

**THE IMPACT OF LOCAL GOVERNMENT ON THE
TRANSFORMATION OF RURAL DEVELOPMENT IN SOUTH
AFRICA; THE CASE OF KATEKANI AND DZUMERI, GREATER
GIYANI MUNICIPALITY**

H.I MABUNDA

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Promoter: Dr M.F Ramutsindela

Co-promoter: Mr J.P Tsheola

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DEDICATION

For my sisters Tsakani, Faith, Zodwa and Nsovo; my brothers Nyiko and Mixo; and my parents Sarah and David. You are inspiration enough for me.

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Chapter 1: Introduction and Background to Local Government Transformation and Rural Development

1.1. Introduction

Local government has a major impact on people's daily lives. Public safety, the cleanliness and the quality of streets and sidewalks, garbage removal, water supply, sewage disposal, control of land uses, storm water drainage, economic development and education of the children are just some of the generic activities of local government (Bish, 1983). In South Africa and throughout the world, national and regional governments are deemed to be remote from the people and are therefore unable to effectively provide the required services at the local level (Venter, 1998). In the light of this, local government is considered the most appropriate level of government to deal with the needs of the communities.

Zybrands (1998) defines local government as that sphere of government closest to its constituencies and involved in the rendering of a wide range of services that materially affect the lives of the inhabitants residing within its area of jurisdiction. It is regarded as a means whereby citizens can exercise control over their local affairs and express their will and power through their votes on local matters (Elcock, 1994). Griffith (1996) regarded local government as an institution that strives for community development whereby the efforts of the local people are united with those of central and provincial government in order to improve the economic and social conditions of communities. There is therefore an assumption of a shared vision between various spheres of government in reality and in practice. The intergovernmental relationships are complex, as we shall see below. These

intergovernmental relationships integrate communities into the life of the nation and enable them to contribute meaningfully to the national progress.

The South African National Rural Development Strategy of 1995 identifies 'aspects of rural reality' as poverty, agricultural dualism, new local government and lack of support services. The strategy therefore proposes, among others, developing rural infrastructure and building rural local government as remedial actions to the conditions of living in rural areas (Republic of South Africa, 1995). Much recent debate still seems to start from the assumption that locally elected members know best what their communities need and want. This raises the question of whether local government is an appropriate instrument for effective rural development. Proponents of local government as a vehicle for rural development argue that, this sphere of government is appropriate for identifying and meeting the basic needs of local communities. The idea is to utilize its closeness and accessibility to the local population to identify needs of the local communities and therefore incorporate such needs into official development programmes. Chambers (1985) describes the rural people as much more than just passive recipients of technology and government action. Furthermore, he stresses that they are people who know their own needs; they have their own development projects and need a successful local government to make these projects a success.

History has shown that local government can become oppressive structures. For example South Africa, throughout the colonial period, was a settler-dominated colony in which settlers had insisted that their interests in every aspect of life should be supreme (Oyugi,

1983). The apartheid regime left the state of development, more especially in rural areas, in shambles. The introduction of the Group Areas Act No.41 of 1950 saw the four major population groups in South Africa (Africans, whites, coloureds, Indians) divided not only by law but also geographically and ultimately in terms of the nature and standard of municipal services (Zybrands, 1998). The forced removals of the black people (Africans, coloureds and Indians) to places far removed from their places of employment militated against all logical development planning principles. Successive apartheid governments catered, as a priority, for the needs of the white minority, and left the majority of the country without essential services. As a result, South Africa is characterized by stark disparities in resource allocation, infrastructure development and the provision of basic services. This legacy poses serious challenges to the post apartheid state.

Addressing the legacy of underdevelopment in South Africa required fundamental changes in the organization of the state; hence the transformation of the apartheid institutions became necessary. The local state became decentralized. It should be noted that other parts of the African countries also experienced the decentralization of local government. Maharaj (1997) indicates that since the late 1980s the need for strong decentralized local government received increased impetus as African countries became subject to the external and internal democratic pressures. Thus the demise of the central party states in many African countries has therefore resulted in a growing emphasis on good governance at the local level. He also emphasized that the focus on local government is significant in a period of economic and political restructuring because it tends to be an important manifestation of pluralist democracies.

The South African government has since 1994 embarked on the transition of the local government with an aim of establishing a new democratic and non-racial local government system (Republic of South Africa, 1998a). The transformation of local government is a move towards democratizing development, by affording the local communities an opportunity to elect their own local councilors and to participate in the developmental activities (Republic of South Africa, 1998a). To this end Simon (1996) has suggested that developing countries should reject the adoption of large, economically sophisticated countries' way of doing things in the hope of achieving growth through the trickle down effect. He stresses that it is at the local scale where problems and issues are far more personalized and less easily generalized than at a national scale.

At the beginning of the 21st century, the majority of South Africans, more especially in the rural areas, still reside in living conditions where there is no access to basic services and where the state of development is poor. The Limpopo Province in particular remains more rural than urban in terms of population distribution. According to the 1996 census results, 88.1% of the population in the Province is based in the rural areas with only 11.9% of the population residing in the urban sector (Republic of South Africa, 2000a). It would seem that any improvement in the quality of life of poor South Africans could most probably be measured in the rural areas. The 2001 outbreak of malaria and cholera in KwaZulu-Natal and Limpopo Provinces is a remainder of the effects of poor living conditions dominating in the rural areas of these Provinces. In the Limpopo Province, 789 cases of cholera have been recorded since the outbreak in January 2001. By mid-

April 2001, already 419 new cases of cholera were reported in ten different regions of KwaZulu-Natal (Business Day, 19 April 2001).

In the wake of difficulties and constraints experienced in local government restructuring and lack of resources and capacity in the rural areas, it appears that there is no single body of answers to questions of rural poverty in South Africa. The intention of this study is to investigate how the newly restructured local government impacts on the processes of rural development.

1.2. Research Problem

This study raises the following research questions:

- How does the democratic local government impact on the process of rural development in the Greater Giyani Municipality?
- What are the developmental needs and constraints in the study area?
- How has the development process unfolded before and after the installation of the democratic local government?

1.3. Research Objectives

The main objective for this study is to uncover the impact of the democratic local government on the process of rural development in the Greater Giyani Municipality. In order to achieve the main objective, the following sub-objectives were pursued:

- To investigate the nature and extent of backlogs and constraints to development in the Greater Giyani Municipality.
- To investigate and analyze developmental priorities of the local community and those of the government.
- To examine the nature of the structure and the capacity of the democratic local government as a vehicle for rural development in the study areas.
- To identify developmental needs of the study areas from the perspectives of the community members
- To examine the official plans and strategies for the study areas.
- To make recommendations for rural development strategy.

1.4. Research Methodology

This study adopted a combination of quantitative and qualitative research methods. Quantitative research methods are used in order to gain factual data (Bless and Higson-Smith, 1995) such as information regarding the available infrastructure in the respective study areas, as well as the quantified secondary data that is based on available literature,

government policies, documents and reports. Of equal significance is the use of quantified primary data in the form of the opinions of people with regard to the developmental needs of their respective communities and; the impact that local government has on the process of rural development. In addition, qualitative research methods were used in order to bring meaning to the quantitative data. Qualitative research allows use of a variety of empirical methods such as case studies and observation of situations that describe routine and problematic moments and meanings to individuals' lives (Denzin and Lincoln, 1998). The idea is to attain data required for the study, and make sense of, or interpret phenomena in terms of the meanings people bring to them.

This study has employed a range of interconnected methods of gathering data in order to understand the impact of the local government restructuring on the process of rural development. A literature review has been conducted in order to shed light on the history, notions, concepts and theories of local government and its relationship to rural development. The review concentrated on government documents, newspaper articles, journals and books on the subjects, and research monographs published nationally and internationally.

Fieldwork was conducted through face-to-face interviews and group discussions. These research techniques were used in order to gain data and solicit views on community needs and aspirations, the developmental local government and official development priorities for Katekani and Dzumeri. The study has, through the use of the purposive sampling,

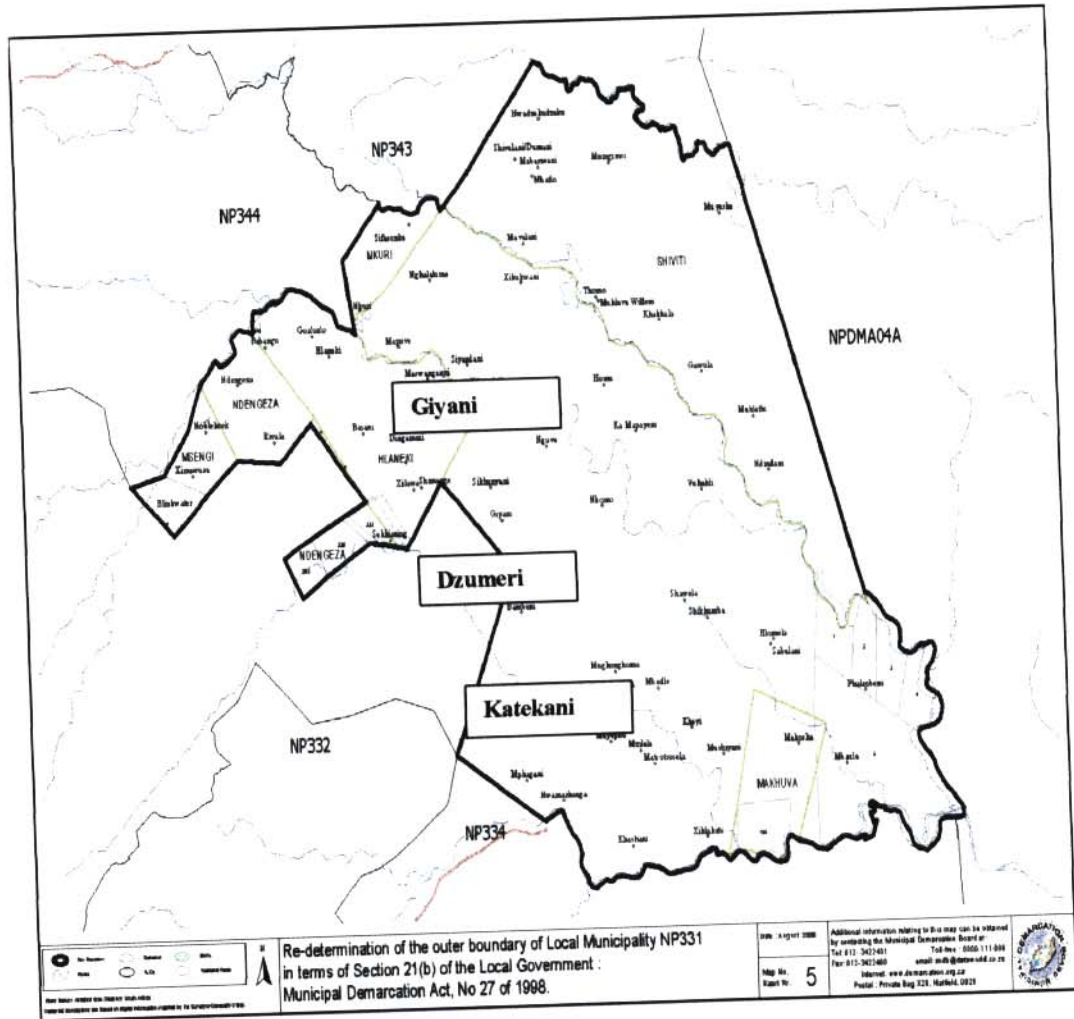
selected informants who were/are active participants in development projects. Interviews were complemented by questionnaires. Apart from this, post-1994 government policies and strategies for rural development were also analyzed to gain insight into the broader development approaches by the post apartheid state. Conventionally, the impact of local government on the process of rural development would be expected to be more visible in areas closer to the 'growth point' (Giyani) than in remote areas. As a result, this study purposively chose Dzumeri (about 30km closer to the growth point) and Katekani (about 48km far from the growth point) in order to assess the impact of developmental local government on localities. Both these areas are found in the Greater Giyani Municipality (see figure 1.1) which is part of Mopani District Municipality (see appendix 1).

For the purposes of this study, a total number of fifty community members (25 in Katekani and 25 in Dzumeri) were interviewed. Moreover, twenty role playing participants (8 government officials, 4 participants from civic organizations; 6 nongovernmental organizations workers and 2 traditional leaders) from the Katekani and Dzumeri villages were also consulted during the fieldwork.

Data are presented in the form of maps, tables and graphs in order to establish and explain the underlying patterns of the data. The content and form of the data were analyzed quantitatively and qualitatively. A gap analysis has been conducted in order to compare the pre- and post democracy developmental strategies as well as assessing the impact of democratic local government on rural development.

Figure 1.1 The Location Map of Katekani and Dzumeri in Greater Giyani Municipality

(Source: www.demarcation.org.za)



1.5. Significance of the Study

Local government as a vehicle for change has captured the trust and belief of many in terms of its denoted capabilities in promoting urban and rural development. Therefore, this study was intended to uncover, if any, complications that may hinder the process of rural development so that they can be cautiously addressed at local and national level. It is hoped that the study would contribute to the existing body of knowledge on aspects of local government and rural development. More significantly, findings from this study, which is based on a rural setting, could be useful in promoting appropriate rural development policies. In most cases, governments tend to provide generalized approaches that are often urban-biased and inappropriate to rural settings.

1.6. Limitations of the Study

This study, like many research studies, was constrained by lack of resources. Fieldwork demanded traveling between the University of the North (Mankweng) and Giyani, and between the two areas of Katekani and Dzumeri. Funds were limited to cover for the travel costs. Furthermore, government officials were difficult to locate. Most of them repeatedly cancelled appointments. The study would have benefited from interviews with a substantial number of officials than reported in the analysis presented in this study.

1.7. Thesis Structure

Chapter One: Introduction and Background to Local Government Transformation and Rural Development

This is an introductory chapter that serves to introduce local government and rural development concepts, giving descriptive backgrounds on how these concepts evolved and relate to each other in a general context. The chapter provides the content and scope of the study as it outlines the research problem, the set of objectives of the study, and the methodologies used.

Chapter Two: The State and Development: Concepts and Practices

The decay of state-led African economies during the 1970s has led to development perspectives in African states moving from being state-driven and managed to liberalization of market forces. The intent was to remedy the 'failed' state approaches for achieving sustainable economies through introducing economic reforms guided by the globalization culture. The International Monetary Fund (IMF) and World Bank's generated Structural Adjustment Programmes for economic reforms are premised on privatization of services as a sufficient and positive appeal for economic growth, thereby addressing massive rural and urban development issues in developing countries.

In assessing the issues of development in African states, this chapter discusses Structural Adjustment Programmes, their introduction to sub-Saharan Africa, how they were implemented and how they impact on local government and rural development at the grassroots level. Moreover, the chapter seeks to examine the nature of the national frameworks for social and economic development within South Africa, how they identify with global capitalist forms of development, and how the effects trickle down to the populations living in rural environments.

Chapter Three: Trajectories of Local Government and Rural Development in South Africa

This chapter entails the historical background on the development of local government in South Africa. The chapter also provides a discussion on the link between local government and rural development and the extent of rural development as a function of local government in South Africa. It is meant to establish the causes of the current stark disparities in development between different rural areas and between rural and urban areas.

Chapter Four: The Rural Landscape of Katekani and Dzumeri

This chapter describes the conditions of life in the two rural areas. It provides a historical background, highlights developmental needs and priorities and examines the implication

of conceptions of development in rural settings. It also identifies the pace and nature of developmental changes in the study area in the context of national strategies of development and the contribution of local government to these changes.

Chapter Five: Challenges on the Process of Rural Development: Experiences from Katekani and Dzumeri

This chapter provides a summary of major developmental challenges facing Katekani and Dzumeri villages, a reflection of the rural people's and officials' views on government's development initiatives and activities in response to rural development needs, as well as tracking changes lacking and or brought about by the developmental local government in these rural areas. The chapter purports to draw a picture of the two case studies with the intention to portray the general conditions of living in rural areas.

Chapter Six: Conclusions and Recommendations

This chapter draws conclusions regarding notions of rural development and local government. It summarizes the material from participating local communities, officials and government documents; highlighting the impact of the democratic local government in the Greater Giyani Municipality. The chapter concludes by making recommendations for appropriate national rural development strategies.

CHAPTER 2: The State and Development: Concepts and Practices

2.1. Introduction

Prior to their decline in the 1970s, African economies were historically managed and driven by states. The perspective of development in African states has since moved from that which is driven and managed by the state to that led by the liberation of market forces and entrepreneurial potentials of the society to allow for growth and sustainability thereof. Following decline in African economies that led to massive development problems in Africa, countries in the continent faced the need for economic reforms in ways that are acceptable to global capitalism. The history of the continent witnessed the adoption of the culture of globalization within societies as a qualitative transformation of the environment of accumulation from essentially nationally dominated economies to an economy and society, which span the entire world, and is largely impervious to political borders (Turay, 1992).

In assessing the effect of the international imperatives on issues of development in African states, this chapter entails a discussion on Structural Adjustment Programmes (SAPs) as imposed by the international financial institutions (International Monetary Fund and the World Bank) to serve as remedies to massive development problems in the African states, and how they impact on local government and rural development. It also includes a discussion on the ideologies underpinning the introduction of such programmes in sub-Saharan Africa, how they were implemented and their impact thereof.

The chapter also seeks to examine the nature of the national frameworks for social and economic development within South Africa and how they identify with capitalist global forms of development. More significantly is the assessment of local economic development and rural development in the context of global capitalism.

2.2. *Structural Adjustment Policies in African Countries: The Winners and the Losers*

According to Coetzee (1993), African countries, despite the hardships of colonialism, achieved considerable progress with social and human development since the 1960s. However the decline of African economies in the 1970s made Africa an easy target to the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and the World Bank configuration for intervention. The economic crisis in African countries led numerous governments such as Uganda, Mozambique and Tanzania in their determination to correct the growing external and internal economic disequilibria that had become quasi-permanent, to adopt packages of reform measures, mostly in close consultation with the International Monetary Fund and the World Bank, with their financial support (Turay, 1992). The decay of African economies is seen in deteriorating infrastructures, increasing debt burdens, stagnating agricultural production and worsening external trade balances (Commins, 1988). The African economic system was characterized by excessive dependence on one or few export commodities, chronic lack of self-reliant growth and development and low production. Such circumstances led to the African states' economic strategies lack of sufficient appeal for economic growth hence, resulting in the practical failures that

characterized the states. From this point of view, Africa's social and economic ills did not only lie in its history of colonialism and its form of integration to the world economy, but in the policies that aimed to offset these imbalances. The result of this was the unintended effects in the form of excessive state intervention in the economy.

The World Bank suggested that Africa inherited at independence simple but functioning administrations, but they were not geared to the developmental role assigned to them by the African leaders, as the staff was inexperienced and inefficient (The World Bank, 1989). The administration was unable to cope with the political stresses of modernization and the unstable environment of the 1970s and the 1980s. Much was blamed on the first generation of African political leaders who believed that the government had to play a dominant role in the social and economic activities and who distrusted foreign business and market mechanisms in the process (Beckman, 1992). Most liberation movements in the continent were influenced and supported by the communist regimes from the East. However the conditions leading to post independence failure to achieve development were inherited from the colonial governments in African countries with causes ranging from insufficient technical assistance, inappropriate policies and unfavourable terms of trade.

According to Ake (1996) the colonial state controlled every aspect of the colonial economy tightly to maintain its power and domination, and to realize the economic objectives of colonialism. It redistributed land and determined who could produce what and how. It attended to the supply of labour, sometimes resorting to forced labour; it

churned out administrative instruments and legislative taxes to induce the break-up of traditional social relations of production. These colonial practices continued to exist even after independence and imposed unworkable conditions for the post independence governments, therefore leading to difficulties or failure in achieving social and economic development.

By the 1980s, Africa's need for assistance in economic reforms, led to the SAPs being adopted and implemented by a wide range of African states, as imposed by the World Bank and the IMF. Technically, one of the major developments in the political economy of sub-Saharan Africa in the eighties was the adoption of economic Structural Adjustment reforms in Africa. According to the World Bank (1989), its new focus at that stage was on the restructuring of the African states in order to make it supportive of the Bank's long-term strategy for the liberation of market forces and entrepreneurial potentials of the African society. The principle underlying the SAPs is that the free play of market forces with minimal or no participation by the government in economic activities may help Third World countries out of their problems (Mensah, 1993). With adjustment, considered to be the implementation of comprehensive reforms of macro- and micro-policies in response to various shocks, and to rectify inappropriate past policies that hampered economic performance, Structural Adjustment was described as the reforms of policies and institutions covering microeconomic (such as taxes and tariffs), macroeconomic (fiscal policy), and institutional interventions. These changes are designed to improve resource allocation, increase economic efficiency, expand growth potential and increase resilience to shocks (The World Bank, 1990). The structural

adjustment perspective stripped African leaders of their rights, duties and responsibilities for the achievement of economic and social development in the respective countries. The crux of the matter is basically the withering away of the state and its diminishing significance that comes with the introduction and implementation of these adjustment programmes.

Globalization is a mysterious, omnipotent and uncontrollable force, somehow rendering everything in its wake powerless. The national state appears therefore to be exposed and outflanked, with national boundaries obsolete (Palan, Deans and Abbot, 1999). However, for those concerned with development, the SAPs as a step towards globalization did not overcome the structural imbalances as expected. With the adjustment programmes, the World Bank and the IMF painted an attractive scenario of growth with equity, including a vision of increases in public welfare expenditure, in stark contrast to the social inequities that characterized many African states. To the present, the state of development in African countries such as Mozambique, Zimbabwe and even South Africa, does not portray an equivalent picture to that of growth and equity as painted by the World Bank and the IMF. It is from this lack of visible progress, that opposition for the SAPs became widespread. Besides the SAPs being seen as a grand design towards sustainable growth in the eyes of the IMF and the World Bank, most African countries remain caught in a state of low economic growth and deep social problems.

While the World Bank and the IMF configuration describes the success of the SAPs in glowing terms (e.g., the progress with trade liberalization and the privatization and

institutional reform of the public sector with the reduction of the role of the state), the opposition of the SAPs argue that the programmes have not succeeded (Coetzee, 1993). It is because poverty in African countries has worsened even further during the eighties, and the development goals were compromised for the sake of the economics of survival, with governments emphasizing on debt servicing and domestic cutbacks. The SAPs came to be seen as a capitulation to a world market that works in favour of the strong and at the expense of the weak. The result was the restructuring of incentives leading to cuts in the public sector, the fall in domestic industrial production, removal of price and rent controls and subsidies, and the rise in the cost of imports (Beckman, 1992). Such unpleasant changes (public service cuts and increases in fees) impacted negatively on workers as these depend on access to transport, education, health, electricity and water supply on a daily basis. Rural areas, as home to the majority of citizens, were hardest hit by these changes. In most cases, rural people continue to live without access to basic services and cannot afford to pay for services (see Chapter 4). In rural areas, privatization of services does not offer hope for improving the quality of life.

In debates on the impact of the adjustment programmes on social sectors, critics have constantly expressed fears that stabilization attempts, focused on reducing government expenditures and balancing budgets, have led to further cuts in government provision of social services (Engberg-Pederson, Gibbon, Raikes, and Udsholt, 1996). The aftermath of SAPs in Ghana and Nigeria was portrayed in government sector employment declining considerably and salaries remaining out of steps with the private sector. According to Mensah (1993), the Nigerian economic crisis deepened despite the seven-year long SAPs

period, therefore the problems that SAPs were expected to solve, or at least alleviate, were still as disturbing as they were in 1986, if not more. In line with the classic thesis that government is at its best when it governs the least, the government sector started shrinking under the SAPs through commercialization of public enterprises and retirements, redeployment and retrenchments in the public sector (Mensah, 1993).

The failure of the SAPs to revitalize the economies of the African countries is seen by labour movements and non-governmental organizations as responsible for the current economic and social crises underlying several African states. However according to Turay (1992), the World Bank and the IMF have reported significant results from their commitment to effective adjustment programmes irrespective of the severe economic difficulties the African states are experiencing. Surprisingly, many African countries and other Third World countries face serious developmental problems. What these countries are grappling with is not only the quest for economic reform aimed at creating the material well-being of the states, but also, perhaps most significantly, an economic reform that leads to effective human or rather social development. Patel (1992) indicates that ideally, policies for African development must be homegrown, leaving room for argument and open mindedness when individual country programmes are under consideration. This, he stresses, allows the debate to be conducted not on first principles basis but on a case-by-case basis. The idea is to create development policies that will have a capacity to achieve balance between the political, social and economic objectives, rather than concentrate on creating material wealth for the international financial institutions.

While the role of external forces is dominating in sub-Saharan Africa's economic and social development, it remains appropriate for Africans to use their resources and adjust to changing circumstances in ways that will determine a brighter future (Coetzee, 1993). A country does not have unlimited ability to adjust on a wide front within a short space of time. Consequently, the need is not only for human oriented policies but also for a better coordination among donors and a readiness to give the benefit of doubt to those who have to implement the programmes (Patel, 1992). Moreover, the experience with the SAPs has shown that it is very important to analyze the prevailing conditions of the country earmarked for the adjustment correctly. Reform policies, whether geared to economic growth or social development are most likely to achieve the desired goal when they are built from within and not imposed from outside.

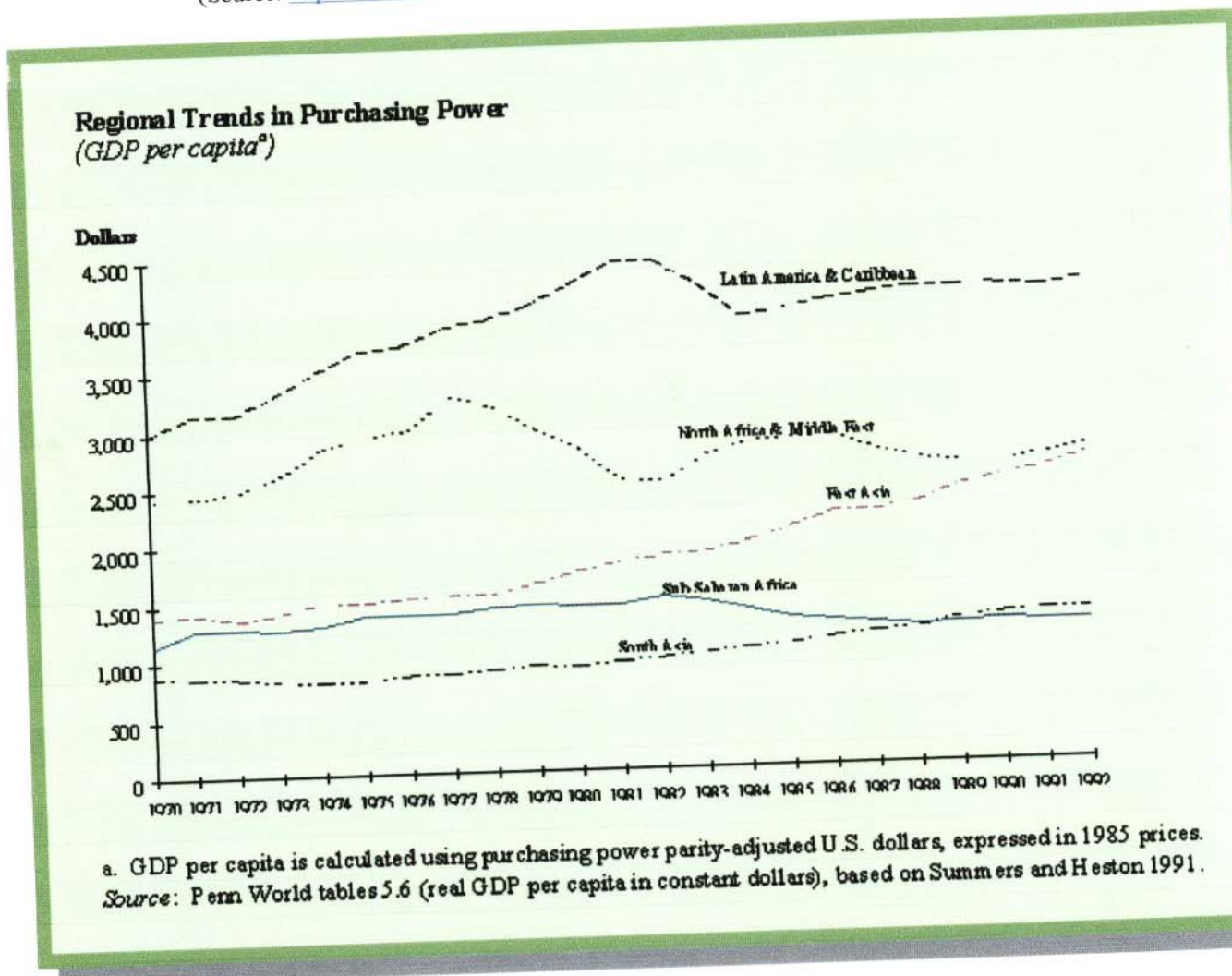
According to Beckman (1992), the failure of the state does not make their aspirations less potent; on the contrary, for many, the failure is a basis for a reassertion of betrayed objectives. In that case, the nationalist, developmental and welfarist visions of the independence movement continue to be a major ideological force in Africa. The liberalization of foreign trade and foreign exchange regimes by the SAPs deprives the state of the means of directing scarce resources to areas of priority for national development, hence nullifying the role and objectives of the state. Ironically, it is the state that bears the social responsibility to provide development to its citizens, whilst outside financial institutions may only be mainly interested in accumulating financial wealth. The current situation in Africa has been attributed to the effects of the pre colonial governments; these authorities are believed to have changed the social,

economical and political structure of the whole continent (Muriithi, 1997). However, it is worth noting that despite Africa's independence today, the continent remains a colony of the west due to the continuing economic control. The reform policies imposed from the west promising sustainable growth instead serve to weaken the states. SAPs in sub-Saharan Africa (SSA) have subjected millions of people to misery as a result of the cutbacks on social expenditure and retrenchment in the public sector.

In a study by the World Bank on poverty assessment in sub-Saharan Africa in comparison with other regions, the following findings were presented in 1996. On average, 45 to 50 percent of sub-Saharan Africans live below the poverty line which is a much higher proportion than in any region of the world, except South Asia. In 1993, an estimated 40 percent lived on less than a dollar (US) a day. At least 50 percent of these people are from five East African countries and Nigeria. Also, the depth of poverty, that is how far incomes fall below the poverty line, is greater in SSA than anywhere else in the world. Beyond low income, a principal indicator of poverty is inadequate access to social services. Currently, the availability of social services in most SSA countries is the lowest in the world. The average gross primary school enrollment rate, which declined in many countries in the Sahel during the 1980s, is currently only 67 percent compared with 94 percent for South Asia and higher percentages reported for East Asia. Health services are falling behind demand in most countries in SSA. This is reflected in an average infant mortality rate of 93 per 1,000, which is higher than South Asia's 84 per 1,000, Latin America's 46 per 1,000 and East Asia's 36 per 1,000 (see figure 2.1).

Figure 2.1 Regional Trends in Purchasing Power

(Source: <http://www.worldbank.org/afr/findings/english/find73.htm>)



Economic growth rates

The growth of income in sub-Saharan Africa during recent years has been dismal. Between 1970 and 1992, average per capita Gross Domestic Product (GDP) grew by only \$73 in relation to purchasing power parity. In contrast, during the same period, South Asia's per capita GDP increased by \$420 (2.3 percent per year) and East Asia's by \$900

(3.1 percent per year). In 1970, average per capita GDP for these two regions was similar to Africa's (The World Bank, 1996).

These findings demonstrate that reforms have served to underdevelop people in sub-Saharan Africa, more especially in the rural areas. It has made poor people to be poorer due to the massive deterioration of social services. The programmes led to accelerated poverty in the rural areas wherein the majority of African citizens live. Moreover, Africa is now trapped in a cycle of poverty and foreign debt. The massive increase in foreign debt and the proportion of exports needed for debt service perpetuates the vicious cycle and increases the dependency of African countries on external donor funding.

2.3. *National Frameworks for Socio-economic Development in South Africa in the Context of Global Capitalism*

South Africa is, according to the classification of the World Bank and the United Nations Development Programme, respectively, a middle-income developing and medium-human development country. However, a cursory glance at the economic and developmental problems of South Africa reveals that despite its middle-income and medium-human development status, the resource endowment, technological advances, well-developed infrastructure, research capacities and management competence at its disposal, rural poverty still prevails (Coetzee, 1993). Cheru (2001) describes South Africa as a very unequal society, consisting of a highly developed 'First World' sector, on the one hand and an underdeveloped 'third world' sector on the other. Racial and class differences are

generally alarming; most members of the wealthy minority are white, and most members of the poor majority are Africans. The country remains saddled with many of the same problems as those in other African countries, which implemented SAPs (Coetzee, 1993). However, South Africa, unlike other African countries cannot fully blame processes of globalization for the current uneven state of development in the country. The apartheid ideologies partially responsible for the social and economic ills in the country were not forced on South Africa by the globalization culture per se, but through the policies that were meant to create and uphold separate development and underdevelopment for the majority of the black South Africans.

The history of the country was dominated by apartheid and exploitive labour policies that led to the racially distorted income distribution and therefore abject poverty for the majority of the South African population. The apartheid government militated for the economy of the country to be built on systematically enforced racial division in every sphere of the society. As shown in Chapter Three, rural areas were divided into underdeveloped bantustans and well developed white owned commercial farming areas while towns and cities were divided into townships without basic infrastructure for blacks and well resourced suburbs for whites (African National Congress, 1994). The apartheid policies promoted segregation in education, welfare, transport and employment, leaving deep scars of inequality and economic inefficiency in the country. Following independence in 1994, the democratic newly elected government was faced with daunting challenges posed by the huge backlogs in housing, education, and social welfare. According to the Reconstruction and Development Plan Office, during the early days of the democratic

government, roughly 53% of the population were living in poverty and earned less than R301 a month (Republic of South Africa, 1995).

While roughly 50% of the population of South Africa is rural, the rural areas contain 72% of those members of the population who are poor (Republic of South Africa, 1998b). Consequently, the democratic government deemed poverty the single greatest burden for the South African people as a direct result of the apartheid system and the grossly skewed nature of business and industrial developments, which accompanied it. It was therefore one of the government's main aims to attack poverty and deprivation in the country, and enhance human development for all people. In order to achieve these aspirations, the Reconstruction and Development Programme (RDP) was implemented with the following aims:

- To eliminate hunger, provide land and housing for all South Africans;
- Provide access to safe water and sanitation for all;
- Ensure the availability of affordable and sustainable energy sources;
- Eliminate illiteracy and raise the quality of education and training for children and adults;
- Protect the environment and improve health services as well as make these services accessible to all South Africans (African National Congress, 1994: 12).

The RDP was intended to address the massive poverty problems characterizing the country. However, when the economic climate became unfavourable to sustain this

ambitious people-driven initiative, it was later abandoned for an economic policy that would attain sustainable growth for the country. The government considered the Reconstruction and Development Programme to be failing to function as a development framework. But serving as an aggregation of social policies designed to alleviate poverty without affecting the complex of economic policies and practices that reduce inequalities (Cheru, 2001). However, in its two years of existence, the RDP office registered major accomplishments before the government decided to terminate the programme, among other accomplishments are the following:

- The connection of electricity to 1.3 million homes and one million new water supply connections (on commercial terms);
- 193 000 houses were built in 1997;
- A primary school feeding scheme to combat malnutrition was operating in 12 300 schools;
- Free medical care was available for pregnant women and children under six; and
- 297 new primary health care clinics were built in rural areas (Cheru, 2001).

The Reconstruction and Development Programme was subsequently replaced by the Gear (Growth, Employment and Redistribution) policy in 1996. The new economic policy was largely focused on attacking structural inequalities and eradicating poverty and realizing the following vision through market-led economic strategies:

- A competitive fast-growing economy that creates sufficient jobs for all workseekers;
- A redistribution of income and opportunities in favour of the poor;
- A society with access to a sound health, education and other services; and
- An environment in which homes are secure and places to work are productive (Republic of South Africa, 1996a: 01).

The change of approach occurred while the majority of South Africans were still living below the poverty line, more especially in rural areas. It was in the wake of these development problems that the South African government saw the need to embark on the restructuring process, which was heralded by the grand aim of promoting accelerated and sustainable development. Part of the process had to do with local government restructuring (see Chapter 3). The international financial community closely watched the economic reforms in its quest to interpret the willingness of the state to change the direction of economic management in order to engineer sustainable growth and development. This implied that government had to promote reform policies that are in line with the global culture of growth and sustainability, that is, privatization and/or commercialization of public enterprises and public sector services.

The South African government ensured that the restructuring of the state assets is an important element of the programme of government for the reconstruction and development of the country and for speeding up economic growth and job creation. Government stressed that the industrial objectives required the increased utilization of the

private sector resources in expanding investments and improving services for the people. This approach implies to services that government lacks sufficient resources to provide unless it relies on increased debt (Republic of South Africa, 2001). The restructuring process was aimed at furthering achievement of the following development goals that government set out in 1995:

- Facilitate economic growth and funding the reconstruction and development programme;
- Create wider ownership in the South African economy;
- Mobilize private sector capital and reduce state debt;
- Enhance competitiveness of state enterprises and promote fair competition; and
- Finance growth and requirements for competitiveness (Republic of South Africa, 1999:8).

While these objectives had been achieved to a lesser degree by the reconstruction and development initiative, government alleged that the restructuring process would yield better results. Moreover, the restructuring process was a response to great pressures for improving the infrastructure to support industrial policy and facilitate regional and international trade. The privatization of state assets, provided for by the Growth, Employment and Redistribution policy of 1996, was a response to the international pressure to create globally viable accessible markets. This strategy emphasizes the need to improve growth performance to sustain the government's social and developmental programmes through fiscal discipline, monetary policy and the restructuring of the state

assets, in order to increase the competition of the economy (Republic of South Africa, 1996a). The South Africa government regards Privatization as a system that aims to increase the number of stakeholders and owners in South African economy, promote empowerment, enhance fair competitiveness, and facilitate growth. It is also meant to help achieve the basic needs of the people and the objectives of the Reconstruction and Development Programme (Nevin, 1998). During the briefing by the cabinet on the restructuring of the state assets, the following goals of privatization were highlighted:

- To provide additional financial and technological resources so as to enable privatized enterprises to meet the ever expanding needs of the citizens of south Africa as spelt out in the RDP, and improve the competitiveness and efficiency of these enterprises;
- To effect the economic empowerment of disadvantaged communities, thus contributing to the democratization of the ownership structure of the South African economy; and
- To reduce government financial burden associated with supporting enterprises that cannot support themselves (Republic of South Africa, 1999:4).

The central and overriding objective of government is said to be the restructuring of the state-owned sector into a series of efficient, well managed and financially independent companies capable of providing goods and services at affordable prices to all South Africans, particularly the previously disadvantaged. The masses in this country do not observe privatization of former government parastatals (Eskom, Telkom and Denel) and

other state assets to promote development for the previously disadvantaged people in the long run. The restructuring process has led to massive retrenchments as the newly empowered private companies embarked on processes of 'right sizing' and therefore removing redundant labour and increasing unemployment up to almost 30% nationally (Cosatu Weekly, 26 September 2002). The labour unions in South Africa strongly rejected the move towards the privatization of state assets for its unpleasant consequences to the country's citizens.

The Congress of South African Trade Unions (COSATU), the South African Municipal Allied Workers (SAMWU), the South African Communist Party (SACP), the South African Transport and Allied Workers Union (SATAWU) and the South African National Civics organization (SANCO) have publicly rejected the privatization of state assets in South Africa. In SAMWU's Southern Africa solidarity workshop held in 2001, Victor Mhlongo (SAMWU's international officer) said that many privatization schemes in Africa have failed at a high cost to government because it has to bail the services out. SAMWU states that privatization has become a breeding ground for corruption on the continent with its contracts awarded in secrecy, and it has also led to the suffering of the workers and wasting of public money (COSATU Weekly, 26 September 2002). COSATU argues that the privatization process is responsible for job losses, a lack of service delivery, the rising of cost of basic services and further impoverishment of the poor. It stresses that privatization of state enterprises and basic services will result in the majority of poor people being unable to afford services. These are the same people who

are at the risk of dying of illnesses such as cholera because they cannot be able to pay for clean water (*Mail & Guardian*, 16-22 November 2001c).

At the anti-privatization march held in August 2001 and October 2002, leaders of the confederation formed by COSATU, SANCO and SATAWU, blamed privatization for reducing the government's capacity to overcome the shortfalls created by the apartheid government. Moreover privatization is said to aggravate the inequalities between the rich and the poor, as the structure of the economy favours large, capital-intensive enterprises. It means the rich can pay for improved services such as education, health and transport; while the poor are left to face cut-offs and soaring bills (COSATU Weekly, 29 June 2001). Willie Madisha, Chairperson of COSATU said they are demanding that government must stop privatization of basic services such as water, sewage and electricity. And that restructuring of state assets must improve services for South African communities and labour formations, and be approved in parliament (COSATU Weekly, 17 August 2001). Prior the October 2002 strike, Cosatu offered the statement statement:

Privatization affects all working and low-income people by making services more expensive and less accessible for the poor, and by cutting employment. Privatization has destroyed over 100 000 jobs so far. With unemployment at almost 30%, this has a devastating impact on our communities. Young people, in particular face rising unemployment as private and public companies cut jobs, For this reason, we have had no choice but to go on strike (www.mg.co.za , 2 October 2002).

A huge turn out of workers and community members participated in both the marches with slogans saying, "Privatization is a killer, we won't rest until it is stopped". The two pictures below are of COSATU members in their thousands marching through

Johannesburg during protests against government's privatization policies on 16th August 2001 and on 1st October 2002.



Source: COSATU Weekly, 2001



Source: Mail & Guardian, 2002

These were signs of fear of losing jobs, paying of expensive services such as water and electricity and also becoming poorer than they already are. The huge crowd indicated the Federation's stance that the working class and the majority of South African citizens are opposed to privatization.

The restructuring process targeted the most significant parastatals for privatization. Telkom, Eskom, Transnet and Denel had 91% of the total assets owned by the state; they provided 86% of the turn over, and 94% of net income. They employed 77% of all state owned enterprises' employees (Republic of South Africa, 1999). These were therefore dominant sectors which government prioritized in terms of restructuring. The GEAR policy projected that 650 000 jobs would be created during 1996-1998. However a shocking number of job losses due to privatization have been recorded since 1995: Transnet (36 609), Denel (4 880); Telkom (12 793); Eskom (2 641) and in the public service (134 153) (*Mail & Guardian*, 24-30 August 2001). The high rate of

unemployment in South Africa today continues to aggravate the skewness of income distribution and the socio-economic imbalances that contribute to the state of poverty among South Africans, more especially those in rural areas.

The privatization and commercialization of public enterprises and public sector services brought along the rise in the cost of the services that people need. Services such as education, health services, electricity and water supply became too costly, therefore putting tremendous pressure on the majority of the South Africans who cannot afford these services. The privatization of electricity has led to the 'Soweto electricity crisis' whereby about 48 000 cut-offs were experienced in 2001, hitting the poor households hardest. In Nelspruit, the provision of water is already in the hands of the Biwater Company. The tariffs since increased within eighteen months of private ownership from an average rate of R80 for all services to R400 monthly for water only (*Mail & Guardian*, 13-19 July 2001). These circumstances aggravate the living conditions of the majority of South African citizens below the poverty line, more especially those living in the rural areas.

The consequences of the economic reforms in South Africa have led to calls for government to bear in mind that investing in people through education, training and health, is also very crucial for the long term economic and social development of the country. Therefore the adjustment programmes should not be allowed room to accelerate the erosion of the political capacity of the state's objectives to promote development in its areas of need. Investing in people is essential for accelerated poverty reduction; many

Third World countries are caught in a trap of high fertility and mortality rates, low education, high dependency ratios and low savings. These countries however, need to translate their commitment to human development through effective programmes for delivering essential services to the needy. Coetzee (1993) stresses that unless the balance is achieved between the political and socio-economic objectives; instability seems inevitable as demonstrated by events in other African countries, Eastern Europe and Latin America. It is therefore crucial to strike the balance between promoting economic growth and human development in South Africa, bearing in mind the socio-economic backlogs and imbalances. The government should tailor its economic and social reforms to fit the country's local conditions.

It is worth noting that the effects of SAPs were as strongly felt in the urban sector as it was in the rural sector in Africa. According to Porter (1998), cities are manifestations of spatial difference and inequality within a country. Though urban-rural differences are marked by divisions of labour between agricultural and nonagricultural activities, they also include differences in wealth, population change, norms and values as well as influence over national affairs. Such differences are the main cause of the massive rural-urban migration leading to urban polarization, which is one of the major problems in the South African cities. Many of the development problems in South Africa have become more visible in and around cities following the rapid processes of urbanization in the mid-eighties (Coetzee, 1993). Migration from rural to urban areas was very intense, as settler economies had brought a different method of earning a living, namely, working in the industries. The payments in money were considered better to working in rural areas

and depending on subsistence crops and supplies, therefore resulting in the strong migration to the urban areas. Moreover, the centralization of services in the urban areas also served to induce migration to urban areas. Consequently there was rapid rural-urban migration in South Africa that was not accompanied by comparable growth of industrial or service activities. This brought about a major expansion of informal settlements, and additional pressure on government to provide the much needed infrastructure and services created by these developments.

According to the World Bank and the United Nations Development Programme (1990), the population in urban Africa increases at a stunning rate, with sub-Saharan Africa's urban population doubling every twelve years. These high and accelerating growth rates of African cities and towns emerge as a natural consequence of countries' developments being restricted and centered around towns and cities. Under colonialism, towns and cities were essential to the organization and administration of the colonies by a handful of Europeans. Since independence, the urban areas have become the homes and sources of power for political and economic elites. It is for these reasons that they often receive preferential treatment in terms of development (Porter, 1998). Lipton (1977) stresses that most of the rural population became superfluous to agricultural production and they were displaced to, or attracted to, cities. Cities attracted both the industrial activities in need for cheap work force, and rural-urban migrants with few other opportunities, and who were seeking jobs because they could no longer live off the land. Consequently cities tended to be parasitic on, rather than generative of growth in their own hinterlands, by taking relatively skilled and active men and women, willing to take on lower status work in

return for better pay (Russell, 1992). There is however lack of employment chances for the many rural-urban migrants whose movements have swelled the size of Third World cities. This has led many to describe the Third World cities as over-urbanized (Porter, 1998). It is because of the failure of rural development that South Africa continues to experience a growing congregation of poor and underprivileged migrants (often the Africans) in the urban sector, where they find limited or no opportunities to improve their lives and are therefore subjected to a poverty stricken life. Because development in the urban sector led to underdevelopment in the rural areas, poverty is not only moving from the rural areas to the urban areas, but also worsening the condition in the rural areas. As a result, South African cities are slowly becoming the major centers of poverty accompanied by the polarized livelihood opportunities for the urban residents along the lines of race and class. Moreover there continues to be a perpetuation of non development and underdevelopment of the rural areas within the country. Rural areas in South Africa continue to live without access to essential services such as water and sanitation, therefore putting their health at risk on a daily basis. According to Statistics South Africa (Republic of South Africa, 1998b), 55 percent of the South African citizens do not have access to clean water via an inside tap, with the majority of these citizens are in the rural areas. Moreover 12 percent of South Africans do not have formal toilet facilities. These statistics call for accelerated development programmes to uproot poverty and provide essential services in all sectors.

2.4. Conclusion

It is in the wake of these conditions that the developmental local government and municipalities in South Africa have been given an important role to play in achieving rural development. The aim is to address the many causes of poverty, around to promote development and protect human rights of the South African people. However the capacity of the newly restructured local government to face these challenges remains questionable. Cheru (2001) states that strengthening the capacity of the local government for poverty reduction in South Africa remains an enormous challenge, particularly in the poorest provinces, namely, the Eastern Cape Province and the Limpopo Province. Local government in South Africa is expected to promote effective rural development. Instead of relying on direct and concerted government intervention, the new local government is to work towards local economic development and rural development through market or commercial oriented practices. Chapter Three sheds light on the link between local government restructuring and rural development in South Africa.

CHAPTER 3: Trajectories of Local Government and Rural Development in South Africa

3.1. Introduction

Local government in South Africa is inextricably linked to the colonial British system of governance. Local government has continued to exist as a European imposition on South Africa. It has, however, been constantly punctuated by processes of transformation and transition that led to the changes we can observe today.

This chapter seeks to capture the history of local government in the country, the nature in which it unfolded and the reasons thereof. As it establishes the link between local government and rural development, the chapter will also dwell on establishing the causes of stark disparities in development in rural areas, between urban and rural areas and between races. Moreover, this chapter includes a discussion on the extent of rural development as a function of local government in South Africa.

3.2. *The History of Local Government in South Africa, it's Rationale and Relation to Rural Development*

3.2.1. *Local Government during the Apartheid Era*

The introduction of the South Africa Act (no number) of 1909 led to the creation of a three-tier system of government. The first tier was a parliament based on the British Westminster systems in terms of structure and practice. The second tier consisted of four

provinces (Cape, Natal, Orange Free State and Transvaal), and the third tier of local government (for the white population) was created and defined by the provincial authorities in terms of scope and local operation (Cameron, 1999). Local government is therefore traditionally regarded as the third tier of government and has been an essential link between the central government and the people; it is essentially considered a creature of law by the South African state (Cameron, 1999). However, the system of governance in South Africa was heavily influenced by apartheid, whereby the laws created separated racial communities in every sphere of life while the white population enjoyed privileges at the expense of blacks. Cloete (1995) stresses that the apartheid regime created separate racially based local authorities for each of the four racial groups in the country. The White Local Authorities (WLAs) were the most favourably endowed in terms of resources, facilities, business and industrial areas. Local government in the apartheid era was therefore characterized by a complex process of functional exclusion, spatial separation and political exclusion (Swilling, Cobbet and Hunter, 1991).

The major functions of the WLAs included the construction and maintenance of roads, supply of water and electricity, provision of council housing, traffic control, refuse collection, health services, public library services, museums, fire fighting services, motor vehicle business licensing, sewerages, cemeteries and crematoria, ambulance services and storm water drainage, the provision of parks and sports grounds and public transport (Cloete, 1986). The sources of revenue for these WLAs included rates on fixed property and income derived from trading services such as electricity, water and gas supply (Solomon, 1983). These apartheid ideologies in government militated against all logical

township-planning principles. Consequently, South Africa is characterized by uneven development as well as disparities in access to clean water, sanitation, land, essential health care services, educational facilities and employment. This is solely because the apartheid government provided education, hospital services and some public works primarily for the white minority, and left the majority of the country's citizens to live without the essential services, more especially in the rural areas (Cloete, 1995).

The introduction of the Natives Land Act No.27 of 1913 resulted in the African population being denied the right to own property. A consequence of this Act is that 93% of the country was designated as 'white' South Africa, and Africans could only acquire land in the 7% of the country termed reserves (Cameron, 1999). This arrangement forced the Africans (in large numbers) to settle on inadequate and unproductive land with little or no means of production and limited or no provision of services thereof. Africans were therefore obliged to seek employment in the urban areas in order to provide for themselves and their households. However, government introduced a counter legislation, the Natives Urban Areas Act No. 25 of 1923, to regulate and exercise influx control over black migrants entering the 'white' cities seeking employment. The Act allowed African people into the white areas for labour purposes only, with the White Local Authorities responsible for the control of their movements (Cameron, 1999). According to the then government, the Act was presented and expected to be seen not as a harsh measure, but one that empowered local authorities to set aside land for Africans occupation in defined locations, or to house them or require their employers to do so (Davenport, 1991).

The Natives Land Act No. 27 of 1913 and the Natives Urban Areas Act No. 25 of 1923 served to regulate the use of land in favour of the white population. The Acts made provision for separate residential locations between the white and black population and served to tighten restrictions for Africans who could not prove gainful employment in the areas of white South Africa, the towns and the cities. They were therefore denied the permission to settle in white areas. By the 1940s, the size of the urban African population rocketed as a result of the expanding employment opportunities in the cities as well as desperate rural poverty. The extent of the eviction from rural areas outside the 'reserves' also drove people from rural homes to seek accommodation and livelihoods elsewhere, mainly in the towns and cities. Thrust to power in 1948, the Nationalist Party government regarded a solution to the 'native urban problem' as one of its first priorities (Posel, 1991). The main objective thereof was to bring under control the major immigration of Africans from the towns and cities.

Following the promulgation of the Natives Urban Areas Act No.25 of 1923, the WLAs were charged with the responsibility of employing officials for the administration of 'black areas'. This meant that local governance for the African population was historically conceived and implemented chiefly as a control mechanism (Shubane, 1991). Financial self-sufficiency also applied to black townships and the WLAs were required to keep special accounts called 'native revenue accounts' for black townships under their control. The major sources of revenue for these accounts were sorghum beer production and retailing, liquor sales in the townships, levies on white employers of 'black labour' in certain areas, the payment by township residents to local authorities for various services

rendered, mainly rent and fees (Bekker and Humphries, 1985). Although the money acquired could only be spent in the location from which it was collected, it was insufficient to ensure appropriate development and provision of services in the townships. These legislations promoted the principle of apartheid governance, therefore providing for further racial segregation among the different races in the country. In 1950, government introduced the Population Registration Act No.30 of 1950, wherein South Africans were classified into four racial groups; Africans, Asian/Indian, coloured and white with the African population constituting about 76 percent of the population (Khosa and Muthien, 1998). Furthermore, the Group Areas Act No.41 of 1950 was also introduced for the demarcation of areas into different racial groups with thousands of people being forcibly moved in terms of this Act (Bekker and Humphries, 1985). Posel (1991) stresses that the apartheid government introduced the Group Areas Act in order to strengthen the residential segregation among races. Moreover, the Group Areas Act provided for control over the use and development of the black (Africans, Indians and coloureds) areas, further entrenching the doctrine of separate development.

Through the use of the Population Registration Act No.30 of 1950, influx control in respect of black people was tightened with the use of pass laws (Davenport, 1991). The pass law later caused great resentment among the black population for the indignity and hardships that they caused, and led to the protests and uprisings in the South African townships.

The Group Areas Act No. 41 of 1950 became the genesis of local government structures, because it led to separate residential areas that required separate local government structures for the coloured and the Indian areas (Cameron, 1991). Following the Niemand Committee (appointed to investigate development of local government for the coloured and Indian) recommendations, The Group Areas Amendment Act No. 49 of 1962 was introduced to make provision for the following three phases in the development of the coloured and Indian local government:

- Consultative committees, which consisted of nominated members having advisory powers only and functioning under close official guidance from the WLAs, where they were geographically situated.
- Management committees were partly elected and partly nominated. They had advisory powers, but their mother WLAs could delegate certain powers to them.
- Fully fledged municipal status equivalent to WLAs (Cameron, 1991:49).

The progress of the functions was however stagnated by the lack of financial viability and trained staff, and by political opposition from the coloureds and the Indians against these apartheid structures. The Indian and coloured populations largely rejected separate representation and rallied for nonracial representation on white city councils. Consequently, only four Indian local affairs committees evolved into independent local authorities whilst no coloured management committees did.

The apartheid government established the homeland system in the 1970s to further promote separate development. The result was the creation of nine bantustans, namely, Transkei, Ciskei, KwaZulu, Lebowa, Venda, Gazankulu, Bophutatswana, Qwa-qwa and the KwaNdebele. It was argued that the government's bantustan policy held out a clear and attainable objective independence for the bantustans (Kenney, 1980). The creation of bantustans spelt racially skewed development that did not favour the rural people (see Chapter 4). As a result the bantustans policy was faced with growing and more assertive domestic opposition from the African population. Because it left the black territories with only 13.7% of the total land area of greater South Africa, the bantustans system hindered and disadvantaged the development of the African population in South Africa (Geldenhuis, 1981).

The South African Constitution Act No. 110 of 1983 replaced the Westminster system of governance with a tri-cameral parliament that made provision for limited power sharing for the white, Indian and the coloured population (Cameron, 1991). The three chambers exercised powers on matters of 'own affairs' with local government as one of the main functions classified 'own affairs'. The African population was excluded from the arrangement; this tri-cameral system was later rejected as an extension of apartheid by the Indians and coloureds. Giliomee (1984) perceived the tri-cameral parliament as an attempt to wean the coloured and Indian population away from future alliances with African people. Moreover the tri-cameral system only provided for separate local authorities to be constituted where there was financial viability. This ensured that the majority of coloured and Indian authorities could not become independent.

In the 1980s, the apartheid government introduced new forms of local government for the urban section of the African population. The Black Local Authorities (BLAs) were established to compensate for the restricted rights to blacks and to bolster the political and economic privileges of racial exclusion (Republic of South Africa, 1997). According to Bekker (1988) the reform of apartheid in the 1980s included the devolution of power from the central to the local levels in order to promote the objectives of the Black Local Authorities Act No. 102 of 1982 and the Black Communities Development Act No. 4 of 1984. This was to increase the administrative powers of the BLAs. The introduction of the Black Local Authorities Act No.102 of 1982 represented a significant but insufficient improvement in the forms of local government for the African communities in the urban townships (Shubane, 1991). However, these authorities did not have sufficient powers or revenue for their well functioning. Such conditions led to the protests and boycotts, forcing government to redress the inequalities imposed on the townships by the nature of the apartheid city.

Financial shortfalls were built into local government for 'black areas' as apartheid regulations barred most retail and industrial development in them. Such actions limited their tax bases and forced residents to spend most of their income in the white areas. The BLAs were therefore deprived of the means to meet the needs of their local residents (Republic of South Africa, 1997). The BLAs lacked the capacity to carry out the functions conferred on them due to the lack of revenue. Moreover, they were not given the power to raise revenue (Hirschman, 2001). The BLAs were later rejected by the civic organizations. Maharaj (1996) indicates that by the mid-eighties the administration of the

black urban areas reached a crisis level as the community councils and BLAs were rejected by the civic organizations with strong support at the grassroots level, thus leading to failure of the BLAs. The civics demanded new unified nonracial democratic local authorities, which would give them full participation in local government and in the redistribution of resources amongst communities. Consequently, local government in many 'black' residential areas collapsed (Bekker & Jeffrey, 1989). According to Zybrands (1998) the Black Local Authorities Act No.102 of 1982, may have purported to give the communities some form of democratic self-government, but he views the legislation as legally sound but lacking legitimacy as well. Shubane (1991) highlights the three distinct phases of BLAs as follows:

- 1982-1984, the period during which the BLAs were introduced. Civic associations, many of which were formed during this time, led vigorous campaigns against these structures.
- 1985-1989, was marked by the increased use of force to protect BLAs from community struggles that had gained momentum.
- 1989-1990, was characterized by a political thaw in the country that saw negotiations between some civic associations and state officials. Hopes of constructing a new local government policy increased. The rejection of BLAs however continued (Shubane, 1991:67-68).

The anti-apartheid political resistance at local community level in South Africa led to an escalation of conflict at local government level to the extent that government was obliged

to declare a state of emergency to restore law and order. In the early 1990s, the government appointed a commission headed by Dr. Thornhill to investigate a new system of local government for South Africa. The Thornhill report thereby advocated a nonracial system of local government based on the maximum devolution of power. It also advocated a local option, in terms of which citizens would negotiate and determine the constitutional structure of local authority (Maharaj, 1997).

3.2.2. Towards a Democratic Local Government in South Africa

The need for local government transformation was adopted by the apartheid state. The recommendations of the Thornhill report led to the government introducing the Interim Measures for Local Government Act (IMA) No.128 in June 1991. The Act allowed WLAs to negotiate with neighbouring BLAs in order to establish nonracial local government structures that would form negotiating forums. The IMA was however rejected by the African National Congress on the grounds that it attempted to create a new system of local government without proper consultation prior the formulation of the legislation. The protests against the IMA represented the beginnings of a move for a more democratic, non-racial local government, with a shared tax base (Shubane, 1991). During the 1990s there was increasing pressure on government to come up with a solution for the local government crisis, which had arisen from the slow but sure collapse of local government in black communities. With the rejection of IMA the state finally succumbed to a need for new local government alternatives.

The national government eventually, with persuasion from SANCO (South African National Civics Organisations), and other antiapartheid forces established a formal national Local Government Negotiating Forum (LGNF) in 1993. The idea was for the LGNF to contribute to the democratization of local government and the bringing about of a democratic, non-racial, non-sexist and financially viable local government system (Cloete, 1995). A stage was set on which South Africa could gradually move from an unjust and undemocratic rule to equitable social and economic development and democratic governance.

The Reconstruction and Development Programme (RDP) describes local government as representative democracy closest to the people. It is therefore best placed to effectively embark on programmes to restore, maintain, upgrade and extend networks of services (African National Congress, 1994). The RDP called for elected local government, with the responsibility for the delivery of services to be extended into rural areas whereby rural local councils will have a key role in rural local government. Local government was therefore deemed to be democratic only if it is structured in a way that maximizes community participation and geared towards achieving development for the areas under jurisdiction.

The LGNF comprised of a statutory delegation (central, provincial and organized local government) and the non-statutory delegation (SANCO and the African National Congress and also organizations and political organizations outside government). According to Cameron (1999) the LGNF was intended to seek agreement between the

two delegations (statutory and non statutory) on the procedure for the restructuring of local government. This was in line with political negotiations that heralded a sea of change in the political landscape in South Africa, wherein the axis of political activity shifted from politics of opposition and confrontation to the politics of negotiation and incorporation (Khosa and Muthien, 1998). At this stage, the importance of civil society to processes of negotiation and political liberation as required for strong national policies was acknowledged. The LGNF appointed three working groups, that is, the legal and constitutional, services and finance, management, administration and training working groups. During its period, the LGNF had the following three meetings only:

- At its inception on the 22nd of March 1993 when it appointed a full time secretariat and three working groups that were charged with the formulation of draft agreements on outstanding issues and with working out the technical detail of agreements;
- On the 30th of June when it approved an interim progress report submitted by the various working groups; and
- On the 18th November when it ratified the final agreements reached in the form of the above-mentioned documents (Cloete, 1995:38).

The work of the stakeholders in the LGNF led to eventual democratization of local government in the country with a model for local government reform set out. Cameron (1999) describes the democratization of local government as having been formally provided for by Chapter Ten of the Interim Constitution, and the Local Government

Transition Act No. 34 (LGTA), which commenced on the second of February in 1994. The South African Interim Constitution made provision for a three-tier government structure, namely, national, provincial and the local tier, which were distinctive, interdependent and interrelated (Cameron, 1995). The move necessitated the need to transform local government so as to comply with the provisions of the legislation, that is, provision for the establishment of provincial committees for local government in respect of the various provinces and the recognition and establishment of forums for negotiating such restructuring of local government. The whole transformation process of local government was divided into the following three well defined phases:

- The pre-interim phase is the period from the commencement of the LGTA (2nd February 1994) until the first local government elections in November 1995.
- The interim phase started with the first local government elections and ended with the implementation of the final constitution at the local level in 1996.
- The final phase commenced with the implementation of the final constitution model at the local level drawn by the constitutional assembly constituted by the national assembly and the senate (Cloete, 1995:6; Cameron, 1999:85).

The LGTA therefore was a step towards the democratization of local government in South Africa. The purpose of the LGTA was to progressively transform the old dispensation into the new one that would be compatible with the constitution of the country. The LGTA was weakened by its urban bias character and the lack of a structured support process to enable municipalities to manage the change process.

3.2.3. *Rural Local Government and Implications of the Developmental Local Government System*

Apartheid in South Africa has impacted negatively on the spatial, social and economic environments, in which people live, work, raise families and seek to fulfill their aspirations (Republic of South Africa, 1998a). It has been declared that almost three quarters of people below the poverty line in South Africa live in the rural areas, and it is therefore at this stage that development is most needed. It is in the wake of these problems that government has pledged to achieve a rapid and sustained reduction in rural poverty in South Africa.

Recognizing and acknowledging the need for rural local government in South Africa, the interim constitution made provision for the establishment of a loose two-tier rural local government. The LGTA of 1993 initially sidelined the principle of separate rural local government. It is because most rural areas traditionally did not have local government structures and were absent from the negotiating forums, that government decided not to apply the pre interim phase on rural areas (Cameron, 1999). The system of local government, in the colonial era, was consistent with the autonomous model whereby urban municipalities were to serve as guardians over all surrounding areas. Government decided that the entire country would be served by local governments in the interim phase, therefore a 1995 amendment to the LGTA provided for the establishment of the rural local government structures. The provision was therefore made for a two-tier system: the upper tier, which was to be called district councils and the lower tier to be the transitional rural councils. Although the transitional rural councils were fully fledged local government, rural local government was not satisfactory as both tiers had no say in

the Transitional Local Council or enough capacity and tax bases for sustenance. Such limitations posed a negative massive rural development challenges facing the nation.

The Rural Development Framework of South Africa introduced in 1997 described development in the rural areas as:

- Institutional development: implies helping people set the priorities in their own communities, through effective and democratic bodies, by providing the local capacity and access to funds for them to plan and implement local economic development.
- Investment in basic infrastructure, and social services: implies the provision of physical infrastructure (e.g., housing, water, power supplies and transport) and social services (e.g., basic health care and schools).
- Improving income and employment opportunities by broadening access to natural resources (e.g., arable and grazing land, irrigation water, woodland and forest).
- Restoration of economic rights to marginalized rural areas by establishing periodic markets as the organizing spatial and temporal framework for development.
- Resource conservation: implies investing in the sustainable use of natural resources.
- Justice, equity and security: emphasis on dealing with the injustices of the past and ensuring safety and security of the rural population, especially that of women (Department of Land Affairs, 1997: 9).

The Rural Development Framework has consolidated the ability of local government in ensuring that the needs of the people in the poor and marginalized areas are met. The developmental local government has therefore been created with an intention to achieve local economic and social development in these areas of the neediest and the most marginalized.

3.2.4. The Establishment of Developmental Local Government

The move away from a centralized autocratic system that was dominating local government to democracy and transformation of governance placed more responsibility on local government to govern effectively and efficiently. The transformation process had not only broken the exclusiveness and superiority of white-dominated municipalities but also integrated the so-called black, coloured and Indian townships with the white municipalities where they belonged. All these changes created a challenge for the new councils to build an efficient and effective local government and ensure delivery of services thereby satisfying the public's everyday needs. This move would theoretically uplift local government from a subordinate level of government to a significant sphere in its own right. Section 151(3) of Chapter Seven in the South African constitution states that a municipality has the right to govern, on its own initiative, the local government affairs and its community, subject to national and provincial legislation as provided for in the constitution. These clauses indicate a shift away from the system of national and provincial control that has characterized South Africa's inter-governmental system since 1910 (Cameron, 1995).

Local government in South Africa is charged with a critical role of rebuilding local communities and environments, as a basis for a democratic, prosperous and truly non-racial society (Republic of South Africa, 1998a). Such priorities have informed the need for the restructuring of the South African local government system, in order to ensure not only a democratic but an equally developmental local government. The developmental local government aims to commit to the constitution's requirement that government must take reasonable measures within its available resource, to ensure that all South Africans have access to adequate housing, health care, education, food, water and social security (Republic of South Africa, 1996b). A developmental local government has therefore been defined as local government committed to working with citizens and groups within the community to find sustainable ways to meet social, economic and material needs and improve the quality of their lives (Republic of South Africa, 1998a). Fitzgerald et al. (1995) stress the development duties of local government as giving priority to the basic needs of the community and promoting social and economic development. This shifts the role of local government away from traditional local service delivery and administration to local socioeconomic development.

The restructuring of local government in South Africa aimed towards efficient and effective government systems by creating circumstances within the municipalities that allowed for the attainment of a satisfactory quality of life for the citizens. However, municipalities are faced with great challenges in promoting human rights and meeting human needs, addressing the past backlogs and spatial distortions, and planning for a substantial future. Local government can only meet these challenges by working together

with local citizens, communities and businesses in adopting a developmental approach (Republic of South Africa, 1998a). Local government restructuring necessitated the establishment of new municipalities as provided for by section 155 of the South African constitution, which provided for the following categories:

- Category A: a municipality that has exclusive municipal executive and legislative authority in its area;
- Category B: a municipality that shares municipal executive and legislative authority in its area with a category C municipality within whose area it falls;
- Category C: a municipality that has municipal executive and legislative authority in an area that includes more than one municipality (Republic of South Africa, 1998d: 18).

The developmental local government comes with a change from the previous six two-tier metropolitan system structure to a newly recommended unitary tier structure. The arrangements of the new municipalities' system implied that category A constituted of metropolitan unitary authorities, while B and C are the lower and upper tier models of the non-metropolitan local government system. The concern for globally competitive cities led to legislation providing for two types of unitary tier authorities: one with ward councils and the other with sub-councils (Republic of South Africa, 1998a). The Local Government Municipal Structures Act No.117 of 1998 embodied the recommendations and replaced the two-tier structures with the unitary authorities (Cameron, 2001). The result was a massive shrink of the number of municipalities from 843 to a low 284 with

the aim to create bigger municipalities with larger tax bases to enable provision of services and sustainable development.

The restructuring process also led to the re-demarcation of boundaries wherein the Local Government Municipal Demarcation Act No. 27 was promulgated in 1998 and created a single independent Municipal Demarcation Board (Cameron, 2001). This was informed by the need for a uniform national policy on local government and to thwart the tendencies of provincial ministers of local government to demarcate boundaries so they could win municipal elections rather than on the basis of effective service delivery and development. The Act provided the new Municipal Demarcation Board with a final decision making power when it comes to the demarcation of boundaries and therefore aiming at rationalizing the number of non viable municipalities (Republic of South Africa, 1998c). The 1999/2000 boundary demarcation of districts is seemly geared towards promoting long-term economic and social development rather than limiting its focus on service delivery only. At the heart of the restructured local government, is the priority to promote and facilitate development of a just society and to ensure that even the poorest of the poor benefit from their government.

3.2.5 The Municipal Legislations Geared Towards an Integrated Rural Development Process and Local Economic Development

Following the provision of a clear and motivating framework through the white paper on local government, the government did not only plan for a new demarcation process but provided new legal framework with clear indicators to allow for the smooth implementation of the demarcation process. Among these legislations were the Municipal

Structures Act and the Municipal Systems Act, all of which have a direct bearing to the transformation of rural development in South Africa. The Municipal Structures Act No.117 of 1998 was passed to fulfill the following objectives:

To provide for the establishment of municipalities in accordance with the requirements and types of municipality; to establish a criteria for determining the category of municipality to be established in an area; to define the types of municipality that may be established within each category; to provide for an appropriate division of functions and powers between categories of municipality; to regulate the internal systems, structures and office bearers of municipalities; to provide for appropriate electoral systems; and to provide for matters in connection therewith (Republic of South Africa, 1998d: 2).

In order to ensure an efficient, effective and transparent administration of the newly established municipalities in South Africa, the Municipal Systems Act No. 32 of 2000 was passed. Among other objectives, the act was established to:

To provide for the core principles, mechanisms and processes that are necessary to enable municipalities to move progressively towards the social and economic upliftment of local communities, and ensure universal access to essential services that are affordable to all(Republic of South Africa, 2000b:2).

The idea behind the establishment of Municipal Systems Act No. 32 of 2000 was to establish the local government into an efficient frontline development agency, so as to effectively provide for basic developmental services to all South Africans, and specifically the rural poor and disadvantaged. The Act provided for the establishment of the Integrated Development Planning (IDP) as the main instrument of integration geared towards addressing the socio-economic needs for the South African communities more effectively (Republic of South Africa, 1997). The IDP is a guiding instrument for the

activities of municipalities and other spheres of government, non-governmental organizations, donor organizations and other service providers with an intention to identify and provide for development needs in the municipal sector. Through the IDP process, the municipalities are in a position to select development programmes that address their priorities, the majority of selected programmes is therefore financed at the municipal level through an expenditure envelope comprised of the municipal budget, and other stakeholders such as line departments, donor organizations, NGOs, and public-private partnerships.

These legal initiatives serve as a basis for building a local government system that is appropriately structured, managed and guided to promote local economic development in the local government sector, specifically in rural South Africa. Local economic development (LED) in the rural context encompasses diversifying the economic base, ensuring basic standards of health and safety through the provision of basic infrastructure and services, maximizing job creation and building on inherent potential of local areas (Republic of South Africa, 1997). Looking at this bigger picture, the selection of and provision for desired services for rural development is of great significance. However these strengthened integrative mechanisms at the local level can be thwarted by the inherent inadequate local capacity to plan and implement them.

The lack of capacity to identify and address local capacity needs, often coupled with tendencies of excessive centralization of decision-making appears to be a contributing factor to the lack of adequate success in the work of the local councilors. With the

Greater Giyani Local Municipality divided into or constituted by 11 wards, these wards are by virtue the closest governing bodies to the grassroots level. The ward committee, as provided by the Municipal Structures Act No. 117 of 1998, consists of the councilor representing the ward in the council, who must also be the chairperson of the committee, and not more than 10 other members. Ward committees are meant to make recommendations on any other matter affecting its ward to the ward councilor or through the ward councilor, to the metro, local council or the relevant council. Because the ward committees are closer to the communities, these recommendations regarding community development needs are expected to be more representative of the needs of the communities. Nonetheless, concerns have been raised from the local councilors at the grassroots level such as Katekani and Dzumeri, that their efforts to identify development needs are often nullified by the lack of ward councils' power to make implementing decisions (see Chapters 4 and 5).

3.3. Conclusions

The apartheid ideologies of the nationalist government have resulted in disparities in development and the provision of services between the white and black population. The apartheid era legislations that served to create separate governance and development provided the basis for conflict and confrontations between the black population and the white rule, and therefore boycotts and protests by the black population. It was from these persisting protests that government eventually acknowledged and took steps towards

achieving the need for a non-racial local government in South Africa. After the first democratic elections of April 1994, the attempts to effect the transition of local government from the old to the new dispensation centred around the creation of a developmental local government system in South Africa. The transformation and rationalization of the former racial local government system to the present democratic and developmental local government seeks to redress the inequalities that were created by the apartheid government. The aim is to create financially viable municipalities that can lead to local economic and social development. In order to track the changes led by the new developmental local government and its implications on rural development in South Africa, the new system needs to be carefully monitored.

CHAPTER 4: The Rural Landscape of Katekani and Dzumeri

4.1. Introduction

As highlighted in Chapter One, this study is aimed at uncovering the role played by local government in achieving development in rural areas in South Africa. The majority of South Africans, mostly Africans, are residing in marginal and degraded environments that do not offer hope for development in the near future. According to a report by Statistics South Africa, of 31,1 million Africans who were in South Africa in October 1996, 57% were living in rural areas (Republic of South Africa, 2000a). The experience in most South African rural areas is one of outright poverty with no access to decent education, health care, nutritious food, reliable sources of income, shelter, energy and clean water and sanitation.

Historically, the rural areas in South Africa have been divided into underdeveloped bantustans and well developed white-owned commercial farming areas as shown in Chapter Three. The Black Authorities Act No.68 of 1951 and the Black Self Government Act No.46 of 1959 provided for the establishment of bantustans (Cloete, 1982) whereby each ethnic group was allowed to 'govern itself' in separate reserved areas. The bantustan system was meant to be a solution to the supposed problem; however the scarce resources administered through the bantustan bureaucracies ensured that development was racially and ethnically skewed (Ramutsindela, 2001). Segregation in education, health, welfare, transport and employment left deep scars of inequality and economic inefficiency among

the areas where African people reside, more especially the rural areas in South Africa. The restructuring of South Africa into a non-racial democratic state in 1994 led to the country being divided into nine provinces namely: KwaZulu-Natal, Gauteng, Free-State, North-West, Western Cape, Northern Cape, Eastern Cape, Mpumalanga and Limpopo. This process resulted in rural and depressed areas that constituted the bantustans being regrouped into the new provinces. Each province is vested with its own provincial government and local government as provided for by the then Transitional Local Government Act No.34 of 1993 and later in 1996 by the final constitution. Consequently the rural areas of Katekani and Dzumeri fell under one of the poorest and under-developed provinces in South Africa, the Limpopo.

Despite the dawn of democracy and transformation in the country, not so much has changed. Rural areas are the first port of information in assessing changes brought about by local government transformation for the neediest societies. Katekani and Dzumeri areas are no exceptions to the general descriptions given to rural areas in South Africa. This chapter intends to describe the conditions of life in these rural areas, describe their historical background, their developmental needs, their conceptualization of development, identify their pace and nature of developmental changes and the contribution of local government to these changes.

In order to allow for a manageable project the study has been limited to two rural areas, namely, Dzumeri and Katekani under the newly established Greater Giyani Local Municipality in the Mopani district. Although the study adopted a combination of

qualitative and quantitative methodologies, the study is essentially qualitative; this therefore requires intensive inputs at a lesser number of locations. The two study areas are situated close to each other but with slightly different characteristics and developmental needs (see Figure 1.1).

4.2. Life in Katekani and Dzumeri Villages

Situated at about 48 kilometers east of the town of Giyani, Katekani village is a typical rural area. It consists of 1 946 households and about 9 889 Tsonga and Southern Sotho speaking people (Dzumeri Tribal Office, 04/01/2002). The majority of the population in these areas comprises of women and children. This is a community with multiple names drawn from its multiple characters. Katekani, a Tsonga word for “be blessed”, is used mostly by young people in the area; its other name, Zaba, was given to the community in honour to the house of traditional leaders and is used by the elders. Above all N’wamarhanga (a place of many veggies) is the most commonly used name though it does not appear in official documents about the area.

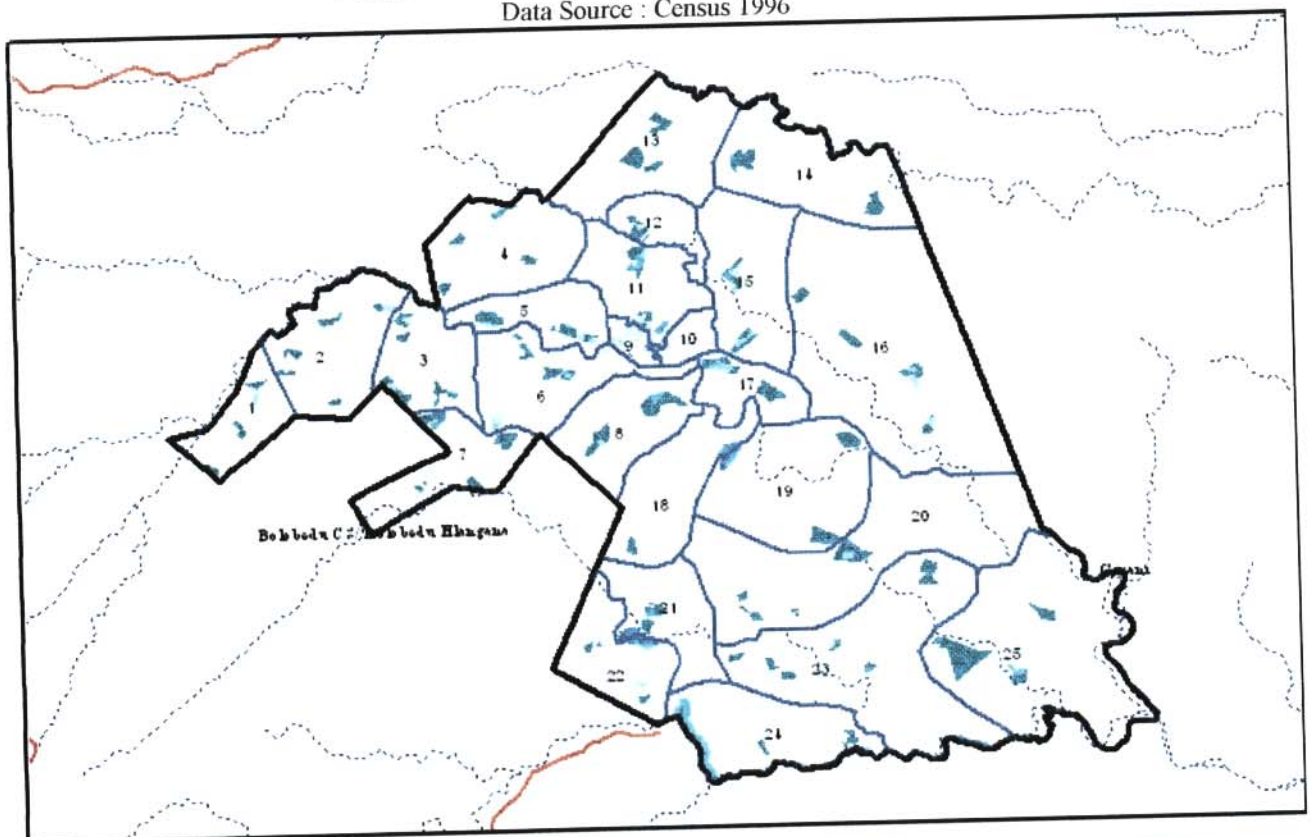
Dzumeri village, also called Ndhambhi, is situated at about 30 kilometers east of the town of Giyani, with 2 336 households with the approximate population of 11 552. During the bantustans era, Dzumeri served as a centre of administration for about 18 (with Katekani as one of them) surrounding communities. Therefore, compared to Katekani and all the surrounding areas, Dzumeri is a much bigger community and slightly more developed

than the other. Like Katekani, Dzumeri is also home to a mixture of Tsonga and Southern Sotho speaking people.

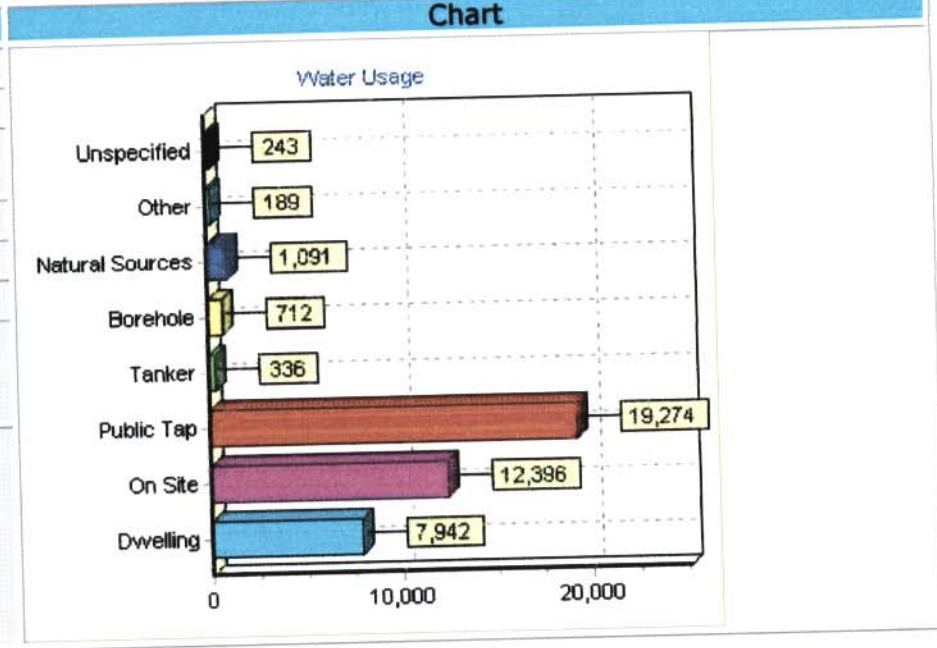
During the last years of the apartheid government, Katekani and Dzumeri areas were kept mainly under the leadership of the house of traditional leaders, Mr. January Mabunda and Mr. Divila Mabunda, respectively. The two areas had one high school and one primary school respectively, and running water from the street taps. These were provided by the former Gazankulu government. Unlike in Dzumeri village, there were no health care facilities and proper roads in Katekani, no proper sanitation system, no proper and reliable transport systems nor sufficient housing for all. Both areas rank high in male absenteeism. Men, as heads of the households were mainly obliged to seek work in the cities and mines. The women were left behind to take care of the homes, rely on subsistence farming (see Chapter 5) and working on the nearby farms in order to make ends meet. Yet Katekani and Dzumeri were relatively better off areas as other surrounding areas had no schools and children had to walk a long distance daily to schools. Since the dawn of democracy in South Africa, these communities have, like the rest of the country, gone through different phases of change. For the South African citizens, the dawn of democracy was accompanied by excitement, high hopes and expectations for the new government to bring about not only freedom, but also provide development and jobs for all. Eight years into democracy and despite the remarkable changes for South Africa, to the people in Katekani and Dzumeri, a lot has remained the same, in other aspects, situations have deteriorated.

4.2.1. *Water, Sanitation and Health*

Figure 4.1: Greater Giyani [NP331] Water Usage (
 Data Source : Census 1996



Water Usage	No
Unspecified	243
Other	189
Natural Sources	1091
Borehole	712
Tanker	336
Public Tap	19274
On Site	12396
Dwelling	7942



Official data (see Figure 4.1) indicate that the majority of people in the Greater Giyani Local Municipality can access water from the public taps. However, for the people of Katekani (ward 22) and Dzumeri (ward 24) this is not the case. Prior the 1994 democratic elections system, both areas were equipped with a fully functional piped water system although they could not access water from within their homes. Community members could access running water from the taps that were within a walking distance from any household. However, within the first year of democracy, the water taps went dry, leaving the people in the area with no access to clean water. As will be shown in Chapter 5, for many community members, the human right to basic water was snatched away by the new government system.

Government's failure to provide water to all areas in South Africa might have led to the thirsty communities having little or no faith in it, leaving them wishing for the long gone bantustan system of governance that had provided them with water services during its reign. Lack of safe domestic water is a major concern for people in rural areas. Water serves a number of important roles in improving the livelihoods of communities. People do not only need water for domestic purposes, it is also central to improving health and moreover reducing women and children's drudgery (see Chapter 5), so as to allow them time for developmental activities such as education.

Despite government policies stating that everyone has a right to basic water (Republic of South Africa, 1996b) the people in Katekani village rely heavily on the nearby Greater Letaba River to get water needed for all domestic activities. Regardless of the fact that

they share water with animals, the people of this area are considered lucky to have a river running through. In the case of Dzumeri, the community members are better off as they have the few taps that provide ground water. Besides these taps, the process of getting water there includes walking long distances to join long queues for water, and to the Molototsi River as the taps occasionally go dry.

The use of water from the river exposes the community members to the dangers of water borne diseases such as cholera and typhoid. In Katekani, there are however 4 households that have installed their own borehole water systems in their homes. The community members who cannot afford to install their own borehole systems resort to buying clean water for R1.00 per 25 litres from those who have. Such water is usually reserved for cooking and drinking purposes only. For those who cannot afford to buy water, they continue to use water from the river for all purposes.

In the long run, the productivity potential of poor households is reduced by the compromised health status and the time and energy spent in obtaining water. Similar situations have been reported in other cases. Boserup (1970) indicates that while women and children perform multiple tasks, with primitive tools and often require many days of long hard labour to produce subsistence requirements for their families, income-generating work is strongly considered a man's responsibility. The multiple responsibilities limit their time and productivity in other aspects of life such as employment and education (Spio, 1997).

Provision of water in rural areas would not only promote the hygiene standards, that is, proper sanitation practices of the communities but would also significantly reduce, in many cases eliminate, the time spent in collecting water and therefore free time that could be used for learning and productive work. However many of the health and other benefits the rural population expect from the provision of clean water are unlikely to accrue unless rural water supply and sanitation are prioritized within the overall context of integrated rural development.

Rural lives under and surrounding the town of Giyani are expected to improve in the not so distant future. The Department of Water Affairs and Forestry (DWAFF) is engaged in a water provision programme. The programme is regarded as a preparation for DWAFF to hand over water provision and management services to respective municipalities as conceived in the notion of developmental local government. The idea is to bring governance closer to the people and encourage a bottom up approach system of governance for a more effective water management system.

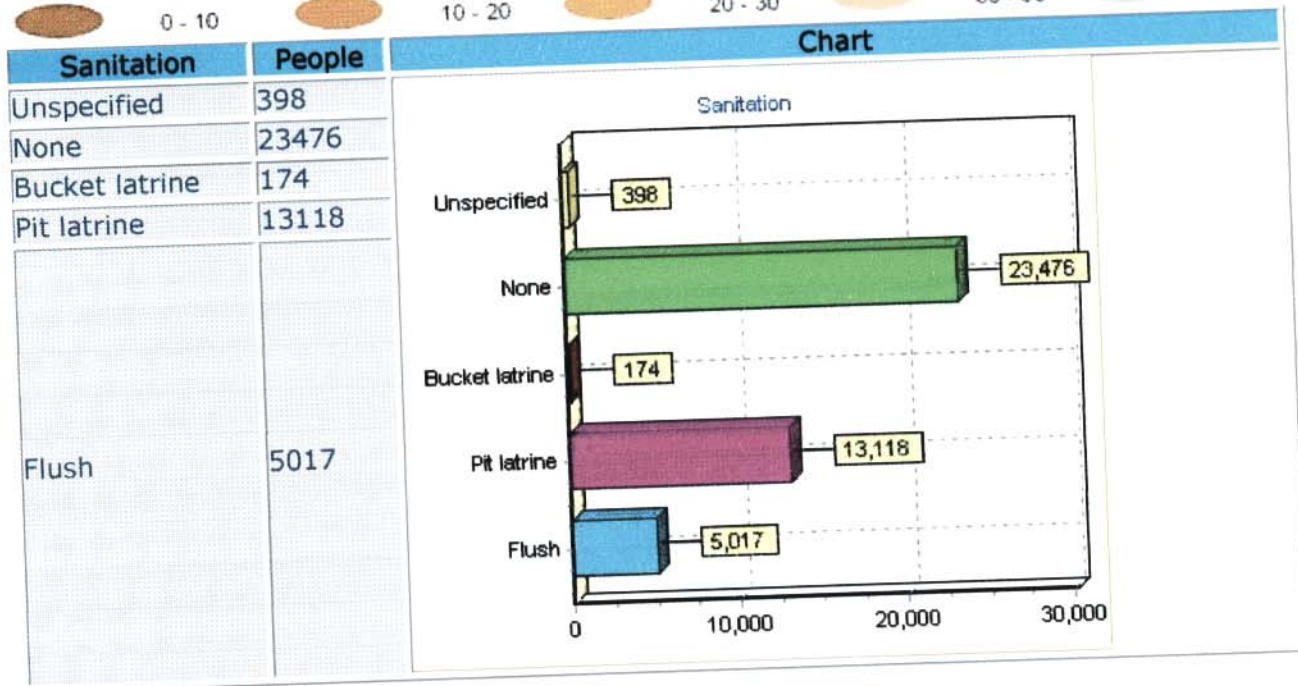
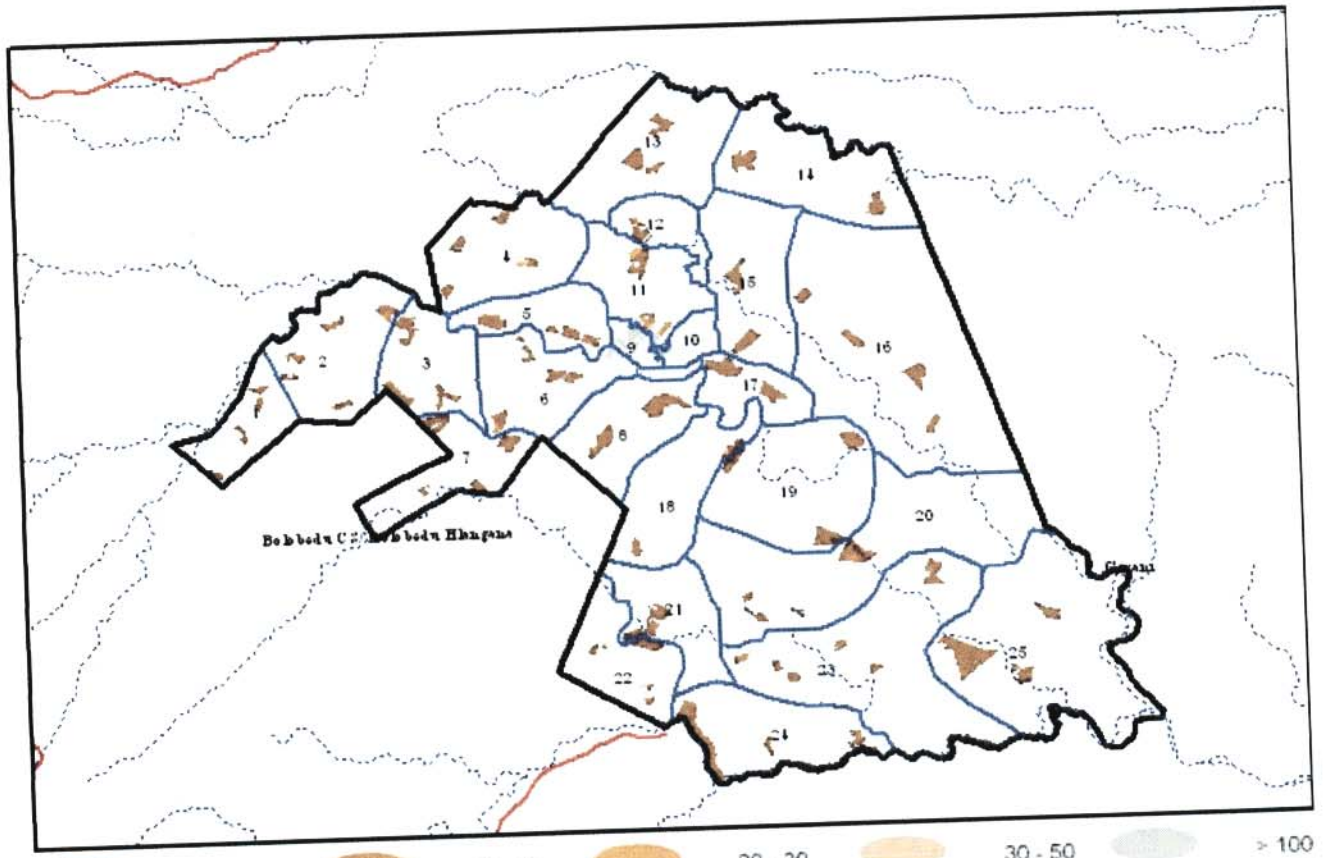
This water provision programme, headed by a subdivision called Metsico, is geared towards installing well functioning borehole systems in the rural areas, start a billing system in the urban areas of Giyani, which will in the long run be applied in the rural areas once they have the infrastructure. The billing system is meant to serve as a control system for water use so as to ensure that people do not abuse the projects in their areas. In an attempt to get and recognize the views of community members Metsico has ensured

that the communities are represented by their elected representatives and water desk councillors.

Although there is a great fear that most community members would not be able to afford to pay for the up-coming water services, the people of Katekani as well as Dzumeri are hopeful that these immediate future plans would improve the living conditions in their area. This could be practical where community members could limit their use of clean water to drinking and cooking whilst they continue using water from the river for other household chores and subsistence farming.

Besides the enormous size of the water problem in rural areas, the majority of the rural population also lives without basic sanitation services. In rural areas like Katekani and Dzumeri, community members who cannot afford to build their own pit toilets resort to use of the nearby bushes for relieving themselves, which therefore increases diseases present in dirty water and excreta. Figure 4.2 indicates that the majority of people in the Greater Giyani Local Municipality have yet to receive proper sanitation services. This situation implies that the lives of the people in these communities are exposed to the dangers caused by lack of proper sanitation and hygiene practices.

Figure 4.2: Greater Giyani [NP331] Sanitation
 Data Source : Census 1996



A healthier population has greater potential for economic and social development. With the first step in community health being an accessible and safe water supply, as well as basic sanitary services, the people of Katekani (22) and Dzumeri (24) villages are more prone to many diseases. The two communities have their own health centres (clinics), which are well equipped in terms of infrastructure and provide the population with free health care services. Sadly the people do not feel happy and have no confidence with the health services provided by the health centres in their areas, as there is often insufficient medication and no running water in the centers (see Chapter 5).

4.2.2. Education and Un/employment

In the entire Limpopo province, there is a total of 4 614 schools and 57 155 educators (Republic of South Africa, 2000a). Although the facilities are usually poor, there is hardly a community without a single school in the province. Since in the past there were not enough schools, the majority of adults in the study areas are uneducated and work on nearby farms for a living. Moreover, many of the youth in the two areas have only passed grade 12. However that is usually as far as the majority of the rural population can go in accessing education. Many of the people do not have enough financial resources to further their studies. With unemployment up to 46% in the Province (Republic of South Africa, 2000a) the people are therefore faced with the frustrations of unemployment. Since education as a right is not available to all in South Africa, many families usually see their children being sent back from schools because they cannot afford to pay school fees, which ranges from R50.00 for primary schools to R100.00 for secondary schools (see Chapter 5). Sadly, most community members do not only have to worry much about

the quality of education offered in their local schools, their main concern is to be able to afford the school fees charged at these schools. Community members in both Katekani and Dzumeri villages do not show satisfaction with the way education activities are conducted in their areas. Such lack of confidence and the apparent government's lack of efforts to improve the situation only serve to marginalize the rural areas further. Despite the Reconstruction and Development Programme's declaration to provide free education for all, the realities on the ground (rural areas) show major disparities in access to education.

Katekani and Dzumeri, like many other rural areas rank high in unemployment. This is despite the projected 400 000 jobs to be created annually through the implementation of Growth Employment and Redistribution policy of 1996 (Republic of South Africa, 1996a). The most common ways of earning a living in Katekani and Dzumeri and rural areas in general are working on farms, selling vegetables, chicken; and liquor. Such attempts are not enough to earn an income sufficient to sustain households. Women and the youth are the ones mainly affected by unemployment in these areas since male adults usually seek employment in the mines and cities rather than rely solely on the nearby farms for employment. With the lack of employment prevailing in the country and being most felt in the rural areas, the majority of people in the rural sector are trapped in abject poverty and cannot enjoy the rights and dignities afforded to them by the South African constitution.

4.2.3. Housing

Katekani and Dzumeri are among the areas that were hard hit by the floods during 1999-2000. The 1999-2000 floods led to serious damage to houses that were not strong to sustain bad weather. Historically, community members used their traditional methods of building houses (using mud for the walls and grass for the roof). Although the system has always been used by Africans in South Africa, it is not durable as exposed by the collapsing of many structures during the floods. Many people were left with no roof over their heads. These traditional methods are still used by many households to construct houses within both communities. However the households that can afford to have built proper and safer houses.

Both communities have not benefited from the Reconstruction and Development Programme (RDP) housing programme. Households who were very desperate for housing resorted to moving to the areas where RDP houses were being built such as Giyani and Mageva. For many living in poorly built homes, the quality of the RDP houses is a less important issue when compared to their need for proper housing. Both communities have since the floods benefited from the housing fund that provided houses (see Chapter 5) to some of the families who were hardest hit by the floods. Although not every needy household was covered by the programme, for those selected beneficiaries, housing problems are the thing of the past, while for many others it remains unattended.

4.2.4. Governance: Roles and Functions in Practice

The newly restructured local government system has introduced the ward system wherein councillors have been selected to lead and serve these wards. Katekani and Dzumeri are communities that have councillors residing in the communities that they serve. The situation looks advantageous and promising, as the councillors are most likely to know the needs of their communities than would office dwellers residing in towns or cities. African communities such as Katekani and Dzumeri, have been previously led by the traditional leaders, who would make all the rules and decisions for their communities. With the introduction of the new local government system, the roles and significance of the traditional leaders have become questionable. Traditional leaders have lost their ruling and decision making powers to the newly elected ward councillors. Such situations pose serious threats to development in these areas and division among community members.

During an interview, Mabunda D, a traditional leader at Dzumeri village indicated that:

Until the roles of traditional leaders are clarified and there is proper participation by the traditional leaders in the municipal council, there can be no speedy improvement on rural development. This confusion about the roles and responsibilities of traditional leaders is causing a strain to rural governance and development (06/01/2002).

Councillor Elijah Malungani in Katekani Village believes that:

Bringing together all stakeholders and giving clear descriptions of the roles of traditional leaders could enhance the processes of development in rural areas as this will promote commitment and cooperation among all the structures (05/01/2002).

The friction between the traditional leaders and the local councilors is not the only delaying factor to the development of the rural areas. The functions of the ward councils as identified by the Municipal Structures Act No. 117 of 2000 imposes a limiting measure to the ability of the ward councils in providing development to these local areas. Given the fact that ward councils can only make recommendations regarding community development needs, these recommendations often take long to be addressed by government, if ever. This serves to frustrate the efforts to enhance rural lives. Such circumstances impact negatively on governments' plan to achieve local economic development for the rural communities. At the same time, these communities' urgent need for a development remains unfulfilled.

4.3. Conclusions

Living conditions in Katekani and Dzumeri areas, like in most rural areas require urgent attention and improvements. The newly established local government system has offered hope for further improvement of the livelihoods in the rural areas. However it appears that among other constrains, tension between ward councillors and traditional leaders can

and may play a major role in stagnating the process of development where it is most needed.

CHAPTER 5: Challenges of Rural Development in Giyani: Experiences from Katekani and Dzumeri

5.1. Issues of Rural Development: Perspectives of Local Residents

5.1.1. Introduction

Rural poverty has remained stubbornly high; this is due to government and donor development plans that have been less than successful in providing developmental services to rural areas in the country. While the country glorifies the democracy so peacefully and successfully achieved, the poverty gap grows and widens by the day. This chapter provides a summary of major developmental challenges facing Katekani and Dzumeri villages, a reflection on rural people's views on government's development activities and initiatives, as well as changes lacking and or brought about by the developmental local government in these rural areas.

In a quest to serve as a basis for a better life for all South Africans, the South African constitution mandates the local government to:

- Provide democratic and accountable government for local communities.
- Ensure the provision of services to communities in a sustainable manner.
- Promote social and economic development.
- Promote a safe and healthy environment.

- Encourage the involvement of communities and community organizations in the matters of local government (Republic of South Africa, 1996b: 81).

The idea of the developmental local government to work closely with local communities in finding sustainable ways to meet their needs and improve the quality of life has been faced with massive development backlogs in the rural sector. Most rural people who were respondents to interviews for the purposes of this study have shown dissatisfaction with the state of development in their areas. However, there have also been signs of satisfaction with other aspects of development as well.

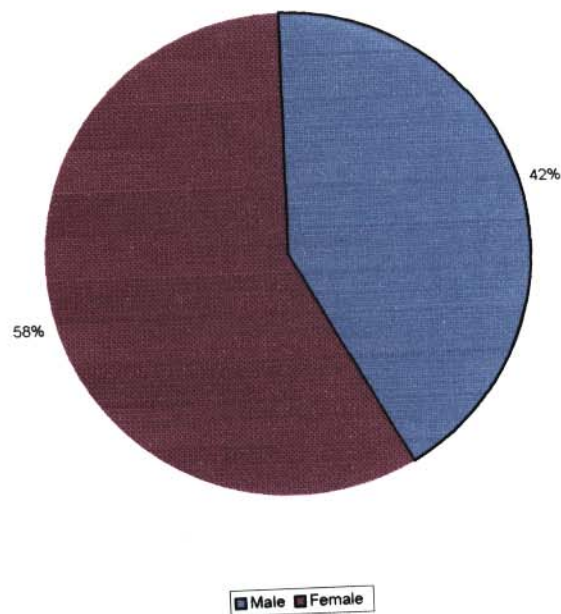
For the purposes of this study, data is derived from conducted interviews, completed questionnaires as well as current government's developmental plans, policies and strategies. Data is presented both quantitatively (in a form of charts) and qualitatively from government policies and through responses recorded from interviews.

5.1.2. Women, Men and Development in Katekani and Dzumeri

Daunting percentages derived from the study's results purport to paint a picture of Katekani and Dzumeri villages serving as study areas. Women in rural areas play significant roles in the socioeconomic life of their rural areas. Rural areas rank high in male absenteeism due to migrant labour (as males usually relocate to towns, cities and mines), and the breaking down of the social fabric, which has left many women leading families alone and being single parents. Dzumeri and Katekani communities are therefore

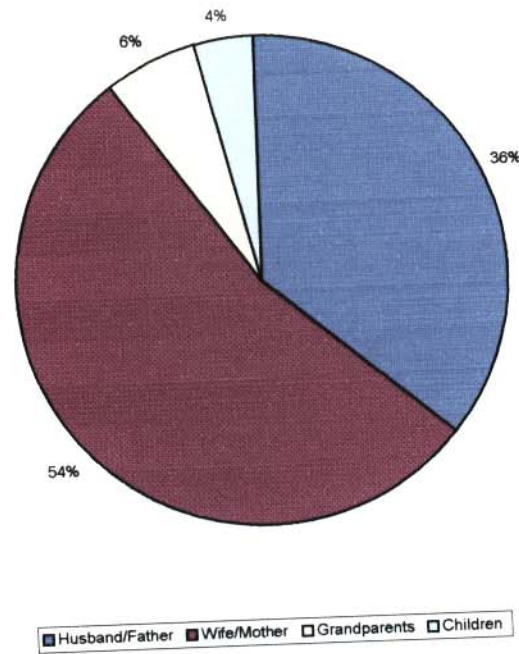
constituted more by women and children than men, hence the purposive sample for this study constituted of a larger percentage of women than men (see Figure 5.1).

Figure 5.1: Gender Characteristics of the Research Sample



Official data indicate that the Limpopo Province's population by gender is; 54.3 female to 44.7 male (Republic of South Africa, 2000a). The implication is that during the fieldwork for this study, the researcher had a higher chance (see Figure 5.1) of interviewing women than men. Of similarity is the findings shown on Figure 5.2 that 54% of the participants' households needs are provided for by either wife or mother in the family. The study also found 66% of the households are between five and eight in size. In most cases, women therefore usually have the sole responsibility to provide the means of survival for their families.

Figure 5.2: Family Breadwinner

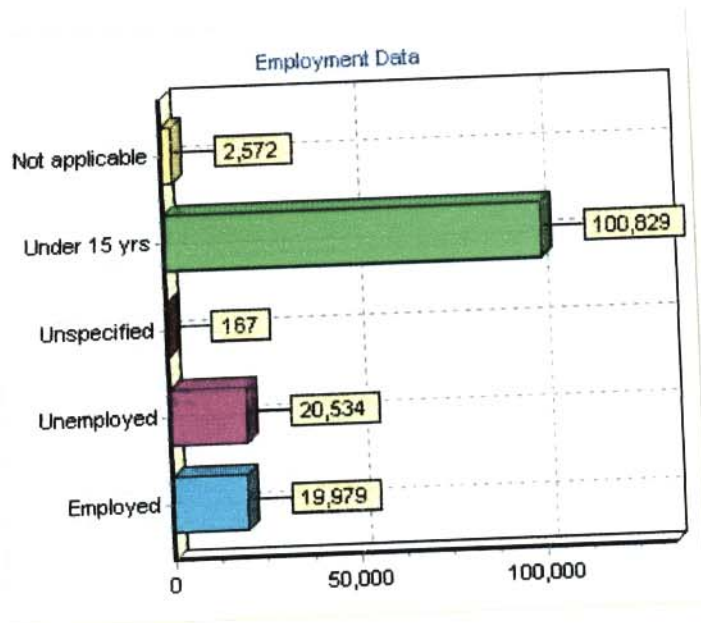


The high rate of unemployment in the Limpopo Province (see Figure 5.3) has had a direct negative bearing on the conditions of living in Katekani and Dzumeri villages. Millions of the South African people live in dire poverty, isolated from services and opportunities (Republic of South Africa, 1998b). Given the poor state of development and the high level of unemployment in both study areas, conditions of living for rural women in the study areas do not match with the level of breadwinning responsibilities they face during their daily lives. While some of the women are working for the neighbouring farms, the majority of women in Katekani and Dzumeri are not employed. This situation places much reliance on subsistence farming and small businesses to provide for families. Regarding employment for rural women, Ennie Ngoveni of Katekani, a worker in the nearby farm commented:

It is not employment if you work on farms. Although the work is too hard, the pay is too little and the farmer can dismiss you anytime they want to, you have no say at all (15/12/2001).

Figure 5.3: Employment Data of the Greater Giyani Municipality

Source: Census, 1996



Women are the major functionaries in household production; they are lead role players in child bearing, child nursing and cooking, and generally looking after the welfare of their households. Their chores also include fetching water, collecting firewood and other household tasks. Because of their rather large workloads, most women rely on their older children (usually female) for assistance with household tasks. Even though their work is usually not assigned an economic value the contribution of women and children is most significant to development in their areas. Moreover, the countless hours spent by women and female children fetching water from distant polluted sources and fetching wood represents a waste of time that could be gainfully used for education and other fulfilling activities. It is clear that rural poverty lays a particularly heavier burden on women and

children because of their dual roles in the economy, therefore worsening their living conditions.

Both communities boast self initiated women's farming projects, wherein they share plots of their agricultural scheme amongst one another, the land has been provided for by Indunas. The women plant a variety of vegetables during the cultivating seasons and they have communally purchased a diesel water pump that they use to draw water for their plants during the dry seasons. The women from Katekani and Dzumeri have recognized and used their power to plan, implement and maintain their agricultural projects in order to serve their needs and those of their families and community members. However these women face quite a number of difficulties during their daily activities with regard to resources. Most of their production is used for subsistence while the remainders are sold to other community members who do not participate in these agricultural schemes. The small farmers hope to make some money in order to finance their other household needs. Although this initiative is able to fulfill the main part of the people's nutritional needs, lack of access to markets, information and financial resources thwarts the potential of these projects to grow into much better income generating initiatives that could contribute to local economic development in the long run.

The lack of resources and services for survival has a much more permanent impact on the future of the communities than meets the eye. Since many of the women in the study areas carry the primary responsibility of raising their offspring single handedly, such circumstances do not promise a brighter future for the young ones in these areas, as the

breadwinners do not have enough resources to afford paying for further education and proper health services when and if needed. In the long run, the cycle of poverty for these households continues unabated.

5.1.3. *Development Priorities of Local Residents in Katekani and Dzumeri*

Defining developmental needs differ from community to community and person to person. For some, descriptions range from financial growth, good education and good infrastructure; while for others it is mainly daily food, land and jobs for all. For the people of Katekani and Dzumeri, the study found the most valued development aspects identified were health facilities, water and sanitation.

Figure 5.4: Development Priorities as Identified by Community Members

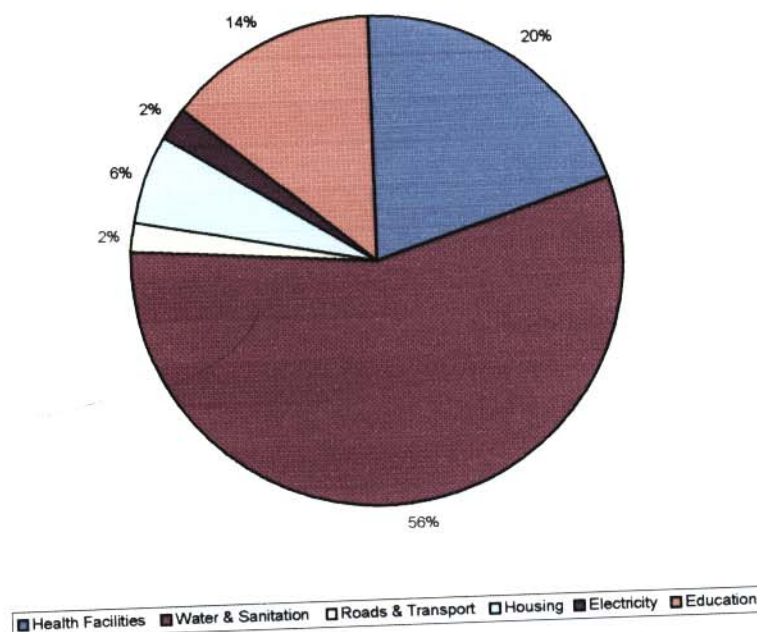


Figure 5.4 shows that 56% of respondents prioritize water and sanitation as the most valued development aspects in their area. Sanitation in Katekani and Dzumeri remains a far cry from the ideal hygienic living conditions. The majority of community residents who cannot afford to build their own pit toilets resort to using the nearby bushes to relieve themselves. In Katekani village, the water taps have been dry ever since the dawn of democracy, while people in Dzumeri can get water from their taps once in a while. Such circumstances occur despite the fact that the South African Constitution, (Section 27 (1)(b)) states that everyone has the right to have access to sufficient food and water (Republic of South Africa, 1996b); and that the White Paper on Sanitation confirms that government has a constitutional responsibility to ensure that all South Africans have access to adequate sanitation (Republic of South Africa, 2001a). Basic water supply and sanitation as human rights are widely supported nationally and internationally. What remains a challenge is how such a right is to be realized and enforced at a local level to ensure that all citizens have access to these required services. The inception of the developmental local government brought with it hope for basic water and sanitation provision as a priority to the needy population in rural areas. But so far, the people in Katekani and Dzumeri are still waiting. Concerning the water crisis in her area, Xithlanyi commented as follows:

Ntsanwisi's (Bantustan system) government was better because he gave us water, now we have to drink dirty water because we can't afford boreholes, and we can't afford to buy from those rich houses with boreholes (Xithlanyi Maswanganyi, Katekani, 10/12/2001).

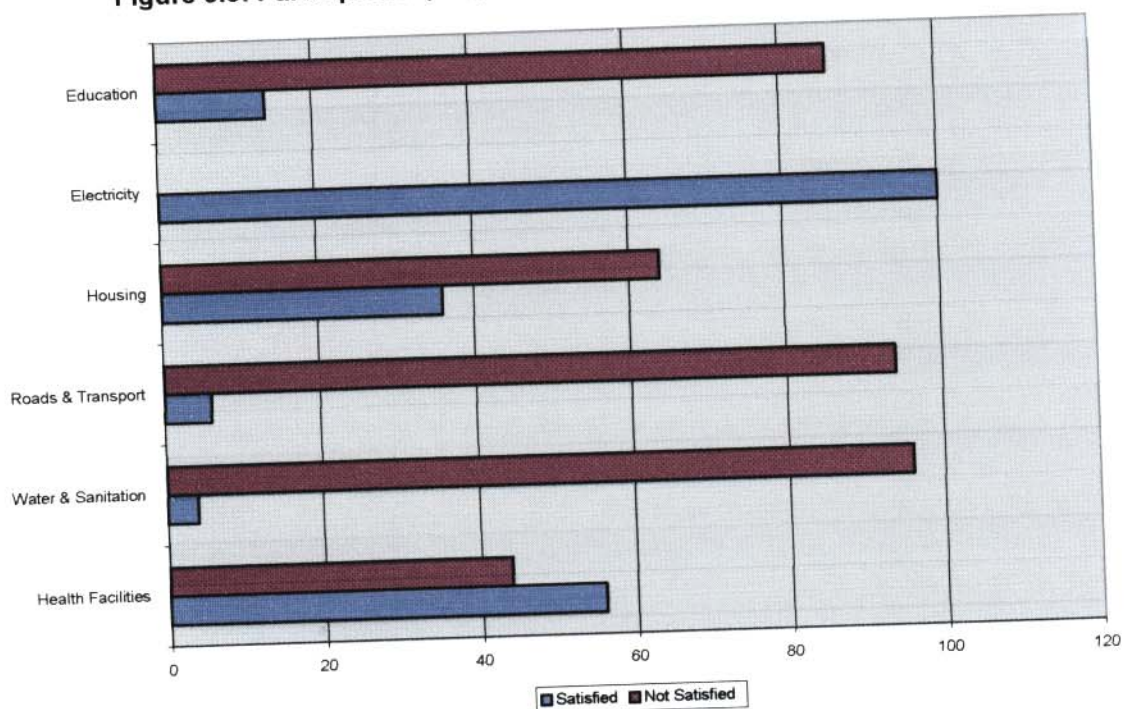
Because lack of safe domestic water is a major concern for people in rural areas, the government's failure to provide water to all areas in South Africa might have led to the

communities without running water losing faith in it, and leaving them wishing for the bantustan system of governance that, according to Xitlhanyi, looked after her community's needs. Residents also feel that the government is prioritizing only the needs of the urban sector population while neglecting those of the rural poor. An affected local resident said:

It's really tough here, in the cities, they use clean water to wash and flush, here we share water with animals and we use dirty water to drink, it really is unfair (Doris Mkhari, Dzumeri, 10/12/2002).

Figure 5.5 below presents rating in percentages of community members' level of satisfaction and/or dissatisfaction with development aspects in their areas.

Figure 5.5: Participants' (Dis) satisfaction with Development Aspects in the Study Areas



In February 2001, the Minister of Water Affairs and Forestry, Ronnie Kasrils, announced that the government had decided to provide 6000 litres of safe water per month to poor households free of charge (Republic of South Africa, 2002b). This initiative was intended to assist those households who do not currently have a safe water supply at all, who are the poorest of the poor and who should receive the most urgent attention. For the rural people, this initiative promised to relieve them from the difficulties of using contaminated water from rivers and wells and the cost of buying groundwater from the households that have installed borehole systems. Lack of clean potable water for these communities is coupled with a massive backlog on sanitation as well. Unfortunately, progress on provision of water and sanitation for the rural people has been so slow that to date it has not reached the people of Katekani and Dzumeri villages.

Given the significance of the water problems in rural areas, no difficulties should to deter local municipalities from advocating the human right to water and sanitation. In agreement with that, Minister Ronnie Kasrils was quoted in the recent National Water Resource Strategy Plan saying:

Water gives life. It waters the fields of farmers; it nurtures the crops and stock of rural communities; it provides recreation for our children, our friends, our families; it supports our power generation, our mines, our industry, and the plants and animals that make up ecosystems. Water is the key to development and a good quality of life in South Africa. South Africa's water belongs to its people. It is the task of the South African Government to care for this water, to seek its fair distribution, and to facilitate its wise use for, amongst other things, social and economic development (Republic of South Africa, 2002:01).

However, 96% of the respondents (see Figure 5.5) remain dissatisfied with water and sanitation services provision in their areas. A point of grave concern for the rural people is that while they wait for government plans to be implemented in their areas, they remain exposed to waterborne diseases and those caused by lack of adequate sanitation. Water and sanitation are matters of health and dignity for all. This in itself provides an impetus for an accelerated implementation strategy in order to eliminate this backlog from not just some, but all rural communities in South Africa.

Despite everyone's right to basic health facilities, the living conditions of the people in Katekani and Dzumeri, arguably justifies a need for proper functioning health facilities in the areas. Unlike many other rural areas, the two areas have well built health centers but there is not much help community members can get from these centers. Data (see Figure 5.4) indicates 20% of the respondents rated health facilities as the most significant development aspect for the people in their areas and 44% (see Figure 5.5) of the respondents have shown dissatisfaction with the state of health facilities provided in their areas. There are no doctors to see patients in these centers, they usually have insufficient medicine, if any, and the water brought by government trucks occasionally runs out. A concerned community member in Katekani village commented on the health problems in his area:

When the clinic was erected, I was very happy, but when you go there to consult, there is no treatment, no doctor, all you ever get is panado, maybe the service is free because you get nothing there (Dumisani Ngoveni, 12/12/2001).

Arguably government has raised people's hopes by building health centers without making proper planning for important requirements like medicine, doctors and reliable water supply services.

The case of Dzumeri is however slightly different in terms of health facilities. The health center in this area was built during the bantustans era. It was meant to service all communities (about 18) surrounding Dzumeri. The center has good basic facilities although there are no doctors and they sometimes run out of water as well. What makes Dzumeri slightly better than Katekani is that a tarred road connecting Giyani and Tzaneen town runs through it. It is therefore much easier for health workers in Dzumeri to access ambulance services in cases of emergency than it is in the Katekani health center. Consequently community members in Katekani have more confidence in the Dzumeri health center, and those that can afford transport costs travel to this center instead of using their own.

Education remains one of the most challenging aspects as the lack of proper education facilities and the inability of parents to afford school fees are common problems in rural areas. A total of 86% of the respondents have shown dissatisfaction with the education aspect, however, only 14% highlighted education as the most needed aspect in their areas. Katekani has one high and two primary schools while in Dzumeri there is one primary and one high school. In both communities the schools make do with old buildings, broken windows and doors, and the constant problem of parents failing to pay school fees charged at R100 for high schools and R50 for primary schools. It is only when you

narrow down your questions from development in general to conditions in schools that most community members will voice out their problems with educational facilities in their areas. Some of the comments recorded are as follows:

The school fees are too much, many people cannot afford these and it is worse if you have more than one child. The teachers there do not even teach, the kids just go there and play, you will see them back at home and on the streets even before school is out (Maki Nkuna, Dzumeri, 14/12/2001).

I did not get my school report because my father did not pay my school fees (Masesi Nkanyani, aged 9, Katekani, 15/12/2001).

Despite unfulfilled major development needs, the people of Katekani and Dzumeri have witnessed the provision of other developmental services that seemed like a dream during the not so distant past. Although rated as less important, this study recorded 100% of satisfaction with the electricity aspect (see Figure 5.5). Most of the households cannot afford electrical appliances and electricity itself, but residents expressed satisfaction with the provision of this service in their areas. A pre-paid electricity system has been installed in the two areas in 1999 and households who fail to pay for electricity services either resort to firewood and candles. Besides electricity, the following aspects were mentioned as government's achievements:

- Democracy,
- Building health centers, and
- Improved education syllabuses.

For some, the new government has not improved anything in their lives; Eva Khosa of Dzumeri had the following to say:

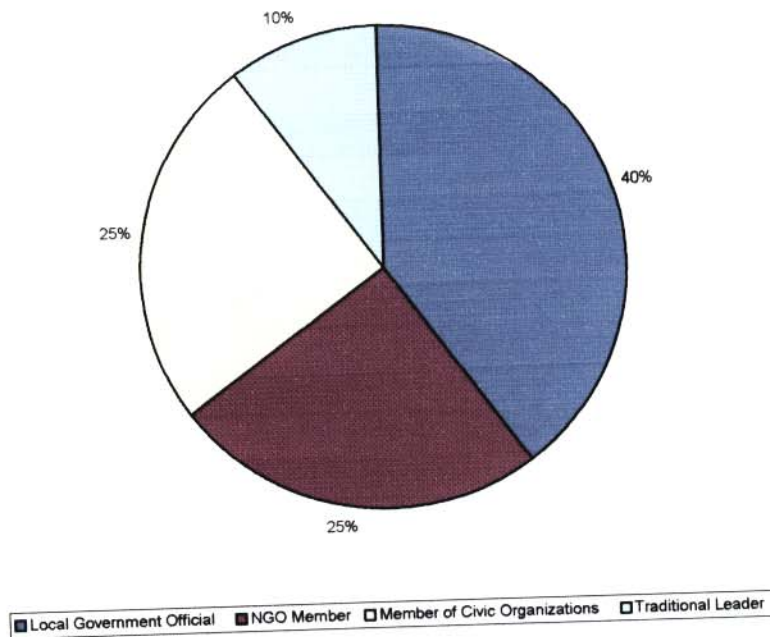
Ever since the democratic government came into being, things have only gotten worse. I don't see the new local government doing something about our problems either; they only notice us when it is time for elections (16/12/2001).

5.2. *Rural Development Issues as Perceived by the Main Role Players in the Rural Development Process*

5.2.1. *Positions of the Participating Role Players*

In order to establish perspectives from the development planners, implementers and other role playing development agents regarding the rural development process and how the newly established developmental local government impacts on the process, this study investigated the views of these role players. Whether their powers are provided for by government, nongovernmental organizations or with the house of traditional leaders, these respondents play an equally critical role in determining the success and/or failure of the developmental local government in the country.

Figure 5.6: Current Positions of the Participating Role Players



Perspectives were sought from the local government officials (including local councillors), NGOs, members of civic organizations as well as the traditional leaders from the two study areas (see Figure 5.6). The purpose is to establish, compare and contrast the local residents' feelings and views regarding development in their areas with those of the role playing individuals in the rural development processes. Conflicts between government and residents on the ground regarding which development aspects matter most have usually been blamed for delaying development in rural areas.

Despite the common knowledge that an office desk is the most dangerous place from which to view the world, residents believe government officials always decide what is needed on the ground in terms of development without proper consultation with the

communities concerned. This leads to the fact that the two might have different perspectives regarding rural development matters.

5.2.2. Development Priorities for the Rural Sector, Perspectives of the Outsiders

The study found that officials, development agencies and residents consider water and sanitation as the priority for rural development (see Figure 5.7). This was also the case with the residents at Katekani and Dzumeri (see Figures 5.5 and 5.8). What draws the line between the two groups (role players and local residents) is that role players are positive of the processes and they see progress regarding rural development. John Matambela of Metsico in Polokwane was very positive about the rural water provision processes that they have embarked on jointly with the local municipalities and the Department of Water and Forestry in all areas of the Limpopo Province. Regarding why the process is taking so long to reach the ground he had the following to say:

The water supply and sanitation programmes are surely going to reach everyone at the end of the day, what is best is for people to wait with some patience and not expect everything to happen overnight. There are procedures to be followed and these things take time (20/10/ 2001).

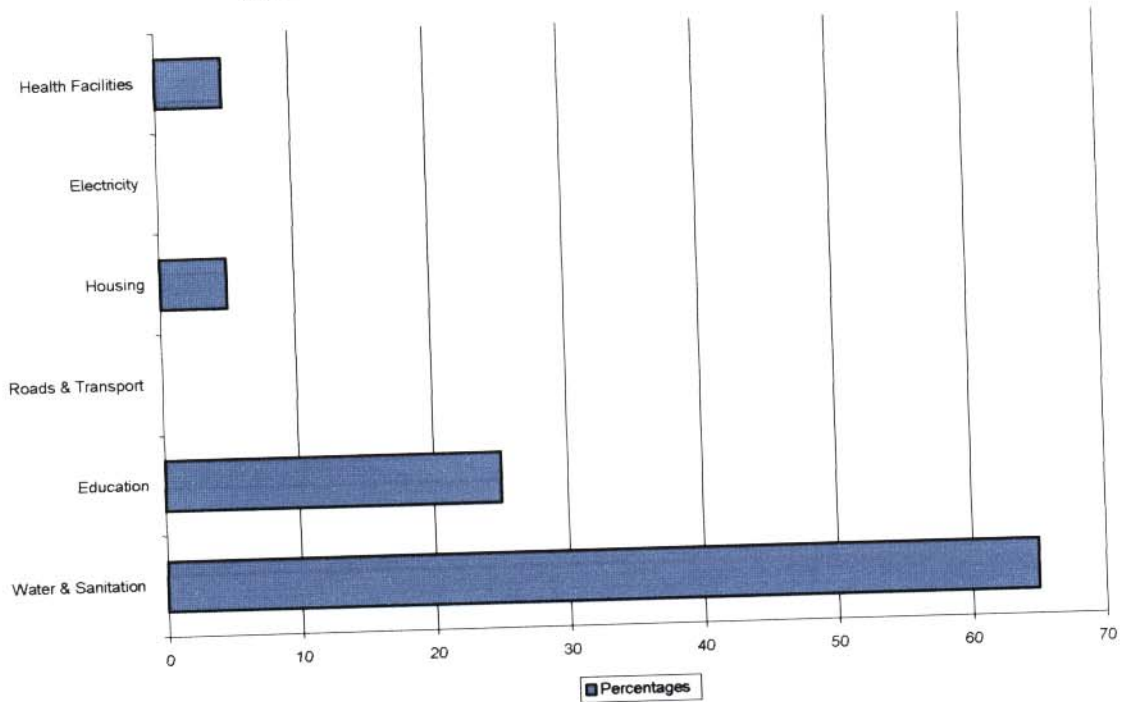
Commenting about water issues in the country, the Department of Water Affairs' director of project development, Kalinga Pelpola, reported in May 2002 that:

South Africa is doing remarkably well. We have managed to halve the unserved population in just seven years and are on track to wipe out the entire backlog by 2008 if we maintain our current rate of progress. Since 1994, 1,3-million people in the Eastern Cape have received access to clean water; 1,6-million in Kwazulu-Natal; 1,3-million in North West, 931 000 in the Limpopo Province; 612 000 in

the Free State; 190 000 in the Northern Cape and 136 000 in the Western Cape (Engineering News-online, 31/05/2002:01).

The two figures below (see Figures 5.7 and 5.8) present the role-playing respondents' views on rural development priorities in general and within their areas of jurisdiction.

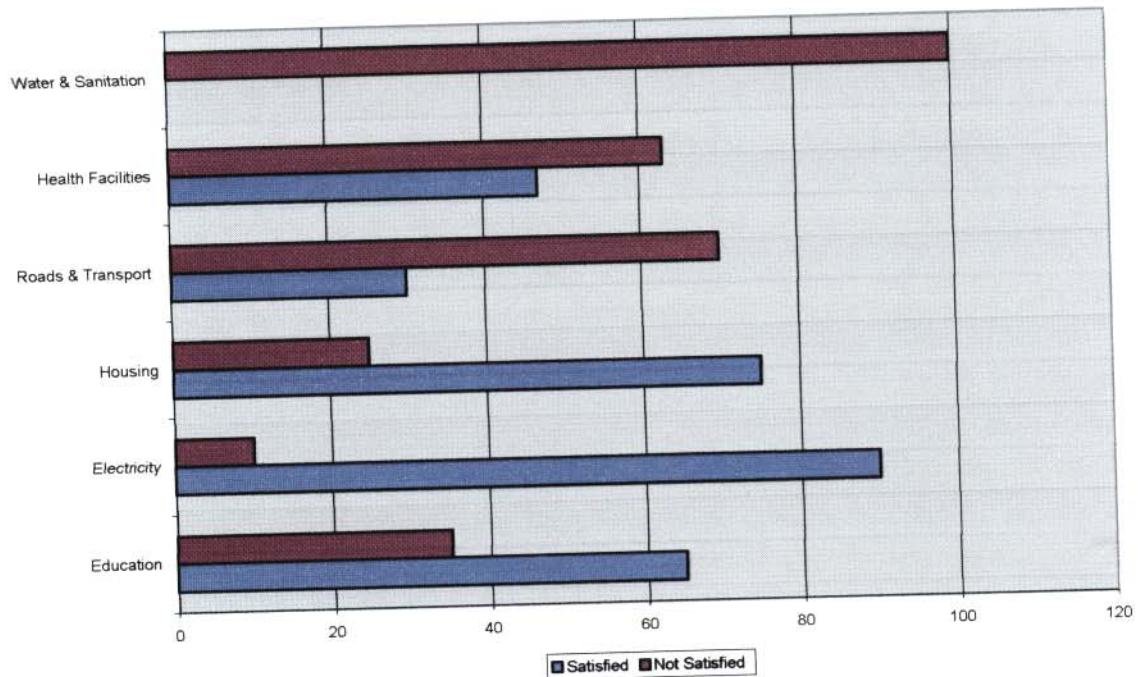
Figure 5.7: Role Players' Ratings of Development Priorities in Rural Areas



While the role playing respondents rated education as the second most important development aspect for the rural sector (see Figure 5.7), provision of proper health services is, according to local residents the second most important aspect of development. It appears that the lack of life saving services on a daily basis may consequently lead to local residents down-playing the importance of other significant development aspects in rural lives such as education. Development agents and government officials have shown more concern for a need to improve educational facilities and services in the rural areas

than the rural people themselves. This situation creates an impression that, when you have trouble accessing water and health care for immediate relief on a daily basis, the education aspect which only shows long term benefits seems less important. In addition, the services that you already have such as electricity seem less desirable. For government officials and development agents who usually do not experience the realities of water and food crises, it might be much easier for them to acknowledge the significance of aspects such as education, roads and transport as aspects requiring immediate attention.

Figure 5.8: Role Players' (Dis) satisfaction with Development Aspects in their Areas of Jurisdiction



The developmental local government system brought about the brilliant idea that local councillors who will represent the people in government be democratically voted into power. Municipal councils play a central role in promoting local democracy. In addition

to representing community interests within the council, municipal councillors should promote the involvement of citizens and community groups in the design and delivery of municipal programmes (Republic of South Africa, 1998b). Local councillors in Katekani and Dzumeri villages are people who live in the same villages. It is therefore easier for local councillors who are in a real sense part of the local residents to identify and understand the needs of the people on the ground. However, this advantage is hindered by lack of resources, capacity and cooperation between the local councillors and traditional leaders as well as how local councillors relate with their higher offices. Mr Elija Malungani, the local councillor at Katekani village, had the following to say:

I may know what the developmental needs of the people in my area of jurisdiction are, but if funds are not provided for by the provincial and national government in areas of need, then there is not much I can do (05/01/2002).

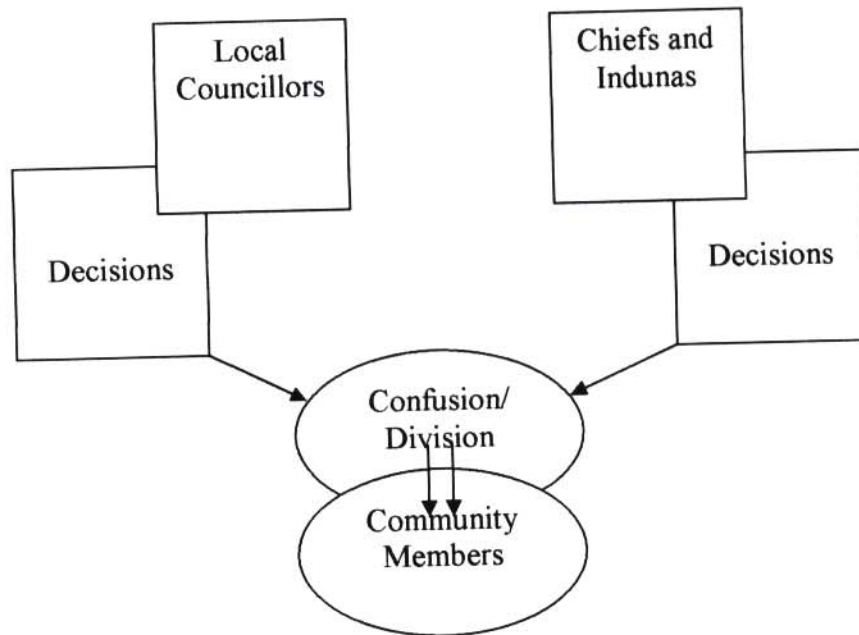
Africa Rikhotso, the local councillor at Dzumeri, commented on factors hindering the rural development in his areas of jurisdiction as follows:

If there is to be progress in the process, the national government must help the newly established local municipalities with funds to specifically address the needs of the people. Our municipality is mostly rural, and there is no way it can successfully sustain itself (06/01/2002).

Despite the local councillors' activities being weakened by lack of funds, their continuing sour relationships with the traditional leaders (chiefs) have also developed into a heated issue, leading to, in some cases, division among the people within communities. Since the chiefs are uncertain of their future and their role in the developmental local government

system, there are constant disagreements about roles and responsibilities between the two structures.

Figure 5.9: Relationship between Traditional Leaders, Local Councillors and Community Members in the Rural Sector



In the African culture, the saying that ‘there can only be one bull in a kraal’ (there can be only one leader in the community) is still taken seriously in some places. Therefore, it becomes culturally difficult for the traditional leaders to interact fairly with councillors on an equal footing. If there are actions by councillors to achieve development objectives without approval from the chiefs, these actions sometimes amount to signs of disrespect to the house of traditional leaders. Malombo Mnisi, member of the Katekani Civic Organization commented on the tension between chiefs and local councillors:

The problem is that until now, we don't have a clear description of responsibilities and people are confused because they don't know who is responsible and accountable for what and who has the final say. The relationship is sour, the traditional leaders are not even informed of their role in the new government and traditional leaders view local government and councillors as a threat (18/12/2001).

There are, however traditional leaders who are committed more to the development of their people than the power struggles. Chief Mabunda D, of the Dzumeri village, commented on the subject:

The relationship will be tense until there is proper participation by the traditional leaders in the municipal council, but at the moment we both sacrifice to meet the challenges of development in order to uplift the standard of living for our people (04/01/2002).

Despite commitment by the developmental local government to improve living conditions for the rural poor, the people of Katekani and Dzumeri still wake up to poor, unhealthy living conditions. Perhaps the question to ask is not what local government has done for the people, but whether the services provided by the local government are what the people on the ground need most. A rural development activist in Polokwane commented on issues of development for the poor as follows:

The majority of rural people of this province put their vote and confidence in the new government to deliver the basic needs such as clean water, durable electricity, decent education and anything constituting a better life for all. Sadly many years down the line, ordinary black people's lives continue to be mired in landlessness, gruelling poverty, illiteracy, unemployment and disease. Surely this is no better life for all (Vonani Bila, 10/12/2001).

By the Year 2002, the local councillor in Katekani had secured housing for the 27 households affected by the floods of 1999 and funds for building a community hall, while the local councillor in Dzumeri has achieved housing for an undisclosed number of the needy household in his area. Both local councilors have shown commitment to development of their areas of jurisdiction. However, because they are closer to the people on the ground, they are the first to be blamed for lack of government's delivery. This occurs despite the complex nature of development in the country as a whole.

The findings presented in this chapter assert that the effects of the reformed local government have not been felt by the people in the rural areas. Instead, the rural development process has been characterized by projects with poor consultation, weak participation of communities concerned, slow implementation and weak sustainability. In the light of the research questions that motivated this study (see Chapter 1), the developmental local government is not as yet, successfully facilitating the required change in the rural environment. This is supported by the fact that most of the development needs (in Katekani and Dzumeri) identified in this chapter remain unmet.

5.3. Conclusions

Growing poverty and other social issues have become emotive subjects and also indicators among people of how to judge government's performance. Daily experiences such as the lack of clean water, sanitation, employment, health, proper roads services and other significant needs induce the people's vote of no confidence in developmental local government. Rural people ascribe their experiences of non- development and under-

development to lack of good governance and official irresponsiveness to the needs of the rural people.

CHAPTER 6: Conclusions and Recommendations

This study was intended to identify how the new developmental local government approach impacts on processes of rural development in South Africa in order to provide new insights into rural development and local government. Undoubtedly, there is a clear recognition that the rural development challenge in a form of abject poverty for millions of South Africans, especially in rural areas, requires urgent and effective solutions. Such challenges are seen as a direct result of planned poverty by the apartheid government. Consequently, the developmental local government has been introduced by government with a focus on:

Realizing developmental outcomes, such as the provision of household infrastructure and services; the creation of liveable cities, towns and rural areas; and the promotion of economic development, community development and redistribution (Republic of South Africa, 1998a:3).

With the new municipalities in place and the new local government in power, local citizens have had expectations for immediate delivery of services and infrastructure, poverty alleviation and signs of growth in areas of need. These expectations are rather higher in rural areas where people continue to live in poor living conditions without access to basic services and proper infrastructure. The rural people in Katekani and Dzumeri still have to taste the fruits of the government's developmental programmes. This situation is not unique to these two areas only, but is typical of most rural areas in South Africa. Local government's development programmes are proving to be slow and are also providing services and infrastructure that are not priority to the rural people

themselves. The slow pace of development in rural areas could be influenced by various factors that government can address as shown in this study.

The redemarcation of boundaries has led to cases where rural and urban areas are incorporated into a single local municipality. For example, Greater Giyani local municipality is constituted by urban and rural areas with rural areas increasingly losing their character. Rural and urban areas have enormous differences in terms of developmental needs. It is highly unlikely that there can be an effective generic approach and system to address the needs of both the sectors.

The rural development process requires community interactive approaches for identification of needs, project/programmes implementation through use of proper participatory methodologies and maintenance. This would require a sufficiently capacitated and dedicated community development workforce. Urban development, on the other hand has its own principles requiring different development agents to address urban developmental needs. In the newly established local authorities, there is little professional capacity to address the enormous development challenges facing the rural sector. The inadequate capacity in local authorities to deliver efficient and effective services should be addressed without government having to resort to privatization of services that in turn, leads to unaffordable pricing of services. It is therefore essential for government to acquire or capacitate development agents, so as to enhance their ability to adapt and implement developmental policies as and when they come.

In the local municipalities which are mainly rural, the slow pace of development has also been associated with lack of financial capital. At the same time municipalities are expected to fulfill their constitutional mandate. Government encourages municipalities to raise their own revenue through billing of services and other means, for example, the promotion of local economic development. This makes a reasonable and feasible plan for ideal municipalities wherein residents (households) can afford, and do pay for services offered by their municipalities. The reality in the rural sector, where the majority of people cannot afford to pay for services, does not make this plan feasible. Instead, it poses several logical questions:

- How do you determine who pays and who does not pay for the services received?
- What do you do with those who cannot afford to pay? Do you deny and cut them off basic services? What about constitutional mandates?
- Does the privatization of services serve to diminish/invalidate the right to basic services?
- Does the payment of services constitute another form of unequal development?

In the wake of this complexity in rural development issues, government requires to provide for and implement dedicated strategies to rural development. These strategies should clarify the institutional and financial implications of human rights such as the right to basic services in ways that are responsive to the conditions of the rural poor.

Before 1994, the traditional leaders and the elderly in rural areas constituted tribal councils that were responsible for taking village decisions and the overall management of their area(s). The introduction of the developmental local government as an engine for effective rural development has been perceived as a threat by and to the traditional leaders. It is apparent that these leaders want to maintain the patriarchal set-up by opposing and, in some cases, rejecting the work of local councilors in their areas. Tension between local councillors and traditional leaders tends to complicate local government's development agendas and therefore thwart progress. It is common knowledge that this conflict is currently serving as one of the major constraints to development in rural areas as it creates confusion among community members and development practitioners. With democracy encouraging community members to be active role players in development so as to contribute to their local economic development, it would be ideal to rid the communities of any confusing leadership problems. Government should take note that accelerating the process of clarifying roles, positions and responsibilities of traditional leaders would create a conducive and stable condition that would allow for effective management and implementation of development programmes in rural areas.

The urgent need of infrastructure development and provision of basic services in Katekani and Dzumeri gives us the bigger picture of what transpires in the South African rural sector. South Africa's rural development process has not only been slowed, but has been commercialized as well. The critical question is shifting from whether the rural people will ever witness development in their areas; to whether they will be able to afford such. It would be more rational for government to, in addition to providing infrastructure,

instill capacity (farming, starting and managing small businesses, etc) to the rural poor in order for them to earn income and contribute to the maintenance of development programmes in their areas. In other words, a sustainable approach to development of the rural people should not only be viewed as helping people, but more as helping people to help themselves. This approach could, in the long run, contribute to breaking the cycle of poverty in the rural South Africa.

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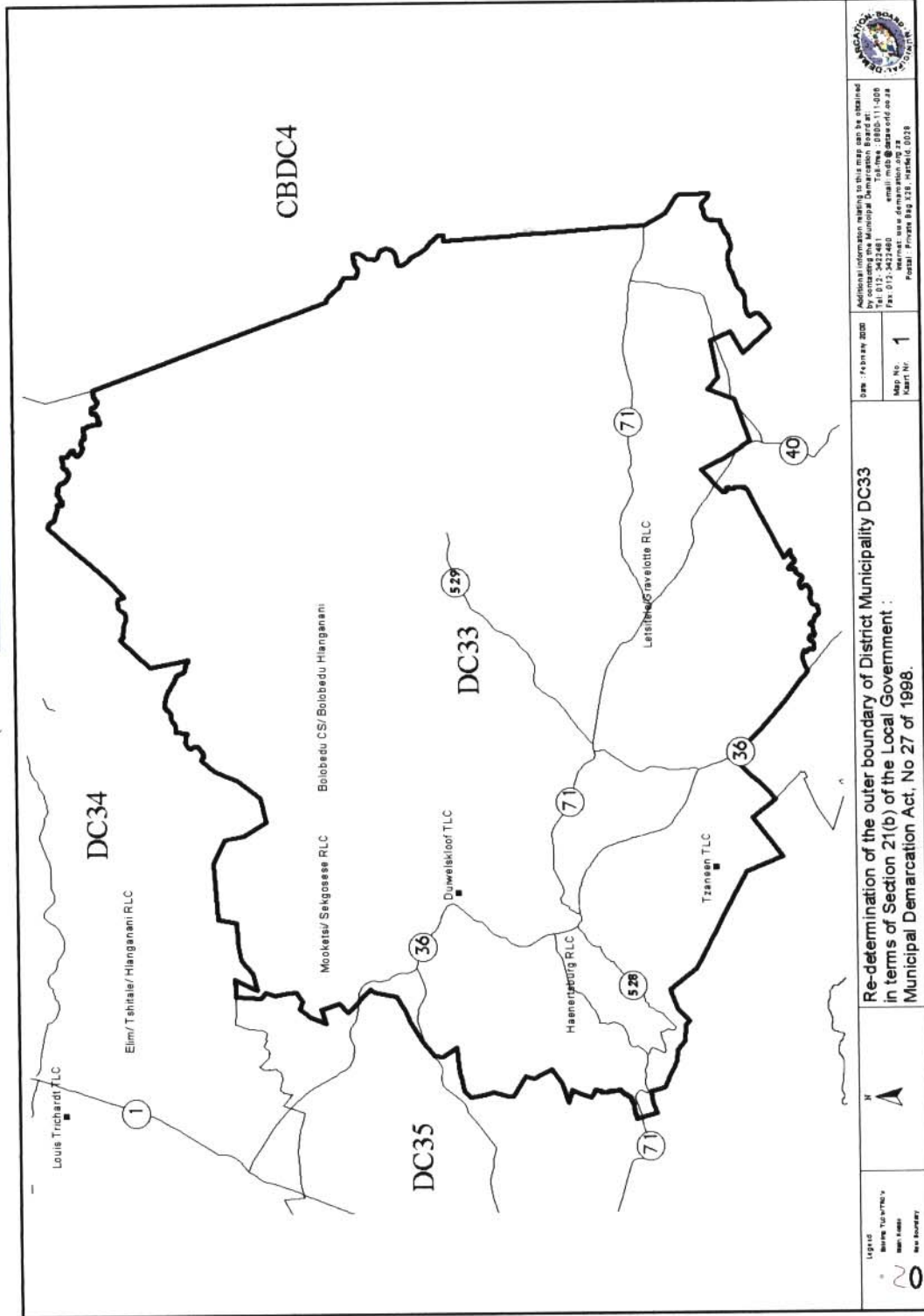
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APPENDIX 1
Location Map of Mopani District Municipality

Location Map of Mopani District Municipality

(Source: www.demarcation.org.za)



		<p>Re-determination of the outer boundary of District Municipality DC33 in terms of Section 21(b) of the Local Government : Municipal Demarcation Act, No 27 of 1998.</p>	<p>Additional information relating to this map can be obtained from the Mopani District Municipality Demarcation Unit Tel: 012-2422480 Fax: 012-2422480 e-mail: mdb@demarcation.org.za Internet: www.demarcation.org.za Postal: Private Bag 338, Harare, 0033</p>
<p>Drawn: February 2008</p>		<p>Map No. 1</p>	

APPENDIX 2

Questionnaire for Role Players in the Rural Development Process

Questionnaire for Role Players in the Rural Development Process

(i) Current position in the area.

1. Tick the appropriate column below.

Local government official.	
NGO member.	
Member of civic organization.	
Traditional leader.	

(ii) Satisfaction with the state of rural development.

2. Which of the below development aspects is the most important for the rural people?

Tick appropriate column below.

Health facilities	
Water & sanitation	
Education	
Roads & transport	
Housing	
Electricity	

3. Indicate your level of satisfaction with the following developmental aspect in your areas of jurisdiction.

	Satisfied.	Not satisfied.	Don't know.
Health facilities.			
Water & sanitation.			
Education.			

Roads & transport.			
Housing.			
Electricity.			

(iii) Perceived impact of government on rural development.

4. How do you determine the needs of the people in the rural areas? -----

-----.

5. What ways is government currently using in order to determine the needs of the people in rural areas? -----

-----.

6. In your view, has government improved the lives of the rural people since 1994?

Yes	
No	

Why -----
-----.

7. How did the previous TLC system help with rural development in your area of jurisdiction -----

-----.

8. In your view, what are the positive changes made to local government that will make / makes it more responsive to the needs of the rural people? -----

-----.

9. What could hinder the performance of the new municipalities? -----

-----.

10. What is the kind of a relationship between the local government and the traditional authority in your area of jurisdiction? -----

-----.

11. How do local government and the traditional authority work together in developing the quality of lives within your area of jurisdiction? -----

-----.

12. State any suggestions that could lead to the improvement on the rural development in your area of jurisdiction and other rural areas-----

-----.

APPENDIX 3

Questionnaire for Local Residents in Katekani and Dzumeri

Questionnaire for Local Residents in Katekani and Dzumeri

(i) Demographic data.

1. Tick the appropriate column below.

Age	Marital status	Breadwinner in the family	Size of family.
18-29	Never married	Husband	4 and below
30-39	Divorced	Wife	5-8
40-49	Widowed	Grand parents	Above 8
50-59	Married	Children	
60+			

gender	State of employment
Male	currently employed
female	Self employed
	Not employed

(ii) Satisfaction with the state of development in the study area.

1. Which of the below listed aspects of development are the most important to you?

Tick the appropriate column below.

Health facilities	
Water & Sanitation	
Roads & Transport	
Housing	
Electricity	
Education	

2. Indicate your level of satisfaction on the following developmental aspects in your area.

	Satisfied.	Not satisfied.	Don't know.
Health facilities.			
Water & sanitation.			
Roads & transport.			
Housing.			
Electricity.			
Education.			

3. What has government done to improve the living conditions in your community since 1994? -----

-----.

4. What did you expect the government to have done so far? -----

-----.

5. Who else can help with the community development process in your area, except for government? -----

-----.

6. Presently, what should be done to develop this area? -----

-----.

7. What are you doing as a community to ensure development in your area? -----

-----.

8. State any suggestions that could lead to improvement on the quality of life in your area and other rural areas-----

-----.