI (TM 7/02). A further element of tension was caused by the dichotomous relationship with OTHANDWENI as both partners and clients. The relationship survived because of the need they had of each other. OTHANDWENI participated only by answering questions: there was no shared decision making.

A critical moment was reached when AGEWISE appointed the teacher on 4th August 2000. It was the defining moment of API 4 because the OTHANDWENI chairperson had promised the job to two local women and the AGEWISE social workers had ignored them. This led to actions by OTHANDWENI to re-establish a leadership position. The chairperson of OTHANDWENI started to re-assert her power and authority in the Project. The ownership of the Project and the roles and responsibilities of the two groups were from that moment questioned. Significantly it can be deduced that the leadership role of AGEWISE was, up to that moment, permitted by the Chairperson of OTHANDWENI because she remained 'silent' in order to 'win' (VM 7/02) resources but she took strategic actions to regain her power by changing the way she behaved. Behaviour changes included being pro-active in appointing staff and organising activities and taking decisions regarding the centre.

Why OTHANDWENI did not deal with problems in the early stages of the relationship is easy to understand. In FG2 it was clearly established that the community did not necessarily 'trust' that AGEWISE would stay to see the Project through to completion. Other 'agents had failed to complete projects or the community had been left with a project they could not maintain once the agent had left' (SN FG2).

Potentially difficult situations were avoided by the Chairperson of OTHANDWENI because she believed that AGEWISE would not continue with the Project if there were difficulties. The history of the area (as described in Chapter 4) and the other development project failures described by FG2 support this attitude.

The success of the building of Phase 2 was acknowledged and appreciated by both groups, who recorded that their involvement in the building of the Project was 'well' (VM 7/02). It can be deduced that the excitement and anticipation of the building of Phase 2 (the task) masked the deteriorating relationship problem (the process) from AGEWISE. It can be assumed that as far as AGEWISE were concerned the Project was 'on track' and successful and in their minds there was no reason to consider other ways to proceed. There was a lack of awareness of the true situation.

The major reason that OTHANDWENI joined AGEWISE was for 'the resources' that they anticipated they would be able to secure. OTHANDWENI leadership felt a constant tension throughout the development of the project that AGEWISE would leave before the completion of the project and the Chairperson was willing to compromise, keep silent, so that the project could go ahead and she made a strategic decision not to cause friction by asserting her independence.

The failure of the two groups to communicate openly concerning the appointment of staff, and the lack of participation in defining the roles and responsibilities of the staff, led to further estrangement of OTHANDWENI and further problems. The tension was increasing as OTHANDWENI continued to adjust behaviour and attitudes in order to secure the ongoing project development and because AGEWISE failed to see the need to behave in a way which gave OTHANDWENI equal status. Using the tool of silence in practice for example reinforced a cycle of disempowerment – keeping silent was successful in achieving short-term goals but it hindered and delayed finding a solution for the long term and worsening relationship problems. Tension was felt by AGEWISE because their attitude of social worker versus client relationship with the Chairperson of OTHANDWENI was now being tested by the actions taken by the OTHANDWENI chairperson to re-affirm her position of leader.

That these different tensions were not recognised and acted upon continued to cause problems for both groups and they failed to learn from their experiences which at the time only served to exacerbate the problems.

Conflict had not been anticipated by AGEWISE and had left them 'confused' (ML 7/02). It can be deduced that this confusion stemmed from their understanding of the situation at the time, 'having done everything correctly and kept detailed records' (ML TM 7/02). On the 'assumption that the Project was a visible sign of the partnership' (HS 3/03) AGEWISE assumed a broad division of labour along activities 'as agreed at a meeting on 10th October 2000' (ML 7/02):

- OTHANDWENI would organize and manage the 'elderly activities', pension pay point and the nurse aids;

- AGEWISE would manage social work activities and the After School Care Programmed.

OTHANDWENI saw the process of the 'allocation of jobs' and the distribution of jobs as unacceptable. The activities in the centre 'were closed to them' (MB 7/02) and it can be assumed that once again the lack of full and clear communication led to conflict.

Meetings were held which resulted in specific, clear decisions (Minutes of Meeting 10/00). There was, however, no indication of either the process by which these decisions were agreed to or the details of how, and by whom, they would be implemented. It can be assumed that no clear thought was given to the process and that the reactionary behaviour was due to a lack of a consultative – sharing approach.

Democratic rights had been denied to OTHANDWENI and, although this was not focussed upon as a specific issue, there was a growing social conscious which brought these rights (participation for example) to the fore – to be fought for. Action was driven by the 'resources' which were now controlled by AGEWISE and the resources no longer delivered anything of value to OTHANDWENI. OTHANDWENI took actions to bring the Project to a standstill in order to reclaim the status of equal partner and to reaffirm ownership of the Project. This situation was brought about by the OTHANDWENI leader's wish to reaffirm her position as leader within the Project and within the community, and was a culmination of her actions taken to date (allocation of jobs, setting up the bar and the take-away). She asserted her authority and took a leadership stance; she took back the right to participate, the right to act.

There was a constant reminder of OTHANDWENI's junior status as AGEWISE insisted that OTHANDWENI 'do things right' (ML 7/03) by doing things according to the AGEWISE (and the welfare departments') policy. This was the classic top down approach and its implementation led to resentment and a growing sense of disenfranchisement.

The question remains would the two group continue to work together to build the Project and would they begin to see the real problems and learn to work together in a more democratic way?

6.8. API 4: MANAGEMENT STRUCTURE

Once Phase 2 of the complex was completed in July 2000 it was not long before AGEWISE and OTHANDWENI realized that the working relationship of the two groups had deteriorated.

From AGEWISE's perspective, the OTHANDWENI Chairperson and her Vice Chairperson were viewed as having 'changed towards AGEWISE' (ML TM 7/02; HS 3/02). On the other hand OTHANDWENI viewed AGEWISE as 'treating them as nothing' (MB 7/02).

The first indication for AGEWISE that there was a major conflict situation brewing was a change in attitude towards the developmental social worker. When asked to explain this further the social worker explained that she didn't clearly know 'why ... they changed ... people were suddenly questioning my role ... questions like 'was there no social worker in the area to do my job?' (MT 7/02).

Both sides appeared to have changed the way they related to each other. The OTHANDWENI Chairperson and her Vice Chairperson visited the Chairperson of AGEWISE to present their dissatisfaction with the social workers and the teacher. The Chairperson of AGEWISE remembered the private meeting:

> 'They had several gripes about the way the centre was being run and AGEWISE role in the development ... they expressed their unhappiness at the work being done by the social worker in particular and their role on the Board' (MP 2/03).

The OTHANDWENI Chairperson assumed that the leadership of AGEWISE rested with the Chairperson and it can be deduced that she viewed him as having the same decision making powers that she enjoyed in her community.

The Chairperson of AGEWISE held a meeting with the staff of AGEWISE and left it to the social workers to find out the root cause of the problem and to solve it (MP FG1 ML 7/02; HS 2/03). The missed opportunity to find out about the situation and the action to 'no longer invite OTHANDWENI to board meetings', further served to convince OTHANDWENI that they had little 'status' (FG2) within the 'partnership'.

Many meetings were called by AGEWISE to correct the problems which they had not clearly seen. The meetings were diarized in the social work department and some

were minuted as having taken place. Most were simply noted in the diary of the staff member involved. No agenda was set for the meetings, the goal was simply to find a way forward (ML 7/02; ML diary 10/02; TM diary 10/02; MS 9/03; HS 2/03). The meetings simply served to fuel an already deteriorating situation by confirming over and over again what OTHANDWENI already knew: that AGEWISE staff considered 'themselves responsible for everything in the centre' (FG2). OTHANDWENI remember feeling 'just like visitors' (VM MB 7/02). The right of 'ownership' of the Project was not discussed at the meetings and the rights and responsibilities of the two groups not clearly defined.

The Chairperson of OTHANDWENI remembers the meetings clearly:

> 'when we came on Tuesdays we come for meetings after that we are strangers in the centre, they know that we can do most things, but the teacher does the teaching, the teacher is responsible for receiving the money in the centre. No reporting except the monthly reporting, which we don't know what it meant' (VM MB 7/02).

The handling of another situation was fuel for the conflict then building rapidly.

Traditionally, during the previous years, the youth in the area had formed part of the OTHANDWENI home care service and had reported to the Chairperson of OTHANDWENI. This changed once the centre was finished and the first operating procedures were put in place by AGEWISE (ML 7/02). This was a critical action and gave OTHANDWENI further cause to believe that they had no authority in the partnership and no ownership of the Project.

The youth were assisted (by AGEWISE) to form their organization separate from OTHANDWENI. This confirmed for OTHANDWENI that as far as AGEWISE was concerned OTHANDWENI was 'as nothing' 'treated as visitors' to the Project and not full and equal partners.

The chairperson recalled how this happened:

> 'The youth had a newly formed body ... yet we had the youth working with OTHANDWENI all along ... But now when we were at AGEWISE (meeting) we thought they have got to be given a responsibility and stand on their own working with us ... Now there were things happening without us knowing ...

they had formed an organization of their own we had nothing to do' (VM MB 7/02).

It can be deduced that the underlying cause of the conflict was not clearly stated in the meetings held at this stage. Specific issues dealt with minor procedures such as running the shop, and the appointment and payment of the guards. Going to the meetings with the social workers was not helping OTHANDWENI and their frustration and anger at the action taken by AGEWISE which were 'disempowering' led to 'fire' (VM 7/02).

The Chairperson of OTHANDWENI acted with determination using what resources were at her disposal. She had failed to improve the situation by going through the available channel (AGEWISE Chairperson) and attending meetings. Other strategies were employed. In Focus Group 2 the participants used the metaphor of the marriage (OTHANDWENI female wife of AGEWISE male husband) to clarify the situation as they saw it at this time and what strategies they would have to employ to change the situation. These are remembered with hindsight but it is reasonable to deduce that they were of significance at the time. Problems were clearly identified:

- That now and then the male wanted to be boss of the lady (SN FG2)

- OTHANDWENI was not able to apply values to the marriage. 'Not sure of what values to bring' (W FG2)

- There was no development programme for OTHANDWENI 'no one is getting learning, getting exposed ...' (TMg.FG2)

- In addition OTHANDWENI identified the strategies 'she' would use to 'influence the male ... to change the attitude' (FG2)

  'Get the family to influence the male ...' Maybe understanding the concerns of the lady'

  'Explain to the people who are the family'

  'Using power that they have to extend the family ... Get reinforcements ... standing together?'

  'Not talking too much ... Actually moving out ... supplement and show different form' (FG2)

OTHANDWENI were not the only group who felt unhappy and felt that their partner had behaved contrary to expectations. AGEWISE also perceived problems and reported in various meetings that OTHANDWENI (represented by the Chairperson and Vice chairperson) had:

- 'denied knowledge of the minuted agreement to open the After School Care Unit' (Working committee minute 7/00)

- opened a shabeen on the premises (and apologized for doing so at Public Meeting 2/10/00)

- 'employed' volunteers to run the shop and said they would be paid by AGEWISE (meeting chaired by Civics 10/00)

- closed the shop because of problems with stock losses (Social Work report 10/00 TM 7/02)

- done things without 'negotiation and consultation' (HS at special meeting with Civics 10/00)

- been silent during meetings and did not attend meetings and arranged other meetings without AGEWISE (ML 2/03; Social work reports 10/00; VM MB 7/02).

Hence it appears that OTHANDWENI, continuing to work on the Project in their own way, caused 'confusion and concern' for AGEWISE who responded by holding more meetings to deal with procedural matters, 'trying our level best to make sure everyone was on the right track together' (ML TM 7/02). The conflict culminated in a toyi-toyi incident by the volunteers who wanted payment for their work and the 'lock out' of the teacher and the social worker which brought about the virtual closure of the facility. It also brought immediate action from the Director of AGEWISE who intervened and threatened to stop work on the Project. This was a critical moment. The action of a development agency withdrawing without first completing the Project and empowering the people was a situation known and feared by OTHANDWENI and the community (Expressed in FG2). AGEWISE had used the ultimate power.

The threat gave pause for thought: neither group wanted the withdrawal to happen. This was evidenced by the AGEWISE Director 'instructing his staff to work fulltime on the Project until a way forward was found' (HS 7/02) and it can be deduced from the role play of the two 'partners' and the stated objective of OTHANDWENI to 'continue

the marriage' (FG2). It is further evidenced by the Chairpersons reaction: 'Ho! Leaving me ... yes this cannot happen this way. So we cooled down for things to happen' (VM 7/03).

Both groups were angry and AGEWISE was confused. There was not an easy way forward. The interaction between the two groups was difficult and there was a strong undercurrent of dissatisfaction because the actions that AGEWISE took to help the situation were in fact causing more problems. The threat of AGEWISE leaving was seen as real. FG2 had described how this had happened before in their community and they expected it to happen to them; it was the price of hope (SN FG2). The attitude of the Senior Social Worker was experienced as 'not nice' as she 'took over the centre' (VM MB 7/02). The belief that AGEWISE viewed OTHANDWENI as inferior was reaffirmed: 'we kept quiet because we were cast off sitting on the bench' (VM 7/03).

The real problems between the two groups were not resolved but there were indications of a very slight improvement in the working relationship as reflected by the Chairperson of OTHANDWENI. 'We met, we continued to share ideas, we had to go on' (VM 7/03). It can be inferred that the motivating factor for OTHANDWENI had not changed; it was still rooted in the acquisition of resources. This is evidenced by the OTHANDWENI Chairperson's actions to 'continue the marriage ... to go on' (VM 7/02). Phase 2 of the Project was complete, Phase 3 had yet to be started but the fund raising activities for Phase 3 were advanced and both groups were aware of funding being made available (AGEWISE Board Papers 9/00).

The September 2000 Board Papers indicated both a willingness to go ahead with Phase 3 and a degree of reservation. The Director's report indicated that MS was already fundraising for Phase 3. Should the Board not approve of the extension of the Project, the donor funding would have to be returned or, with donor approval, allocated elsewhere. ML had applied for a government subsidy to help run the service centre (AGEWISE Board Papers 26/9/00:4.9). The motivating factors of AGEWISE given at the interviews and in the focus groups are expressed as a 'strong commitment to the Project' (ML 2/03 FG1). Clearly, the Board of Management believed that the Project was fulfilling the objectives set out in 1998 as reflected in the Board Papers but it can be deduced that a probable motive for continuing was the organisational glow-effect from the receipt of substantial funding and approval for the Project by the donors and government officials.

The possibility of AGEWISE withdrawing was still of major concern to OTHANDWENI however, as we have seen, OTHANDWENI acknowledged that they still needed AGEWISE to access resources. A number of actions were taken by AGEWISE staff and there was an uneasy peace. The following actions were recorded in social worker reports and in the service centre operating reports in the months that followed. They indicate a return to task driven initiatives as in the past but not to a better understanding of the working relationship between the groups:

- Training took place (home care givers) and it was explained (by the senior nursing sister of AGEWISE) that records had to be kept as 'it was a government requirement' (ML 2/03)

- The social worker organised unemployment seminars for unemployed youth and AGEWISE sent three people for training in market gardening (ML 2/03)

- In November 2000 there was a meeting between the Chairperson of OTHANDWENI, the senior social worker for AGEWISE, and the AGEWISE senior nursing officer to organise more formal training for the young volunteers as nurse aids (ML 2/03: diary note).

Of real significance at this time was OTHANDWENI Chairperson's awareness of a need to expand and strengthen OTHANDWENI. The leader allowed a new Chairperson to 'talk on OTHANDWENI behalf' (FG2). She determined that she 'must keep quiet' (VM 7/02) so that Phase 3 would go ahead. The appointment of the new OTHANDWENI Chairperson was a critical moment and it offered the potential of greater community involvement. The new Chairperson was elected and the past Chairperson promoted to President. In November 2000 at the OTHANDWENI AGM the OTHANDWENI leadership changed and the new Chairperson co-opted others to assist in 'clarifying the nature of the working relationship between the two organisations' (SN 3/03). The new Chairperson took positive steps to improve the working relationship further. He talked to all the participants (SN 3/03) and realized that 'the relationship was not in the position that I thought it would be after all those meetings' (SN 3/03). He confirmed for himself that OTHANDWENI was basically the Chairperson and one or two others who 'rubberstamped' her decisions (SN 3/03). He organised a number of workshops 'to help him make sense of the situation' (SN 3/03).

He came to the conclusion that:

> *'AGEWISE had not mentored OTHANDWENI in such a way as to make them 'do things on their own'.*

and hence:

> *'It was premature for AGEWISE to leave'.*

This re-established the idea that OTHANDWENI either wanted or expected AGEWISE to leave at some point. The nature of the relationship was still not understood.

The new chairperson left the organisation before his plans led to any meaningful changes. The reason for the departure of someone who was able to bring the two groups into a better working situation is also significant. The reasons given by the Chairperson during the interview was that he had a job to go to (SB 3/03). In the focus group however he said that he deliberately left because of the view he had that there was a problem with the attitude of the AGEWISE senior social worker who was controlling: 'if you agree with her you will be seen'. He said he was not prepared to be 'made silent' (FG2 7/03), and in the focus group he also expressed the problem with the political situation in the area and his difficulty in being aligned to one councillor while the other (who was shot and killed, see Chapter 4) was suspicious of his involvement with AGEWISE.

In the focus group discussion his views were not discussed further but two other members showed their agreement by their body language and the Chairperson accused the speaker of 'leaving her' (VM FG2). This reinforces the view that the two organisations were both benefiting, and being hindered, by the strong personalities of the two people most involved. The Chairperson of OTHANDWENI and the senior social worker of AGEWISE both wanted the Project to succeed. The strength of the Chairperson of OTHANDWENI had helped the organisation to develop and grow and to establish firm goals and objectives. She had taken the necessary steps to enable the Project to move forward and had made what decisions she deemed necessary to enable the development to continue. The senior social worker of AGEWISE had strong ideas about how the Project should proceed 'according to AGEWISE policy and government legislation' (ML 7/02) and was intransigent. The two strong-willed people failed to communicate effectively and the result led to conflict.

However by January 2001 the Director was able to report at the AGEWISE Board meeting that OTHANDWENI had started to establish a sense of order and direction. A visit by the Board members was arranged for the end of January. The Director

requested direction from the Board as to the continued involvement of AGEWISE in the Project particularly regarding fund raising, 'It would be foolish to turn off the tap which may not be able to be resurrected' (HS 3/03). The Board approved that AGEWISE continue with the Project but set down criteria that were to be fulfilled prior to the construction of Phase 3:

- current phase under control and on track

- there would be no financial drain on AGEWISE

- that a bono fide waiting list was established of vulnerable people eager to take occupation of the village (this led to Project Shelter 3/02)

- that the concept was sanctioned by the authorities Dept of Health, Dept of Welfare (Board papers 23/1/01:4.8).

To improve the relationship between the organisations a workshop was arranged by OTHANDWENI and AGEWISE, and facilitated by the Centre for Community and Labour Studies. It aimed to establish a partnership agreement. It identified some critical areas of concern:

- Responsibilities were not agreed upon

- Communication breakdown

- One individual provides skills to the organisation

The workshop established that although benefits were recognised, the problem overshadows these and prevented a meaningful relationship between the two groups. A formal Partnership Agreement was drafted.

It is a very important document since it puts forward recommendations as to how the two groups would operate the centre together, their roles and responsibilities, and placed the onus on the organisation to formulate a plan which would allow them to operate individually while staying partners in the operating of the centre.

The workshop helped the two groups see each other 'more clearly' (KZ 5/03). But the long delay of many months before the feedback was received meant that events had taken place which overshadowed its importance.

The March Directors' report to the Board thanked ML and her team for their efforts in putting the project on track (Board papers 27/3/01).

6.9. ANALYSIS OF THE RELATIONSHIP IN API 4

The first critical moment during this time was reached when the OTHANDWENI Chairperson visited the Chairperson of AGEWISE on 4th August 2000 only days after the completion of the building (MPFG1). That the AGEWISE Chairperson (in immediately redirecting the OTHANDWENI chairperson to a senior social worker) did not accord the Chairperson of OTHANDWENI the same level of respect and treatment that a fellow Board member would normally enjoy is significant. That the Chairman of the AGEWISE Board did not realize the seriousness of the situation, and that he did not consider the Chairperson of OTHANDWENI as an equal member of the Board or of equal status is obvious. However it can also be assumed that he considered the two ladies as clients and his immediate action to 'refer them to the social worker to sort out their problems' is in line with the AGEWISE way of working and was therefore perceived as being reasonable and 'correct' (MP FG1) in his view.

This key moment served to reaffirm for OTHANDWENI their position in the partnership. OTHANDWENI used an appropriate and usual channel of communication for people of equal status to discuss issues. The fact that OTHANDWENI members were 'referred' by the Chairperson of AGEWISE to the social worker to have their 'problems sorted out' (MP FG1) codified the relationship of client/social worker and denied the position of equality in the partnership for OTHANDWENI. The relationship deteriorated to one viewed by OTHANDWENI as 'inferior' as 'worthless' (FG1). OTHANDWENI's exclusion from the Board meetings devalued their role significantly and their passive participation 'the people are told what has been decided or has already happened' (Mowforth and Munt 1998:241) was further reason for OTHANDWENI to reassert their independence.

There had been no visible maturing of the relationship between the two organizations.

This lack of recognition of OTHANDWENI and the perceived lack of respect from the AGEWISE Chairperson led the leadership of OTHANDWENI to reassert themselves as 'independent partners' (VM FG2). The OTHANDWENI leader acted by implementing techniques which confused and alarmed AGEWISE: strikes, toyi-toyi, non-attendance at meetings and silence.

AGEWISE retaliated by threatening 'to leave'.

This threat (HS 11/8/00) was the second critical moment during this API because it led to an immediate re-evaluation of the deteriorating situation between the two groups (Minute of special meeting 7am 12/8/00). It can be deduced from previous actions that OTHANDWENI could not risk AGEWISE leaving because there was still a further phase of the Project to build and there had been no meaningful empowerment of OTHANDWENI which would enable them to continue with the Project alone.

AGEWISE had committed to a programme of development work and had committed large expenditure of donor funds and it was not in a position to leave. Both organizations needed to find a way forward. OTHANDWENI still needed AGEWISE to continue obtaining resources and AGEWISE still needed OTHANDWENI to enable them to be able to have access to the wider community.

When the Director of AGEWISE made a threat at the meeting to 'leave the Project' (HS 3/03), this was a key moment which brought the Project to a halt and was the immediate cause of both organizations re-evaluating the situation and their need for each other. The threat was responded to as real (VM 7/02) and it led to a whole series of meetings (Minutes of Special meetings 14/10/00) and was indirectly responsible for the expansion of OTHANDWENI membership to include external community members, the eventual election of a new chairperson for OTHANDWENI and the development of the partnership agreement drawn up in the workshop. However at this moment the relationship was virtually non-existent. The conflict resulted in a total breakdown in communication and there was no participation by OTHANDWENI in the Project. Conflict caused the Project and the relationship to stop (FG1 and FG2).

The groups avoided a repeat of the major conflict by taking advantage of the space provided for them by the many meetings organised and facilitated by the Local Civics Association (8/00). This space provided time in which to regroup and to reflect on what had gone wrong, the major problems identified by the participants and what had caused the conflict. The two groups were perhaps beginning to learn from each other, and from their joint experience of the tensions and conflict so recently demonstrated. Perhaps they were learning how to work together in a better understanding of what their partnership meant.

At this stage the space and time was not big enough to fully resolve the problems which existed but the outcome of the meetings did culminate in each group having space in which to reflect upon the situation and to each re-affirm its continued need of

the other partner. They were looking for what Wenger calls 'a way of sustaining mutual engagement in action' (Wenger 1998:5). They independently came to the conclusion that they needed to find a way forward and each made a suggestion:

- OTHANDWENI was still represented by the 'two ladies' but this critical moment changed this. The OTHANDWENI leader put forward a Civics member to become the Chairman of OTHANDWENI (FG2).

- AGEWISE proposed an intense workshop to resolve the relationship problems and draft a partnership agreement (Attached as Appendix H).

Over the months since the major conflict in October of the previous year there had been many meetings and a slight improvement in the relationship. It was however the workshop attended by both organizations which allowed the groups to 'see each other' (MB 7/02) and to decide to make plans which would enable them to work better together. It can be assumed that this plan was more likely to succeed because OTHANDWENI was now represented by an articulate young male as Chairperson and a group of community leaders, including the OTHANDWENI past Chairperson who was now President. AGEWISE no longer responded to the new OTHANDWENI as social workers would to clients, but as partners working towards finding 'meaningful solutions' (ML 7/02). The two groups were developing less of a top down approach to the way they worked together and moving towards what Larsson referred to as a 'horizontal relationship' because the relationship was beginning to develop 'co-operation based on equality rather than hierarchy' (Larsson 2001:202). The communication improved and the 'participation was equal and challenging' (FG2). The workshop was organized (9/3/01) and planned so that every person who wished to could participate and this included the social workers from AGEWISE and the Chairperson and Vice Chairperson of OTHANDWENI as well as 'many' community members. Attendance by both parties at the workshop is the third defining moment of API 4.

The new initiative by OTHANDWENI to have the Civics hold a large number of intense meetings gave space for the two groups to re-assemble. That the two groups both wanted Phase 3 to go ahead can be deduced from their continued application to the Project. Their joint attendance at the subsequent workshop to draft a 'partnership agreement' was a further strong indication that they jointly wished to move the Project forward while at the same time securing for themselves a better way of operating.

The workshop was a significant turning point in the relationship between the two organisations at community level as it provided a forum for each to discuss:

- the partnership and what it meant
- the role of each of the 'players'
- a positive agreement – understanding to guide their future relationships.

The relationship seemed to be maturing to a stage where they each made a *conscious* effort to focus on the human aspects of the relationship as apposed to the material, task-driven aspects. Was there a possibility of building what Wenger calls 'a social configuration in which our enterprises are defined as worth pursuing and our participation as recognisable as competence?' (Wenger 1998:5). Had the two groups at last reached a stage where they could learn from each other as they continued to develop the Project?

6.10. API 5: THE WAY FORWARD 2001

The events which overshadowed everything else were:

> *A very large donation obtained to go ahead with Phase 3 and a public meeting held by AGEWISE to tell the community (HS 2/03; MS 9/03).*

These events propelled both groups into action: They needed to find a way forward so that they could develop the cottages and care units planned for the next phase of the development. This more than anything else, served to bind the two groups together again.

Once Phase 3 became possible both groups took actions to secure the Project's success. Each needed to find a way to work together and this was managed by taking the workshop outcome, which suggested a way forward by involving the greater community, and determining a new committee structure and acting upon it.

The new committee structure included more community people who were interested in the village concept. The first Village Committee met on 2nd August 2001 and its two sub-committees were formulated very soon after that (Terms of Reference: AGEWISE file SA1).

OTHANDWENI was attending, contributing and chairing the new committees. (Social worker reports 11/01). A number of initiatives were planned to enable the Project to

move forward: OTHANDWENI and AGEWISE agreed that in November the following initiatives would be acted upon:

- A community meeting called by OTHANDWENI, at which the community would be informed of the new funding and of the plans to build Phase 3 (27/11/01)

- An extended meeting of the AGEWISE Board with community leaders and experts in the field of care of the aged, housing and community work (Board Papers 1/02)

- A psychographic attitude survey be held in the community (Project Shelter 3/02).

The AGEWISE Board were 'anxious' that they 'behave responsibly' and acted with the same cautious behaviour which was normal in 'terms of other Project developments of this size' (FG1).

The community meeting instigated by OTHANDWENI 'convinced them of the support of the leaders of the community' (Board Papers 10/01:1). This was reinforced by the outcome of the extended Board meeting.

The survey was needed to convince them that the 'people in the community would want the facility' (Board Papers:4.9). Project Shelter was undertaken (3/02 Appendix E).

Once the AGEWISE Board of Management was convinced that the Project was the right thing to do it committed AGEWISE to going ahead with the Project as per the October Board of Management Meeting (Board Papers 10/01:1):

'When it became clear that adequate funding would be provided by donors and that donors had much enthusiasm for the project the attitude of our Board became also more positive' (MP 2/03).

6.11. ANALYSIS OF RELATIONSHIP API 5

The consequence of the public meeting in July 2001 was an appreciation in the community that the Project was not owned by either AGEWISE or OTHANDWENI but by the community. As a result, the community increased participation in the Project and the many activities in the centre (Social Worker reports October/November 2001)

and more members joined the various committee structures established to help move the Project forward. The relationship between OTHANDWENI and AGEWISE improved as they negotiated a new communication system together (FG2).

The position of both OTHANDWENI and AGEWISE changed because the Project ownership was in the hands of the community and it was their decision as to how the Project should proceed. The architect presented the plans to the community members for approval and this was referred to as a very, very important moment (SN FG2). This third element realigned the relationship of the two groups as equal partners working on a joint Project for and on behalf of the community. It led to the establishment of new structures including a large community committee and two sub-committees, one operating, one development, with community members well represented on each and each chaired by the Chairperson of OTHANDWENI. This was a significant turning point in the relationship; OTHANDWENI had strengthened to re-occupy the position of partner.

However although OTHANDWENI had reached a stage where they challenged the existing distribution of power, they still remained dependent on AGEWISE for access to resources and technical knowledge. AGEWISE had also strengthened its position by widening the Project's base of support in the community and by receiving the affirmation of support for the work they were doing and acceptance by the councillors and local leaders (Minutes: meeting of community 11/01).

In summary a more mature relationship had been achieved where each party accepted the other as a partner in the Project – the actual partnership however remains unequal. This is the true challenge going forward – to address the transfer of skills and resources and rectify the inequality.

6.12. THEMES

Throughout the analysis above, various themes can be seen to flow from one API to the next. I have briefly developed each of these themes below and I refer to them again in Chapter 8.

6.12.1. The use of silence

The Chairperson of OTHANDWENI used silence in a number of ways to bring about change. In the interviews with her it became clear that she made strategic decisions as to the type and level of silence that she would employ as each set of circumstances required a different response from AGEWISE.

Initially the use of silence was employed as a line of least resistance taken specifically to move the Project forward. OTHANDWENI wanted the resources and anything that delayed the provision of the resources was 'not acceptable' (FG2). The chairperson made the decision to 'keep quiet' (VM MB 7/02) about important decisions that she actually disagreed with, such as the content of the lease of the land, the decision to establish an After School Centre, because the greater goal of obtaining the resources was more important to her.

Silence was used to great effect to communicate dissatisfaction with outcomes without entering into a debate which OTHANDWENI considered they could not win. For example OTHANDWENI considered 'unhelpful' (SN FG2) the role and the reporting mechanisms designed by AGEWISE for the social worker. 'Seemingly this was not working ... But for a way forward we had to accept' (VM 7/02).

Silence was used as a tool, a weapon, to force change. Non-attendance and non-contribution in meetings caused concern and led AGEWISE to reflect on the situation they found themselves in and to try to negotiate a way out.

Ultimately silence was used as a pacifier. The conflict situation was perceived by the OTHANDWENI Chairperson to have gone 'too far' (FG2) when the AGEWISE Director threatened to leave the Project. The Chairperson still needed AGEWISE to help OTHANDWENI obtain resources and she thus used silence to help bring the situation under control: 'this cannot happen this way ... so we cooled down for things to happen' (VM, 7/03). There was no resolution of the real problems at this time, the root causes of the conflict were overshadowed by the drive for resources.

The effective use of silence drove the Project forward on one level and hindered the process of building a meaningful relationship on the other.

6.12.2.   Negotiation of professional status and accountability

The Project was led by two powerful women, a senior social worker from AGEWISE and a nursing sister from OTHANDWENI.   On a number of occasions during the interviews and in the focus groups, the relationship between the two was highlighted as problematic.   This occurred on a number of levels.   In the initial stages of the relationship there was no indication of problems associated with professional status.   It first appeared as a problem for OTHANDWENI once the development social workers role was questioned.   As far as AGEWISE was concerned specific rules and regulations governed how she would be employed and what she would do 'according to government policy and AGEWISE procedures' (ML 7/02).   OTHANDWENI viewed things differently 'we had to come down and accept AGEWISE way of doing things as a social worker' (VM 7/02).   Later when the operating of the centre was brought into focus the professional status of the role players again was highlighted 'doing things as a nursing person to ML it was out ... things were quite bitter' (VM 7/02).   Once the centre was operating the youth who had reported to OTHANDWENI (nurses) and been trained by them to care for the elderly in the community were regarded by AGEWISE as not operating properly '... they ... said they were home carers but there was no evidence of their visits or records kept' (ML 2/03).

Although this situation was another example of OTHANDWENI electing to keep quiet in order to move the Project forward they nonetheless recorded it as having made them 'feel as visitors' (VM 7/02).

The situation was exacerbated by the lack of clarity about lines of authority and accountability. AGEWISE's source of authority related directly to the fact that everyone reported to and was given direction by the professional staff. The professional staff were accountable to the Board of Management and not to the OTHANDWENI chairperson or staff, or to the community in which they operated.

AGEWISE remained oblivious to the situation and simply organised actions that they determined as correct. 'Training (of the home carers) took place and it was explained to OTHANDWENI that proper records were needed' (ML 2/03).

6.12.3. Oscillating source of power and leadership

The relationship between the two groups was initially determined by the changing government legislation and in this way, the government, an external powerful force, determined the framework within which the two groups would operate. This top down approach was reinforced by AGEWISE adopting a top down approach to dealing with OTHANDWENI. OTHANDWENI's action to hand over the 'problem' of the land legitimised the powerful leadership position adopted by AGEWISE. AGEWISE used the power to make decisions without consultation with OTHANDWENI. They acted unilaterally and took control of people's lives. Within a democracy there need to be plentiful checks and balances to prevent the abuse of power and for powerful leaders to elect to share power. OTHANDWENI's actions provided the checks and balances which restrained AGEWISE from being in a position to fully ignore OTHANDWENI and act without them; they took action to reclaim their lost power.

OTHANDWENI took action during the time of conflict to regain the position of partner, to re-assert their inclusion in decision-making, specifically the decisions dealing with powerful issues such as finances and governance. The outcome of the negotiations during the workshop resulted in better power sharing in that there was to be a 'higher degree of participation and more open communication' (FG2). However the basic fundamental truth remained unresolved: that power is held in the hands of those who have access to plentiful resources. Other 'partners' remain hostage to this fact. Power is further discussed under the democratic actions outlined below. Of significance is that while this research details the relationship building between the two groups it has to be remembered that the Project was built over the same period of time without any sign of power play or conflict. There was a total focus on the Project and all else was unimportant until ownership of the Project became an issue. The right to operate and control the finished first two phases was the issue that led to the problems in the human arena that had been simmering during the process of building the project but had not been addressed.

6.12.4. Conflict

There are different types of conflict as we have seen in the APIs and they are linked to the nature of the power relationship between OTHANDWENI and AGEWISE.

There was conflict caused by the leadership of the two groups. This conflict was more easily resolved than other more value-laden conflict which occurred later. The style of leadership of the two main participants caused operating plans and procedures to be put in place only for them to be rejected by the other party. This type of conflict is the easiest to resolve because of the clarity of the problem. In the workshops and various meetings decisions were made to re-structure the management and operating norms to enable better participation and a more equitable power sharing (FG2).

There was also the conflict to do with relationships Examples of such relationship difficulties were professional status, and the gender and age discrimination against the two elderly ladies as practised by the Chairperson of AGEWISE and the social workers, where conflict was avoided by the Chairperson of OTHANDWENI's strategy to keep quiet. Other conflicts of this nature can normally be resolved by the intervention of an outsider who is respected by all parties. What is important in conflict resolution is that the focus remains on the deep-seated causes of the conflict and not on simply finding a way to move on. The initial conflict resolution between the groups was more a decision to move the Project forward than a resolution of the actual causes of the conflict. Both parties chose to ignore the causes until major conflict developed, which brought the project to a standstill.

Conflict on a deeper level stemmed from a lack of sensitivity to the needs and emotional requirements of each other. This conflict was exacerbated by a lack of understanding of the norms and values that each group brought to the partnership and was further exacerbated by the lack of communication in the initial stages. Good communication may have assisted the two groups to establish some commonalities.

This chapter concludes half of the analysis of the Project. The following chapter will finish the effort by concentrating on Learning Democracy. Although the two sections are separated for ease of reference, they can not be read in isolation for they are entwined and interconnected. Democratic action is investigated as demonstrated in the normal course of the evolving relationship as described in detail in this chapter.

7. LEARNING DEMOCRACY

This chapter first determines how the two groups who worked together did in fact go through a learning process. In the second part of the chapter the democratic actions, essentially derived from Larsson's aspects of democracy as detailed in Chapter 2 (Larsson 1999:200-216), are used as tools for analysis. The seven democratic actions, namely participating as equals, building quality relationships, communicating honestly, accessing and sharing knowledge that informs standpoints, recognising and respecting diverse identities, endorsing internal democratic decision making and ability to take action to inform society, listed as separate headings to structure this section of the work.

7.1. INTRODUCTION

Wenger focuses on learning as a 'mutual development process between communities and individuals, one that goes beyond socialization' (Wenger 1998:266). He suggests that learning is not isolated but takes place in the normal everyday activities of life; it is interconnected, mutually defining. Within the Project's development the two groups were involved in the practice of every-day life where learning was informal and incidental. Initially the two groups deliberately elected to work together. They each belonged to a significant 'community of practice' (Wenger 1998:5) within their own organizations. There was no obvious indication that either group wished to construct a new identity as they came together to work. They each brought competencies, valued by the other, to the negotiating table and they each established tools necessary to allow the Project to move forward. They were willing to participate, collaborate, reflect and compromise in order to move the Project forward. The learning as practice, as doing, was well evidenced in that the building of the Project provided the 'mutual engagement' (Wenger 1998) details as 'necessary to characterise social participation as a process of learning' (Wenger 1998:5). The reflection and the learning became more deliberate as the groups started to question how to move the Project forward.

The two groups worked to fulfil their individual goals and aspirations, and by 'sharing some of the same conditions and tensions' (Wenger 1998:45) and by 'learning to deal with each other' (Wenger 1998:47) in order to move the Project forward, they did in fact, engage for a while in a community of practice. This engagement is crucial for the success of an enterprise as 'it defines and restructures what is done in practice'

(Wenger 1998:47). The working relationship had moved through a cycle of deteriorating levels of communication and participation to a stage where there was a total breakdown of the relationship, conflict and confusion.

In the focus group discussions it was made evident that the relationship between the two groups had improved over time as the two groups had learned to work together. The learning had been mostly 'incidental and informal' and it did in part stem from 'a sense of common purpose' (Freire cited in Rick 1997:7) which was to build a successful enterprise. Learning did not form part of any particular group's agenda but it moved the project forward by helping the groups to understand how to work with each other and actively to seek a way forward. The most significant learning took place as the groups 'struggled to make sense of what was happening to them' (Foley 1999:2) and as they struggled 'to work out ways of doing something about it' (Foley 1999:2). At the time of conflict the work had been brought to a halt. The groups were driven by the power of the conflict, to reflect upon past experiences and to learn from them. The participants struggled to make sense of the situation and to understand what had happened to bring the relationship between them to such a state of collapse. The participants experienced not one struggle but multiple and diverse struggles, each adding to the conflict. The conflict was on three levels: firstly there was conflict concerning the management and the procedural aspects of the work, secondly there was conflict which could be ascribed to different cultural, ethnic values and viewpoints which were of deeper concern because they were not easily defined and then thirdly the conflict to do with the task-driven initiatives. The major struggle was identified as having to do with power and ownership of resources. Each group feared that the other was chasing it away (MB 7/02; TM 7/02).

Both groups identified very strongly with the Project and wanted to remain a part of its development and success. In the workshop they talked about who they were and what they wanted to achieve together. That they had learnt becomes apparent in the changes made to the way the project would be managed and the way the two groups were to behave towards each other as detailed in the partnership agreement. There was a resolution to the conflict and the root cause of the dispute was identified correctly as having to do with basic human needs and values. The participants supplied the solution and in this way the power now rested with the new partnership.

There were significant changes in behaviour as the Project progressed and each movement signified that learning had taken place, but as Foley determined this kind of learning is often only 'half realised' (Foley 1999:3). There was no one to focus the

group, to enable the participants to do what Freire calls 'conscientization' and have them reflect on the situation they found themselves in, and make a conscious effort to learn from it. This state was almost reached in the workshop. Many learning opportunities, such as the groups learning to build a common identity and a worthwhile community of practice were missed throughout the development of the Project and although learning is by 'doing' in the definition I have used and not by planned cognition, it is regrettable that the activity of 'doing' the Project was so strong that there was insufficient space to allow reflection and conscious learning to play a more meaningful role in helping the two groups to learn to work together in a better way.

The groups did not manage to build what Kilgore calls a 'shared vision of social justice' nor a 'collective identity'. They did however begin to learn how best to act together in order to overcome major conflict and to create new ways of relating to each other. The FG2 used the metaphor of the marriage and suggested that 'the husband has become sensitive to the wife' (FG2); he is more aware of her 'values and her family' (FG2). As this research closes there is a focus on the building activity but the plan for the future includes many of the things most important to the OTHANDWENI Chairperson and her Vice Chairperson: a caring unit for the 'sick and the frail' is to be constructed and a full training course for the young care givers is planned. The AGEWISE staff and the OTHANDWENI Chairperson are actively encouraging the youth and people from the community who have been active members of the After School Committee to help with the service centre. The realisation of OTHANDWENI's original needs plus the more participatory approach to the way the two groups now operate, enhances the possibility of greater success in terms of both the building project and the continued development of the working relationship.

The major effort the two groups are now making to expand their interaction into the community and to develop news ways of operating may enhance the learning potential as they negotiate a new level of meaning built on the immediate past experience of this enterprise. As Kilgore has said 'to develop further this situation needs to include full participation and practice if it is to ultimately lead to a collective identity and a sense of belonging' (Kilgore 1998:197).

According to John Dewey 'a democracy is more than a form of government, it is primarily a mode of associated living of conjoint communicated experience' (Dewey 1916:87).

Democracy has to do with the way we work with and relate to each other and the shifting realities that make up our environment. In any nation or community there is the potential for peace and for conflict. That the people enjoy the one or endure the other is a consequence of the extent to which the leaders of the people determine what actions the leaders will use to manage society and the way people behave. From the literature review I selected a number of 'democratic actions'. These were distilled from multiple works from the ancient Greeks to the more recent theorists such as Larsson and McQuoid-Mason. During the Project's development the participants learned to work together to enable the Project to go forward. The development of a good working relationship was impeded by the intensity of the focus on resources and the leadership style exhibited by both organizations. There was significant learning during the working relationship: the learning was generally informal and incidental but, as described previously there were a number of key moments which caused the two groups to reflect on past experience and deliberate the way forward, having learned from the situation.

The next section of this chapter uses the theoretical tools developed in Chapter 2 and the data from the previous chapter to identify whether a learning democracy process is in evidence.

7.2. PARTICIPATION

In this section of the chapter the different aspects of equality and some of the drivers that influenced each aspect are identified. I look at the theme of power – do the partners have an equal balance of power? (Knowledge and resource), and at the theme of discrimination – do discriminatory practices impact on the equality of participation? I then look at the key moments (identified in the previous chapter) and reflect on the type and form of the participation itself and draw from Pretty's indicators, and the rating during the focus groups, to plot a graph reflecting the consensus view of the degree of participation evident during the process of working and learning together.

7.2.1. Power & discrimination

The two groups came together as partners. There was recognition of the power of AGEWISE as a resource rich organisation and of the power of OTHANDWENI in the local community. The two groups needed each other and the Project provided a platform for a joint undertaking to work together. The mutual need was, however,

never expressed explicitly. Each group appeared to have assumed that the other was aware of their interdependence; each was driven by the interdependability of the union. There was a tacit agreement between the groups that participation at this stage was understood to be determined by the 'authority of knowledge'. The Greeks first determined that this is acceptable in a democracy, because it enabled society to function better, utilizing specialist knowledge for the benefit of the people and because it worked to prevent the abuse of power since power was divided across many individuals or groups. The modern, liberal view of participation, which states that it is 'through participation that a solid local knowledge base is used for development', (Swanepoel 1997:4) is useful for both OTHANDWENI and AGEWISE. On the one hand OTHANDWENI's 'common knowledge of the political, social, economical, cultural and environmental dynamics' (Swanepoel 1997:5) of the community was immensely valuable to AGEWISE in their efforts to establish contacts in the local community and to make it possible for AGEWISE to find a 'way in' (Lave 1991). On the other hand, AGEWISE had knowledge about how to deal with local and national government bodies and how to access major funding. Each group initially focused on its own strengths, and this helped move the Project forward. Participation, at this stage, was not hindered by one group being in a position of such power that they could adversely affect the other. The power to influence was in the hands of both OTHANDWENI and AGEWISE. Without OTHANDWENI the Project could not proceed as they had access to the community and the authority to begin negotiations with officials for the legal documents to secure the land. Without AGEWISE the Project could not proceed as they had the powerful voice which could be heard in the right places.

During the conflict situation in API 3, OTHANDWENI organised a public display of power by participation in social action. They used their powerful community support and they succeeded in bringing about a crisis that led to the initiation of change. 'Participation and non-participation defines our identities and reflects our power as individuals and communities' (Wenger 1998:167). OTHANDWENI demonstrated a 'social learning process' as they withdrew their participation in meetings and in activities in the Project and used this as a tool to force AGEWISE to change. By their actions to involve other people of stature in the community, the Civics, OTHANDWENI re-asserted their position as partners and not clients; thus the balance or equality was tipped in their favour and they were able to renegotiate a balance of power.

In the beginning there was no obvious class, gender or race discrimination displayed that would work against full participation. However within a very short time frame age

and gender discrimination practised by AGEWISE seriously affected OTHANDWENI's level of participation. This was first made manifest by the attitude of AGEWISE social workers to the OTHANDWENI Chairperson and Vice Chairperson. The adoption of a social worker-client relationship in that situation constituted age discrimination and it led to the social workers not actively seeking to inform OTHANDWENI of matters of importance concerning them, such as the contents of the lease of the land and the appointment of staff. A pattern of exclusion was emerging. On the one hand OTHANDWENI was participating by simply being at the meetings and hearing of the decisions taken or to be taken, which Pretty describes as manipulative, as simply pretence because people sit on committees but have no power. On the other hand OTHANDWENI did not participate on any level when major decisions were taken and OTHANDWENI was simply informed of the outcome. Towards the end of the project the introduction of younger male community leaders within OTHANDWENI structures changed the balance of power as AGEWISE responded to the new leaders of OTHANDWENI as partners and not clients. There was a better flow of information and more open communication. Participation was to a certain extent driven by the new OTHANDWENI structures in that meetings were called and agendas set by the new Chairperson of OTHANDWENI. However, real participation levels had altered little because the power to access and utilize resources remained significantly in the hands of AGEWISE.

7.2.2. Participation trends during each of the APIs

The focus groups determined that there were swings in the levels of participation and they correlated with the levels of conflict as detailed in each API. The focus groups were simply asked to score the level of joint participation on a scale of 1 – 5 where 5 indicated full participation and 0 no participation on any level. The participation level at API 1, FG1 agreed, would score 4 out of 5 on their own scale. It can be deduced that this was felt, in hindsight by the focus groups, to be an appropriate score because the groups correctly identified the fact that at that stage both groups were 'mutually engaged to create, develop their relationship around what they do' (Wenger 1998:74). They were working together to fulfil their individual goals and aspirations; they had identified a joint enterprise, - their pursuit of the lease. At that stage they share some conditions and tensions which would identify them as engaged in a 'community of practice' (Wenger 1998:5) and they moved as if with one voice to help move the Project forward.

On Pretty's Typology of Participation (Mowforth and Hunt 1998:241) the score of 5 is most appropriate, a level which Pretty describes as Functional Participation. However there must be recognition of some aspects of 6 and even 7 at this early stage of the relationship. Both groups participated by taking initiatives to bring about change; they developed useful contacts with external institutions and resources (7). And as the two groups participated in developing plans to enable them to proceed, participation was, at this stage seen as a right (6). The groups met and interacted but the level of shared decision making gradually declined and tended to rise only after major decisions had been made by AGEWISE reducing the participation level to 5. It can be seen that the scores allocated by the focus groups independently agreed with Pretty's topology of participation scores.

During API 2 learning was hindered by the lack of participation because 'being included is what matters (it) is a requirement for being engaged in a community of practice' (Wenger 1998:74). Initial discrimination practices resulted in the exclusion of OTHANDWENI in 'what mattered' and as a result participation levels on Pretty's scale dropped to 3. Pretty describes this as Participation by Consultation; external agencies define problems. People participate by being consulted or by answering questions about local matters. AGEWISE took a strong leadership position and controlled the process of gathering information and acted as they determined was appropriate. Although AGEWISE shared with OTHANDWENI in low level decision making processes the professional social workers were not under obligation to account to OTHANDWENI for the decisions they took (ML 7/02).

During API 3-4 participation further decreased because OTHANDWENI had been reduced to being told what to do and what decisions had been made. AGEWISE no longer listened to the input from OTHANDWENI and acted unilaterally. The information shared was minimal and did not include full disclosure of information from professional and legal bodies. In API 4 the 'non-meeting' of the Chairman of AGEWISE Board and the Chairperson of OTHANDWENI was the culmination of increasing gender and age discrimination which led to OTHANDWENI's exclusion from future Board meetings and any major strategic decisions made concerning the Project. Information was 'told' (MI 7/02) to OTHANDWENI by the social workers at working committees. At API 4, Focus group 1 agreed that Equal Participation would score 2 out of a possible 5, falling to a 0 just prior to and during the major conflict.

In terms of Larsson's levels of 'conditions to influence' (Larsson 2001:199) OTHANDWENI should have enjoyed a position of strength because they came to the

relationship with a ready-made community development project, which had the support of local people, and a leadership team. But this position of strength was negated by OTHANDWENI not having access to meaningful information which would allow for their full and equal participation in procedures and decision making.

The groups maintained their powerful need of each other. But this powerful need of each other did not equate to a better and more equal level of participation.

Through intervention during API 4 the groups had resolved some of their difficulties and were again engaging at a higher level, attending meetings and workshops. This 'mutual engagement in the enterprise' engendered a better sense of 'belonging' (Wenger 1998:74) and a better sense of having a 'negotiated response to the situation' which included better levels of participation (Wenger 1998:74).

At API 5, FG1 scored the levels of participation as having increased again to 4 out of 5. This scoring system did not work for the other democratic actions and was abandoned as a technique, but in terms of participation it does indicate that the group recognised a huge swing between the participation levels, and the groups assessment of the situation does agree with the scores indicated on Pretty's topological chart. What is significant is that at no time did AGEWISE believe that full and equal participation was practised.
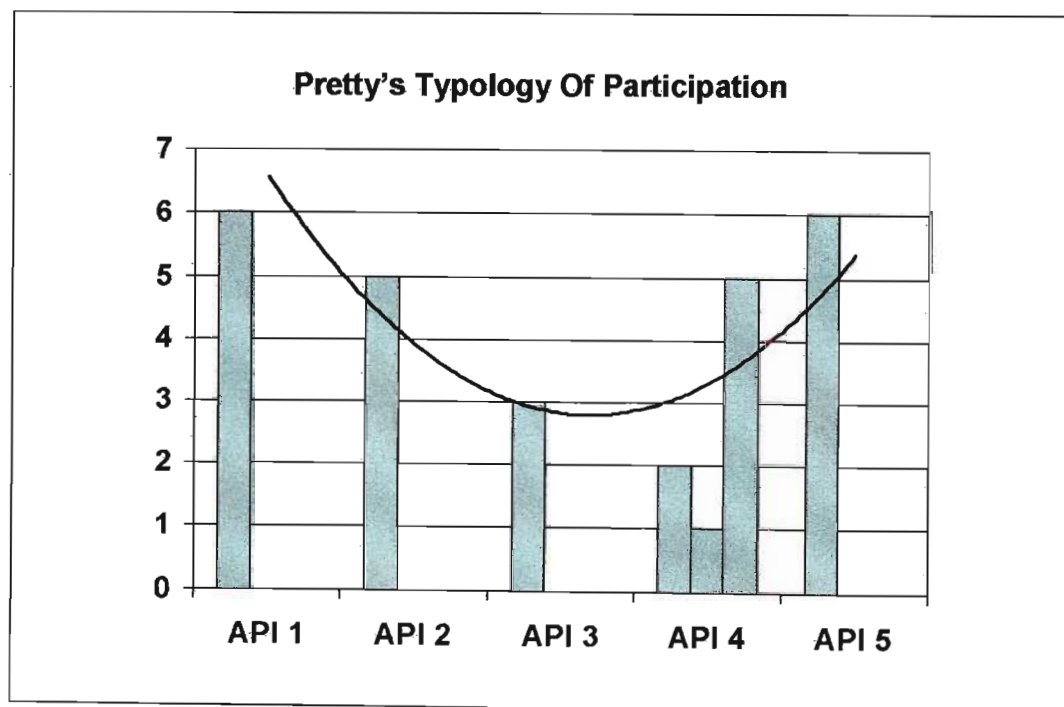
Graph: Pretty's Typology of Participation.

The summary graph of the scores of participation reflects a typical relationship cycle. There is a honeymoon phase followed by a jostling for position often resulting in conflict and with the effective resolution of conflict, a stronger relationship moving forward. The graph includes a polynomial trend line that shows the trough that these two parties have experienced. It could be drafted solely from the point of view of OTHANDWENI or AGEWISE and each would differ. What would remain constant however is the knowledge that both groups identified as never having achieved full participation on any scale and that participation levels were stronger at the beginning and at the end, and that conflict resulted in little or no joint participation.

The radical view of participation maintains that there must be inclusion in all activities and decision-making to ensure equity. Using these criteria OTHANDWENI did not have equal participation at any level; they were excluded from major decision concerning the lease in API 2. In API 2-4 they were not included in visits to donors or professional contractors dealing with the development of the Project. There was a major shift in participation levels because of the partnership agreement and the new committee structures that lead to visible and clearly constructed arrangements for full participation. In API 5 the level of participation was higher and there was expectation of equality because of the process the two groups had gone through; but at the stage that this research closes, participation is still being negotiated.

In summary, participation is key to learning how to build a better working relationship. The polynomial trend line in the graph above indicates that the two groups participated at different levels throughout the period and denotes a fairly typical relationship cycle in a democratic environment. It does not give a complete picture because the level of participation may be high from one point of view and almost non-existent from another. What it does clearly indicate is the huge swing in the participation levels as determined by the focus groups and the lack of full and equal participation at any time during the Project development. If democracy requires full and equal participation then there is no evidence of democracy during this relationship because there is acknowledged lack of participation at different levels throughout the APIs. However the fact that there is a definite movement towards building a relationship by developing better, more inclusive participation would suggest that there is also a movement towards better democracy.

7.3. QUALITY RELATIONSHIPS

This section of the chapter looks in depth at what defines a quality relationship. I also examine how an increased degree of commitment, or 'invested interest', also influences the time and effort that both parties are willing to invest to improve the relationship. I also look at 'attitude' and how this impacted on the relationship.

Quality relationships can be defined as those which foster a collective attitude based on co-operation. People co-operate in groups and the degree of quality of the relationship can be easily measured by the effectiveness of their output. Throughout the five APIs the two groups continued to work together with great effect to construct the buildings. The tasks were completed on time and the Project moved forward. Using this criterion alone, the score for Quality relationships would be high; the output was very effective, it produced a tangible successful enterprise.

There is more to consider about the way the two groups functioned together however. While the groups' task orientation remained strong and focused, the role they should each have played in the maintenance of their relationship remained mostly ignored. Wenger (1998:192-3) talks about how groups learn from each other by engagement in practice and how this can lead to a mutual identity. Although it is never 'an obvious source of identification by those involved... our identities can develop by being engaged in actions without being themselves the focus of attention' (Wenger 1998:192). This kind of engagement leads to recognition by the participants of a 'give and take' situation as they interacted and it can be, as Wenger says, a 'very fulfilling. source of great energy' (Wenger 1998:193). The focus of the two groups on the task to build the Project, was as both focus groups agreed, 'very fulfilling' and made everyone 'proud' (FG1 and FG2). However this source of 'pride' and engagement held the two groups 'hostage to the experience' of building the facility (Wenger 1998:193) and failed to allow space for the development and maintenance of the relationship.

In API 1 the relationship was strong and effective but there was no foundation of honest communication from either side. The two groups came from totally diverse backgrounds; they had had little or no experience of working together across social, cultural and historical divides. Any group interaction is characterized by caution and tentativeness and as Shulman (1997:138) points out, each member of the group makes assessments of the other based largely on non-verbal clues such as dress and appearance. First interchanges within groups were 'attempts to become familiar with

one another, mutual interests, people, events and common experiences' (Hartford 1971).

The gulf of apartheid divided the two groups and made it almost impossible for them to develop norms which would allow them to work together. They shared no common interests except the Project, and their experiences were diverse and different. In API 2 the relationship was functioning well but it was built on misconceptions about the status and role of OTHANDWENI leadership, and by API 3 the relationship had become tense because of further disregard for the leadership of OTHANDWENI and lack of open communication and full participation. FG2 aptly summed up the stage by using the metaphor of the marriage to describe AGEWISE as the 'boss of the lady' who was OTHANDWENI (FG2).

Both groups acknowledged the benefit of working with the other. They each worked towards the completion of the Project and at no time did the quality of the relationship impact on the ongoing success of the building process. OTHANDWENI constantly adjusted and adopted their behaviour to move the Project forward and in doing so they establish a pattern of engagement as determined by AGEWISE to 'get the job done' (VM 7/02). It is because of this pattern 'where some always produce and some adopt' (Wenger 1998:203) that a situation results in a 'mutually reinforcing condition of both marginality and (possibly an) inability to learn' (Wenger 1998:203).

That the two groups continued to stay 'in the relationship' and continued to engage however, led to a 'richer context for learning' (Wenger 1998:17). The groups had to 'absorb new perspectives' and create new ways of 'belonging' (Wenger 1998:17) in the relationship in order to move the Project forward. They had to do engage in what Kilgore calls 'constructing a social vision' and creating a 'collective identity' (Kilgore 1999:193). But this did not happen.

The relationship was held together by the tension; each still had a need of the other and this need continued to drive and motivate the two groups:

At this stage the major decision-making was taking place outside OTHANDWENI's sphere of influence, which was contained within the local community, and within AGEWISE's who had access to a whole range of government and corporate officials. OTHANDWENI could no longer negotiate from a position of strength. They had committed themselves to the AGEWISE partnership and were thus, at that stage, unable to link with another potential partner. Thus OTHANDWENI were hostage to the assumption that they could not lose AGEWISE.

During the early part of the Project, AGEWISE could walk away from the relationship without doing any harm to themselves. This changed as AGEWISE invested in the Project in terms of both their own resources and later, considerable donor funding for which they had accepted full responsibility. AGEWISE then became hostage to the donor community and thus equally at risk should the community, through OTHANDWENI, no longer support the Project.

Both parties became increasingly committed to the relationship and this can be seen during the latter part of API 4 and during API 5.

The conflict in API 4 reflected a situation where the relationship suffered a major set-back as the two groups became confused and angered by the behaviour or perceived behaviour of the other. OTHANDWENI took action to change the situation however, and had to return to the negotiating table as a result of their assumption that they could not lose AGEWISE. At that stage, the building of Phase 2 was complete and there was no immediate timeframe known for the start of the next phase.

Once funding was available and the next phase a reality, AGEWISE was too heavily invested (in reputation and future funding opportunities) in the Project and therefore also had to commit to the negotiation table. Thus the commitment by the two groups to their respective communities forced their commitment to the Project and to a commitment to creating a better quality relationship.

A large number of relationship building exercises took place during API 4 and the two groups worked out a pattern of behaviour that allowed that the Project moved ahead. Both groups were willing to work at building the relationship to enable the work to progress; the groups were once again task-orientated and driven by a need to move on with the Project. However along with this powerful motivation there was a deliberate change in attitude which recognised that in order to move ahead with the tasks of creating a Project there was a need to have a good working relationship based on agreed patterns of behaviour. These were worked out and detailed in the new partnership agreement. The major changes were devised to refocus the way the groups interacted and to make their relationship more effective. The common goal of the Project had proved strong enough to hold the two groups together. The groups built a new collective attitude towards getting the Project completed and during the workshop they determined a way to enable the group to begin to build a better way of working together. This has been applied to the achievement of tangible project goals over time but not to the building and maintenance of a sustainable quality relationship.

7.4. COMMUNICATION

Communication is a democratic practice and the credibility of the communicator impacts the validity ascribed to the communicated information. Learning is enhanced where the learner is made aware, assimilates the knowledge and takes action to change the situation. A major contributor to the 'knowing' is worthwhile communication. A group can be described as the learner and constructor of knowledge (Kilgore 1999:193). Democracy according to John Dewey is 'A mode of associated living of conjoint communicated experience' (Larsson 1999:202). Worthwhile communication is about breaking down barriers and allowing the two groups to function effectively.

The groups explored their relationship with each other. They argued, deliberated, evaluated and prevaricated. While there seemed to be a willingness to try to find a way to continue the Project, the lack of open and free communication acted as a barrier to understanding and led to conflict. Communication was often determined by who 'set the agenda for the debate' (Pettersson et al 1998:96). The lack of meaningful and rich discourse caused misunderstanding. Wenger says this lack of meaningful and rich discourse is a problem with communication and it needs to be dealt with in terms of its presenting 'opportunities for the negotiation of meaning within the community of practice' (Wenger 1998:108).

Part of the problem expressed by the social worker in 'doing developmental work' was poor communication and lack of a flow of necessary information. The development social worker, although Zulu, was not from the area and her access to the community was initially limited by her having to communicate only through the OTHANDWENI Chairperson. The legacy of the past had trained social workers to perform to very strict guidelines and within clearly defined parameters.

Although the Welfare Policy had changed at national level the implementation of the policy in practice was difficult. There was a lack of knowledge about how the policy should be implemented and funded. It was presented in a classic top down approach and the people at community level had not bought into the process. AGEWISE adopted the classic top down approach in disseminating knowledge to OTHANDWENI. OTHANDWENI had not bought into the process.

OTHANDWENI and AGEWISE should have been what Wenger calls 'nodes of communication' for the 'receipt, dissemination interpretation and use of information'

(Wenger 1998:252). This was restricted by AGEWISE not having access to the greater community and the use of the OTHANDWENI Chairperson as the main and sometimes only source of dissemination of information, and equally by AGEWISE not including the OTHANDWENI leadership in planning and major decision making processes.

During each API there were many opportunities for worthwhile communication to take place. Both organisations missed valuable learning opportunities because a good system of communication for the receipt and dissemination of information was not agreed to in the beginning and the systems of meetings that AGEWISE instigated did not function effectively nor did they assist in informing a wider community about the Project. During API 4 OTHANDWENI withdrew their participation and communicated with AGEWISE through the Civics. The Chairperson of the Civics chaired the difficult meetings between AGEWISE and OTHANDWENI during the time of conflict. These meetings proved a powerful tool to bring about change. The political power of the Civics enhanced the level of communication because both OTHANDWENI and AGEWISE respected this channel of communication and used it effectively.

The intervention of external authorities provided the space needed to work out a way forward. The groups did not at any time during the focus groups or during the interviews indicate that they were communicating to learn or to achieve democracy there was always a strong focus on building a successful enterprise. Measured from this point of view, the communication was adequate at all times and in the last API during the workshop, the levels of communication improved to an extent that there was a more honest approach to shaping what Wenger calls 'communities' which 'define us as knowers' (Wenger 1998:253).

7.5. KNOWLEDGE

In this section I look at knowledge as a useful and powerful tool to bring about changes.

In order to form an informed opinion, knowledge is a necessity. Throughout a working relationship, knowledge can be used as a tool to bring about change. In API 1 OTHANDWENI had access to knowledge that informed the stance that AGEWISE took in response to the Government policy changes. OTHANDWENI knew about the local situation and that the land was available to them. That knowledge was 'power' which OTHANDWENI shared with AGEWISE in exchange for AGEWISE's knowledge of how

to access the right systems in order to move the Project forward and to achieve their aim. Their knowledge of local conditions enabled the Chairperson of OTHANDWENI to control the conflict situation and to make it impossible for AGEWISE to function as they wished. Knowledge is powerful and it is used to good effect by OTHANDWENI and by AGEWISE. AGEWISE used the ultimate power when they threatened to withdraw from the Project (and by doing so withdraw their knowledge of how to obtain the resources necessary to proceed with the project) in order to bring the conflict situation under control. Each group, because of their histories as discussed in FG2, questioned with assumed knowledge the role of the other partner. The participants each shared only the knowledge they considered the other group needed to move the Project forward. It was most often minimal in nature and shared on a need to know basis. This was probably not a conscious strategy made by either group but more likely simply a legacy of the past. Each group had learned not to freely associate with the other. The content of the knowledge shared was determined by the participants as was the knowledge withheld.

Kant says that democracy is about refusing to accept subordination (Larsson 1999:206). In API 4 OTHANDWENI took actions to inform AGEWISE that they were no longer willing to accept a subordinate role. OTHANDWENI had learned by association and experience what actions would precipitate a response from AGEWISE (such as the use of silence in API 3-4) and they used this acquired knowledge to excellent effect. Knowledge gives the group power to negotiate the way forward and to enable them to take a stand or to form an opinion that helps them to determine action.

7.6. DIVERSE IDENTITIES

In this section of the chapter I look at diversity and the external factors that influenced the relationship: the apartheid legacy for example. I also examine the internal organisational changes that were effected in order to address diversity during the duration of the Project.

Wenger talks about social configurations in which 'enterprises are defined as worthy, membership of a community as a matter of mutual engagement, joint enterprise and shared experiences and identity as a matter of negotiating who we are in the context of the community' (Wenger 1998:10). Democracy dictates that the dividing lines related to identities are dissolved (Larsson 1999:207). Larsson lists the old dividing lines as

gender, race, culture, nationality and class, and suggests that there is now a qualitative debate in society to allow new identities to be formed (Larsson 1999:207).

To say that during the Project development there was no issue concerning the old dividing lines would be naïve. South Africa remains one of the most divided societies in the world. The groups participating in the development came from diverse and disparate backgrounds and brought to any interaction a preconceived understanding and perspective which impacted on decisions made at all levels. This can be deduced from FG2 where the group talked about the families of the two groups not understanding the 'marriage' and, also from the clear indication that both focus groups acknowledge inequalities in our communities. These they detailed as having to do with poor versus rich, black versus white, female versus male, ignorant versus arrogant (API 1 and 2 Chapter 6).

Each group had to deal with their individual and group value systems. FG2 expressed concern that they did not know which values to bring to the relationship, their diverse histories had enforced stereotyping and it can be deduced that AGEWISE perceived themselves as better informed and more capable than OTHANDWENI from the actions that were taken. OTHANDWENI were not 'expected to know' (ML 7/02).

The external factors impacting on the relationship and preventing a real acceptance of diverse identities were often as compelling as the internal. They each had to deal with the turbulent situation in the community, as described in Chapter 4, as they worked within structures and systems that were ever changing. The problems of the relationships between individual councillors and between different sectors of the community (the youth and the elderly) made the development of a working relationship between the two groups more difficult. There was scepticism and suspicion at AGEWISE working closely with OTHANDWENI: 'The family did not understand' (FG2). The history of the community defined local context as inherently homogeneous as a consequence of apartheid, thus there was an expected clash of 'difference' (FG2) when two groups from two different areas and histories come together.

That the participants worked together through such political turmoil and change suggests that a learning process would happen and that ultimately there would be a move towards a more democratic approach to the delivery of service and the interaction between the groups as they each become more aware of and 'sensitive' (FG2) to the other. Only in API 4 and 5 was there an effort to implement the means to build a new identity in a democratic way. In API 1 the groups worked together to build

a joint enterprise but it was based on moving the project forward and there was no consideration of democratic principles. In API 3-4 the conflict rendered it difficult for democratic action of any meaning to take place, except the sovereign right that OTHANDWENI acted upon to 'build their own identity' (Larsson 1991:208) and take back their lost freedoms and demand their rights. What they were looking for was, in fact, what Larsson (1991:209) calls 'equal value' which he maintains requires the support of a democratic social conscience.

In API 4-5 the workshop and the consequential new structures started to provide a platform on which to establish another way of working which would offer 'equal value' but it has not been achieved as this research closes.

Diversity should flourish in a democracy and within the groups there was great diversity: young and old, black and white the previously disadvantaged and the advantaged, the educated and the illiterate, and there was acceptance of each on a number of levels. The change of attitude towards working together came about as a result of the workshop and the development of the partnership agreement. There was at that stage an acceptance of the notion of equal partners but different: each group recognised that many things still divided them but that there could be an understanding of the differences and a way of developing a way forward. AGEWISE was aware that it needed to change at an institutional level as well as at an interactive level with OTHANDWENI (Transformation plans 2000-2001). There is demonstrable evidence to indicate a willingness to change, there are goals established and procedures written for each level of the organisation including the Board of Management; but changing entrenched and prejudicial attitudes is not easy as we have seen in the detailed social worker-client relationship. However in order to accept diverse identities within the two groups, an attitude change had to be made and this makes it possible for democracy to be a meaningful part of everyday life. At this stage in the relationship there was a strong motivation (the resources) to compel the two groups to accept diversity and move on with the Project.

7.7. INTERNAL DEMOCRACY

In this section I initially look at the balance of decision-making with respect to both participants, I then delve a little deeper into the inner workings of OTHANDWENI and AGEWISE and observe the internal decision making process and the dominant roles of

the chairperson of OTHANDWENI and the senior social worker of AGEWISE and what impact these individuals had on their organisation's ability to learn democracy.

Decision-making is certainly an aspect of democracy (Larsson 1991:210). Those with formal skills are often allowed to assume too much power and authority. This was made obvious by the lack of attendance of OTHANDWENI members at some of the higher level meetings conducted during the Project's development, such as attendance at the lawyer's office to draw up the lease or at Board meetings. Both focus groups clearly identified AGEWISE as male and dominant. That AGEWISE assumed the powerful role with which both the groups had identified 'him', was not questioned until API 3. Some of the assumptions were confirmed by the groups during the interviews and by the results of future action taken by OTHANDWENI. AGEWISE was assumed to be unwilling to give up critical decision-making (FG2) and unwilling to give up control of initiatives and actions other than at a local level (VM 7/02). A further assumption was that AGEWISE saw OTHANDWENI as represented by 'two ladies' as not having the capacity to develop and control a large Project (FG1 ML 7/02).

OTHANDWENI were unwilling to give up ownership of the Project (FG1), unwilling to give up control of the Project (ML TM 7/02) and they took actions to reassert their authority which resulted in a reappraisal of the situation and ultimately a restructuring of the process by which decisions would be made.

Decision-making at an informal or low level was democratic in that the two groups met and jointly made such decisions. Decisions at a higher level were made with either OTHANDWENI members observing the proceedings but not participating (at Board of management meetings) or without the input of OTHANDWENI on any level (Architects, lawyers, contractors and corporate funders for example). There was no wish by AGEWISE to disempower OTHANDWENI, just an assumption that the normal hierarchical decision-making processes would be acceptable to OTHANDWENI as represented by two elderly ladies who were simply treated as 'clients'.

Within OTHANDWENI there was little internal democracy. The leader was, by her own admission, the one who made decisions (VM 7/02). She behaved in a matriarchal way and there was no clear line of communication or accountability other than through her. Where important decisions needed community support, OTHANDWENI worked towards consensus but led with the authority of community spokesperson on the issue of the Project. Within AGEWISE, the Board behaved democratically in that decisions were made with majority approval: usually; consensus was reached but where not, the

majority ruled (JC 7/02). At Project level and during much of the interaction between OTHANDWENI and AGEWISE it was the professional authority of the senior social worker which was adhered to by AGEWISE at all levels. Part of the conflict situation as we have seen, was caused by the intransigence of the senior social worker in terms of the correct procedures and the dominance of her personality which was seen by OTHANDWENI leadership as 'not nice' (VM 7/02). The two dominant personalities each wanted to move the Project forward but each having definite and different goals helped fuel the conflict situation. The situation indicated that two different value systems were operating, two different approaches to decision-making which the focus group clearly identified as likely 'to clash' (FG2). OTHANDWENI did not want to be developed in the 'mirror image of AGEWISE' and AGEWISE did not concede that there could be another way to build a partnership until the conflict forced a reappraisal of the situation and a reflection on the past relationship and what had caused the breakdown. The two groups determined that in the new structures there would be other members in decision making-positions and with more participatory roles. The documents did not detail how decisions would be made; however the new developmental approach favours consensus.

There is an opportunity for the level of internal democracy to increase and the voices of other OTHANDWENI and AGEWISE members may be heard more clearly. The groups are beginning to interact in a more democratic way.

7.8. ACTIONS TO INFORM SOCIETY

Wenger talks about learning in practice, learning by doing. The whole person is involved.

The idea is to build upon shared historical and social resources and to develop a framework which will allow for 'mutual engagement in action' (Wenger 1998:78). In order to make things happen people work together to inform society and bring about change. Larsson maintains that for democracy to become complete all the links in his chain of democratic aspects must be there (Larsson 1999:212). Within the process of the two groups working together all the aspects determined by Larsson were visible and acted upon at some stage by one or other of the two groups. They did not appear in a predetermined sequence, and the levels at which they operated were varied, as we have seen in the participation graph on page 165. What is not visible is a sustained and deliberate effort by the two groups to behave democratically towards each other.

At the end of the process of 'linking the chain of aspects of democracy' Larsson says that there must then be an outcome: there must be 'power to make things happen' and the whole thing must impact on society. The last aspect is therefore 'political and social action that has an effect' (Larsson 1999:212). At the end of the workshop the two groups had determined a process with the desired outcome of making it possible to work together more effectively. In order to achieve this, democratic actions, as discussed above, were included but they are not enforced yet and they have not been tested in action.

Larsson's theory leaves a gap in the process by not clearly quantifying the level or degree of the various aspects required to indicate true democracy. For example, what level of participation would deem the action democratic? His theory does not indicate when and if all aspects have to be visible at once. Learning democracy from actions that will help the process seems to be more possible. The Project did present the two groups with an opportunity to learn how to work together. There was a process of learning as the groups went through each API and adjusted their behaviours to deal with the many key moments. Most of the learning was incidental and informal and some was as a result of major conflict. The groups have worked together to document and reformulate how their relationship functions and how it should be maintained.

What is significant is that as the two groups worked together there was a change in the way they behaved towards each other and each shift in behaviour had an effect. The most significant shift was in API 4 between Key moment 4, the private meeting with the two Chairpersons and key moment 5 at which point the Director of AGEWISE threatened to leave the project. Between these two points the work came to a halt. Key moment 6 in API 4 was the beginning of rebuilding the relationship from the ashes of a mostly dysfunctional relationship. The apex of learning is said to be at the point where 'order arises out of chaos' (Kilgore 1999:191) and in this case this point was reached between key points 5 and 6. It can be deduced that there was also a dawning of democracy at this point because, in the focus group, the remembered discussion of this time led to the comments about OTHANDWENI being 'new to this democracy' (VM FG2) and the focus of moving forward in a more 'democratic way' (SN FG2). There was at this point an awakening of the need to practice, do, democracy. A way had been found to 'sustain mutual engagement in action' and there was an increase in the level of exchange which would enable the two groups to 'create personal histories of becoming in the context of 'our' community' (Wenger 1998:5). That this is so is proved by the actions taken by the groups to keep their relationship alive. There was a

change in attitude and they each took democratic actions, they communicated better, had joint decision-making processes. Each participated in the design and development of future plans which would include joint responsibility for planning and procedures and joint accountability for decisions made. There was a better sense of joint ownership of the Project and a joint responsibility for the future success of the enterprise. It can be said that the groups had gone through a process of learning to work together to make a successful enterprise and that the process did in fact lead to a situation which would encourage more democratic actions to be applied to their future dealings with one another.

Does the process of building a better relationship equate to a process of learning democracy?

The process of building a good working relationship together was not a process of learning democracy. The end result of the process to build a better working relationship is better awareness of how to behave in a more democratic way. It was achieved by the two groups ultimately reaching consensus and agreeing to the application of good democratic actions which would help them to develop a better working relationship. Had they become 'conscious' of this in the very beginning then they could have applied a learning democracy process (including all of the democratic actions) to their endeavours and avoided the conflict that was the ultimate test of the strength of their commitment to the Project.

In Chapter 2 I confirmed that there was no definitive definition of democracy or clear unequivocal means to understand what it is. The Greek society of Herodotus determined that a holistic approach to government was required for a nation to flourish. People needed to be free to debate in open forums and make decisions together and the leaders had to change frequently. Held against this definition of a democracy the relationship between the two groups failed.

In a democracy it is accepted that people enjoy a level of choice in the rules that govern them and in their leaders. It is understood that members of society need to find commonalities of experience that unite them rather than divide them so that democracy can flourish. As we have seen the relationship between the two groups from diverse backgrounds had only the Project as a commonality which would help them unite. It did provide a catalyst for momentous change which, over a period of four years, ultimately led to a better working relationship based on working together in a more democratic way.

The Project provided both time and the space needed for the two groups to begin to see and hear each other more clearly and to be able to listen more attentively to the aspirations, needs and expectations of each other. The project provided what Larsson identified as 'the learning space' necessary to introduce 'new types of content working in the same direction, something which would support the creation of new identities by providing learning space' (Larsson 2001:209). The two groups needed to find further commonalities that would enable them to sustain a relationship built on democratic principles as interpreted by both groups and applied with joint agreement and understanding.

8. CONCLUSION

The case study has focused on the specific theme of learning democracy. The research methodology used was qualitative, and the conclusions drawn are presented with a realization of the need to be careful of generalizing to other situations, even those of a very similar nature. No project, starting today, will be developed in quite the same context of momentous change as was the situation with the project in the case study. For the reasons stated in Chapters 1 and 4, I believe that the Project is a unique learning site. The participants are uniquely diverse and different and thus any findings may not easily be transferred. The participants are integral to the process of learning and learning democracy and future research will probably reveal a more active democratic learning as the relationship between the two groups matures. This research took place early in the relationship and the participants came to the relationship ill prepared for democracy. The relationship was essentially task-driven and the participants had to adjust to a normalising society and address some residual fears and trauma from the apartheid legacy. They had to find a way of moving forward in the external democratic environment, by including the civics and other community leaders, to reveal the potential for a more meaningful relationship. The interactions between them became progressively more equal. There is now awareness - thus I expect that future findings will demonstrate a stronger, more active, democratic interaction.

INSIGHTS

8.1. RESEARCH INFORMING PRACTICE

Learning democracy is difficult but this research has provided me with the opportunity to better understand how people come to learn democracy. Having participated in the development of a project, reflected upon the mistakes that were made, collected data about the attitudes, skills and knowledge needed to become a more democratically active individual I am in a better position to put forward recommendations for building real partnerships. What I have learnt I am now able to share with others.

I spent much of this research trying to write myself out of the story because I was too passionately involved to write about it objectively. Firstly, I found it particularly hard to

accept myself and people I admired as major players in the evolving story. It was so much easier to see the tangible results of our work and accept the volume of praise and thanks for a job well done than to accept responsibility for our failure to recognise the need to build a better, more democratic way of working together sooner. Secondly, as the real story evolved, I found myself wanting to justify and explain the actions taken by the different participants and to shift the blame for the consequences of those actions. This response to the research and my changed status within AGEWISE, which made me responsible for future actions, almost brought the research to a close: I was finding it very difficult to continue. On reflection I realized and accepted that if I really wanted to know and understand what was happening so that I could be part of meaningful change I would need to continue and complete the process started. This was made possible by ultimately accepting the rigours and discipline of the academic process to structure and guide the research, by writing myself out of the story and allowing the participants to speak for themselves. It was aided by the use of interactive techniques which allowed the participants to express their thoughts and feelings more clearly.

The biggest learning experience has been my own and it started with the realization that building democracy is a slow process and it has little to do with the electoral process of casting a vote every four years.

What I learnt from this research is the following:

- We learn democracy by our keen awareness of it and by putting it into practice in our everyday interaction with others. It has to do with our body language, the way we speak to each other and about each other, the tone of voice, the language used and the way we respect each other as worthy individuals. We learn democracy by having an open mind, accepting differences and being non-judgmental. For democracy to happen in our communities we need to learn how to communicate well by listening first, even to the silences. We need to commit to seeing the process through even when there are very difficult obstacles to overcome.

- Unequal partnerships are not likely to foster democracy unless there is clear understanding of the role, rights and responsibilities of those involved. There is a need constantly to question inequalities and exclusions and to be concerned about relationships within communities and between individuals and groups.

- Democracy is made easier when those involved agree by consensus what will be shared and what will be excluded.

- Democracy is made easier when a core of shared values is identified and acted upon in an atmosphere of trust and respect.

- We cannot assume that we share understanding in a multicultural, unequal society. We must work to exclude what is not fair and not just. We must be willing to unlearn past acceptable practice and learn new, more appropriate methodologies.

- We can understand and accept differences as long as we claim fairness but, before we can do this, we have to be made conscious of what is not fair.

- We can learn democracy by conducting a continuing discourse about what is right about what we do.

- We can not 'do' democracy unless we respect others and co-operate fairly in practice.

- Even highly skilled and experienced professionals will need to learn how to adjust their practice.

Doing this research has enabled me to understand and to accept that democratic interaction between two groups of people cannot be built on weak foundations of wrong assumptions and unrealistic expectations.

Democracy is difficult but NGOs can play a meaningful role in building relationships of equal participation if they consider the following during implementation:

- Creating more opportunities and appropriate conditions in which people can practice democracy

- Creating effective network systems across social and professional boundaries and providing for full community involvement

- Giving quality support to the development of democratic processes

- Disseminating good practice and becoming a community resource

- Creating space and opportunity for critical reflection and making learning together part of the agenda.

8.2. A SHIFTING POLICY ENVIRONMENT WILL HINDER DEMOCRACY

The research has highlighted a number of tensions which hindered the adoption of a democratic culture and created stress for all of the participants as they worked together within the changing South African environment as it moved from an apartheid past to a democratic future.

Firstly, expectation created by the RDP of a fast delivery of service to improve the lives of the people was not met and this lack of delivery of expected services created major difficulties for NGO's working in those communities.

Then the government's new fiscal policy, GEAR, determined that there would be investment in human capital which would result in self reliance and self-sufficiency. Many people understood this to mean increased numbers of jobs. Tension was caused because there were no structures in place to enable the building of human capacity and no means to specifically enable, the very elderly, disabled and children to become self sufficient.

The policy framework and the reality of the situation at community level were at odds. The non-delivery of services and funding caused disappointment and tension in the community and lack of faith in government promises.

The immediate impact on large NGOs dealing with elderly and disabled people in homes and children in care was tension at Board level as to the ongoing financial viability of the organisations. In many cases the tension translated into the immediate reduction in budgets and thus curtailment of services and closure of facilities. The tension also resulted in major changes in organisational structure, including retrenchments of staff, but paradoxically it also created the need to expand and re-develop services in line with the new policy.

The new policy indicated a requirement for formal NGOs to transform and to operate in previously disadvantaged areas using a developmental approach. The tensions in community-based organisations translated into the need to find partners away from government to assist their communities to continue planned development projects and upliftment initiatives:

Further tensions were experienced by formal NGOs willing to work in previously disadvantaged areas for the following reasons.

- The NGOs did not have the structures to create a 'way in' and were dependant on community leaders to assist them make contact with the wider community

- Communities at the time were still in conflict as described in Chapter 4 and 'outsiders' were viewed with 'suspicions and scepticism'. Staff members were afraid to work in these communities

- NGO staff did not have the expertise and experience necessary to begin to work in communities of which they had little or no understanding

- They were further restricted by a lack of research data and literature which would have enabled a better understanding of the work which needed to be done and how to implement the new methods required

In summary, the re-prioritizing of state funding, away from institutional care and case work driven intervention towards developmental work and multi purpose facilities, created major tensions within the NGO sector within the first years of the new democracy. This is due in part to the inability of the NGO sector to respond adequately to the new policies. The new policy initiatives demanded a slow and determined developmental process while the expectation of delivery demanded rapid results, specifically of basic needs such as housing and food supply. The need for rapid results precluded the time-consuming democratic process of building relationships. People who need food and housing want these basic needs met before being interested in building a democratic process. Many NGOs lacked the capacity to meet the requirements of the new policies.

Building democracy in this kind of environment is very difficult.

Shifting policy and lack of supportive financial initiatives lead to mistrust of government intentions and a lack of hope for the future. The problem of shifting policy remains significant for future research. The Aged Persons Act of 1967 and the Aged Persons Act of 1998 have been repealed and the Bill which, when enacted, will become the Older Persons Act 2003 has not been promulgated. The most recent draft copy put forward (11/03) has changed from that determined as appropriate and necessary by the task teams appointed to assist with the draft legislation. The financial policy in support of the new social policy is still embargoed.

The gap between expectation and delivery of service continues to make building a relationship based on democratic principles harder particularly when dealing with

marginalized groups of people such as older persons. Many of the older people have little or no experience of democratic processes; many remain unaware of their rights and have little chance of accessing support structures. In many ways they are obliged to trust strong community leaders to speak and act for them. Future research will show that the younger older people are beginning to speak for themselves as the new government initiatives are promoted and there are action groups such as The South African Human Rights Commission dealing with issues such as elder abuse, including the abusive situation which still exists at the pension pay points.

Against a backdrop of these on-going general tensions two groups of people did build a successful enterprise and managed, over a period of four years, to move their relationship significantly towards a more democratic way of working together.

The research has shown how building democracy during a project development in a changing environment takes time but it can be achieved even in the most difficult situations given that the people involved want to achieve something worthwhile together and are committed to seeing the project through.

There must be continued liaison between Government/NGOs and Communities. There must be participation by the various role players in drafting policy and implementation strategies and the contents must be agreed to by consensus and not changed after consultation and agreement has been reached.

Fiscal policies need to fully support social policy and where this is not possible clear reasons for the lack of support needs to be explained fully, and a time frame established for future implementation.

Short term or partial funding for projects or services creates further tension and makes NGOs vulnerable.

Community groups and organisations should have equal representation in forums and collaborate fully in establishing arrangements to improve democracy.

There should be awareness programmes and specific indicators used to inform communities about democracy. People need to be prepared for democracy, encouraged to raise questions, able to insist on deliberation about issues that concern them and play a meaningful part of process evaluation systems.

8.3. PROJECTS CAN PROVIDE IMPORTANT LEARNING SITES

This research has indicated that when participants continue to see and interact with each other over a long period of time in order to bring a project to fruition, the project will provide the impetus needed for learning to happen: the project will provide a familiar and encouraging site of learning. Thus, projects can provide important learning sites. When people meet and interact in a familiar environment over a period of time learning is enhanced.

The evidence presented in Chapter 7 indicated the changing relationship between the groups and a movement towards working in a more democratic way. This evidence indicated that projects can provide important learning sites. In the case of the Project there were very specific reasons, after the conflict situation had brought the Project to a standstill, why it was necessary to take actions in order to move the Project forward. The success of the enterprise became dependent on the identification and acceptance of actions which were identified as democratic actions only when the groups were made conscious of the term and applied it to what they had already achieved independently. If they had been made conscious of these actions as necessary to build a good working relationship during the early part of their relationship it is possible that application of them would have prevented the conflict and enabled a better working environment to be established.

8.4. WE LEARN AFTER CONFLICT

The research has shown that conflict can bring actions to a halt and then provide the space necessary for people to reflect on the experience of conflict and learn from it. The learning can then be applied in future practice: significant learning then follows conflict. We can learn democracy after conflict.

Projects, and the people working on them, do not focus on demonstrating a democratic process. They are normally focused on the delivery of either resources or services. The learning process is not considered but remains incidental and not uncovered. The democratic actions similarly remain unexposed unless there is a compelling reason to expose them, such as the conflict situation described in Chapter 6. Conflict is exacerbated by a lack of sensitivity to the needs of others. When conflict brings action to a halt then there is time for reflection. Careful consideration of a situation leads to a better understanding of why conflict happened and this better understanding, once acted upon, changes the way the participants respond to each other. They can

change attitudes and become more sensitive to the others' needs and further conflict can be avoided or dealt with appropriately.

8.5. WE LEARN DEMOCRACY EVEN WHEN THE PROCESS OF LEARNING IS INCIDENTAL

The research has highlighted that incidental learning will help move a project forward as participants learn how to work together in a more democratic way.

As a project moves forward learning democracy will be evidenced as democratic actions are taken to enable the work to continue without conflict.

The thesis clearly shows that learning occurs throughout the duration of a project. The relationship between groups improves over time as the individuals making up the groups learn to work together. The learning is likely to be mostly 'incidental and informal' and in part as a result of a focus on 'a sense of common purpose' (Freire cited in Rick 1997:7). Learning, even when not on anyone's agenda, will nonetheless help move the project forward by helping the groups to understand each other and actively seek a way forward. Significant learning can take place as the groups 'struggled to make sense of what is happening to them' as they struggled 'to work out ways of doing something about it' (Foley 1999:2) and there can be significant changes in behaviour as a project progresses.

In this research this change in behaviour which signals learning is particularly noticeable between Key moments 6 and 7 when the two groups had time to reflect on the situation and take deliberate joint decisions to change. Movement signified that learning had taken place and, as Pretty's topology of participation showed, there was evidence of significant movement which would indicate a learning process. Much of the learning however was often only 'half realised' (Foley 1999:3) and as a result the relationship building was hindered and the opportunity to avoid conflict lost.

8.6. WE LEARN DEMOCRACY WHEN WE BEGIN TO NEGOTIATE POWER AND POSSIBILITY

The research has highlighted that participants need to be aware that their attitude and actions have consequences for the project success and for democracy.

It has also shown that the role and responsibilities of each participant and the lines of authority in a project need to be clearly defined before the introduction of resources.

The negotiation of power will in part be determined by the recognition of status, authority and ownership. Recognition of status, particularly professional status, is of great importance if work is to continue without conflict. Professional people working on projects need to be sensitive to the role and authority of others. They need to develop ways to encourage joint decision making by, where necessary, a major shift in attitude. This will be aided by an increase in knowledge about the other participants and different methods of working together. Control must be shared. The power to make decisions, act unilaterally or organise and lead debate must be distributed by consensus.

The right of ownership and authority over the use and allocation of the resources needs to be clearly established. Ownership rights to resources need to be clearly discussed upfront and revisited constantly throughout a project's development.

8.7. LEARNING SHOULD BE A CENTRAL FOCUS DURING A PROJECT'S DEVELOPMENT

This research has highlighted the following: that for this initiative to succeed into the future the focus has to shift away from building facilities to building the human, interpersonal relationships so lacking previously. Task driven initiatives remain important and necessary, but participants working on development projects need to devote a significant amount of time to building good human relationship and interpersonal skills, even if this delays or prevents the task driven initiatives.

It has shown that learning can be enhanced when people consciously focus on learning opportunities. Learning needs to be the top item on each agenda and recognised as an important outcome of every interaction.

As I have indicated earlier many learning opportunities were missed throughout the development of the Project and it is regrettable that learning was not on the agenda and that it did not play a more significant role. It is regrettable that someone did not interrupt the focus on the building of the Project - the learning by doing, task driven cycle, - earlier to allow 'conscious learning' to play a meaningful role in helping the two groups to learn to work together in a better way. The groups did begin to learn how best to act together in order to overcome major conflict and to create new ways of

relating to each other but they did not manage to build what Kilgore calls a shared vision of social justice nor a collective identity. They did each become more 'sensitive' (FG2) to the other and are actively seeking a better understanding of how their relationship could be strengthened in the future.

8.8. PEOPLE NEED TOOLS TO HELP THEM LEARN DEMOCRACY

The research has revealed that participants working together in difficult situations will come to realise that they need tools to enable them to work together in a better way. Over time there will be a change of focus of attention away from task driven initiatives toward better relationship building, and participants will determined what tools they require to assist the process of working together. The democratic actions based on Larsson's Aspects of Democracy provided a good basic democracy tool kit when used by the participants working on the Project and it is important that for democracy to happen these continue to be used in everyday interaction between people.

8.8.1. Communication

Democracy is enhanced by the use of an appropriate and acceptable vehicle for meaningful communication. Communicating honestly with each other is a powerful tool to assist the democratic process. The research showed that a lack of open, honest communication acts as a barrier to democracy and provides a platform for conflict. There are a number of vehicles that can aid adequate communicate, some are more effective than others.

The use of an appropriate medium of communication will aid the development of better understanding and aid the democratic process. Meetings and minutes of meetings did not prove an effective means of honest communication within the Project and they did not assist the development of good working relationships. This situation was improved however, as the participants were able jointly to set agendas and actively take part in the decision-making process.

The use of a respected communicator enhances the level of understanding and acceptance of the communication as participants are more likely to listen attentively to the information communicated and are more likely to respond appropriately.

Silence has proved a powerful and useful tool, to enable communication without conflict. Silence is not however totally effective in helping to bring about democratic action. Its very use precludes full and equal participation and open communication, two essential pillars of democracy. The strategic use of silence can influence relationships but it is important not to recommend silence as an effective means of achieving democracy. When/if silence is heard, action should stop until the underlying cause is addressed, and silence should never be assumed to mean consent. Everyone should listen harder to the silences!

8.8.2. Quality Relationships

The research clearly indicated that time spent building quality relationships can assist us to build a better democracy by developing a collective attitude based on co-operation. Quality relationships are made as groups work together and learn about each other. As people learn to work together during the everyday activities of building a project, they deal with conflicts and concerns and go through a process of learning which helps them to re-form identities and alter relationships in order to work together in a better way. Democracy is enhanced where there are horizontal relationships and people participate in decision making as equals. A top-down approach limits learning democracy but successful horizontal relationships are inclusive and they will help to create a culture of democracy within a project development.

8.8.3. Knowledge

Knowledge of democracy is not a prerequisite for learning democracy but accessing and sharing useful knowledge is a powerful democratic action. In order to be able to participate on any level knowledge is a necessity. Withholding knowledge that is needed to make a successful project means democracy is limited and the development of a quality relationship is unlikely and conflict is likely. Knowledge gives the participants power to negotiate the way forward and it enables them to take a stand about issues and to form opinions. The knowledge that people need as they work together on a project so that they can make informed decisions may vary but this research has shown that it must always include full and open disclosure about issues of ownership and the roles and responsibilities of the key people involved.

8.8.4.   Diverse Identities

In recognising and accepting diverse identities the dividing lines which hinder democracy are dissolved and new, better working relationships can evolve as new identities are built. The process of learning about each other and re-forming identities as relationships alter in the context of the project along specific, demonstrable dimensions is a process of learning to work together.

Value systems can act as barriers to democracy; however they need not necessarily be abandoned if people working on projects are willing to reassess the values and norms they hold dear and measure them against the reality of the situation. The research indicated very strongly that enforced stereotyping needs to be focussed upon and talked about so that participants know how to deal with concerns that may arise as a consequence of wrong assumptions. As the research strongly indicated the attitude of the key support people is critical to the development of democracy. Leaders must be able to rise above personal and outdated professional norms and values in order to accommodate a process of learning democracy. Diversity can bring greater learning through challenge and conflict. As participants begin to achieve mutual respect for each other while working together they will learn how to best move a project forward. This learning will be learning democracy. The research has indicated that learning democracy is made easier in an atmosphere of mutual respect and understanding.

Within the Project the two groups developed a deeper understanding of what Larsson calls the 'concept of equal value' (Larsson 2001:209) because they were aware of the 'multitude of identities' and more accepting of the many diversities which still have the possibility to exclude and marginalise. As this research closed there was a focus on the building activity again but the plan for the future included working within new structures which are more democratic. The groups' ability to 'accept diversity and fight social exclusion based on differences' (Larsson 2001:209) continues to be the challenge for democracy in the future. Future research is needed to see if and how the groups meet the challenge.

8.8.5.   Internal Democratic Decision Making

The research has highlighted the need for participants to continue practising internal democratic decision-making as this is vital for the success of any project. Those with

formal skills are often allowed to assume too much power and authority simply because they can and they do not provide for others to learn how to participate in decision making or offer opportunities for practising decision-making processes. There needs to be a wide base of support for a project and recognition of everyone's value as contributors to the process of building a successful enterprise. There may be different value systems brought to the negotiating table as groups learn to work together, and as long as these are identified and dealt with as the need arises conflict can be avoided and democracy enhanced. A bottom-up approach to decision making will enhance democracy.

8.8.6. Participation

Participation, says Larsson, 'has many meanings apart from those that can be related to democracy. If we take into account the participants' views of what is considered legitimate and meaningful, this becomes even more pronounced' (Larsson 2001: 214). He states that in relation to study circles only a small number of participants gave reasons related to democracy as a motive for joining. Within the special South African context democracy is very topical and possibly plays a more immediate and meaningful role in many peoples lives. Participation is essential if a democratic culture is to be built.

This research has proved that people from diverse backgrounds need to practise democracy in a relatively safe environment so that they can gain knowledge, confidence and experience. Even power-plays and conflict situations can be opportunities for learning and developing for everybody within a project situation because people continue to participate at some level as the project moves forward. Projects can offer people the opportunity to participate as equals if people are taken seriously as they involve themselves in making a contribution to the success of a project. Participants need to be given the tools necessary to enable them to contribute to dialogue taking place and they need to be included in the many opportunities for development and change. Within a project there is a better chance of democracy happening simply because the participants continue to be involved as they work together to find a way forward.

8.8.7.   Action to Inform Society

Taking action to inform society suggests that people have the power to make things happen and that the action will have a positive impact on society. Larsson maintains that the sheer multiplicity of users and meanings within a study circle group makes it difficult to distinguish between 'activities that are forming society and those that are not'. Democracy, says Larsson, is a major value but there are other values linked to study circles (Larsson 2001:214). The Project did indeed have a multiplicity of users and meanings. The users were very diverse and this alone presented the two groups with great difficulties and challenges. Confusion and anger were expressed on a number of occasions regarding roles and responsibilities. This discord led to a greater need and determination to find a way forward together. The many changes completed through compromise, pact making and collaboration served to strengthen commitment to the project and ultimately to enable a more democratic solution to be found. The project was ultimately a success in that it helped the participants to build a better working relationship based on democratic principles. Further research is needed to track the development of the new working relationship established by the two groups as they entered the third phase of the Project. Once completed the new phase of the building will introduce many more people into the village and there will be a need to reassess the organisational structures in place. Professional, skilled people concerned with funding and building the project will leave and new people will become involved. The Project may have become a site of learning democracy but for democracy to succeed it cannot be contained within a project. It needs to continue to inform a wider public. Future research would show to what extent the participants are able to sustain democracy within the changing project and to what extent their learning of democracy can inform society.

This research has indicated that a community project can impact on society. The impact can be enhanced by the participants' attitude to the implementation and completion of the project. For example a project can offer many learning opportunities but many will be lost to a wider public simply because no one will talk about learning and democracy. Even though the concept of life long learning appears in government policy documents concerning welfare and health and education there is no indication of how it should happen other than being regarded as a tool to enhance sustainability and promote empowerment. Projects provide many opportunities to talk learning democracy in every day situations. People telling and asking about and describing the learning opportunities utilised and those missed can encourage a focus on learning

democracy. Ian Martin asks that adult educators actively seek ways to politicize lifelong learning as Learning Democracy. The many project developments may provide the space and opportunity for people to 'learn and make democracy a way of life' (Martin 1999:90). However, it will need more than a change of policy or a change in organisational structure. Democracy needs people to want it to work and for this there is a need for a change in attitude. As this research has indicated, making democracy happen is not the responsibility of adult educators alone but of every citizen.

APPENDICES

APPENDIX A: FOCUS GROUP FLOW CHART/DISCUSSION DOCUMENT

Discussion Guide (V9)

INTRODUCTION: *(5 MINUTES)*

Aim:
- To set participants at ease
- To set the context for the discussion and allow for easy flow into main topics
- To learn about/gain insight into participants backgrounds/perceptions/lives

Facilitator:

Introduction, set group at ease. Stress that:

- Everything that is said will **only be used for** the purpose of this research.
- The participants should feel free to say what they like without fear; we are looking for the **opinions** of each and there are **no wrong answers**.
- Give a **brief overview of purpose of the research** and a **broad history of the project.**
- Stress that **facilitator does not know much about the subject**, so as to encourage respondents to open up.

COLLAGES: *(25 MINUTES)*

Aim:
- To use projective techniques to explore the attitude and views towards the project in the early stages as compared to presently. Has the idea of what the project signifies changed?

Facilitator:
- Participants to work **in groups of 2 per group** – do both collages simultaneously
- Explain **the procedure** to participants - Please stick the pictures in a collage on the paper provided (can use images, words, etc.)

- Please choose pictures from these magazines that show/represent the way you felt or thought about "The Project" whenever it was that you were first introduced to the idea. (10 Mins)

- Now please choose pictures from these magazines that show/represent the way you feel or think about "The Project" now. (10 Mins)

Facilitator:

- Briefly find out **what the pictures signify/represent** for the participants. (5 mins)

- So this collage represents "The Project" when you were first introduced to it, briefly talk to me about what these images mean and tell us about the project at this time.

- And this collage represents the project in 2001, briefly talk to me about what these images mean and tell us about the project at this time.

PLANS & EXPECTATIONS: *(10 MINUTES)*

Aim:

- To explore what the reasons and expectations were for **initial contact** between the two parties – what they were planning to get out of it and how they felt at the beginning of the project **(plans and expectations)**

Facilitator:

- Now we are going to talk about how you were **feeling at the very beginning** of the project, before it really got started.

- I am very interested to find out what it is that made you want to work together with AGEWISE/OTHANDWENI.
- What where your expectations of the other group? What did they bring to the partnership?

AGEWISE/OTHANDWENI PERSONIFICATION: *(20 minutes)*

Aim:

- To explore the initial power dynamic between the two organisations and the progression of the dynamic through the course of the project to date.
- Use a projective technique, personification to do so.
- Alternate AGEWISE/OTHANDWENI.

Now we are going to do something quite fun.

- I want you to imagine it is 1997 and the door to the room opens and through steps AGEWISE the person. I want you to imagine that AGEWISE is a person and that person is standing in front of you. Describe this person to me, what do you see?
  - Gender?
  - Age?
  - Personality?
  - Likes/dislikes?
  - Dressed?
  - Car they drive?
- Now I want you to imagine that it is still 1997 and OTHANDWENI steps through the door. I want you to imagine that OTHANDWENI is a person and that person is standing in front of you. Describe this person to me, what do you see?
  - Gender?
  - Age?
  - Personality?
  - Likes/dislikes?
  - Dressed?
  - Car they drive?
- Now imagine they walk into a board room together. What happens? Do they start to speak? How do they talk to each other? What do they say? I would like you to tell me about how they behave towards each other?
- Now I would like you to clear the image from your head. OK. Right, now it is 2001. So I want you to think about how things are now. The door to the room opens and through steps AGEWISE the person. I want you to imagine what AGEWISE looks like now in 2001. Imagine AGEWISE, the person standing in front of you. Describe

this person to me, what do you see? How are they the same and how are they different to the AGEWISE person you described to me for 1997?

- Gender?
- Age?
- Personality?
- Likes/dislikes?
- Dressed?
- Car they drive?

- Now I want you to imagine that it is still 2001 and OTHANDWENI steps through the door. So OTHANDWENI is standing in front of you, describe this person to me, what do you see? How are they the same and how are they different to the OTHANDWENI person you described to me for 1997?

  - Gender?
  - Age?
  - Personality?
  - Likes/dislikes?
  - Dressed?
  - Car they drive?

- Now imagine they walk into a board room together. What happens? .Do they start to speak? How do they talk to each other? What do they say? I would like you to tell me about how they behave to each other?

- What is different from 1997 about the way they interact?

DEMOCRACY: (15 minutes)

- I would like you to tell me all the things you feel are important to move a project forward

Create awards from the various responses on what important things about working together are.

Probe for all the issues not covered and make an award for each:

Probe:

- Use a disguised probe for all criteria not identified
- Equal participation (What about the extent to which different organisations get involved?) (Equal input about decisions regarding the future)
- Relations (What about the quality of the relationship between the two organisations?)
- Communication (What about the extent to which the groups/organisations carefully discuss issues before things are done/invited to all meetings?) (communication)
- Knowledge (What about the sharing of important knowledge?) (What knowledge do they use to form opinions and standpoints?)
- Diverse identities (Is it important for organisations to be clearly identified as separate from each other?) (Accept differences between people and cultures.)
- Internal democracy (What about the individual contributions and rights within the groups?)
- Action to form society. (What about the need for a shared common vision/purpose, is this necessary? Do the orgs both have power to make things happen?)

THE PROJECT: (35 minutes):

Aim:
- Go through the 3 Action Periods of Influence (API's).
- Explain how these were identified as important from the interviews.

Now we are going to talk about the **project itself.**

When interviews were conducted with each of you individually there were certain main periods that were **identified** as important or significant in moving the project forward or rather **having an influence on how the project would move forward**. The periods identify were:

1.) The period revolving around the **lease and acquiring the land** (1997-1998)
2.) The period around **operating of the full service centre** (about 1998 – 2000)
3.) The period around the establishment of the **committees** (about 2000 – 2001 - present)

AWARD CEREMONY

We are now going to look **at each of these periods** in turn and think about what it is you feel were the **most important** things that happened within each of these periods and how you **felt** at these times during each period.

So now that we have thought about what happened at each point and what was done to try and move the project forward at each point, we are going to have an **award ceremony**. I would like you to think about how much the situation or way the two **groups behaved towards** each other **deserves** an award for each period. I will read out all the statements we have for working together and then I would like you to tell me how much you think each period deserves the award.

So if the word is friendly and the interaction between AGEWISE and OTHANDWENI was very friendly during period 1 then tell me you think it definitely deserves the award. And if during period 2 the interaction between the groups was very unfriendly then tell me it definitely doesn't deserve the award. Some of you may have different opinions about this – that is alright, we don't all have to feel the same way – everyone must feel like they have not been left out.

OK, lets talk about the first period... (lease & land)...........

For each period think:

- **What happened** at this point that had an influence on the way people **felt about the project** and how AGEWISE and OTHANDWENI interacted with each other?
- What people **did**?
- What was **going on** in the **group/organisation**?
- So what was **done** about it?
- How did people **react** to what was done?
- **Did it help** the project going forward? **How**?
- **What** do you feel could have been **done better** at this point?

How much do you think it **deserved** (Award 1, 2, 3 ....x)
Talk to me about it....

REPEAT FOR ALL 3 PERIODS

Are there any comments you would like to make about the project?

What do you think would stop or retard the process of working together?

Facilitator:
- Thank the group for their time.

APPENDIX B: INTERVIEW SCHEDULE

NAME	DESIGNATION	DATE	TAPE REF NO	DURATION OF INTERVIEW
HS	Past Director	10/7/02	1	160 minutes
ML	Senior Manager – Social Services	10/2/03	2	140 minutes
MP	Past Chairman	21/2/03	3	35 minutes
TM	Social worker	24/2/03	4	120 minutes

Table: Individual interviews held with AGEWISE

NAME	DESIGNATION	DATE	TAPE REF NO	DURATION OF INTERVIEW
ML	Senior Manager – Social Services	1/07/02	5	130 minutes
TM	Social Worker			

Table: Small Group interviews held with AGEWISE

NAME	DESIGNATION	DATE	TAPE REF NO	DURATION OF INTERVIEW
SN ML	Past Chairman, OTHANDWENI Senior Manager Social Service AGEWISE.	6/03/03	7	130 minutes
VM	President – OTHANDWENI	9/03/03	8	90 minutes
KZ	Past Advisory Chairman OTHANDWENI	5/05/03	9	90 minutes

Table: Group interviews held with OTHANDWENI/AGEWISE

NAME	DESIGNATION	DATE	TAPE REF NO	DURATION OF INTERVIEW
VM	President – OTHANDWENI	4/02/03	10	60 minutes

Table: Individual interviews held with OTHANDWENI

APPENDIX C: FOCUS GROUP PICTURES
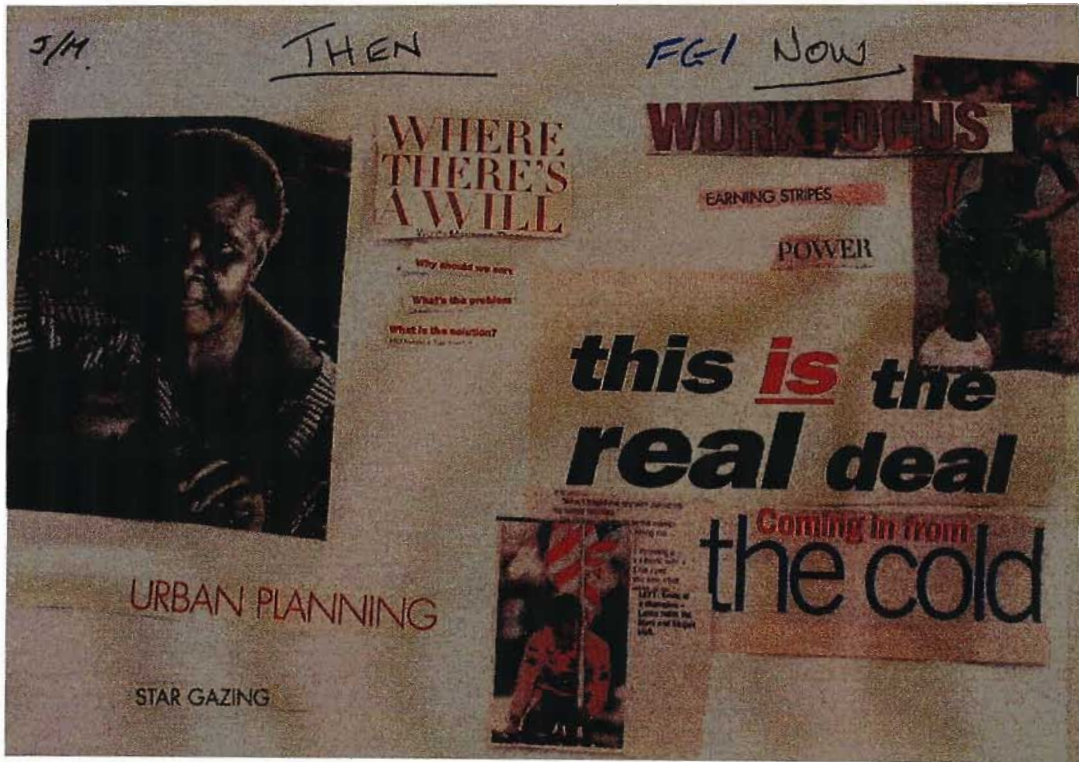
Focus Group 1 AGEWISE: Then and Now

Focus Group 1 AGEWISE: Then
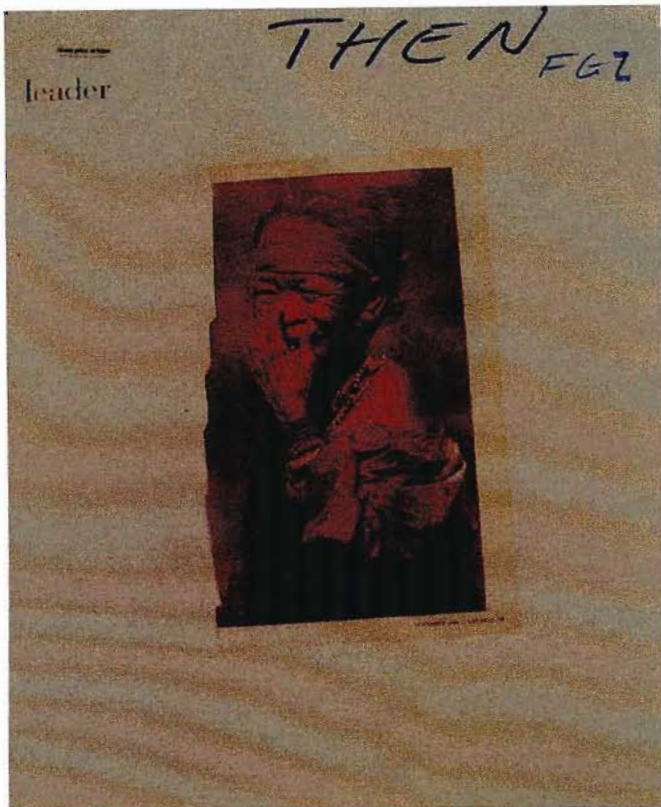
Focus Group 2 OTHANDWENI: Then
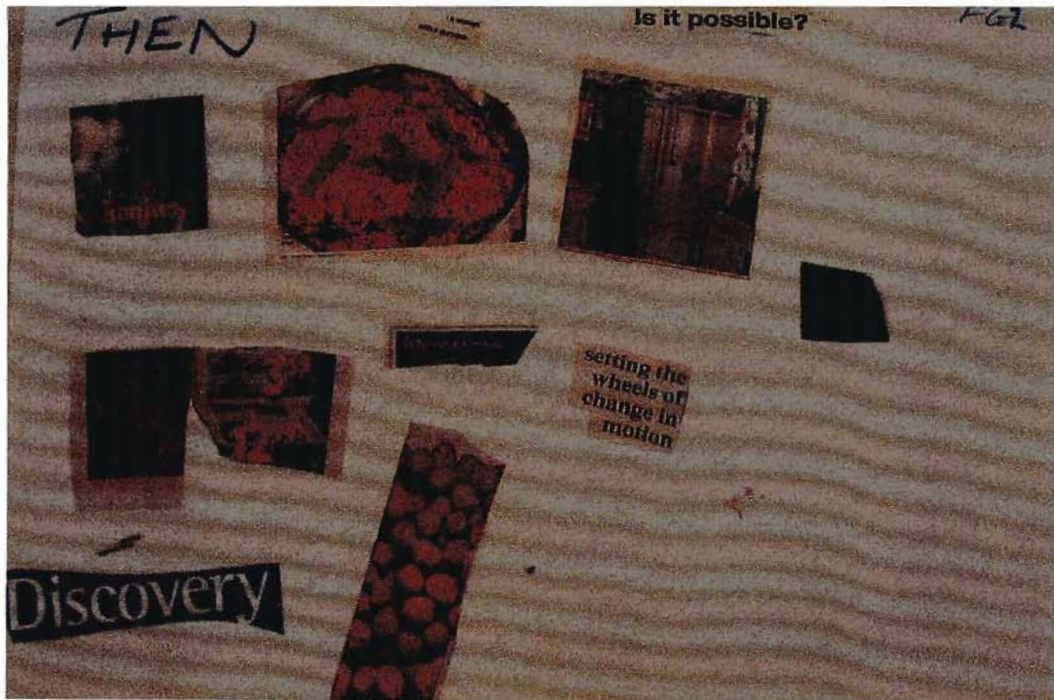
Focus Group 2 OTHANDWENI: Then

Focus Group 2 OTHANDWENI: Now

Focus Group 2 OTHANDWENI: Now

201

Focus Group 1 AGEWISE: Now
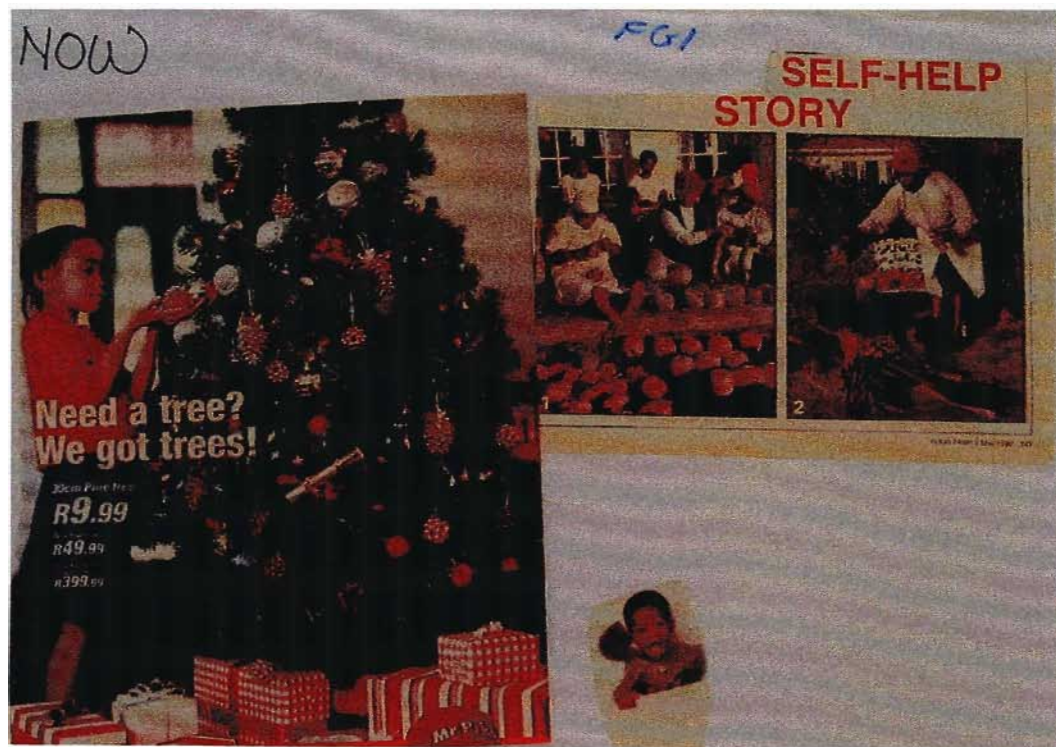
Focus Group 1 AGEWISE: Now

APPENDIX D: MAP OF AREA
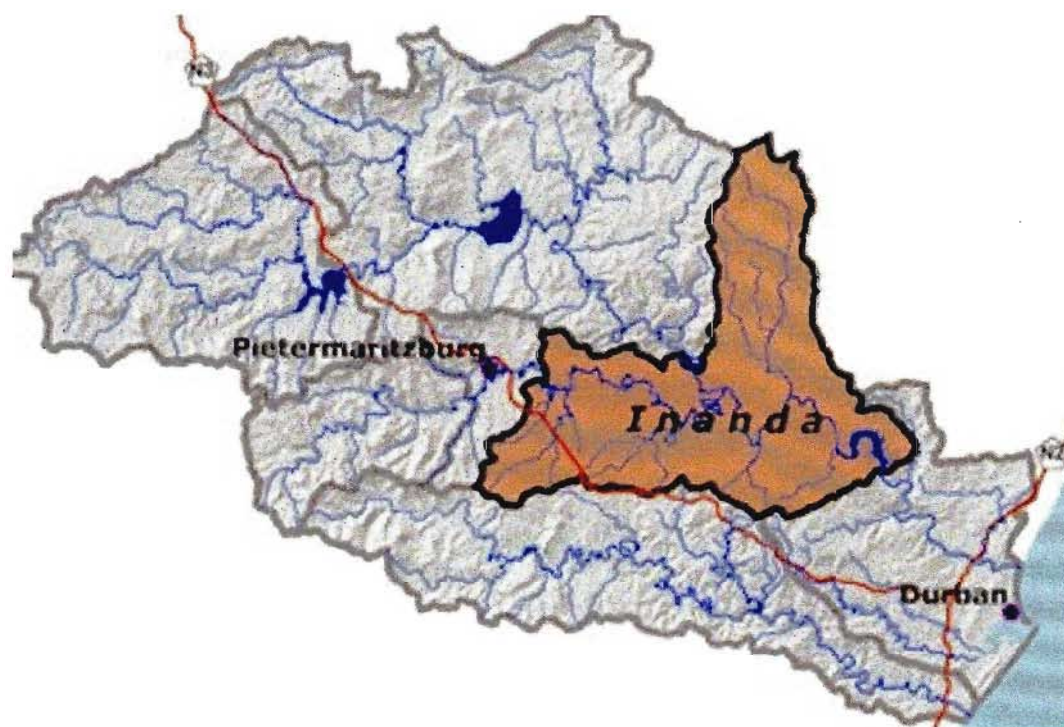
APPENDIX E: PHOTOGRAPHS

1:      THE COMMUNITY CELEBRATES OWNERSHIP OF THE LAND

Local dignitary
turns the sod.
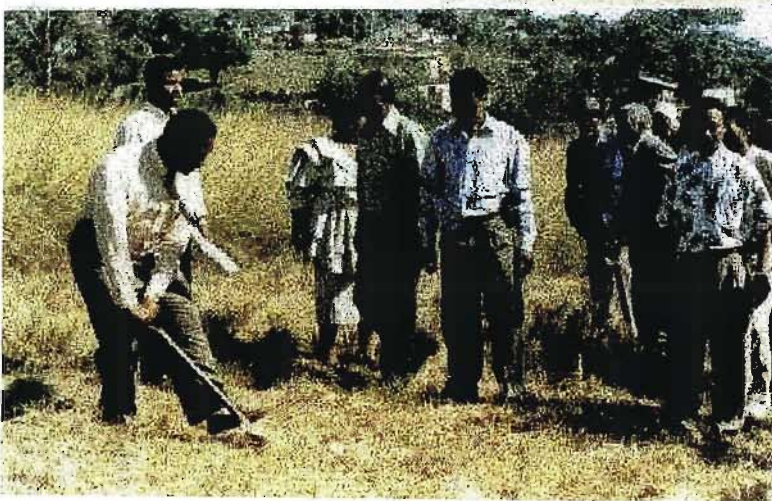
The community
does not realize
that they will
have to fight for
seven years to
prove ownership.

2:       THE LEASE IS OBTAINED, CONFIRMING THE LAND OWNERSHIP
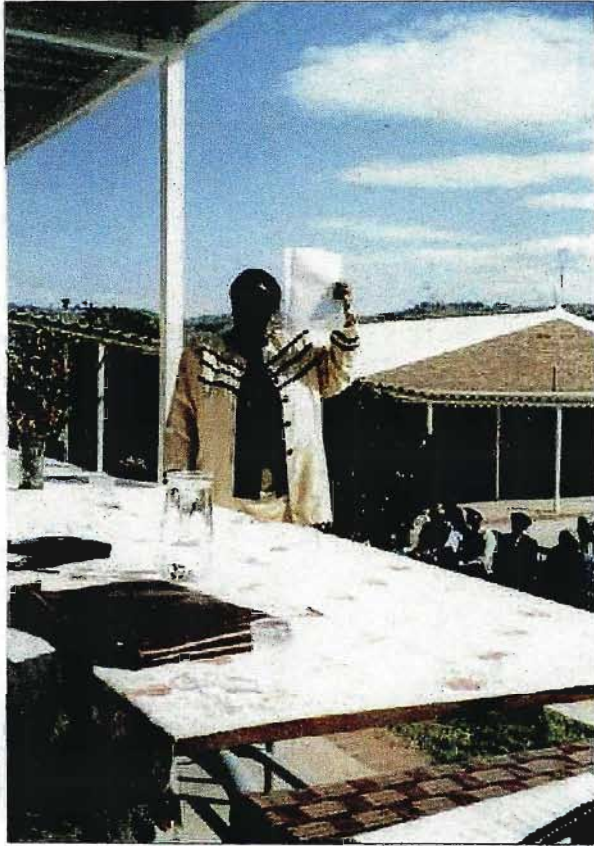
There is much joy as the lease is displayed in public for the first time.

3:     PRE-FABRICATED UNIT MOVED ONTO THE LAND
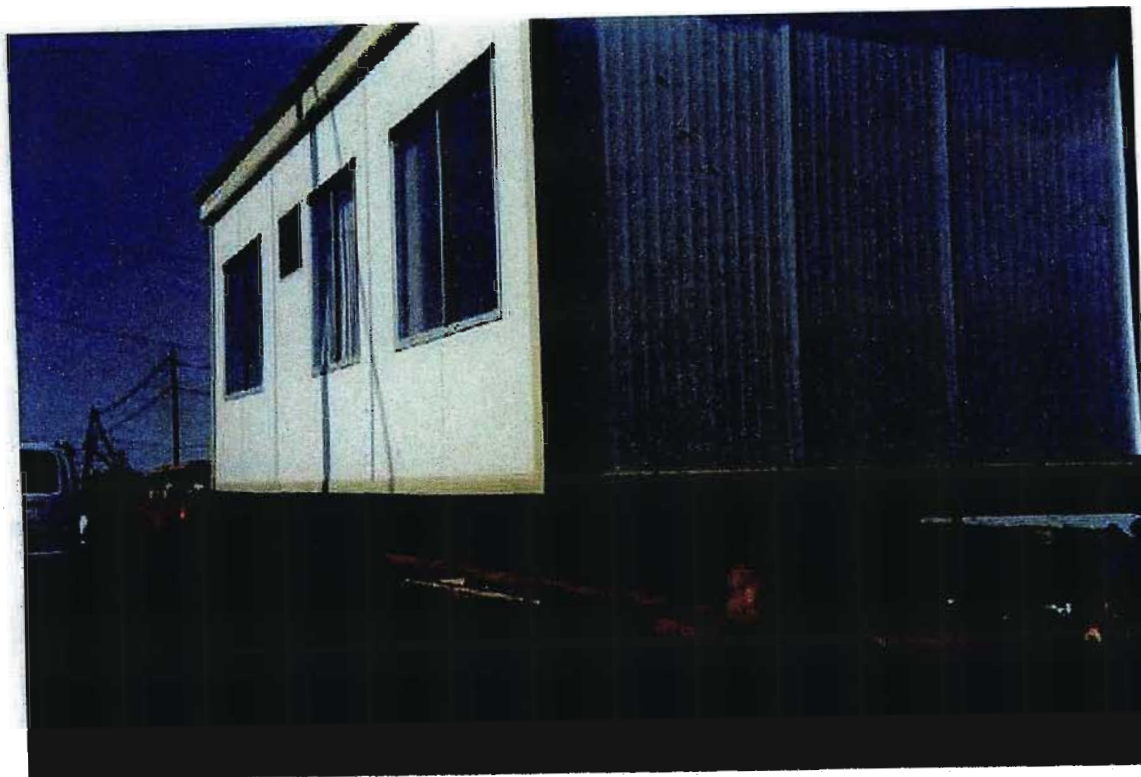
The donated unity will provide a much needed office and skills training centre.

4:    MEETING WITH SBPO/LWWO AND THE COMMUNITY

The pre-fabricated unit was put to good use

5:    THE BUILDING PROCESS

Committee members and staff are pleased with the progress.
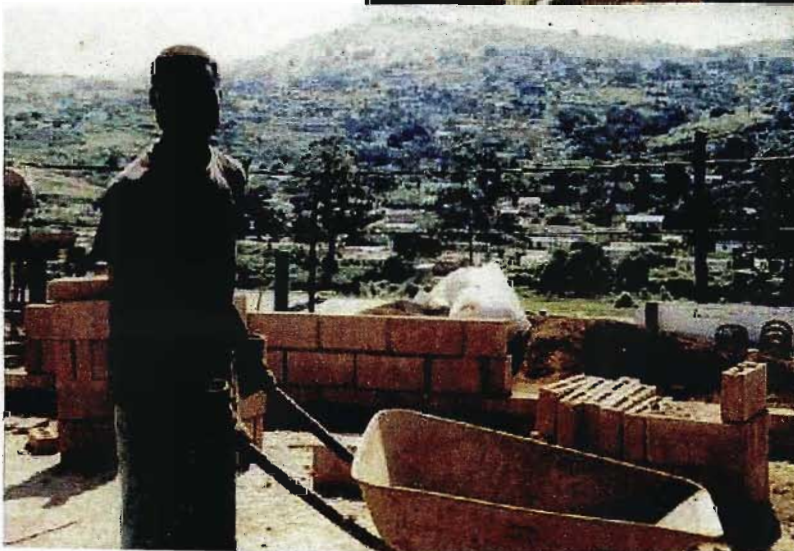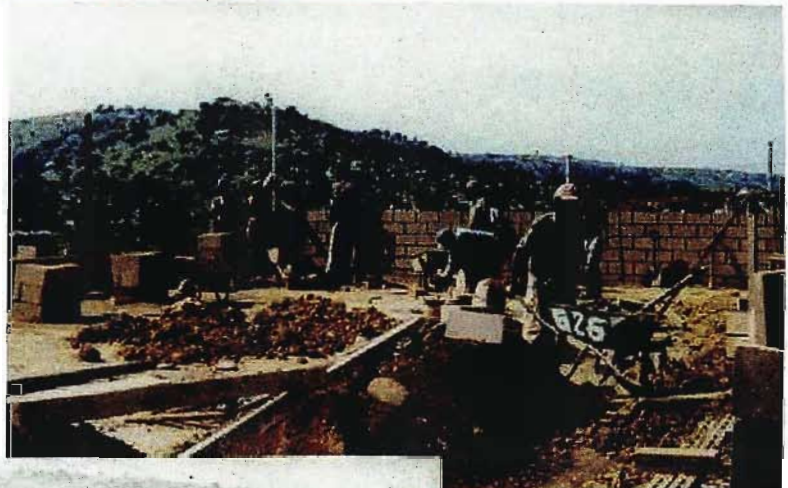
Local people are taught how to build.

6:   BUILDING OF CENTRE AND PAY POINT COMPLETE
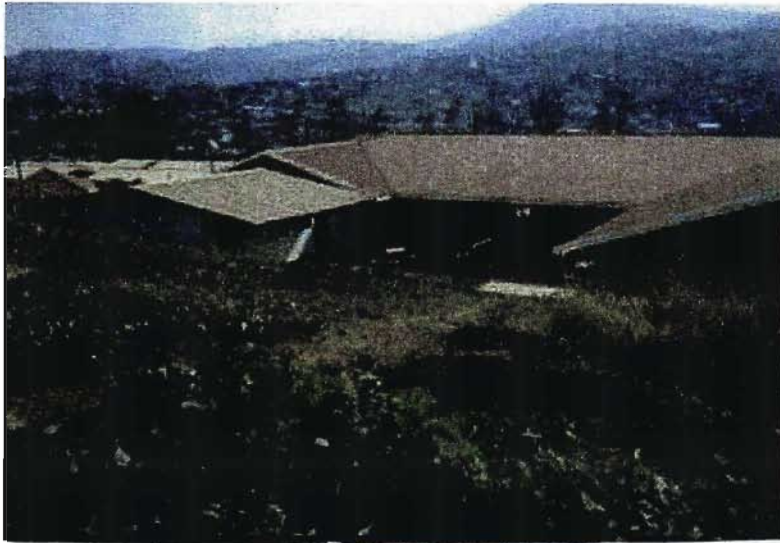
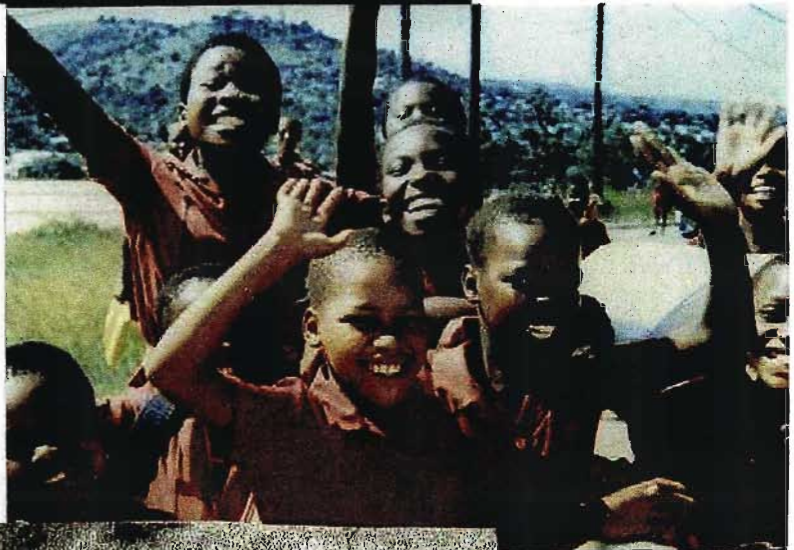The pre-fabricated unit acts as the After School Care Unit.
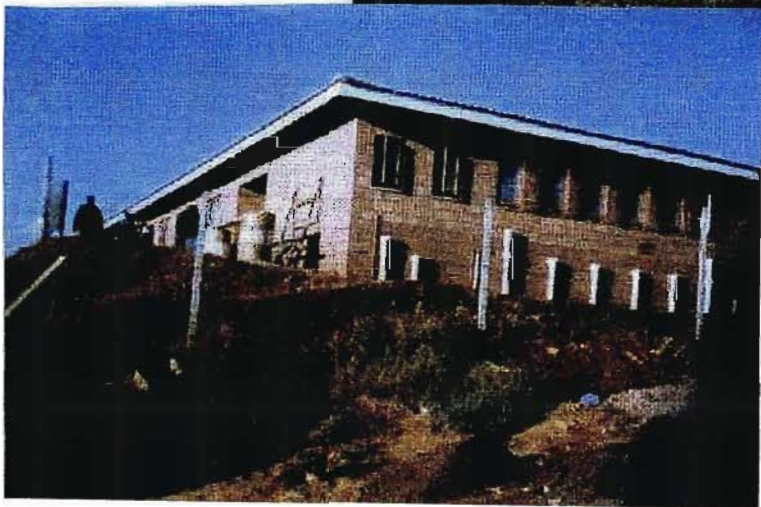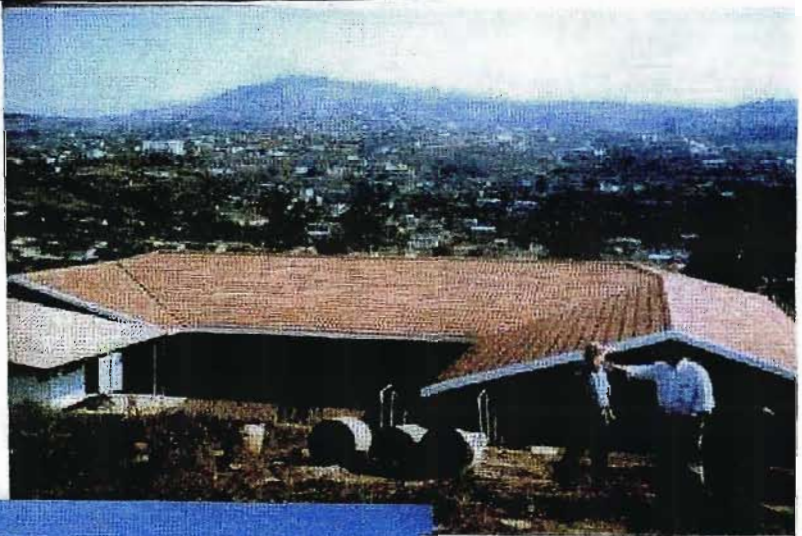
The centre will be the new pension pay point.

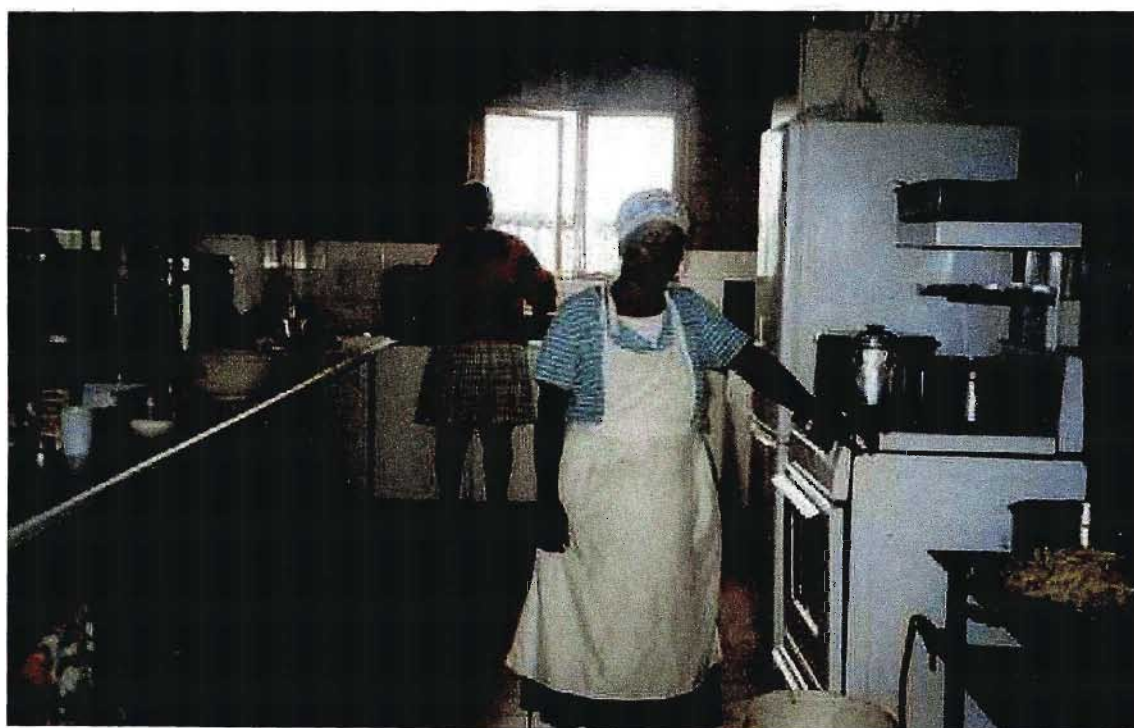7:   THE CENTRE BEING USED ON PENSION DAY AS A PAY POINT
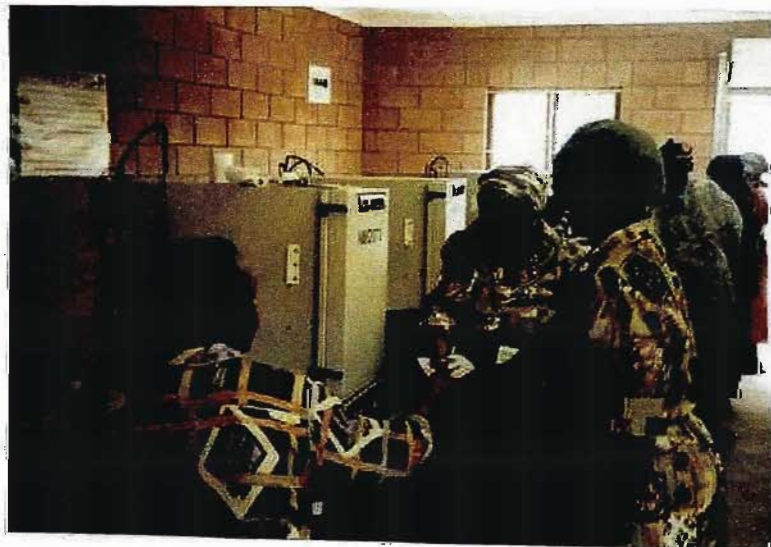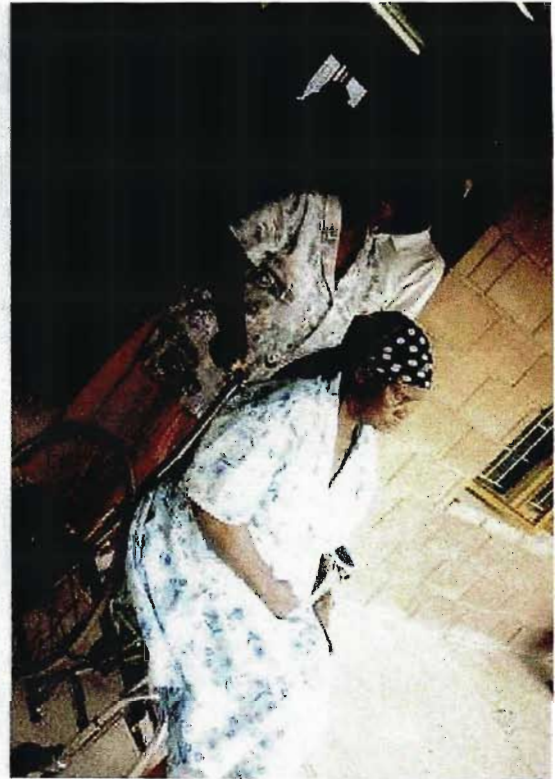
8: AFTER SCHOOL ACTIVITIES

The shop and take away; opened to provide jobs for local people and income for the centre.

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