TABLE OF CONTENTS

LIST OF FIGURES

LIST OF TABLES

LIST OF ACRONYMS

ABCD	Asset Based Community Development
ABET	Adult Basic Education Training
AIDS	Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome
ASGISA	Accelerated Shared Growth Initiative of South Africa
AU	African Union
BBBEE	Broad Based Black Economic Empowerment
CAMP	Community Asset Mapping Programme
CBO	Community Based Organisation
CEDAW	Convention on the Elimination of all forms of Discrimination Against Women
CGE	Commission on Gender Equity
CIS	Commonwealth of Independent States
CRDP	Comprehensive Rural Development
DRDLR	Department of Rural Development and Land Reform
DTI	Development of Trade and Industry
EEP	Employment Equity Plan
EPWP	Extended Public Works Programme
GAD	Gender and Development
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
GEAR	Growth and Economic Redistribution
GM	Gender Mainstreaming
GNP	Gross National Product
GSDS	Greater Sekhukhune Development Strategy

FAO	Food and Agricultural Organisation
HD	Human Development
HIV	Human Immune Virus
IDP	Integrated Development Plan
IEC	Independent Electoral Commission
ITK	Indigenous Technical Knowledge
LIBSA	Limpopo Business Support Agency
MDGS	Millennium Development Goal Strategy
MTN	Microbicide Trials Network
NDA	National Development Agency
NDP	National Development Plan
NGO	Non-Governmental Organisation
NSDP	National Spatial Development Perspective
NEPAD	New Partnership for Africa's Development
NSNP	National Schools Nutrition Programme
OAU	Organisation of African Unity
OSSREA	Organisation for Social Science Research in Eastern Africa
OSW	Office on the Status of Women
PRA	Participatory Rural Approach
PDGS	Provincial Development Growth Strategy
RDP	Reconstruction and Development Programme
RRA	Rapid Rural Appraisal
SABC	South African Broadcasting Corporation
SABS	South African Bureau of Standards

SADC	Southern Africa's Development Community
SASSA	South African Social and Security Agency
SEDA	Small Enterprise Development Agency
SGB	School Governing Body
SMME	Small Medium and Micro Enterprises
SMS	Senior Management Services
SWOT	Strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats
UIF	Unemployment Insurance Fund
UK	United Kingdom
UN	United Nations
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNGM	United Nations Gender Mainstreaming
UNIN	University of the North (University of Limpopo)
UP	University of Pretoria
USAID	United States Agency for International Development
WAD	Women and Development
WE	Women Empowerment
WID	Women in Development
WSSD	World Summit on Sustainable Development

CHAPTER ONE

THE ROLE OF GENDER WITHIN THE DEVELOPMENT PROCESS IN THE GLOBAL SOUTH WITH SPECIAL REFERENCE TO RURAL SOUTH AFRICA

Internationally, the desire to include women in development processes has a long and in most instances not very successful history. Patriarchy, which implies that power rests with men, has been practised in most societies across the globe for many decades – even centuries. The consequence of this norm is that women often remain marginalised and even powerless in achieving a better life for themselves and their families. The norm has resulted in their exclusion from significant events in the everyday life of the communities in which they live. In some communities women are often only associated with reproduction and family responsibilities which have kept them within the boundaries of their homes. The most important reason for this association is that peoples' roles are often defined on the basis of gender. The situation has kept many women materialistically poor, vulnerable and often deprived. In countries located in the Global South where the economic welfare is significantly worse than in the Global North, the situation related to the welfare of women is worse due to the economic dependence of the Global South on the Global North. Within this development paradigm, the idea is that development would trickle down from 'rich' countries to 'poor' countries, and that the gender bias towards men would change with development and would thus transfer from men to women. As a result, the development agencies in the last three decades of the previous century saw women as passive beneficiaries who were not actively engaged or consulted during the planning or implementation of the multitude of development initiatives of the time.

Boserup (1970), an economist, published her research which concentrated on the role women played in economic development. In this work, she maintained that the respective contributions made by women within the economic fields of agriculture and industrial development should be taken into account. Boserup's (1970) work was so significant that

the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) started to reconsider the contribution that women could make to development. Since the 1970s, a variety of different strategies have been adopted to provide for the more inclusive role that women play within development agendas. Some of these strategies are documented by Ghosh and Chopra (2002); Parpart, Rai and Staut (2002) and Premchander and Muller (2002).

The first strategy that was discussed by the above authors is the Women in Development (WID) which called for the treatment of women and children issues in development projects. Often the focus was on making women the beneficiaries of aid in the areas of food, shelter and family planning issues. Within the WID outlook, women were not given the opportunity to participate as equals in development matters but it was expected that women should merely accept what they were given. Although WID had many shortcomings, it did highlight the need for the inclusion of women in a variety of development issues. As time went on, this view became stronger, and women and development were seen as inseparable, and the emphasis started to change to the concept of Women and Development (WAD). There was a realisation that it would be beneficial to the success of development projects to integrate women into matters of development. This became a reality as the idea of Gender and Development (GAD) took off effectively and at great speed during the last part of the previous century. As an approach to development, the GAD was of the opinion that women could be included in development matters only if the power within the context of gender relations was redistributed evenly, starting from the home as the focal point. During this period, the idea grew that it was the inequality between men and women that often stood in the way of women's opportunities to participate in a meaningful way in a variety of development projects.

Although the importance of women in development was recognised in the 1980s and the matter was developed by a variety of development programmes, various approaches until 1995 were criticised in different ways. This critique included the WID which ignored the larger social processes that had a real effect on the lives of women and their reproductive roles. Failure to address the root causes of gender equalities was one of the main reasons for the failure of the WID. GAD attempted to redress this problem by making use of gender analysis to develop a broader view of problems faced by women. The approach then moved

away from focusing on women's issues, to concentration on the way in which men and women participate in the development process.

1.1   GENDER MAINSTREAMING (GM)

Gender Mainstreaming (GM) then became a purposive goal, as women were to be drawn from the periphery to the centre of the development process from planning to implementation. Under the auspices of the United Nations, all countries were encouraged to align their development policies and programmes guided by gender mainstreaming perspectives. It is as a result of sound gender mainstreaming practices that we often hear of the 50/50 setup. The South African Constitution is a good example of how gender mainstreaming has taken place in many government departments. However, like many countries in the world, there remains a big gap between policy and implementation (Rippenaar-Joseph, 2009:281-290).

1.2   WOMEN EMPOWERMENT (WE)

With the various attempts to bring women on board, women empowerment was regarded as the right approach to bring about social equity. The approach emerged in the 1980s because of the failure of GAD and other related strategies. The approach realised that, since women were actually disempowered, they needed to be empowered to be able to work together with men. The concept requires women to be self-reliant in meeting their practical needs so that in the end they can meet their strategic needs. Consequently, different laws and regulations that support, protect and respect the rights of women are promulgated worldwide, and this has also been done in South Africa. Therefore, it is the primary aim of the thesis to expose the role of women in activities as far as women empowerment is concerned. What is real is that empowerment is something that must come from within a person and not from an external force. In support of this view, Mosedale (2005: 244) acknowledges that empowerment cannot be bestowed by a third party. Instead, those who would like to be empowered must claim it. When correctly adopted, both gender mainstreaming and women empowerment are important approaches that can help eradicate women's oppression.

1.3   UNITED NATIONS MILENNIUM DEVELOPMENT GOALS (MDGs)

At the United Nations Millennium Summit in 2000, the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) were developed, not as an approach to development, but as catalysts that would encourage every country around the globe to desire to achieve the target goals for 2015 (United Nations, 2011:4). The MDGs are intended to inspire development efforts, set global and national priorities, and focus government actions to achieve these goals. The nine MDGs address many aspects of development, such as gender equity, poverty reduction, environmental sustainability and human development. Goal 3 focuses on the promotion of gender equality and the empowerment of women. In the 2013 report on the Millennium Development Goals (United Nations, 2013b:18-23), progress of the various targets within the goal are described. Steady progress has been made towards equal access of both genders to education. There are, however, regional differences in this regard. Girls face high barriers to accessing primary school education in Northern Africa, sub-Saharan Africa and Western Asia (United Nations, 2013b:19). Eastern Asia is the only region in the Global South where girls have greater access to primary school education than boys (United Nations, 2013b:19). Gender disparities become more marked at higher levels of education, with girls not always at a disadvantage. Only two out of the 130 countries that are signatories of the MDGs have achieved gender parity in all levels of education (United Nations, 2013b:19). Women's access to paid employment is an indication of their integration into the market economy. In this regard, women are gaining ground in the labour market, although not in all regions and not in all areas of work. Although more women are now participating in income-earning opportunities, this does not imply that these positions are secure. In every developing region (especially Western Asia, Northern Africa, sub-Saharan Africa and Oceania), women tend to hold fewer secure jobs than men, with fewer social benefits (United Nations, 2013b:21). This trend can be ascribed to a variety of factors that govern family life. The lack of childcare facilities and other social rights also contribute decisions not to participate in the labour force or will influence the type of employment and their employment patterns (United Nations, 2013b:21). Women are assuming more power in the world's parliaments, boosted by quota systems. There are only six parliamentary chambers in the world today where there are no women members (United Nations,

2013b:22). There is a lot of room for improvement in women's decision-making power at home.

The MDGs, as viewed by researchers such as Aitken and Valentine (2008:42), are solely concerned with the improvement of women's lives by understanding their living conditions; that would include the effect of their employment status, health and nutrition levels and also their role in and contribution to family life**.** In the light of research done across a wide spectrum of studies in recent times, it has become apparent that the MDGs can only be achieved if women empowerment is prioritised. In addition, the 2013 United Nations Human Development Report (United Nations, 2013a:45) has highlighted that gender dimensions are extremely important in enhancing equity in the world today, and is necessary to sustain the development momentum that will relieve poverty and reduce inequality globally.

While the achievement of the various MDGs is targeted for 2015, the United Nations is already considering the post-2015 areas of priority. In a survey commissioned by The North-South Institute (Higgins, 2013:22), the top global priorities identified by women respondents include (in order of rank from highest to lowest):

- A good education
- Better health care
- An honest and responsive government
- Access to clean water and sanitation
- Better job opportunities
- Affordable and nutritious food
- Protection against crime and violence
- Protection of forests, rivers and oceans
- Equality between men and women
- Freedom from discrimination and persecution.

It should be noted from the list above that women continue to prioritise aspects related to gender equality and at the same time give attention to the world's most pressing problems – such as environmental sustainability, economic growth, jobs and better governance – all of

which have a gender component. Gender and related matters thus remain high on the agenda of any programmes targeted at sustainable development.

1.4   GENDER AND ASSETS

Gender equality concentrated on bridging the gap between men and women by focusing on access to education and entry into stable paid employment and levels of income. Increasingly in the last decade, the focus of attaining gender equality has moved to a gender-assets approach. The link between gender and assets has become the focus of ongoing research under the Gender, Agriculture and Assets Project (GAAP) which has been jointly implemented by the International Food Policy Research Institute and the International Livestock Research Institute (Quisumbing et al., 2013: 1). The focus on assets rather than income is a result of the critical role of assets in both accumulating wealth and managing vulnerability; gender inequality is addressed in this way. Access to, control over, and ownership of assets – including land and livestock, homes and equipment and other resources – enables people to create stable and productive lives (Meinzen-Dick et al., 2013:5). Programmes to increase ownership of and control over assets help to provide more permanent pathways out of poverty and inequality, compared to programmatic measures that aim to increase incomes or consumption alone (Quisumbing et al., 2013: 2).

The GAAP programme maintains that whoever controls the assets within the household is critical to the whole household and to the well-being of individuals within the household. There is now substantial evidence (IFPRI, 2012: 3; Quisumbing et al., 2013: 1) that contradicts the common assumption made in economics and many development projects of a 'unitary' model of the household. Quisumbing et al. (2013: 3) explain that in many development projects there is the assumption that households are groups of individuals who have the same preferences and pool their resources fully. The International Food Policy Research Institute (IFPRI) suggests that, while some assets in a household are jointly held, many assets within households are held individually by the men, women and children who make up typical households. Meinzen-Dick et al. (2013:4) maintain that the allocation of assets to various individuals within households is determined by the context in which households find themselves as well as intra-household dynamics. The GAAP

6

maintains that the distribution of assets across individuals within a household may, in turn, affect individuals' intra-household bargaining power when individual preferences over outcomes differ (IFPRI, 2012: 7). A growing body of evidence collected by the GAAP has shown that 'not only do women typically have fewer assets than men, but they also use the ones they have differently' (IFPRI, 2012: 7).

Increasing women's control over assets – mainly land, and physical and financial assets - has been shown to have positive effects on a number of important development outcomes for the household; these include food security, child nutrition, education, as well as women's own well-being. Based on this and other evidence, 'it can be inferred that: understanding the role of men's and women's asset ownership and control is key to achieving global development goals' (IFPRI, 2012: 1).

In their work, which is largely on development of rural communities, Mathie and Cunningham (2008:339) encourage women to mobilise the local assets or resources in order to improve their livelihoods and those of their families. This is so because development, as postulated by the positivists, did not trickle down from men to women automatically. Women remained in the background despite the progress made by their male counterparts, while the success of any development project depends on the strong link between livelihood strategies and the access to and control of a variety of assets. The link between the empowerment of women and access to and control of assets is critical.

1.5 THE ROLE OF GENDER WITHIN THE DEVELOPMENT PROCESS IN AFRICA

Africa is generally regarded as a continent comprising countries characterised by making no exception with regard to the existence of human inequalities; these include the invisibility, deprivation, inequality, social injustice and discrimination that affect most women around the globe. Kevane (2004:31) observes that in many African countries, women were denied self-ownership as they were regarded as properties of their husbands. The condition in Africa has worsened due to its economic dependence on developed countries. The situation

was highlighted by the adoption of the Human Development model which culminated in conferences in Mexico (1975), Nairobi (1985) and Beijing (1995) where the status of women worldwide was reviewed. The empowerment of women has been taken as the necessary means to the end to bargain with patriarchy. In 1979, the Beijing Platform of Action (South Africa, 2005) came up with what is known as the Convention on the Elimination of all forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW). This convention guides almost all political women's movements. Different countries in Africa have addressed the issue of women's empowerment at their own pace, with Tanzania taking the lead. Cain et al. (2008:136) argue that women in sub-Saharan Africa will not enjoy the full benefit of their human rights unless there is a change in the political order within their countries - especially in governance – as well as commitment on the part of the international community to address the inequalities that exist in all spheres of life.

This research is therefore guided by feminist ideas that advocate equal rights for women. According to feminism, like all human beings women are also endowed with capabilities and potential which need to be developed. Soni (2006:27) maintains that men and women are created equally and endowed with the same inalienable rights to enjoy all available opportunities. Feminism strives to achieve gender equality which at the end of the day promotes a people-centred form of sustainable development. May (2008:19) is of the opinion that before the impact of feminist research on dominant social practice, women were only seen as wives, mothers and housewives; not as people in their own right. Their status was determined by the status of their husbands as the heads of households. It was unfortunate that development had not been able to trickle down from men to women as postulated by natural positivists. Therefore, women have remained unrecognised in all spheres of life. One should be reminded that the daily chores in which women are engaged (food preparation, cleaning, washing and child upbringing) do not count as value addition activities, despite the fact that all these activities consume almost two-thirds of their time. It is unfortunate that there is no mention of these activities, although women do make a significant contribution to the quality of life of any community. It is because of this attitude that women have tended to remain highly invisible.

1.6   GENDER AND DEVELOPMENT IN SOUTH AFRICA

South Africa ranks fourth amongst the 87 countries covered by the 2012 Social Institutions and Gender Index of the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (Statistics South Africa, 2013a: i). Within the continent of Africa, South Africa is ranked the highest in this index. South Africa's high ranking reflects the country's strong legal framework with regard to gender equality and women's rights. South Africa also performs well against the indicators specified for Goal 3 of the Millennium Development Goals; this goal focuses on gender equality and women's empowerment (Statistics South Africa, 2010: 56).

Women make up just over 50% of the population in South Africa. However, when one analyses the areas of the composition of the poorest people in the rural areas and informal settlements of South Africa, the majority of the people living in these areas are women (Statistics South Africa, 2013a: 4). In the rural areas where just over a half of all women in South Africa live, the levels of poverty and inequality are high and this impacts on the quality of the lives of women. In these areas, access to land ownership and general support for small-scale farming and other economic opportunities are limited for women. Apartheid and the migrant labour system created spatial rural-urban patterns that did not have a positive impact on rural households. This spatial pattern persists within rural areas today and the result is that over 30% of all households in rural areas are headed by women (Statistics South Africa, 2013a: 7-8). Unfortunately, this generally means that women are chiefly responsible for contributing to household income in rural areas. In most rural areas women work outside the home and still take full responsibility for housework. They work long hours to cook, clean and care for their families. Almost all families have young children, as well as old or disabled people who are cared for and nursed by women (Statistics South Africa, 2013b: 3).

Almost half of all African women have an education of Grade 7 or less, and many women have no schooling at all (Statistics South Africa, 2013b: 8 & 14).The statistics for 2011 show that although there are more girls attending high school compared to boys, more boys pass the highest level of school education (Statistics South Africa, 2013b: 14). This could be ascribed to the roles and responsibilities of girls within the household, which extend to

caring for the aged, extended family members and siblings, and this keeps girl children away from school or results in less study time. This trend continues in tertiary education with more than 60% of all men having post-matric qualifications, while only 40% of women achieve this level of qualification (Statistics South Africa, 2013b: 15).

Like many countries in the world, South Africa has introduced a quota system to ensure more representation of women in government (United Nations, 2013b:22). In 1994, the ANC introduced a one-third quota system for the first democratic election, and the result was that 30% of all members of parliament and provincial legislatures are women. The ANC was the only party to have a quota for women, and most parties have less than 25% women in their respective legislatures. About one-third of cabinet ministers are women. Women are also under-represented in local government – with only 28% of councillors being women – and very few of them hold important positions such as mayors or chairs of committees (ETU, 2013). Women are very badly represented among leadership in political parties, and in provincial and national executives of all parties, men fill about 80% of the leadership positions. In Cosatu, where women make up 37% of the members, only 14% of shop stewards are women (ETU, 2013).

In South Africa, as is the case in many other countries in the world, women do most of the work which helps communities deal with their challenges, but they have little power to influence leadership structures in development. Examples where women make up the majority but have almost no positions of power are in churches and rural areas that fall under traditional leaders (ETU, 2013; Statistics South Africa, 2013a: 10).

According to the GAAP, making assumptions about people as family units or 'households', does not provide us with correct information about the individuals in the unit (Meinzen-Dick et al., 2013:5). Such assumptions do not take into account the differences that exist in roles and responsibilities of the different genders in a household. In South Africa (as is the case in many countries in the Global South), men and women have different needs and problems, and access to power and resources are significantly different. Both genders are involved in productive work by making things or providing services that can be traded for money. Both genders are involved in productive work, but the types of work they do are

very different and are often divided according to their gender roles. The South African formal employment sector is characterised by specific gender trends; for example, most people in management are men and most clerical workers are women. Most teachers and nurses are women, but most school principals and doctors are men. Most skilled workers and artisans are men, and most cleaners and domestic workers are women (ETU, 2013). Most paid farm workers are men, while the women who grow crops for their families to eat are unpaid. In all sectors of the economy, men occupy the majority of the higher paid jobs. Even when men and women have the same jobs, men are usually paid more (ETU, 2013).

In South Africa the informal sector is a very important for the economy of country. As is the case in many countries in the Global South, women are the majority of the producers in the informal sector. The South African informal economy lacks support and infrastructure and is not represented in a variety of local decision-making forums. Economic development is an important part of development work in the country and the mainstreaming of women in this sector is critical. Local governments should investigate the needs of the informal sector and also important aspects such as space, security, storage facilities and power supply. The planning around issues such as transport, safety, childcare, health services and account pay points should take into account the needs of working women who are the major participants in the informal sector.

As is prescribed by the GAAP, women should be targeted for income-generating and employment projects. Consultation around such projects should directly involve women. Training and skills development should specially target women, whether these projects are organised by government or non-governmental organisations.

1.6.1 Gender legislation in South Africa

South Africa is no exception to masculine dominance in society. Such adverse conditions of gender discrimination dragged on up to 1994 when the South African democratic government dawned. Through the Bill of Rights, as contained in the Constitution of South Africa, all people are said to be equal before the law. In support of the Bill, the South African national government has made some effort to legislate against all forms of discrimination

11

and abuse against women and girl children. Examples of such legislation, as contained in the Beijing+10 Report (South Africa, 2005), are:

- *The Gender Equity Act*: The main aim of this Act is to encourage equality between women and men and boys and girls when it comes to access to resources and opportunities.

- *Act on Domestic Violence*: This Act protects both men and women against any form of abuse within the family. In addition, it encourages that such behaviour be reported.

- *Labour Relations Act, 1995 Act No. 66 of 1995:* The Act states that people, especially the vulnerable, are to be equally treated at places of work.

- *Empowerment Equity Act No. 55 of 1988 and Affirmative Action Act of 2000:* This Act ensures that the marginalised and the poor, especially women, are to be empowered in order to be self-reliant.

On 6 November 2013, the Women Empowerment and Gender Equality Bill (WEGE) was published in the Government Gazette (South Africa, 2013). The objectives of the Bill are to ensure the equal participation of women in social, political and economic structures of society by providing for women's empowerment and gender mainstreaming in the public and private sectors and in civil society, and eliminating detrimental cultural, economic, social and traditional practices against women. The Bill ensures that all strategies, policies, programmes and budgets must take measures to empower women, including integrating gender to ensure economic empowerment and representation.

All these laws are the manifestations of international agreements such as the Beijing Conference, WID, GAD and WEGE; their main tasks being to empower and mainstream women into all matters of development.

1.6.2 National Development Plan (NDP)

In 2012, the National Planning Commission launched the National Development Plan: 2030. This plan aims to eliminate poverty and reduce inequality by 2030. The National

Development Plan (NDP) developed key targets that guide communities, civil society, state and business in the elimination of poverty and the reduction of inequality. The plan stresses the importance of developing the people's and the country's capabilities. The plan is ready to do away with ailments such as unemployment, a low-level education system, widespread corruption, poverty, inequality and many other such issues that plague democratic South Africa at the moment (National Planning Commission, 2011). Despite the drive to mainstream gender matters within policy and strategy in South Africa, the NDP is mainly gender-blind, and in many instances disregards women's practical and strategic needs and concerns. The diversity of the needs of women is not recognised, and instead women are described as a vulnerable and homogenised group (National Planning Commission, 2011: 43). Although the plan does not specifically address gender specific contributions or needs within the South African economy or in development, it should be noted that the plan does not specifically exclude gender matters either. Since 1994, issues about the development of women's status have been the central focus of developmental planning in all spheres of life in order to redress the anomalies of the past. Women's dependency was and is still a major obstacle to women empowerment.

1.6.3 Women empowerment in South Africa the way forward

It is hoped that, with the adoption of the South African democracy, the living conditions of women would be better understood and that women would occupy their rightful place in society as citizens (Soni, 2006:146). The observation by the Organisation for Social Science research in Eastern and Southern Africa (OSSREA, 2010:65) has proven that women's empowerment should be seen as a process of redistribution of power, assets, resources, opportunities and constraints which should result in a society which is democratic and non-sexist. To date, the work of Musyoki and Fairhurst (2012:99) acknowledges the fact that the role of women in rural areas has undergone a considerable transformation with regard to self-development, asset accumulation and use, and also confidence building. It means that it is not the question of affirmative action, but the fact that women are trying hard to climb up the ladder of development. Consequently, there is an increased visibility of women in almost all spheres of life.

The global patriarchy that dominated the nations of the world remained a barrier on the path of development for women through their exclusion. There was nothing that a woman could do before getting permission from her husband, who often refused any move the woman would like to make. The major problem the study seeks to address is what women in local municipalities are doing to improve their living conditions. The South African democratic government is seriously striving for women to be empowered in all spheres of life. The democratic government has realised the mistake of disempowering, marginalising and discriminating against women merely because they are women. Since 1994, women in South Africa have been given equal opportunities and rights. Therefore, the research study investigates what has been done or is being done with regard to women empowerment within the municipality.

1.7   THE AIM OF THE RESEARCH

Instead of lamenting the legacy of past discriminations and inequalities that women suffered – and which some are still suffering – this research seeks to find out what women do or can do to liberate themselves. Women empowerment must be seen in development programmes as the only solution to end social inequality in the world today. This thesis seeks to encourage women to do their best to secure their rights as contained in the South African Gender Policy Framework. Furthermore, men are also requested to understand the position of women and support the idea of women's empowerment.

The main aim of the study is to show that the empowerment of women within local municipalities is a pathway to poverty reduction and the betterment of living conditions for women within their own environment. Prior to the 1996 gender-sensitive policy intervention, the main responsibility of women was to bear and rear children and to remain at home as caregivers for their children, the aged and their husbands. Lack of participation in economic, social and political activities rendered those women poor, vulnerable and marginalised. Now that all doors of economic activities are open to all people, women are expected to participate fully and contribute meaningfully to the development of their families and their communities. One should remember that freedom depends on economic conditions more than on merely political status. If a woman is not economically free and self-earning, she will

have to depend on her husband or someone else for survival for the rest of her life; dependents are never free. Above all, it is a general belief that the quality of life of a community can be judged by the increased employment level of the women folk. Hence, it is the aim of this study to find out what the women in this municipality are doing, especially after the dawn of the South Africa's democracy, to better their own living conditions.

In order to achieve the aim of the research, the three objectives were identified:

- *To describe the activities in which the women themselves engage in order to improve their quality of life:* It is a known fact that quality of life is a subjective concept, is intangible and cannot be quantified; however, it can be observed and used to help us get a general picture of what life is like in a particular place at a particular time. Factors such as freedom from discrimination, freedom of movement, the right to education, the right to vote and the right to human dignity can reveal the quality of life of a person or a society. It goes without saying that the improved quality of life will impact positively on fundamental aspects of life such as basic needs (availability of drinking water, food, health care, shelter and availability of clothing).

- *To establish how women's involvement in cash-earning activities impacts positively on the socio-economic standing of women:* It is known in history that women have for a long time been excluded from discussions or decisions taken by men. Women remained at home with restricted mobility.

- *To establish how the involvement of women outside the confines of the household offer women the opportunity to empower themselves and at the same time improve their living conditions:* The engagement of women outside the home gives them the opportunity to meet other people with whom they can exchange views on how to solve daily problems in order to learn how to cope with life's challenges .

1.8   GEOGRAPHICAL AREA OF THE STUDY

In order to achieve the objectives of the study, a municipality in Limpopo the northernmost province in the country was selected (Figure 1.1). Limpopo is the South African province with the highest level of poverty; 78.9% of the population live below the national poverty line. In 2011, 74.4% of local dwellings were located in a tribal or traditional area, compared to a national average of 27.1% (Statistics South Africa, 2013b: 7 & 16). The province is divided into five municipal districts and is further subdivided into 24 local municipalities. It is significant that the Sekhukhune District was earmarked by the former president of South Africa, Thabo Mbeki, during his national address on 30 April 2008 to be the 'poorest of the poor' (nodal point) district in Limpopo and needed immediate intervention. The researcher decided to investigate the levels of women empowerment in her own area of residence, the Makhuduthamaga Local Municipality, and to address the objectives of the research. Makhuduthamaga's current status is that of a Local Municipality formerly inhabited by the 'Bapedi ba Sekhukhune', living in a typical rural setting. This particular settlement typifies both the plight of women prior to the new political dispensation that followed in South Africa after becoming recognised as a democratic state in 1994, as well as the present situation in which women are encouraged to participate in all programmes of development, which were previously male-dominated.

The municipality is based in the Greater Sekhukhune District (Figure 1.1) which shares boundaries with the districts of Vhembe, Mopani, Waterberg and Capricorn, with the municipal headquarters situated in the town of Jane Furse. It is a summer rainfall area where livestock and crop farming are practised.

The Makhuduthamaga Local Municipality was officially established in December 2000 with the proclamation of the Municipal Act of 2000. It is one of the five local municipalities that comprise the greater Sekhukhune District, and is located in the central part of the district. The municipality consists of 146 settlements which are mostly rural in character (IDP, 2008:21). Women are 56.6% of the total population of 262 904. These women were highly marginalised with regard to their socio-economic standing in terms of their literacy level, agricultural endeavours, employment, decision making and skills development. The HIV/AIDS pandemic affected most of

16

these women because of their low level of literacy and cultural norms that compelled them to remain subordinate to their husbands. Based on general observation and from what the community members say, the main sources of living within the municipality are remittances, social grants and pension funds.

From the above, the women living within the boundaries of the Makhuduthamaga Local Municipality would surely benefit from this kind of policy intervention. One should understand that women's empowerment is essential for democracy, because women represent half the human resources and half the human potential in all societies. Therefore, by leaving women at the margins of development, no ideal sustainable development would be attained.
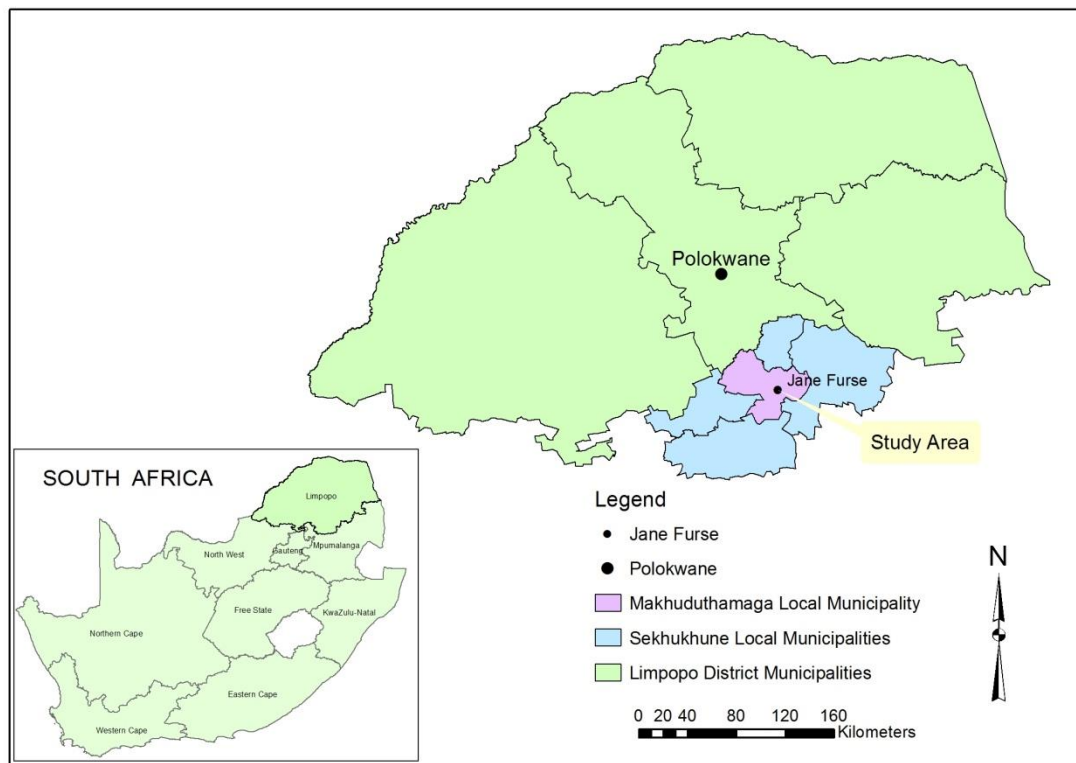
Figure 1.1: Location of Makhuduthamaga Local Municipality, Sekhukhune District, Limpopo

The study is geographically confined to the Makhuduthamaga Local Municipality. The name was given in recognition of the organisation, Makhuduthamagathat fought for democracy in Sekhukhuneland. The municipal area has hot summers and not very cold winters. The Bapedi are the original inhabitants of the municipality, and they practise extensive stock farming and subsistence dry land farming. With increased contact with westernisation, coupled with poor harvests, many households are no longer farming because most of the farmland has been taken up by new settlements and other development activities. Migrant labour affecting both males and females is still the order of the day, indicating that the sources of daily survival are a challenge as state welfare is insufficient.

In the municipality, the proportion of females is higher in terms of the gender breakdown of the population (IDP, 2009: 24). The main reason for the decreasing male numbers is mainly due to outflow of migrant male labour and the declining life span of the returning male population. Generally, the socio-economic analysis exposes the municipality as an area with relatively poor and uneducated people, implying a need for education, health care services, skills development and job creation in an attempt to address poverty which mostly affects women as breadwinners.

Within the municipality there are a number of voluntarily initiated projects that are run by women. The main purpose of the projects are to boost the means of living and survival. The Hlabologang Bakery, Diphagane Vegetable Gardening Project, Raemet Kreaxion Co-Op and Maano A Basadi Dairy Co-Op (meaning 'plans of women') were selected for in-depth investigation to find out how the projects affected the lives of women in the municipality. Furthermore, the study is limited to women living within the boundaries of the Makhuduthamaga Local Municipality. The socio-economic impact of the empowerment of women forms a psychological delimitation, whereby the mindset of women shifts and broadens to face the challenges of life on their own. This is the essence of the investigation and focuses specifically on women's marginalisation and empowerment.

1.9   THE CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK OF THE STUDY

The conceptual framework in Figure 1.2 illustrates how policy intervention can benefit the quality of life of women and the communities of the Makhuduthamaga Local Municipality at large. There is vast literature exposing how vulnerable and deprived women are becoming empowered worldwide. Women in the Global South countries were hit hard by patriarchy, which was practised within and outside the home. Social inequalities with regard to education, nutrition, employment, resource acquisition and decision making thrived. Furthermore, the mechanisation of agriculture complicated the problems faced by women. Consequently, poverty, hunger and low levels of literacy were associated with women. At last, such discrimination was strongly addressed at the Beijing Conference (Gosh & Chopra, 2002:320) through the signing of the CEDAW in 1995. In South Africa (macro-level) the dawn of democratic government would equate well with the agreements made in Beijing, as recent policies have brought some recognition for women who have for so long suffered exclusion. Policies and programmes that support women empowerment are in place to redress the imbalances that for decades have ruined many South African communities. The Makhuduthamaga Local Municipality (meso-level) was also positively affected by policy interventions as one of the municipalities created by the South African democratic government in the new dispensation. With such steps being taken, social equality should be achieved where women will enjoy the same opportunities as men at all levels of life; namely, social, economic, political and cultural undertakings. When such a stage is reached, women will have been empowered. The results of the data collected illustrate the living conditions of women and their communities.

According to the framework, women are viewed as key role players in improving life in all rural communities. Prior to policy interventions, women were highly marginalised, their quality of life not considered and societies were characterised by inequalities between men and women, boys and girls and people with disabilities. Resources and opportunities were channelled to benefit men as heads of families, and women and children were regarded as minors. With policy interventions since

1994, a period of transition dawned and the inequalities that discriminated women and other vulnerable groups were bound to come to a halt. All people became equals.

At micro-level – the household level in this case – the South African Constitution of 1996 ushered in policies that fostered a shift in decision making, gender division of labour, resource acquisition and power relations to create space for women's participation. The activism campaign for the 16-day period – 25 November to 10 December – promotes 'no violence against women and no children abuse' (South Africa, 2005:37) and is a defensive mechanism against the abuse and violence that women and children have suffered and are still suffering for no apparent reason. At meso-level – the municipal level – institutions such as community based organisations and local government offices are held responsible for the redistribution of resources and activities to empower women and the poor. It is at this level where women are expected to take part in decision making regarding their own priorities and needs in order to avoid repeating past mistakes. At macro-level – national level – various economic institutions are expected to consider and apply a gender-sensitive approach to the value of the 'invisible' work done by women privately and informally, as well as see their roles in the various economic sectors as significant.

Interventions will allow women to participate in the political, social, economic and cultural sectors more freely. That will only be possible if power is seen to circulate and to be exercised rather than to be possessed. The inclusion of women will without doubt also lead to a better quality of life for people in the Makhuduthamaga Local Municipality. The election of a female mayor for the period 2006 to 2011 as the head of the municipality was a clear indication of acceptance of the recognition and empowerment of women. It is true that during her term of office as mayor observable changes regarding education, agriculture, health and sport took place.
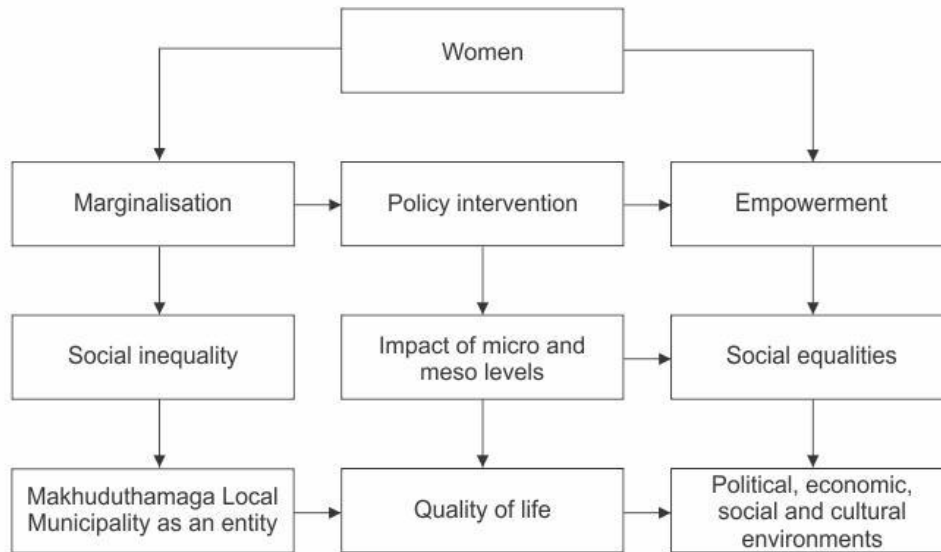
Figure 1.2: Conceptual framework of an investigation of women empowerment in Makhuduthamaga Local Municipality, Sekhukhune District, Limpopo

1.10 THE RESEARCH DESIGN

The research design refers to the plan or the guide on how the research would be carried out in addressing the research problem (Mouton & Marais, 1990:32-33; Mouton, 1996:107). The research design has to perform its duty and guide the research process in terms of the aim of the research, data collection and analysis methods and techniques, with the purpose of ensuring validity and reliability of both methods and findings of the research.

1.10.1 Post-development theory

The thesis is grounded within post-development theory that developed in the 1980s as a result of growing critique against the dominant development theory of the time. During this period the development process was socially constructed and reflected a dominant western (northern) hegemony (Escobar, 1995:2). The ideology of development is a social vision that is entrenched in the ideals of modernisation which assumes and imposes western economic structure and society as the universal module that the whole world should copy and follow (Nicolau, 2013: 31). The assumption of development theory of the last decades of the previous century was

that the western lifestyle that includes a strong middle class with a nuclear family, mass consumption, suburban living and the allocation of extensive private space was to be imposed on all communities (Esteva, 1999; Sachs, 1998). In contrast, the post-development theory that local culture and knowledge provides a critical stance towards the discourse of development, and the defence of pluralistic grass-roots movements, is critical to sustainable change (Nicolau, 2013: 32).

1.10.2 Research methodology

The umbrella methodology the study employed was Participatory Action Research (PAR). Of importance is that the research methods are determined by the aims and objectives of the research. The study will use purely descriptive qualitative participatory methods, with simple statistics used to elucidate the descriptions. Participatory Rural Appraisal (PRA) thinking and its techniques will be used in the collection of data. The PRA approach implies that people in the study area are to be involved in the collection and analysis of data. The term 'participant' is significant as this signifies who should instigate, conduct, analyse, present and benefit from the research undertaken (Cornwall & Jewkes, 1995:1667; Flowerdew & Martin, 2005:63; Nicolau, 2013:33). Various techniques such as questionnaires, fieldwork, personal visits and transect walks were used. Sampling and piloting was also done as a methodological means of executing the research. The data analysis will be highly descriptive.

In empowering these women to participate in this research another asset-based approach was used. The methodology has similar approaches to the Asset Based Community Development (ABCD) developed in the Global North and now applied in the Global South, and also the Community Asset Mapping Programme (CAMP) developed in rural communities in South Africa. This offered the participants the opportunity to use their own resources to drive their own development (Mathie & Cunningham, 2008:276-279; Nicolau, 2013: 247-248). In both these approaches, the talents, abilities, associations and anything the people could use to improve their quality of life or satisfy their needs were used. The environment, the people,

institutions, the economy and the political situation are the basic assets of every community. In essence, the asset-based approach emphasises using what people already have to improve their quality of life, rather than always looking for external assistance. More will be said about methodology in Chapter Three.

1.10.3 Data collection

In order to carry out the research, sources of information must be accessed and data obtained. The main source of existing information for this research was relevant literature. There is a great deal of written evidence on the deprivation, discrimination and the powerlessness of women worldwide and, to the contrary, how women can successfully be agents of change once empowered to feel free to think and act. The literature consists of books, dictionaries, newspapers, official and scholarly reports, articles and papers, development and strategy documents from a range of government sources and also through internet access. Participant observation as a reliable means of gathering information in qualitative social research will be used to accumulate primary data. The participants remain the major sources of information in the study as they have deep knowledge of the area and were willing to share their lived experiences. Other sources of data entailed semi-structured interviews with selected people, discussions and a simple short questionnaire. Secondary data supported substantive interpretation.

1.11   EITHICAL CONSIDERATIONS

Participatory and case study research cannot be separated from ethical considerations right from their beginning point. Ethics (Thomas, 2011: 68) are principles of conduct about what is wrong and right pertaining to both the researcher and the researched. One important aspect that had to be considered during the collection of the data was the observation of the ethical behaviour of both the researcher and the participants. It was imperative that the researcher recognised ethical behaviour, as it protects the rights of the participants, the community and even the environment affected by the research. It commands respect, consent and

trust between the researcher and the researched. Anonymity, confidentiality, privacy, voluntary participation, informed consent and sharing of results are some of the ethical considerations that were taken into account before, during and after this research process. These will be referred to in appropriate sections of the research.

1.12   VALUE OF THE STUDY

The study will contribute to the expansion of the body of knowledge in the field of rural development, through the involvement of women in all walks of life within Makhuduthamaga Local Municipality, Limpopo – the province in which the municipality is located – and South Africa as a developing country. The study seeks to expose the fact that men alone cannot bring about the desired development unless they travel the route together with women, meaning that development is gender-sensitive. In support of this view, South Africa's present (2013) president, Jacob Zuma, is known to have said in his address to the nation: 'Together we can do more'. This quote drives the point home that women are key partners in any development endeavour – as a group or as individuals. Therefore, societies or countries that view women as invisible or ignore their contributions should be encouraged to involve women in their projects to shape things for better. On the other hand, women can also be encouraged to start new projects.

The important role played by women in sustainable rural development is singled out. Observations and literature support the fact that in many rural areas of the world successful projects and programmes related to development are headed and run by women who, on several occasions, have won prizes for successful ventures.

During the research process, the participants' understanding and sense of responsibility for their own development that will make their planning and implementation more effective will be enhanced. Moreover, further research investigations on strategies how women empowerment can assist in poverty alleviation in rural areas of South Africa could build on the work done in this locality. The thesis will serve as a source of reference for the municipality regarding future

projects in order to stimulate participation by communities through the mobilisation of resources and processes to ensure the sustainability of the projects.

1.13 ORGANISATION OF THE THESIS

Chapter One provides an introduction to and a background overview of the study pertaining to women empowerment in a rural setting. The position of women within and outside the household is highlighted. Their emancipation has given them new ideas of self-improvement, and also the desire and passion to become more independent. Sampled projects within the Makhuduthamaga Local Municipality served to support the idea of women empowerment. The chapter also describes the research design which embodies the aims, objectives, data collection and the moral ethics. The problems that the research addresses and the significance of the study are also explained in this chapter.

Chapter Two explains the strategies that the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) implemented to try and draw women into the development arena. The role of the strategies of women in development (WID), women and development (WAD), the gender and development (GAD) approach and gender mainstreaming (GM), the human development approach (HD) and empowerment strategy will be looked into to see how each tried to bring women into the picture. Terms such as poverty, gender, empowerment, development and Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) are discussed at macro-, meso- and micro-levels to check how they impact on women empowerment. South Africa's National Development Plan: 2030 with its multifaceted aims is highlighted, and this suggests that the vast literature available on issues of development was studied.

Chapter Three deals with the methodology used to execute the research. Participatory Rural Appraisal (PRA) will be used as a toolkit of methods. PRA as an approach to rural development will be explained and reasons for its choice will be outlined. The PRA techniques, such as participant observation, semi-structured interviews and simple questionnaires will be employed for the collection of data. The

concepts of validity, reliability and triangulation which accompany data collection are also clarified. An asset-based approach used by local people to mobilise the local resources for their own development is also explained in this chapter.

Chapter Four deals with the descriptive and visual orientations of the projects and the communities of the Makhuduthamaga Local Municipality. Photographs showing the resources, products, the project centres and the participants are presented. The historical backgrounds of the projects, their successes, challenges and their ways forward are discussed in this chapter. The map showing the location of the projects will add more substance to the visual information.

Chapter Five presents the processed data and its interpretation. The interpretation will be done by the participants, with the researcher acting as the organiser and facilitator during the discussions. Simple bar graphs and tables will be used to elucidate the results and to enhance the applicability of the data. Since the research is qualitative in nature, the interpretation is purely descriptive. A short critical analysis of PRA and the asset-based approach will be done in relation to the data presented. As part of this chapter, the researcher describes who she is and how her personality has influenced the research.

Chapter Six presents the general conclusion on the findings. Recommendations for further research are also given in this chapter.

The foregoing chapter explained the origins of women empowerment and their importance to development. The methodology used in the research is explained, as are the ethical considerations which accompany all social research.

From the above suggestions, it is clear that empowerment of women is imperative in every country, especially the Global South countries. What is more disturbing is that women form the larger percentage of communities and in some countries their status is used as a yardstick for development. Therefore, to reduce the dependency ratio, women need to be fully empowered and become responsible for their own lives. Women within this municipality are therefore encouraged to free themselves by

accepting empowerment. From the above explanations, it is clear that no community can achieve the goal of development without taking into account the gender factor. This forms the essence of the research study. Masculinity, which has for so long been a barrier for women development, needs to be challenged and turned into an opportunity for women.

In the subsequent chapter, the attempts to include women into the development processes – which aim to move away from economy-based development – are explained. The aim is to endeavour to reduce poverty through women empowerment, as it is often mentioned that women have 'faces of poverty'. It is believed that once the status of women has improved, the rest will fall into place – starting from the home and leading to the larger community.

CHAPTER TWO

MAINSTREAMING GENDER AS A WAY TO REDUCE POVERTY AND INEQUALITY WITH SPECIAL REFERENCE TO SOUTH AFRICA

The subordination, traditional roles and non-participation of women in all spheres of development, as prescribed by cultural norms and traditions, kept women far away from the gates of development – not only in South Africa and other countries on the continent of Africa, but also in many countries all over the globe. The situation continued for decades with positivists believing and hoping that development would automatically trickle down to women via men. The result was unbalanced development that only concentrated on economic growth without paying any attention to social development. Consequently, many women were associated with having a low standard of living, being subjected to poverty to a greater or lesser extent, a poor quality of life and a lack of voice, internationally, nationally and locally.

With the passage of time, this situation was challenged by feminist writers, women's movements and many more concerned people whose aim was to bring women on board. The main reason for such a step was because women constitute a higher percentage of the population in almost all the countries of the world. A growing concern for improving women's status started growing as early as the 1970s and reached a climax in the 1990s when the whole world was affected. The inequality between men and women, and boys and girls is evidenced through perusal of the status of the acquisition of services such as education, employment opportunities, health care and nutrition. In all of the above instances, men were accessing bigger and better shares. This situation clearly showed that culture was the determinant factor in the nature of gender roles, both in private and public spheres.

As a result, women remained subservient to their partners and sons in different parts of the world and were thus faced with long hours of work that were unremunerated and unrecorded. It is a known reality that women accept responsibility for production, reproduction and community management activities; this means they go to sleep late and wake up early. From the above, it is clear that early approaches to development were gender-blind. Development during the modern era was only determined by growth in the Gross Domestic Product (GDP) or Gross National Product (GNP) without taking note of those who contributed. Consequently, gender issues in relation to present day development with regard to the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) will occupy a central position in the following discussion.

2.1   GENDER, POVERTY AND DEVELOPMENT AT INTERNATIONAL LEVEL

Gender refers to widely shared ideas, norms and expectations about women and men, while the dictionary shows the meaning of 'development' as the act or the process of growing or showing progress. From a geographical point of view, a population consists of men and women who are together expected to bring about development of a country but, as indicated earlier, only men have been given the opportunity and they are expected to develop the country; the opinion is that they have power which women do not have. Challenging this view – as many gender proponents over recent decades have done – Shefer and Friedman (1998:13) also believe that the term 'gender' should be given a new modern meaning. Therefore, they accepted 'gender' as a social rather than a biological concept of being a man or a woman. It is no wonder therefore, that development theories of the 1950s ignored women and saw them as obstacles to progress (Lister & Carbone, 2006:3) as, unlike men, women had specific roles which did not expose them to the outside world of work.

Only after the mid-twentieth century did women's issues became of interest to donors due to the work of social researchers, feminist movements and feminist writers. Today all the major development agencies require that gender issues be taken into account in all programmes and projects. One could say that it was discovered that

something was missing in the process; hence no proper sustainable development could be attained. The year 1970 is historically seen by development practitioners as a watershed or a dividing line in the history of development. Since then, attention has been given to ensure that development initiatives have sought to distribute equity between men and women. The inclusion of women in issues of development was referred to as 'empowerment', since society and culture had disempowered women for decades. Shefer and Friedman (1998:78) indicate that gender in development can be an end in itself and hence known as empowerment or a process whereby women are trained to challenge patriarchy and its social relations. Since development without recognition of women had failed, a shift of emphasis was needed; from economic development to empowerment.

Since the 1970s, empowerment started to gain attention in the literature of development as a means to bring about a change in the lives of women. Consequently, policy changes took place to ensure gender equity – these changes started at international level and filtered down to national and local levels. Women in developing countries were hit hard by gender inequalities, as they were faced with discrimination and deprivation both in the home and the community. The main aim of the policy interventions was to bridge the gap between men and women with regard to access to opportunities and control of resources.

To enhance further discussion, it would be worthwhile to give the varied understandings of empowerment as viewed by different scholars:

- *Momsen (2004:14)* sees empowerment as a process that enables people to gain self-confidence and self-esteem, allowing both men and women to actively participate in development and decision making.

- *Kumar (2011:29)* defines empowerment as the process that allows both men and women to take control over their lives by gaining skills, setting their own agendas and building self-confidence and self-reliance.

- *Narayan (2006:23)* explains empowerment as the expansion of people's abilities to make strategic life choices in a context where this ability was previously denied them.

In all of these definitions, power is something to be released from the more powerful point to the least powerful point. In this study, local rural women were identified as the least powerful, needing to receive the various forms of power as outlined by Afshar (1998:14); the 'power within' allows women to develop self-esteem and self-confidence to accept and adopt whatever changes improve their status quo in a positive manner. This gives them the *power to* network and organise themselves as women to bring about change in their lives. This form of power encourages women to mobilise and work as a collective for the common good. They gain the *power over* the resources in order to utilise them to improve their living conditions. The power over the resources also implies their access and control over such resources. This kind of power, if correctly manipulated, can result in ownership of resources. The *power with* others will help the women to gain confidence in the presence of others. Prior to the adoption of the new approach to development, women were confined to the home and their movements restricted to be within and around the home, in the fields or visiting family relatives on rare occasions.

Lutrell et al. (2007:3) summarise the various forms of power and their implications (Table 2.1). In their work on women studies in Honduras, Afsher and Maynard (1998:22) observed that empowerment can be personal for an individual woman or be collective for a group of women. In each case the products of empowerment differ. In the case of personal empowerment, the products are: self-confidence, self-esteem, a sense of agency, a sense of self and dignity. In the case of group empowerment the products are: group identity, collective sense of agency, group dignity and self-organisation and management. Although all forms of empowerment are important, personal empowerment is of the utmost importance as indicated by Kabeer (in Datta and Kornberg 2002:77) when he says: 'Empowerment cannot be given; it must be self-generated'.

Table 2.1: Implications of different forms of power (Lutrell et al. 2007:3)

Type of power relation	Implications for an understanding of empowerment
Power over: ability to influence and coerce	Changes in underlying resources and power to challenge constraints
Power to: organise and change existing hierarchies	Increases individual capacity and opportunities for access
Power with: increased power from collective action	Increases solidarity to challenge underlying assumptions
Power from within	Increases awareness and desire for change within an individual

Kumar (2011:9) and Narayan (2002:13) describe an empowered woman as one who:

- 'has the freedom to make choices and decisions in matters relating to her life as well as society at large;

- is not a victim of violence either in her family or any other institutional setting;

- can live her life in such a way that her self-respect and dignity are protected;

- has equal access to opportunities in all spheres of her activities;

- is in a position to make use of the laws formulated for safeguarding her honour and rights'.

This explanation is similar to what the women in the Makhuduthamaga municipality have achieved. They have taken decisions in order to improve their standing in all aspects of society. Women like this are needed in the development of the country. It is for this reason that empowerment, which embraces both men and women, should be a priority in every country, especially where women have been disempowered because of their gender. It must also be understood that men need to be empowered

in order to understand and to accept women as working partners of the same strength. Parpart (2002:11) mentions that in the 1970s the need was to help women without changing their status quo. That strategy was known as Women in Development (WID). Under WID, women were passive recipients of development aid. They received more economic resources in the hope that it would remove the disparities between men and women. This meant that the roles of women were just prescribed by gender, and it was in actual fact a welfare approach to development. With WID, the advantage was that the desire to improve women's status was awakened. Its weakness was the expected trickle-down effect which failed dismally.

In the 1980s, the desire and need to shift to a gender perspective grew. The strategy adopted became known as Gender and Development (GAD). The new strategy of GAD looked into power relations between men and women; prevailing inequalities rendered women poor. GAD was therefore an anti-poverty approach in the following instances, as instances as argued by Momsen (2004:14-15):

- It was a bottom-up approach concerned with improving the lives of the poor and the community as whole.

- It saw women as agents of change, meaning that women are usually ready to accept change and to spread it as fast as possible because they can network.

- It encouraged income generation projects for women. That was an indication that women would remain a key to development.

GAD was interested in improving the practical gender needs that would better women's lives within their existing roles. Momsen further adds that empowerment of the 1980s was seen as a means of improving the status of women, implemented through participatory activities and community involvement. Prechamder and Muller (2006:66) say that the definition of development changed with the introduction of GAD. It no longer only meant the improvement of economic circumstances, but also

referred to the advancement of social conditions in terms of capacity building of the people, especially women.

GAD advocated:

- Redistribution of power within gender relations – it was a known reality that power between men and women had been skewed, and that women therefore remained subordinate

- Self-organisation of women as active agents engaged in transforming their proper social realities

- A change in the structural conditions that caused disadvantages to women.

An exposition of GAD clearly shows that with welfare and an anti-poverty strategy towards the achievement of gender equity, women would gain economic independence. GAD wanted to come up with what could be called a trickle-up effect as the trickle-down effect had failed. In the researcher's findings (Mashaba 1995:97) conducted in GaMasemola among the Batau community on the effect of agricultural modernisation on the lives of women, through participation in the agricultural modernisation the well-being of those women improved in terms of nutrition, clothing, health, transport and stable family units. Besides improvement in their practical needs, their mindset opened up and changed as their scope of operation increased. It is therefore implied that unless women stand up to close the gap between themselves and men and do something that will impact on their lives positively, nothing better will be achieved for them either as individuals or as a group. It is at this stage where the 'power within' concept is critical. The status of the people, especially that of women in aspects such as education, health conditions, employment and many more will tell about the country's status without going into finer details other than reminding everyone that the status of women in today's world is among the indicators of identifying whether a country is developed or not.

Fortunately, during the same late mid-twentieth century period, the international law of the Convention on the Elimination of all forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW) was passed by the United Nations (UN) in 1979. CEDAW laid a solid foundation for all approaches towards women empowerment. Datta and Kornberg (2002:31) pointed out that the main aim of CEDAW was to address, in a comprehensive way, the root cause of all gender discrimination and where possible to uproot them all. Accordingly, women were encouraged to be literate and train to acquire the skills necessary for living in the world of today. CEDAW, being an international order, influenced all countries of the world to automatically revisit their policies regarding the position of women in their countries.

It was unfortunate that global poverty still persisted by the end of the 1990s despite the implementation of the CEDAW agreements in 1979. As a result, the development and empowerment approaches shifted to general poverty elimination. Gender equality was cherished by the Platform for Action at the 1995 UN Fourth World Conference on women held in Beijing. Mainstreaming gender equality – or gender mainstreaming as it is commonly known – is the process of removing women and disadvantaged men from the margins of development to the centre through planned action such as policies, programmes and interventions. The main objective of gender mainstreaming is to ensure that women's, as well as men's concerns and experiences are integral to the design, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of all projects so that inequality is not perpetuated (Momsen, 2004:15). Many countries of the globe adopted the approach. It was unfortunate that mainstreaming gender equality did not yield the expected results, but that does not mean that the approach was discarded; it formed a foundation for improvements on gender inequalities. One should not forget that development differs within time and space.

Consequently, the UN sought a means of development that would look at the gender dimension of poverty; as long as poverty is rife among the majority of the population, namely the women, no real development can take place. In 2000 The Millennium Declaration was signed at the United Nation's Millennium Summit, where eight Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) were agreed upon, the target being to meet

these goals by 2015. Standards which can be monitored are set along each goal. The 189 governments that were present in Beijing agreed that the advancement of women and the achievement of their equality with men are matters of fundamental human rights and therefore a prerequisite for social justice. By addressing gender and poverty issues, human rights became the underlying principle of this set of goals for the MDGs and their emphasis on quality of life. Moller and Husnka (2009:5) understand Millennium Goals as a declaration of human well-being and a key objective, rather than economic growth. The aim of MDGs is that a minimum standard of living be set for all countries of the world.

The eight MDGs (Shiraishi, et al., 2009:3& Momsen, 2004:16) are to:

- Halve the proportion of people living in extreme poverty and hunger
- Achieve universal primary education
- Promote gender equality and empower women
- Reduce infant and child mortality rates
- Reduce maternal mortality rates
- Combat HIV/AIDS, malaria and other diseases
- Ensure environmental sustainability
- Develop a global partnership for development.

On their own, the goals are motivating because they have target dates on which each goal is expected to be achieved. Furthermore, the MDGs are responsible for growing attention being paid to global poverty and gender. The goals are stated in such a manner that the achievement of the one goal will necessarily influence the achievement of the others. The targets and indicators of the MDGs are given in Table 2.2. The empowerment of women will definitely facilitate the attainment of the MDGs.

Table 2.2: Targets of MDGs and indicators (Deegan, 2009: 68)

Targets	Indicators
Halve between 1990 and 2015, the proportion of people whose income is less than $1 a day	Proportion of population below $1 a day
Halve between 1990 and 2015, the proportion of people who suffer from hunger	Prevalence of underweight children under 5 years of age; proportion of population below minimum level of dietary energy consumption
Ensure that, by 2015, children (boys and girls alike) will be able to complete a full course of primary school	Net enrolment ratio in primary education Literacy rate of 15-24 year olds
Eliminate gender disparity at all levels by 2015	Ratio of girls to boys in primary, secondary and tertiary education; ratio of literate females to males among 15-24 year olds
Reduce by two-thirds, between 1990 and 2015, the under 5 mortality rate	Under 5 mortality rate; proportion of 1 year children immunised against measles
Reduce by three-quarters, between 1990 and 2015, the maternal mortality ratio	Maternal mortality rate; proportion of births attended by skilled health personnel
Ensure environmental sustainability	Proportion of people with sustainable access to improved water sources
Reverse by 2015 the HIV/AIDS pandemic	HIV prevalence rate

Of all the MDGs, MDGs 1 and 3 are central to this research. Approaching development through MDGs shows clearly that it is people themselves who will bring about development. They are important and should be assisted to avoid being trapped in poverty, but rather to break the poverty cycle and reduce persistent detrimental gender inequalities. Today, countries of the world (especially those in the Global South) are guided by the MDGs to monitor and evaluate their progress towards the achievement of the MDGs in relation to the reduction of poverty and improved quality of life.

Table 2.3: Total net enrolment ratio in primary education (%) (United Nations: 2007)

	1990	2004/2005
East Asia	99	95
Southeast Asia	94	94
South Asia	74	90
West Asia	81	86
Commonwealth of Independent Asia	89	94
Commonwealth of Independent Europe	91	90
North Africa	82	95
Sub-Saharan Africa	54	70
Latin America and Caribbean	87	97
Oceania	75	78
Developing Regions	80	88

Considering the time frame illustrated in Table 2.3 with regard to total net enrolments in primary schools, progress has been registered, with developing countries showing a significant improvement of 8%. Hopefully these figures will at least be maintained or increased to make a contribution to addressing the problems of poverty and social injustices.

Table 2.4 Proportion of primary school-aged children not attending school by gender 1996-2004 (%) (United Nations (2006)

	Girls	Boys
East Asia	1	1
Southeast Asia	10	10
South Asia	29	22
West Asia	22	16
Commonwealth of Independent Asia	15	15
Commonwealth of Independent Europe	11	12
North Africa	14	12
Sub-Saharan Africa	42	38
Latin America and the Caribbean	8	7
Oceania	26	18
Developing Regions	22	18

Although the enrolment data shows improvement throughout the whole world during this period, sub-Saharan Africa shows a increase in the net enrolment figures (Table 2.3) . When the proportion of children not going to school is broken down by gender (Table 2.4), the statistics show that African states and other developing regions still have a long way to go to reach gender equality. The entire trend is promising in terms of population growth in these countries. Table 2.4 indicates the proportion of people living on less than 1US$ a day (%). The worldwide status of poverty (Table 2.5), as implied in proportion of people living on less than a dollar (US) a day, has improved although the rising food prices especially in recent years remains a serious challenge.

Table 2.5: The proportion of people living on less than US$1 a day (%)
United Nations (2006)

	1990	2004
East Asia	33.0	9.9
Southeast Asia	20.8	6.8
South Asia	41.1	29.5
Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS)	0.5	0.8
West Asia	1.6	3.8
Transition Countries of South-East Europe	0.0	0.7
North Africa	2.6	1.4
Sub-Saharan Africa	46.8	41.1
Latin America and the Caribbean	10.3	8.7
Developing Regions	31.6	19.2

According to Table 2.5, East Asia, Southeast Asia and South Asia have managed to reduce their headcount ratio markedly. Sub-Saharan Africa has a larger percentage of its population living in poverty, showing that more poverty reduction efforts are needed. In the municipality, therefore, the women have already realised the threat posed by unemployment and have therefore decided on self-initiated projects to

sustain their families and roll down the sleeves of poverty. Behera, (2006:78) sees empowerment and political participation as the tools that can reduce global poverty, as women will be involved in influencing decisions that affect the realities of their lives. On the other hand, Smith (2005:17) suggests that poverty reforms are needed in order to end global poverty applicable to government policies that relate to markets and the distribution of wealth, suggesting the following as means to end poverty:

- Personal empowerment to gain freedom from exploitation and torment, which is seen as the most important key to capability building and strengthening the voice of the poor

- Community empowerment to ensure effective participation which implies that community empowerment forms the basis for entitlement and social well-being

- Basic education to build a foundation of self-reliance, as people who lack education are often unsure, full of fear, hesitant and always blame themselves unnecessarily

- There must be good health and nutrition for adults to work and for children to grow to maximise their potential.

These attempts to end poverty are strongly linked to the MDGs and their indicators. If they can be achieved, the quality of life of women and the vulnerable will definitely improve. It is clear here that the MDGs are globally still far from being met except, possibly, in the areas of education.

2.2   GENDER, POVERTY AND DEVELOPMENT IN AFRICA

An international assessment done by UNDP (June, 2010) on 50 countries revealed the following with regard to MDG's achievement:

- A global reduction in poverty
- Improvement in child and maternal mortality

- Closing up of disparity in enrolments and gender in schools
- Improvement and continued improvements in global partnerships.

The achievements noted internationally are really encouraging in the sense that the status of women and their quality of life are implied. Despite the notable progress registered, sub-Saharan Africa is experiencing an increase in the absolute number of people living in poverty. The major causes are the rapid demographic increase, the prevalence of the HIV pandemic, high food prices and excessive increase of people in urban areas putting pressure on the service delivery.

Pauw and Baud (2012:215) write that poverty in Africa is prominently rural, as more than 70% of the continent's poor people live in rural areas and depend on agriculture for food and livelihood. The danger of totally depending on agriculture is that agriculture is often affected by natural hazards and its returns are slow. Fosu et al. (2009:87) understand poverty as the inability of an individual or a family to provide sufficient resources to satisfy basic needs for survival; for example, food, shelter and clothing. In Africa, the poor are characterised by larger households, reliance on labour income, larger number of women, and populations consisting mainly of elderly people. The high rate of poverty in Africa is aggravated by the HIV/AIDS pandemic and the prevalence of diseases in the forms of tuberculosis, malaria, meningitis, hepatitis and many more fatal diseases. In 2006 alone (Deegan 2009:134), about 2.1 billion people were killed by AIDS in sub-Saharan Africa. The 1996 World Bank report contained in Fosu et al. (2009:107) found the following causes of poverty in Africa:

- Inadequate access to employment opportunities due to lack of skills – especially for women

- Shortage of physical assets such as land, capital and other production resources

- Inadequate access to markets where goods can be sold

- Destruction of natural resources leading to environmental degradation

- Lack of participation by the poor (especially women) due to failure to draw the poor into the design of new programmes

- Lack of access to the means of supporting rural development in poor regions.

Noting these numerous causes, it is not surprising that the ongoing poverty of African countries falls heavily on the shoulders of women because, in addition to their deprivation, they are still expected to perform their daily chores. While sharing this understanding of poverty, Porter and Sweetman (2002:3) name the different manifestations of poverty as:

- *Lack of income and productive resources:* in instances where people are unemployed they will definitely have no money and hence cannot till the soil or produce anything that can sustain life

- *Hunger:* where nothing is produced because of lack of income and productive assets, hunger is common and there is nothing a hungry person can do

- *Malnutrition and ill-health:* lack of adequate nutrition accompanied by poor health will be common as no food is produced and so food will be unobtainable

- *Limited or no access to education and other basic services:* in cases where there is no income, it is difficult to access services such as education, health services, food and housing facilities

- *Increasing morbidity and mortality:* where there is no income there is lack of food, which can results in death of children and adults

- *Lack of participation in decision making:* every individual needs a healthy body and mind. Despite gender issues, a poor person is unlikely to contribute in decision making, as a healthy mind and healthy body are required in the process.

The reality is that poverty occurs in all societies; pockets of poverty are also found in developed countries of the world, affecting gender differently. According to the 1995 UN Human Development Report, of the 1.3 billion people living in poverty, 70% of them were women. By then, African countries could do nothing as they had just obtained independence from colonial and neo-colonial domination. The attempt to fight against poverty in Africa could not succeed due to underperforming economies, coupled with unequal global terms of trade, debt, oil price, corruption and refusal to articulate gender issues. Growth and development were therefore slow. Tanzania took the lead in fighting poverty through the 'ujamaa', known as a policy where people lived together for the good of all. The ujamaa villages were created with the intention of promoting socialism and rural development in the belief that in the final analysis these would turn into equity (Yansane, 1996:16). Unfortunately, the success here was short-lived as it only lasted for twenty years due to the reaction of the peasants. Although the policy failed, a sense of popular participation and equality was awakened. Consequently, the rich west, the financial giants and bureaucracies were then – and are still today – looked upon to counteract the face of poverty in Africa. The strategies of import substitution and export-led growth were also adopted to try and reduce poverty in Africa.

Import substitution: This involves the use of other goods in the place of those normally used resulted in the following challenges:

- Growth limited to the internal market

- A continuous negative balance of payment was created

- There was a slow growth of employment in the non-farm sector.

Export-led growth: It was unfortunate that this strategy aggravated dependency of Africa on outside aid. The strategies failed on the grounds that it was thought that what is good for the growth of the economy is good for the poor. Consequently, poverty remained rooted in Africa. Adejumobi and Adebayo (2008:108) point out that the economic decline of Africa by the late 1970s forced the Organisation of African

Union (OAU), although politically inclined, to take over the challenges of development issues. The OAU also encouraged development through participation by the poor.

Basic needs approach: This approach was adopted in the 1970s, whereby attention was paid to development with equity in terms of resources, land, power, income, services and jobs. Unfortunately, the approach also failed because accusations were made that basic needs were not properly identified. During the same period, poverty was rife in Third World countries to the extent that organisations such as the World Bank, the Food and Agricultural Organisation (FAO) and the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) started to show concern about the rate of poverty worldwide. Fortunately, in various parts of the world, there were ideas on how the poor could be assisted to rise above their powerlessness. During the 1990s, the concept of empowerment suggested by the United Nations received a positive reaction in Africa. Several conferences were held in Africa, with the focus being on the participation by the poor to reduce poverty and the rights of women as human beings.

The two current continental initiatives for development are the New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD) and African Union (AU), the former OAU. NEPAD was launched in 2001 having been devised by certain African states and eight overseas countries; namely, the United Kingdom (UK), Canada, France, Germany, Italy, Japan, the Russian Federation and the United States. NEPAD encouraged sub-regional and regional integration to improve economic gains and corporate governance. Under regional integration, South Africa is a key role player within the Southern Africa Development Community (SADC), comprising Malawi, Mozambique, Tanzania, Zimbabwe, Namibia, Botswana, Mauritius, Madagascar, Swaziland, Angola and also Lesotho, which has just joined the SADC recently. Although the OAU's former task was to liberate Africa, both the OAU and NEPAD emphasise the importance of popular participation in Africa's development. Although NEPAD failed because of its top-bottom approach, it had attractive long-term objectives. These were key issues to development and included the mainstreaming and empowerment of women in development and the eradication of poverty. Consequently, NEPAD was

adopted as a negotiation tool for donor support and aid to the African countries (Adejumobi & Adebayo, 2008:111). Upon the failure of NEPAD, the AU took over to further the development process, the aim being to promote democratic principles and institutions, popular participation and good governance. It was often hinted at meetings of political leaders in Africa that the main reason for the failure of all reforms in Africa was poor governance.

By the year 2000 a number of countries in Africa saw the need for women's participation as a means to reduce poverty (OSSREA, 2010:63-80). For example, in 2000 Kenya adopted GAD-driven policies. About 16 females and 134 males were elected as members of parliament. Zimbabwe accepted gender mainstreaming after the Beijing Conference, but it is at present frustrated by its political instability. In Botswana, gender mainstreaming started in 2002, but was frustrated by lack of funds and skills and persistent patriarchy. Such thinking at the turn of the century and accompanying agreements set the scene for agreement on the Millennium Development Declaration, where eight developmental goals were agreed upon to drive development in Africa.

Studies made by Shiraishi et al. (2009:10) on development strategies for low-income countries point out that poverty reduction in Africa is generally not satisfactory and therefore call for innovative approaches to further reduce the level of poverty in Africa. The crux of the matter is that, if the poverty level is not reduced, it would be difficult to attain other MDGs, as they are all intertwined. Today, big foreign companies like Anglo American, De Beers and Rio Tinto are major businesses within Africa. China has also expanded its trading relationships with Africa. The big question is: Will these multinationals have the interests of Africa at heart or they will just tap the wealth and go, leaving Africa poorer than before? The reality is that no other person or organisation can make Africa a better continent than Africans themselves. All in all, the discussion so far seems to indicate that gender issues were never really at the heart of Africa's concerns nor seen as a priority issue. At times, one takes the various religious denominations and multi-cultural backgrounds as contributing factors towards the failure of gender mainstreaming in Africa. The AU and NEPAD –

45

upon whose shoulders the development of Africa rests – have a long way to go to get social justice, and political and economic conditions of Africa in order. The attention now turns to how South Africa figures in the interpretation of acknowledging gender in its own development context.

2.3   GENDER, POVERTY AND DEVELOPMENT IN SOUTH AFRICA

South Africa is situated on the southern tip of Africa. It comprises nine provinces (Figure1.1): Limpopo, Mpumalanga, Gauteng, North-West, Northern Cape, Western Cape, Free State, Eastern Cape and KwaZulu-Natal.

South Africa received democratic rule in 1994 when a democratic constitution was drawn for the country. The South African Constitution remains the pillar for women empowerment and development as a whole. To support this, in his inaugural address as the first president of democratic South Africa, President Nelson Mandela (Beijing Report, 2007:16) noted that: 'Unless we see in visible and practical terms that the condition of women in our country has radically changed and that they have been empowered to intervene in all spheres of life as equal members of our society, no genuine liberation would be achieved'. In simple terms, it meant that the South African government should take drastic steps against gender inequality, which could cripple the newly-born democracy. To the former president, gender equality was a prerequisite for democracy. A noteworthy achievement pertaining to South Africa is that it has managed to address the issue of women's participation in political matters. This is attested by the fact that the assessment says that about 40% of the seats in parliament, cabinet and national council of provinces are occupied by women. This needs to be applauded on the part of women.

South Africa is classified as a developing country because it still faces the challenges of a growing economy, unemployment, inequality and low level of education among its masses. Like all countries of Africa, South Africa was dominated by patriarchy, whereby women remained minors, although after the dawn of democracy attempts were made for this situation to change. The challenge is to uproot the legacy of

apartheid and patriarchy, as each led to a great deal of discrimination and inequality between men and women in many spheres of life. As a point of protocol, the South African government was bound to commit itself to the various national and international obligations that assisted in promoting gender equality in society. The ratification of the United Nation's CEDAW by South Africa in 1995 was an indication that women's rights are now protected and respected in South Africa. From this statement, one is reminded that CEDAW encourages gender mainstreaming which should finally lead to gender equality. Gender equality is what all South Africans aspire to, because it would make South Africa a better place to live for all persons.

2.3.1 Policy and legislative framework

The research takes as its point of departure the constitutional and legislative provision that was enacted in South Africa post-1994. The Constitution of South Africa (1996) Act 108 states in Chapter Two the Bill of Rights (section 9.1 to 9.4) that all people are equal irrespective of race, gender, colour, age, class and disability. In support of the Constitution, a range of laws, policies and statutory bodies are in place to promote a democratic society where men and women have equal opportunities. According to the Annual Report of Commission on Gender Equality (2006/2007:56) such laws and regulations are:

- *Employment Equity Act (Act 55 of 1998):* This Act places men and women on an equal footing in the workplace in terms of remuneration, hours of work, benefits, privileges and many more opportunities.

- *The National Policy Framework for Women's Empowerment and Gender Equity* was compiled by the Office on the Status of Women (OSW) and based on the Beijing Platform of Action to promote gender mainstreaming in all governmental decisions and processes.

- *The White Paper on land reform:* All legislation that restricted women from accessing land was removed. This implies that women are free to obtain land to develop their potentials and expertise in farming activities and women can be owners of the land as well as tillers of the soil.

- *A Victim Empowerment programme:* This programme is in place to protect women and children against violence. It is commonly known as 16 Days of Activism for no Violence against Women and Children. The programme operates from 10 October to 25 November, and protects women and girl children against any harassment or any violent and abusive action.

- *The 1994 White Paper on Housing:* Housing is recognised as a basic need which every South African must have and serves to ensure that all people have shelter.

- *The Reconstruction and Development Programme (RDP):* The need to eliminate all sexism and discrimination in all spheres of society is recognised. The view is that women often represent the poorest, most exploited and most marginalised group in South African society and that they are also economically dependent. The RDP was designed to build South Africa anew with regard to all basic services.

The government has also established independent statutory bodies to monitor and evaluate the process of gender mainstreaming in all governmental institutions.

- *The Commission on Gender Equality (CGE):* this body is provided for in Chapter Nine of the Constitution. The CGE is an advisory, investigatory, consultative and research body which deals with gender equality matters.

- *The Human Rights Commission:* this body is concerned with the advancement and promotion of human rights and is at the disposal of women as women's rights are human rights. It liaises regularly with the Commission on Gender Equality.

- *The Independent Electoral Commission (IEC):* this body is decreed by the South African Constitution to promote and safeguard democracy. It strengthens democracy and promotes fair and free electoral processes. It has a strategic function of advancing the involvement and participation of women in political and electoral matters.

- *The Public Protector:* the role of the Public Protector is to investigate cases of practice and prejudice, and is an important channel through which women can take up grievances and seek redress.

- *The Public Service Commission:* this is a body that promotes greater representation in the public service. It is a mechanism for advancing gender equality in the provision of public services.

The list goes on, but these are core bodies that drive gender mainstreaming in South Africa. The above strategies are enabling tools to encourage women to stand up and participate fully and freely in various social, political and economic levels of the country. To be more inclusive, in 2009 the government created a department for women, children and people with disabilities. This department helps to expose the people with disabilities and to offer them assistance when available so that they are encouraged to participate in programmes and projects designed for them. What needs to be done is to follow up whether these bodies really do impact on the lives of those for whom they are designed.

The strategies the government put in place have to a large extent helped the women of Makhuduthamaga to at least be aware of their deteriorating living conditions. The

laws and statutory bodies empowered them to develop self-confidence to start projects that will help improve their social, economic and political standing. Above all, the Constitution with its inclusivity in nature has unlocked all doors for women to participate.

2.3.2   National Development Plan (NDP):2030

The National Planning Commission has come up with what is called NDP 2030 (NDP 2030:15) to address some of the challenges that are stumbling blocks in the achievement of a true democratic South Africa:

- Poverty is still rife in South Africa.
- There is widespread unemployment, especially among the youth.
- The education level which is key to development is of low quality.
- Corruption (which weakens the coffers of South Africa) disables development.
- Pockets of inequality and discrimination are still strong in all spheres of life, making South Africa appear very undemocratic.

To this Commission, a new South Africa could only be achieved by observing the capabilities of South Africans and opportunities that the country offers; socially, physically, politically and economically. The Commission is highly determined that by 2030 (NDP 2030:27) it shall have achieved what is called an inclusive and integrated rural economy, whereby the rural communities will be able to fully participate in the economic, political and social spheres. This is true because as long as rural areas remain backward, South Africa will be socially divided. The plan is therefore seen as a supplement to MDGs which each and every country is striving to achieve despite the challenges. As the plan indicates, its success depends on the involvement of all South Africans.

In South Africa, 38.1% of the population live in rural areas in harsh conditions where survival is a real challenge. In these areas the majority of the population are women who are poor and struggle to provide a daily living; the men are often drawn away

from home to work as migrant labourers. On 10 May 2009, the Department of Rural Development became a new department known as the Department of Rural Development and Land Reform (DRDLR). The function of the newly-created department is to enable rural people to address poverty and related problems. In order to perform its task, the DRDLR introduced the Comprehensive Rural Development Programme (CRDP). Its main function is to reduce poverty by training and engaging women in remote rural areas of South Africa to enable them to take control of their lives through the optimal use and management of natural resources.

Similarly, in order to improve their livelihoods, communities should be encouraged to mobilise local resources and capabilities in the form of social, physical, financial, and institutional resources (Mathie & Cunningham 2008:339). The truth is that people, especially women, must first be empowered to be aware of the resources and be given access to them. Simply put, the CRDP is a participatory process through which rural people can learn over time, through their own experience and initiatives, to adapt their indigenous knowledge to the changing world. Knowledge of the local people is central to development because it shows what the local people have as assets and what experience they have on which to build their lives. By so doing, the quality of life and the living conditions of rural people will definitely improve as they themselves will be deciding which programme suits them best. The DRDLR rolled out the CRDP across the country. The first phases of the programme started in Giyane in Limpopo, Riemvasmaak in Northern Cape, Qwa-Qwa in Free State, Mhlontlo in Eastern Cape and Mkhondo in Mpumalanga. The aim was to stimulate rural development through sustainable projects. This serves to indicate that the women of Makhuduthamaga are not alone in their venture and that the government is supportive.

The CRDP encompasses a high degree of participation, skill, learning and commitment. The approach is bottom-up, as people are engaged in the improvement of their own lives. All these ventures ascribe to 'development', which Soni (2006:51) sees as the liberation from political domination, freedom from economic dependence as well as freedom from poverty, disease, illiteracy and unemployment. Food security

in rural areas is a precondition for all other activities that ought to take place. In the same vein, the Green Paper on Land Reform (2011:6) recognises development as shared growth and prosperity, relative income equality, full employment and cultural progress. In order for the RDLR to perform the task of developing the rural areas, it has implemented the following programmes pertaining to land acquisition as a way of empowering people, especially women (Department of Rural Development and Land Reform's Strategic Plan, 2009-2012:13-17):

- *Tenure reform:* this refers to the system of acquiring land; ancestral land could be occupied by descendants through relevant applications, and women could access arable land and prove their expertise. Within the municipality, many women are making a living by ploughing their ancestral farmlands, although western lifestyle seems to dominate the scene.

- *Redistribution:* through this process, the department aimed to redress the imbalances in the land allocations of the past by providing land and financial assistance to historically disadvantaged persons and communities. This included the poor, especially women who did not have land rights prior to democracy. Under this process, the department's target was to redistribute 30% of land by 2014. In the study area, women were each given a piece of land to either farm or create any other activity that could provide a daily living for their households.

There is no doubt that with the acquisition of land by women and correctly executed processes, rural communities will try all ways of rolling back the sleeves of poverty.

The Strategic Plan (2009-2012:37-38) has the following duties to accomplish for communities in the rural areas:

- *Improve economic infrastructure:* this means that the DRDLR is committed to helping provide roads, markets, community

gardens, electricity networks and many more facilities to promote development.

- *Improve social infrastructure:* the department is committed to assisting in social mobilisation, engagement in non-farming activities, democratic participation and giving ownership of all the projects and programmes to rural communities.

According to the Baseline Report on Women Empowerment and Gender Equality (2009:51-53), the government has introduced different programmes to reduce poverty and inequality:

- *Poverty:* poverty eradication, including ending the feminisation of poverty, remains a top priority of the government. Through Extended Public Works Programmes (EPWP) and small and micro-business developments, the poor, including women, are involved in a process that aims to reduce poverty. In the study area the unemployed, especially women, are employed in projects initiated by EPWP; these include road building, roadside cleaning and construction of dams

- *Social assistance and social security:* in this regard, the South African Social and Security Agency (SASSA: 2004), the Unemployment Insurance Fund (UIF; the Department of Labour - the Act was modified in 2007) and the Compensation for Occupational Injuries and Disease Act (1993) help to reduce poverty in various ways; for example, child grants, old age pensions, disability grants, school feeding schemes, food parcels and free health services for the unemployed. The municipality does everything in its power to ensure that the members of the community who deserve these services receive them to improve their standard of living

- *Housing assistance:* it is a known reality that every person in South Africa has a democratic right to shelter. Some of the unemployed, the poor and older women in the municipality are provided with four-roomed houses. The main challenge is that the population is growing faster than the supply of houses which appears to be insignificant. Hence, people need to be empowered so that they can provide for themselves

- *Employment:* the report noted a reduced gender disparity in access to employment, representation and employee benefits as regulated by gender laws and statutory bodies. In the study area there is high unemployment among women. Consequently, the majority of women resort to selling items along the roads or at road junctions just to make a living; these items include vegetables, fruit, sweets and many other small items

- *Education and skills development:* progress indicators in this regard include higher education figures for girls graduating from high school and reduced level of illiteracy among women (from 14% in 2002 to 12.6% in 2006)

- *Media and Information, Communication and Technology (ICT):* women's participation in media, science, communication, information and technology is increasing

- *Free or Subsidised Basic Household Services:* water and sanitation, electricity, transport and refuse removal are given to people freely or at low rates

- *Land Reform:* through the programmes related to land redistribution, land restitution and land tenure reform, a sizeable percentage of land has been recovered. This has made land available for various economic activities in the rural areas.

Above all, the concrete programmes of RDP (1996), Growth and Economic Redistribution Strategy (GEAR of 1996) and the Accelerated Shared Growth Initiative of South Africa (ASGISA-SA 2006) helped to reduce socio-economic disparities, some with a view to gender mainstreaming.

To date, the government of South Africa has made significant progress with regard to poverty reduction, unemployment, and service delivery. It is the opinion of the researcher that progress does not appear to be apparent only because population growth is faster than the rate at which the resources increase; namely, demand is higher than supply. This suggests that other circumstances of life, such as immigration and school-going girls having two to three children before completing Grade 12, compound the problem of poverty. It has been explained that the South Africans themselves can create a better South Africa.

2.3.3 Gender, poverty and development in Limpopo

Limpopo (Figure 1.1) is one of the nine provinces that constitute South Africa. It is the most northerly province in South Africa and shares boundaries with the Gauteng province in the south, Mozambique in the east, Botswana in the west and Zimbabwe in the north. The position of the province is of strategic importance as it acts as a gateway to Africa. The province also gains from NEPAD initiatives of integration across the province.

The province comprises Mopani, Vhembe, Waterberg, Capricorn and Sekhukhune districts. Its population increased from 4.9 m in 1996 to 5.2 m in 2001, and to 5.4 m in 2011 (Statistics South Africa, 2011). Its gender breakdown profile shows a higher percentage of females (54.6%) than males in 2001, and in 2011, 53.3% were female, while males formed 46.6% of the population. The racial structure of the population is composed of Black Africans (the majority by far), Coloureds, Asians Indians and Whites, and the total population in 2011 was 53 96 408 m. The age distribution of the population resembles the broad-based pyramids of developing countries. This shows that the population of Limpopo is younger than that of the country as a whole.

Therefore, it offers opportunities for growth with regard to education, recreation and development interventions.

The provinces are bound by the South African Constitution to provide monitoring and support to the local governments to enable them to perform their duties successfully (Cameron, 1999:227). Like all the other provinces, Limpopo is given a constitutional mandate to see to it that it improves the lives of its citizens; especially the poor, the vulnerable and women. Consequently, the province developed what is called the Provincial Development Growth Strategy (PDGS) on 15 October 2004; a ten-year strategy (2004-2014). The PDGS guides all developmental planning that takes place within Limpopo and its motto is: 'Development is about people'. This motto implies that the province binds itself to the improvement of the lives of people. This suggests that once human resources are developed, the community will be able to take care of the development of the other resources. The following objectives of PDGS (2004-2014) are important to the study:

- *To improve the quality of life of the population of Limpopo:* this suggests that the province is to try everything to ensure that the people of Limpopo have satisfied basic needs and living conditions which are free from threats such as diseases, poor infrastructures and discrimination in terms of gender in the provision of services.

- *To ensure a growing economy and sustainable jobs:* under this objective, the province commits to making sure that its economy grows, in order to provide the people with permanent jobs.

Like the other provinces in South Africa – although more prevalent – Limpopo is challenged by poverty, unemployment and inequality. While poverty reduced from 62.4% (1998) to 60% (2003), the poverty rate is distorted by migrant labour and job seekers (PDGS, 2004-2014:16). To fight poverty the province is determined to ensure the following:

- *Target income generation and job creation*: this simply implies that if people are engaged in jobs that give them income, they are in a position to access basic needs. Satisfaction of basic needs will lead to access to other higher level needs.

- *Establish dedicated institutional structures for poverty alleviation:* such institutions will do research on poverty and have connections with non-governmental organisations (NGOs) regarding poverty reduction.

- *Concentrate on provincial poverty pockets*: poverty is not equally spread; there are remote areas of extreme poverty, medium poverty and low poverty.

- *Develop programmes:* programmes such as Broad Based Black Economic Empowerment (BBBEE), Land Reform and Small Medium and Micro Enterprises (SMME) were developed to facilitate participation by all.

Although the government does everything in its power, HIV/AIDS is seen as another factor that increases poverty because in most instances it affects more females than males, thus increasing the poverty trap and reducing life expectancy. The researcher believes the province should tirelessly seek support from the Health Services to repeatedly spread the mantra: 'Abstain, be faithful and condomise' (ABC); it would seem that the attitude towards these preventative measures should be adopted among the youth of rural communities. Despite the challenges of poverty reduction, the province draws strength from its mission that reads: 'To stimulate, promote and sustain unity and an enabling environment conducive for economic development, social justice and improved quality of life'.

To achieve the national constitutional mandate of improving the lives of all citizens, the province identified mining, tourism, agriculture and their related manufacturing industries as the driving forces of economic development and prosperity.

- *Mining:* Limpopo is rich in mineral deposits and has a spectrum of about 70 minerals. The majority of the people work for these mining companies to earn a living. An increasing number of young women are working in these mines as well.

- *Tourism:* in these areas of scenic beauty, people work as tour guides, rehabilitators of degraded landscapes, improving access roads and taking care of the flora and fauna. In Limpopo this sector is core to the economic growth.

- *Agriculture:* this includes stock farming, and vegetable and fruit farming. Many people, especially women, are employed in this sector as permanent or temporary workers during particular seasons. Some women have started their own agricultural ventures such as poultry farms, vegetable gardens, dairy farms to earn a living.

Highlighting the main features of the economy of Limpopo shows that its status rests on its natural resources. On the socio-cultural side, the people of this province also need to fight gender inequalities that persist in various spheres. According to the Provincial Annual Report (2009-2010) on gender equity read on International Women's Day on 8 March 2011, the province has these structures to support gender mainstreaming:

- *Commission on Gender Equality (CGE):* the duty of this body is to monitor and to assist the implementation of all gender laws in all governmental institutions.

- *Public Service Commission:* this commission ensures provision of services to all people without any prejudice. It also has to report to government what services are crucial to the lives of people.

- *Office of the Public Protector:* the rights and interests of all people, especially those of the poor and the marginalised, need to be protected without any bias.

- *Limpopo Youth Commission:* the province has a young population. As a consequence, the provincial government takes advantage of this and involves the youth in its activities, as they are the future generation of the province.

The report further highlights some of the province's achievements pertaining to women matters:

- *Projects:* the CRDP benefitted 456 women in the form of agricultural projects and non-farming economic activities.

- *Training programmes:* approximately 505 women benefitted from training programmes that were rolled out in the Mopani and Greater Giyane districts. In the Sekhukhune District, workshops and training programmes were offered to women by volunteers and local experts in various economic activities, in order to help improve the living conditions of communities.

- *Job creation:* some 925 jobs were created; some temporary and some permanent.

- *Project leasing:* under land reform policies, six projects have been leased to women; 23 are female adults and 4 are female youth. In the researcher's district, women of different age groups were given land to carry out their various projects with the aim of earning a living.

Consequently, a large number of females are taken out of the homes by these projects.

In his budget speech of 2012/2013 delivered on 27 March 2012, the Provincial Premier proudly indicated the progress registered with regard to development. He stated that they have made remarkable progress in implementing Youth Development Programmes that empower the youth internship programmes and EPWP. He indicated that a large number of youth are employed in the public service to reduce unemployment among the youth. He further stated that the province has reached a target of employing 2% of people living with disabilities in Senior Management Services (SMS) as prescribed by the South African Constitution. He then encouraged all departments to continue employing such people. Other progress made related to empowering women by appointing them to senior management positions, thereby reaching the 40% target. He promised to continue working hard to ensure that the 50% target is reached. Personal communication with the Deputy Director of the Department of Rural Development and Land Reform (31-01-2013) in Limpopo indicated that rural women are mostly engaged in workshops which encourage the following:

- *Leadership skills:* women are encouraged to stand up and talk amongst their colleagues. This is necessary because in deep rural areas women are still reserved and fear what people will say if they do this or that. This type of behaviour needs to be discouraged so that individuals' gifts can be discovered and expanded upon.

- *Literacy among rural women:* there is still a dire need for improvement in literacy as a tool to unlock the potential that is latent in rural women. Acknowledging the value of having basic literacy skills should ultimately encourage them to attend ABET (Adult Basic Education Training) courses – hopefully not too late in their lives.

- *Entrepreneurship:* these come to those women who already have some projects but do not have the business language and skills to

progress further. They need the skills to visit fellow women or men who are growing the same crops or performing the same activities.

- *Participation:* although this sounds like an old activity, in the rural areas participation is still feared by many women and even men to a certain extent.

What impressed the researcher in her discussions with people in the community was that they were involving women with disabilities with regard to money-saving skills. These women are encouraged to cultivate the habit of belonging to a group and saving a regular amount, so that a member can request the amount she needs for a particular service from the accumulated money circulating amongst them.

For the province to have had such results despite the challenges of poverty, lack of skill and inequality, the provincial government undertook the following initiatives:

- The PDGs were presented to all stakeholders to enable a path for service delivery for the provincial departments and municipalities.

- Areas where creation of employment on a large scale was possible were identified.

- A strong social dialogue among the stakeholders was maintained. That included communication with the traditional leaders, so that they understood the implications of democratic rule. Such a dialogue was attained through workshops, road shows, meetings and consultations.

- There was a full understanding and awareness of careers where women are under-represented.

- The programme known as Techno-girl, which benefitted about 2 329 girls, was introduced. Its objectives are:

- o to become aware of the importance of mathematics and science to further career studies

- o to grow understanding of the world of work in careers which are scarce

- o to expose girls to women who are role models in the workplace. This is known as the 'Take a girl-child to work' initiative

- o to establish relationships between classroom learning and work requirements through various exhibitions.

The information given here gives a clear indication that despite the challenges the province is trying hard to adhere to the national slogan: '*Working together, we can do more*'. The province set targets for itself alongside the international MDGs in order to improve the quality of life of the people of Limpopo in all respects (Table 2.6).

The stipulated objectives and indicators support the vision and mission of the province, whereby people are central to development. Women and the poor are given priority recognition. In this way, the province is striving to adhere to one of the national slogans, 'A better life for all'.

Table 2.6: Objectives and indicators for improving quality of life in Limpopo (PDGs, 2004-2014)

	Objective	Performance Indicator
1	Develop the human potential of the province	• Net enrolment ratio in primary education • Proportion of pupils starting Grade 1 who reach Grade 5 • Literacy rate of 15 to 24 year olds
2	Improve health and social status of the population	• Under 5 mortality rate • Proportion of one-year-old children immunised against measles • Number of children orphaned by HIV/AIDS • Maternal mortality ratio
3	Reduce crime and corruption	• Robbery per 1 000 of the population • Fraud per 1 000 of the population • Number of child abuse cases per 1 000 of the population
4	Meet the basic needs of the population	• Proportion of population with sustainable access to an improved water source in both rural and urban • Proportion of people with access to improved sanitation • Proportion of people with access to secure tenure
5	Promote a safe and healthy environment	• Proportion of households using wood and paraffin as primary energy source • Ratio of area protected to maintain biological diversity • Proportion of land covered by indigenous biomass • Proportion of highly degraded land surface area
6	Meet the needs of specific communities, women, elderly, youth, disabled and the marginalised	• Proportion of people living in poverty • Prevalence of underweight children (under five year old) • Proportion of population below level of dietary consumption • Ratio of literate of females to males among 15-24 year olds • Share of women in wage employment in the non-agricultural sector

2.3.4 Gender, poverty and development in the Makhuduthamaga Local Municipality

The Makhuduthamaga Local Municipality is located in the Greater Sekhukhune District (Figure 1.1). It shares boundaries with the municipalities of Fetakgomo to the north, Greater Tubatse in the north- and south-east, Greater Groblersdal (now Eleas Motsoaledi) in the south and Greater Marble Hall now (Ephraim Mogale) in the south-west. It is about 270 km from the province of Gauteng. Jane Furse is the headquarters of the municipality and is centrally located within the Sekhukhune District. The municipality was originally inhabited by the 'Bapedi ba Sekhukhune', living in a typical rural setting, where livestock and crop farming were practised under unreliable summer rainfall conditions. Unfortunately, the major part of the land area is rapidly disappearing under new settlement constructions, and economic activities, which include the recent shopping complex developments. However, although farming was revered in the past, the present generation no longer value farming. The worst part is that the older people who were used to farming are disappearing from the scene due to death from diseases or old age. The solution to this loss of the land and tilling of the soil can be sought in schools where teachers offering studies in Agriculture should feel obliged and inspired to keep the subject alive and attractive, in order to attract many children to study agriculture further. Alternatively, dependence on commercial white farmers will remain, and that will have a great impact not only on prices of food commodities but also on the price and availability of food for daily nurture.

The population of the municipality is composed of Blacks, Whites, Asians and Coloureds. In the age group 0-24, the number of both males and females is higher (62.7%) (IDP, 2008/2009:23). The demographics indicate clearly that the municipality is experiencing increasing pressure for the supply of basic services. The municipality has a predominantly African population, the majority being women. The main reason for this trend is associated with labour migration to economic centres such as cities. Women are also being affected by the migrant labour trend, as they are breadwinners and heads of households. These women find themselves highly

marginalised with regard to socio-economic standing, education level, agricultural endeavours, employment, decision making and skills development. The HIV/AIDS pandemic affected most of these women because of their low level of literacy and their cultural status which compelled them to remain subordinate to their husbands. The 2011 census also revealed that about 19 534 (6.5%) people are unemployed, 94 761 (31.6%) are not economically active and only 32 780 (10.9%) are employed. Consequently, the main sources of income within the municipality are remittances, social grants and pensions. The above population figures do not include people with disabilities as revealed by the 2001 and 1996 Statistics South Africa figures (Table 2.7). According to this table, there has been a huge reduction in the number of cases of hearing and sight disabilities due to availability of medical facilities. Physical and intellectual abilities have registered a slight improvement, but multiple disabilities have increased. To further fight these disabilities, the municipality promises to strengthen access to primary health care and improve co-ordination of access to health education to all communities.

From the above explanations pertaining to the population profile it is not surprising that the Sekhukhune District, within which the municipality is located, was earmarked by the former president Thabo Mbeki to be the 'poorest of the poor' district; a nodal point in Limpopo that needed immediate intervention. This became one of the reasons why the researcher became interested in embarking on this kind of investigation, believing that it is at local level where men and women from different walks of life engage with the government to access services, resources and opportunities. The Local Municipality is answerable to the provincial government, and the provincial government answers to the national government.

Upon assumption of duty in 2000, the local municipalities were given a provincial mandate to improve the lives of the communities in which they are stationed. Shah (2006:3) maintains that local governments therefore are expected to be:

- *Responsive:* doing the right thing by delivering services that are consistent with citizens' preferences or are citizen-focused

- *Responsible*: doing the right thing the right way

- *Accountable* to citizens through the rights-based approach.

Table 2.7: Persons with Disabilities (Statistics South Africa, 2001)

Disabilities	2001	1996
Sight	9 063	5 496
Physical	3 148	3 852
Multiple	1 898	1 122
Intellectual	1 353	1 359
Hearing	2 234	3 940
Emotional	1 702	0
Communication	562	0

It is believed that the closer the government is to the people, the better it works. Therefore a local government is a purchaser of local services, a facilitator of networks of government providers and overseer of provincial and national governments. Based on the duty assigned, the Makhuduthamaga Local Municipality adopted a vision and mission (Makhuduthamaga News, 2008:4) that would remain a driving force for it to accomplish its responsibilities. The vision is: 'A developmental municipality that provides needs-satisfying sustainable services'.

The mission is: 'To strive for a people-centred municipality that delivers sustainable services underpinned by redress, access and accountability, as principles of Ubuntu (any human action or behaviour that is shown not only to people known to you but also to strangers) and underpinned by "Batho Pele" (People First) principles'. The essence of the vision and mission revolves around the development of people, the satisfaction of their needs and assurance that the municipality sees that the provision of needs will be sustainable. To have a plan of action, the municipality adopted an Integrated Development Plan (IDP). The IDP is an expression of the will of the people. The IDP cannot be implemented (Year Book 2009/10:270) until it has been discussed and approved by the affected people. In the IDP, the needs and

aspirations of the community are accommodated. In the municipality the people are provided with services such as roads, electricity, water, and to a lesser extent with employment which is supplemented by the establishment of projects. Normally, the IDP is a five year plan that guides and informs all planning, management, development, investment and implementations of decisions and actions in the municipality. The IDP was aligned with policies (IDP, 2008/2009:18) from global, national, global and district platforms. The policies consulted are:

- *Millennium Development Goals:* these goals were agreed upon at the World Summit on Sustainable Development (WSSD) held in Johannesburg (Gauteng) in 2002. There are eight goals which have a target date of 2015 (as explained earlier in the chapter). The attainment of the goals has implications for development of the municipality. The MDGs suggest to the municipality what to prioritise and observe the date lines. In other words, the MDGs are a set of numerical and time-bound targets that express key elements of human development.

- *National Spatial Development Perspective (NSDP):* this is a framework within which future development of the national space economy can be utilised by identifying areas of need and resource potential. The NSDP acts as a common point of reference for national, provincial and local governments to analyse comparative potentials of localities. Although not yet established in the study area, there are propositions for such developments to create jobs for the unemployed.

- *Provincial Growth and Development Strategy (PGDS):* since the municipalities carry the provincial mandate, they are obliged to draw their IDPs guided by provincial policy. The objectives of the Limpopo Growth and Development Strategy are:
    o   to improve the quality of life of the people in Limpopo

- o to ensure growth of the province's economy through mining, tourism and agriculture

- o to enhance innovation and competitiveness

- o to pursue regional integration for economic gain

- o to improve the institutional efficiency and effectiveness of government.

- *The Greater Sekhukhune 2025 Development Strategy (GSDS):* the Greater Sekhukhune District has crafted a 20-year development plan that will guide development in the district and its municipalities. The municipality will have to develop a framework indicating how the 20-year plan is to be implemented in the annual municipal programmes and projects.

- *Apex Priorities:* a list of priorities was formulated by the former president, Thabo Mbeki, indicating activities of the three spheres of government for the 2008/2009 financial year. The municipality refers to this list when compiling its action programmes.

The three challenges of *poverty, inequality and unemployment* continue to haunt democratic South Africa despite the documented and legally approved strategies. Furthermore, the municipality operates under the Municipal System Act of 2000, which provides the framework for gender inclusive developmental programmes and governance. Through consultation with communities, a priority list was drawn to identify the needs within the municipality. It is hoped that such priorities would help to reduce the problems which the municipality faces. The project priority list is as follows:

- *Provision of water to communities:* it is common knowledge that water is essential for life and water shortage has serious consequences that frequently culminate in disease and death.

Although this remains a problem, a number of villages within the municipality do have tap water.

- *Electricity supply to communities:* in all rural communities, energy supply is a problem. The available forests are being destroyed by settlement encroachment and increasing population numbers as green trees are cut for firewood. In the municipality almost all villages are provided with electricity.

- *Maintenance of roads:* as a means of communication, roads need to be in good condition to ease travelling from one settlement to another and to the municipal service centres. Most of the roads that connect the villages are tarred to facilitate travelling.

- *Health services to communities:* in rural areas, hospitals are often far apart and far from dwellings. Therefore, the provision of health care centres, clinics and even mobile clinics would benefit isolated settlements.

- *Town settlement in Jane Furse:* this growth point already exists and supplies urban goods and services to people from far and near settlements. Since there was definite demand, a shopping complex at Jane Furse – called Jane Furse Crossing – was constructed and opened in March 2013. Other growth points identified are: Nebo-Phokwane cluster and Apel-Cross at GaMasemola. These will relieve the demand on the primary growth point of Jane Furse and will offer employment opportunities for local people.

- *Sports facilities for communities:* this project will be significant as recreational facilities in the municipality are scarce. It will help keep the youth occupied and under control as most of them are unemployed. A start has already been made in the provision of these facilities.

- *Industrial developments:* development of industries within the municipality will reduce the movement of migrant labour and its accompanying problems, and help reduce the unemployment rate within the municipality; this is already the case with the completion of the Jane Furse Plaza, although the population overpowers it with their enthusiasm and support. The success of the projects which the women have established, add to the creation of jobs.

Undoubtedly, if these projects are put in place as suggested, poverty will be tremendously reduced within the municipal area, as the projects will generate employment. The IDPs (2008/2009:156-159) explain how the municipality addresses poverty and gender inequality as they are root causes of underdevelopment in the greater Sekhukhune District.

2.3.4.1   *Poverty reduction in Makhuduthamaga Local Municipality*

In the context of a rural setting, poverty could be referring to a condition in which a person would not have food or clothes, have a substandard house that did not really offer shelter and people going to sleeping without having eaten anything. With regard to housing, it is the obligation of the municipality to supply the elderly and orphans with accommodation. In cases where poverty is extreme, the municipality assumes the provision of all basic needs, such as free electricity, water and shelter to the vulnerable and marginalised groups – particularly women. Food is supplied in the form of food parcels, but this is not enough. As a result, such groups are provided with seeds to do some farming in order to ensure food security. The municipality is also working hand-in-hand with SASSA to make sure that those who are eligible for social grants are helped immediately.

In its IDPs, the municipality promises to create opportunities for all poor and vulnerable people to sustain themselves through productive activities, namely, handicraft, raising livestock, sewing, or poultry farming or any other activity that will generate income. This idea is better because people will be able to secure food on their own and buy what is needed for them to remain independent. Furthermore, the

municipality has adopted a social security system and safety nets to protect those who are poor and disadvantaged. This kind of structure is necessary as the poor are mostly robbed of their rights as citizens of the country because of the corruption which is gaining roots in the country.

The municipality takes it upon its shoulders to empower the poor, especially women. That could be a good step forward in a rural setting where women tend to remain silent in the background, as they fear to come forward even if they have the ability to achieve something worthwhile. To the researcher, it is in this venture to empower women where the municipality, through its gender desk, has to constantly organise workshops on gender mainstreaming to tame the fears of women. In this way poverty will be a problem of yesterday. What was observed among rural women was that the majority still lack that courage and driving force from within to be successful.

2.3.4.2   *Gender equity in Makhuduthamaga Local Municipality*

In the context of the South African Constitution, gender equity specifically refers to ensuring that men and women have an equal understanding of access to and control over social, political and economic resources in post-apartheid South Africa. This is one aspect which, if not attained, will allow the problem of poverty to continue. The researcher is aware that it is tough to transform people from an inequality setup, but this seems to be the only immediate tool available for poverty reduction and alleviation. In this regard, the municipality (IDP, 2009/2010:156) promised to organise efforts and resources in such a manner that they are equally available to both men and women. Such an approach would help to arouse the feeling among women and the vulnerable of belonging to the nation. It furthermore promises to remove gender inequalities as they are barriers to the access of skills, land, housing and jobs. That means that the Bill of Rights and the contents of the Beijing Platform of Action will be implemented. At local level, the municipality implements the contents of what is called Employment Equity Plan (EEP) of 2007. The plan is further guided by the Skills Development Act (Act No. 81 of 1998), which further contributes to enhancing women empowerment. From 2006 to 2011, the municipality was headed by a female

mayoress and a female speaker; the latter is still in office. Their stay in office was witnessed by mayoral progress in areas of education, sports, agriculture, health care and many more facilities, although unemployment still remains a major problem for the municipality.

Several workshops on how women can improve their status and be enabled to do something constructive would be conducted. By attending these workshops women will be free to identify their general problems as women, because women differ in respect of age, religion, culture and interests. In addition, the workshops will help to identify women's talents, and they could be taught to develop their own talents through skills training workshops. Lovell (1992:27-28) writes that women remain on the bottom rung of the ladder of development because they have little or no access to people or positions of influence. She warns that social and economic developments cannot take place without a changed role for women. In her studies in Sri Lanka on community development through micro-lending, she observed that women are key role players in primary health care, nutrition and family planning, and that the majority of women are found to be better savers than men, who are better borrowers. In 2008, the IDP indicted that a budget of R1 million was allocated for local economic development. Hopefully, the poor and women were allocated the larger share.

The municipality assures that it will understand the diverse needs of women and promises to prioritise such needs in the planning and delivery processes. The municipality has beautiful priority lists and policies, but the question is: 'How will such information flow to the community?' The municipality launched the Ward Committees in 2006. These organisational structures are meant to build and forge working relations between the municipality and the community. The municipality has 31 ward councillors, of whom 10 (32.2%) are women. The percentage is promising and encouraging as it can grow up to 50%. Chairpersons of the ward committees and the ward councillors often go for training on municipal systems. Through ward councillors, the municipality approaches the tribal chiefs when there is need for land for new constructions and developments. The tribal rulers also constantly attend workshops and are updated about the legal reforms that intervene in their traditional

ways of ruling. The organisational structure of the municipality (Figure 2.3) is planned in such a manner that communication is easy between the municipality and the community and within the municipality itself. The influence the ward councillors can have on the community members is clear from Figure 2.3.
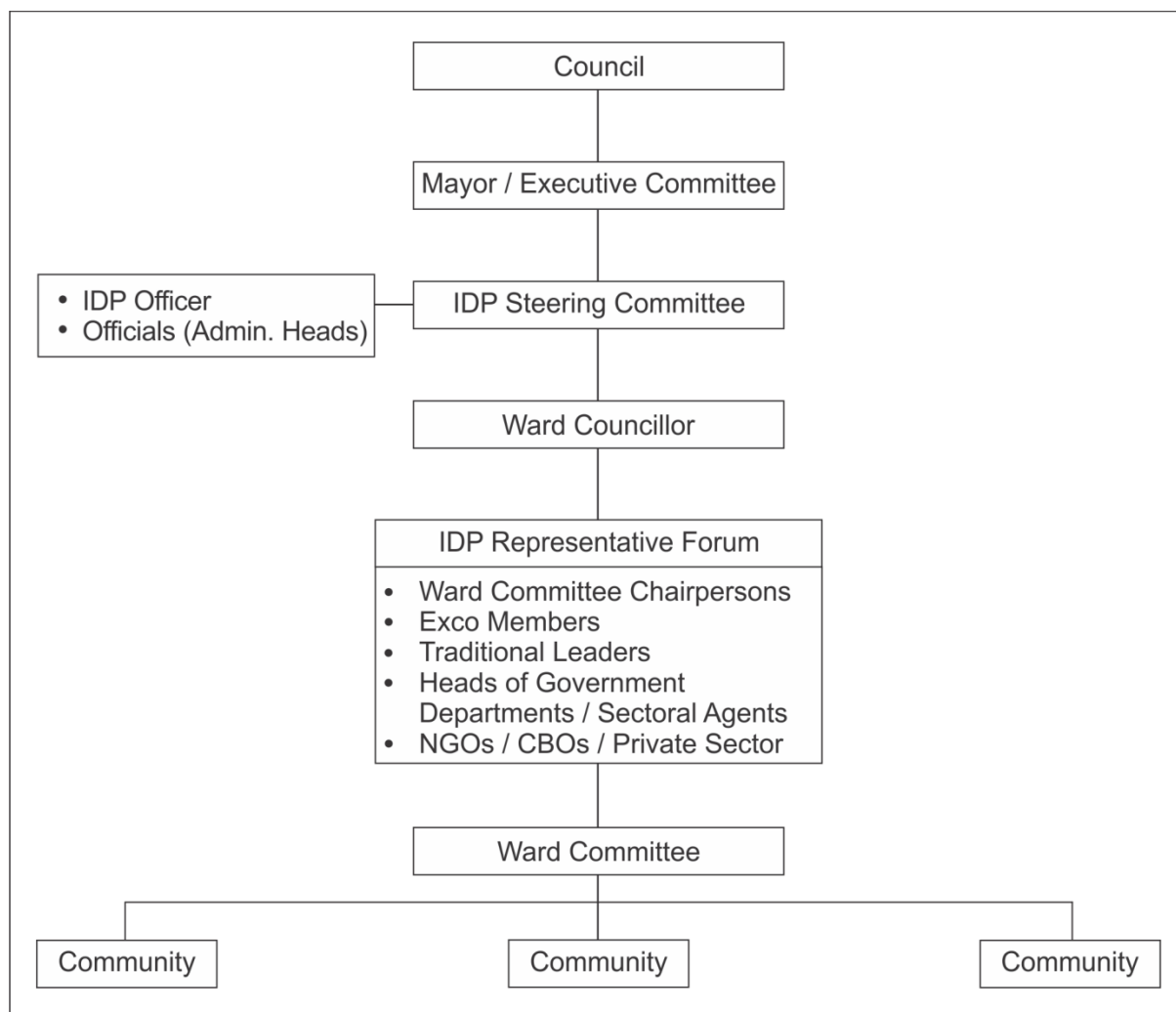
Figure 2.1: Organisational Structure of the Makhuduthamaga Municipality

2.3.4.3 *HIV/AIDS levels in Makhuduthamaga Local Municipality*

The HIV/AIDS pandemic is the greatest challenge not only to Makhuduthamaga Local Municipality but to the whole of the Sekhukhune District; in fact to the whole of South Africa. The problem is that it affects females more than males and hence

doubles the problems of poverty. HIV/AIDS has an effect on development in the sense that it affects breadwinners and leaves orphaned children, reduces life expectancy and labour availability and results in loss of skills. In this regard, the municipality promises to work together with clinics, schools, religious groups, theatres and music artisans and to offer public education for the prevention of aids. It is believed that this will help to change the behaviour of affected and infected people.

Counselling services and facilities for basic health and medical care and clinical tests should be available for the local people to use. Testing for HIV/AIDS in particular is important for prevention, so that risky behaviour can be discouraged and infected people can be encouraged to take medication as prescribed in order to sustain their lives. Therefore, the municipality should, at all costs, support community home-based caregivers and ensure there are enough trained workers in the field.

2.3.4.4   *Women empowerment in Makhuduthamaga Local Municipality*

The researcher investigated five projects within the Makhuduthamaga Local Municipality with the purpose of finding out the extent to which women are responding to the country's constitutional call and international pleas and endeavours that support their empowerment and participation in all aspects of daily life. The projects are:

- Hlabologang Bakery at GaMasemola village

- Diphagane Vegetable Gardening Project at Diphagane village

- Ba Kgobokane Art & Craft Co-operative at Jane Furse

- Raemet Kreaxion Co-operative at Clen-Cowie village

- Maano A Basadi Dairy Co-operative at Phokoane village

More will be said about these projects in Chapter Four where the participation of women in these projects contributes to the achievement of the MDGs, especially MDGs 1 and 3. As the projects employ women, they will help in the attainment of

poverty reduction and women empowerment. It follows that once women are empowered, other problems such as mortality, education standards and social injustices could be brought to manageable levels. It is for this reason that the projects and the courses of action are called co-operative projects because they are economic centres that engage people for social and economic mutual benefit. The co-operative projects are therefore regarded as one of the building blocks for the success of the MDGs.

2.4   CONCLUSION

This chapter highlights the strategies and attempts to foster human development and acknowledge barriers that appear internationally in Africa, as well as in South Africa and its rural communities. The shift from the concept of welfare in the 1970s to human development in the 1980s, continued on to empowerment from 1990s. A range of developments has upgraded the level of women's achievements with sustainable development as the ideal. Despite the great steps that have been taken, inequality and poverty are still observed as major obstacles towards attaining evident sustainable development. The eradication of poverty has not yet reached the people, especially the women who are most affected by being poor. Moreover, numerically women remain the smaller percentage of the members of decision-making bodies, thus reducing their possible influence when decisions have to be taken. The other serious impediment is that for a long time development strategies focused mainly on economic growth as the only indicator of development, and human potential was totally ignored. Hence, people were left in poverty for decades and the challenge now is for them to move out of the poverty trap.

It is thought that the attainment of MDGs will help to close the gap between the haves and have-nots, since the thinking behind the MDGs is to put people first as a precondition for sustainable development. Unless women are seen as equal partners with men, development will end up in a cul-de-sac, starting from within the family up to the public sphere. The government and the relevant statutory bodies at various levels of government are urged to ensure that suggested policy interventions are

implemented in such a way that all people participate and have equal opportunities. However, general improvement is observable in the lives of women, an example of which is the women in Makhuduthamaga. Of note is that people should develop the power within to aspire to a better life to enable the empowerment process to take place.

The following chapter will deal with methodology and explains the methods used to collect data from the participants and document information about the area under study. The data obtained will definitely reveal something about the status of women in the study area. The methods and instruments chosen will be explained in detail and reasons for the choice of such methodology will be furnished.

CHAPTER THREE

WOMEN EMPOWERMENT IN THE MAKHUDUTHAMAGA LOCAL MUNICIPALITYUSING THE ASSET-BASED APPROACH TO DEVELOPMENT

Since the empowerment of women is enshrined in the South African Constitution and in keeping with international thinking, the main aim of this research is to investigate the extent to which the women within the Makhuduthamaga Local Municipality have been inspired by the contents of the South African Constitution to reduce their own levels of poverty and thus improve living conditions in their daily lives. With this in mind, attention turns to how the data was collected from two particular sources; firstly, those actively participating in the sampled projects and, secondly, the municipal officials who were responsible for co-ordinating the projects in this small rural South African community. The socio-economic setting in which the research took place and the chosen methodology are presented, taking the history and the geography of the area into account as they have strongly accounted for the concern about and interest in women empowerment in the study area.

In order for the aims and objectives of this research to be attained, participatory approaches were chosen for data collection and analysis. When development in rural communities is involved, these approaches are preferred to those related to the traditional basic needs approaches. The theoretical basis of the participatory approaches proves to be advantageous when it comes to gathering information. Participatory Rural Appraisal (PRA) forms – the overall methodology for the research – with specific application of a combination of the Asset Based Community Development (ABCD) and Community Asset Mapping Programme (CAMP) methodologies were considered the most relevant methodologies for this investigation.

3.1 POST-DEVELOPMENT THEORY AND THE DEVELOPMENT OF PARTICIPATORY RURAL APPRAISAL (PRA)

Before discussing this specific case further, it seems appropriate to give a short background of the participatory approaches used, their principles and their uses in rural development.

During the 1950s and early 1960s, the global goal of development was economic growth with the gross national product (GNP) as the sole indicator of development. The nation state was therefore the driving force of development (Ozerdem & Bowd, 2010:10). These assumptions of development resulted in the development of the dependency theory. In this theory, the rich countries (located in the Global North) were to design the development strategies for the poor countries (located in the Global South). The result was that countries in the Global South were expected to exactly copy or follow the development path of the countries in the Global North in order to 'develop' themselves. This theory was discredited when it became apparent that the rich countries were becoming enriched at the expense of poor countries. However, it meant that the poor were impoverished further and further, widening the gap between the rich and the poor.

The essence of the matter was that rich countries were not aware that the people in poor countries had knowledge and skills that could contribute to and even direct their own development. They just saw them as poor people who were helpless, desperate and in need of assistance. In actual fact, the theory was blind to or ignorant about the importance of local knowledge on issues of development. The approach was totally top-down; the local people had to accept changes forced down their throats without having any say, and strategies were applied in the name of development (Nicolau, 2013:31).

During the last decade of the previous century, global development theories that led to new approaches to development inquiry emerged; these were later known as

participatory approaches. These approaches are inclusive in the sense that they recognise the capabilities and indigenous technical knowledge (ITK) of the local people in bringing about development. Sillitoe et al.(2009:9) see ITK as knowledge that is culturally transferred from generation to generation from birth. It is this knowledge that the developers or donors should know about in order to assist in designing the right technology for developing rural areas in particular. The development of the participatory approaches created an increasing awareness of the need for programmes and policies for development to follow a roots-driven approach, meaning that the local people were to be given the opportunity to take part in designing of their own development. The development of the participatory approaches is significant within the development of the post-development theory which challenges the assumption of the development theory of the previous century that assumes that the western lifestyle should be replicated in the Global South; rather posing that the post-development theory should acknowledge the local culture, knowledge, resources and assets as the critical stance towards the discourse of development and the defence of pluralistic grass-roots movements is critical to sustainable change (Nicolau, 2013:32).

Robert Chambers from the Institute of Development Studies at Sussex University in England is regarded as the father of participatory research methodology; he defines participatory methods as a family of approaches and methods that enable rural people to share and analyse their own knowledge of life and their own conditions with the intention of developing a suitable plan of action to change their own lives sustainably (Chambers, 1994:953). The implication is that the local people are or should be the designers and implementers of the programmes and policies meant for their own development.

Increasing dissatisfaction with the top-down approach to development encouraged the development of a methodology called Rapid Rural Appraisal (RRA). The approach was whole-heartedly welcomed by non-government organisations; due to its practical nature, it was easier to use and involved the local people designing programmes to suit their needs. The local people became the seat of decision-

making processes over issues that affected their lives. In addition, RRA was found to be more cost-effective than the dreary conventional questionnaires that took people a long time to complete. The proponents of participatory approaches were suspicious that the western influences of modernisation and dependency and domination by conventional methods might have damaged the ITK, or the ITK might have been lost in another way (Small, 2004:18), as it (ITK) was regarded as useless and irrelevant to the development process.

In international language, the 1990s was termed the decade for Human Development (HD) meaning that the people and not the economy were regarded as the centre of development. The HD model gives people a wider range of choices to decide what is most suitable for them and their daily lives. Many local communities in the Global South illustrate this well, as the local people are seen as being important in bringing about improvements in their lives. Proponents of participatory approaches realise that no one person can develop another person without that person taking the initiative himself. The HD development model is sometimes referred to as participatory rural appraisal, community-driven development or development from the grass-roots level whereby the people's choices are widened and dynamic as they can change over time.

By the 1980s, the word 'participatory' was increasingly associated with RRA. Although the work of Cernea (1985) is considered to be the most important work that led to the transformation from RRA to Participatory Rural Appraisal (PRA), it was the application of a RRA by the Indian Aga Khan Rural Support Programme and the International Institute for Environment and Development of London in two rural villages in India that is considered to be the most significant contribution of the development of the PRA from the RRA (Nicolau, 2013:39).

3.2   COMPARISON OF RAPID RURAL APPRAISAL (RRA) AND PARTICIPATORY RURAL APPRAISAL (PRA)

Rapid rural appraisal (RRA) is a direct forerunner and main contributor to PRA that also accommodates the ethos of both activist participation and agro-ecosystem approaches. However, Chambers (1994:953) identified differences between them showing the distinctions and development of PRA as being currently dominant and progressive. The participatory approach has a common view with PRA in that poor people are acknowledged as being creative and capable and are able to investigate, analyse and plan on their own. In addition, the poor, the weak and the marginalised can be empowered. Both the RRA and the PRA are more effective within rural communities where agricultural activities are dominant. Both approaches use visual methods, such as seasonal calendars, daily activities, and many more methods which can be used easily by the non-literate.

Rapid rural appraisal (RRA) contributed to PRA, as it also gave room for the poor, marginalised and the non-literate to take part in their own development. RRA has the disadvantage in that information obtained from the local people in rural areas was collected in a rush, as if people were on a tour or merely visiting, as the name suggests. In an RRA, outsiders who gathered the data would do so in a hurry and would then exit the community to analyse it in offices somewhere else. It is for this reason that it is also at times called the 'rushed rural appraisal'. As noted earlier, in the 1980s the terms participatory and participation permeated the RRA vocabulary. By then people had started to question the role of outsiders in development. Therefore, PRA came about as an extension or an improvement on the RRA, the chief difference being that in PRA information has to be collected in a relaxed manner, with the local people taking the lead in development processes. In that way the local people would be able to evaluate the success or failure of their projects as their lives would be affected. Using the work of Kumar (2002:39), Narayanasamy (2009:17) gives these distinctions between RRA and PRA in Table 3.1.

Table 3.1: A comparison between Rapid Rural Appraisal and Participatory Rural Appraisal (Narayanasamy: 2009: 17)

Category	RRA	PRA
Main user	Aid agencies and universities	NGOs, fieldworkers and government
Main innovators	Universities	NGOs
Resources and skills overlooked	Local people's knowledge and skills	Local people's knowledge and capabilities and skills considered
Main innovation	Methods	Behaviour
Outside mode	Eliciting	Facilitating
Objective	Data collection	Empowerment
Main actors	Outsiders	Local people
Long-term outcomes	Plans, projects and publications	Sustainable local actions and institutions
Period of development	Late 1970s and early 1980s	Late 1980s and 1990s

From Table 3.1, it is evident that local people, like the women in the Makhuduthamaga Local Municipality, will benefit from being given the opportunity to use their knowledge and skills. Should the municipality itself be aware of the importance and benefit of involving the local people through word and action, unemployment and extreme poverty could well become merely part of history. It is this non-academic knowledge of themselves and their own world that brings about the certainty that local people do understand their environment better than outsiders and are able to respond accordingly to meet their needs. For this reason, PRA is sometimes called Participatory Learning and Action (PLA), implying that the people learn from one another and take action to their own satisfaction and do not look for help from elsewhere. Ozerdem and Bowd (2010:4) note that participatory approaches help to bridge power relations that exist between researchers and the researched and between practitioners and beneficiaries, a situation that arose

because the power that the researcher possessed under conventional methods made sure that those being researched remained on the side-lines and had little or no involvement at all.

3.3   PARTICIPATORY RURAL APPRAISAL (PRA)

By early 1994, when South Africa became a democratic country, PRA had already been applied to many communities in Africa (Kenya, Zimbabwe, Uganda, Senegal, Ethiopia and Botswana), South and Southeast Asia (Sri Lanka, Pakistan, and India) and Latin America. In some of these countries, PRA was used successfully in natural resource management, agriculture, health, food security, and many programmes for the poor. PRA is today regarded as a useful approach in social research, especially in developing the rural areas. According to Monaheng (1996:6), different names, such as Popular Participation, Community Participation, Local Participation and Citizen Participation, are given to PRA. Under PRA, it becomes possible for outsiders or researchers to learn from and about the local inhabitants.

From the explanations given, it is understood that PRA approaches are to rural development, in terms of their methods and objectives. The method observes that development must be from below and that the local people must be given the opportunity to decide their development path, and guided by their capabilities and assets available. One should not be surprised that this research emphasises 'rural'. This is because it is in the rural areas such as the Makhuduthamaga Local Municipality, where poverty is widespread and many have no source of living, that the women, children, the poor and the marginalised remain vulnerable. Therefore, the powerlessness and non-involvement of these people are to be counteracted through the approaches of PRA as the right recipe for women empowerment. PRA discourages reliance on external assistance and promotes the initiative by local people to eradicate poverty and unemployment by using their God-given talents. In other words, PRA aims to empower the local people. In South Africa, one sees the introduction of the Comprehensive Integrated Rural Development as the

manifestation of PRA. One is reminded that PRA can take various forms, as long as the knowledge of the local people is engaged, the local people are involved, committed and feel proud that they are given the opportunity to decide upon, design and plan the programmes that affect their lives. The following concepts (Chambers, 1994:953-969) are associated with PRA and simply suggest that any approach that misaimed at capacity building of the community is to be part and parcel of the process or of the results thereof.

- *Empowerment:* in Chapter One, different views of the term empowerment were given. In this chapter the concepts relate to PRA as an approach that will culminate in empowering the people. Empowerment is observable when the local people have built confidence through sharing and generation of new local knowledge which impacts upon their lives. This only happens if the people have close social ties, as will be seen in the case of the women in the Makhuduthamaga Local Municipality. Observation showed the researcher that it is the degree of social network that is central to PRA.

- *Respect:* this behaviour is observed when the researcher, a practitioner or an NGO is able to transfer power to the respondents. Respect also takes place between the participants to affect progress in a positive way. The local people become champions because of the knowledge and experiences they have. The local people share this knowledge respectfully with the researcher and amongst themselves. In this instance, the researcher is reduced to a listener, a convenor or a catalyst.

- *Localisation:* PRA is a locally driven process in the sense that it takes place in a particular locality and community. Furthermore, it uses the local resources and knowledge of people in a particular locality. In other words, it avoids external interference as far as possible. Hence, PRA will differ from community to community.

- *Enjoyment:* PRA as a participatory approach is accompanied by some degree of enjoyment in the forms of jokes, little songs and stories to avoid the monotonous conventional way of data collection where everybody is found to be serious. The enjoyment in PRA is further noted when the participants can finally exclaim: 'We can do it on our own!'

- *Inclusiveness:* PRA is not selective; it is designed for everybody, especially the poor. By including groups such as children, the elderly, the rich, the poor, disabled and many more, much more representative information will be obtained. The South African government is aware of this concept, as inclusivity has to be observed in its various policies and programmes. The responses to the question of age in the interview schedule will indicate whether the projects are inclusive or exclusive.

Therefore, if any researcher claims to be applying PRA in his or her work, the above concepts should permeate through the process. These terms make PRA attractive, practical and more democratic. Contrary to the opinion of positivists, it has been proved by PRA that the trickle-down effect cannot take place in humans. Each and every person should seek some means of survival. These concepts suggest that PRA considers ethics to be a prerequisite for participatory research.

3.3.1 Principles associated with Participatory Rural Appraisal (PRA)

A number of principles which guide the development of the local communities and the marginalised are adopted by PRA. These principles are derived from engagement with the local people as witnessed by Kumar (2002:41).

- *Reversal of learning:* in PRA, learning takes place face-to-face with the local people. The latter take the lead in sharing the ITK, with the researcher playing a subsidiary role. Their knowledge of the environment also helps to add value to the learning process. In

this case, the researcher set out to learn more from the participants, instead of giving them confusing information. Oral histories about their projects proved this principle to be efficient.

- *Progressive learning:* learning in PRA does not follow a fixed route or prescribe method; instead, participants are free to follow any route that suites them as long as it will yield fruitful results. In other words, PRA encourages initiative and flexibility as shown by the different activities carried out by the participants in their projects under study. Participants came up with different ways of how to alleviate poverty.

- *Triangulation:* under PRA, using just one method is not enough. Different methods are used to cross-check the validity of the results and the methods. This principle will be illustrated later in the chapter. This happens to support the fact that PRAs consist of a basket of methods and techniques from which the researcher chooses one to suit the research.

- *Off-setting biases:* it is the aim of PRA not to gather information in a hurry. The researcher should be relaxed and reach everybody who needs advice, and therefore collect information in detail in order to avoid biases and mistakes.

The above principles support the idea that PRA is people-centred in nature when it comes to rural development, because it is the fundamental aim of rural development to bring about a positive change in the lives of people within rural communities. Furthermore, PRA shares such as open-mindedness; meaning that people engaged in PRA are not narrow-minded. They can immediately identify the pros and cons of their actions and decisions and withdraw immediately if necessary. Their minds are receptive. The skill of patience to listen indicates that the participants are interested in learning from others and shows the ability to withdraw once action is decided

86

upon, showing respect to other peoples' ideas and the ability to compromise. The skills acquired promote the participation by the researched.

3.3.2 The role of Participatory Rural Appraisal in rural development

This research is conducted in the municipality of the purely rural and poverty-stricken Sekhukhune District, with the exceptions of isolated instances where western lifestyle is being adopted. Hence, the use of the term 'rural development' is appropriate. Under such situations:

- It is one of the roles of PRA to bring the local people together and give them the opportunity to share ideas, knowledge and skills. In essence, it promotes social networking which is one of the key prerequisites for the success of PRA and helps to build the social capital, upon which PRA rests.

- One major role of PRA is to narrow the gap between the researcher and the researched as the ethics and cultural norms are considered. It will later be shown that ethics are very important during the collection of data in a research. In that way, the researched feel empowered and free to participate.

- PRA empowers the weak and the marginalised in the sense that they are encouraged to participate in making their living conditions better and do not sit back and wait for outside help.

- PRA involves the participation of a group rather than an individual, affecting behaviour and attitude for the better at every level of participation. Obviously, PRA matches well with the South African slogans of 'A better life for all' and 'Together we can do more'.

3.3.3 The use of the Participatory Rural Appraisal to achieve the aims and objectives of this research

The main aim of the study is to show that women empowerment within local municipalities is a pathway to poverty reduction and the betterment of living conditions for women within their own environment. There are three associated objectives for this research:

- to describe the activities in which the women themselves engage in order to improve their quality of life
- to establish how women's involvement in cash-earning activities impacts positively on the socio-economic standing of women
- to establish how the involvement of women outside the confines of the household offer them the opportunity to empower themselves, at the same time to improving their living conditions.

To achieve the objectives of this research it is important that the collection of data takes place while talking directly to the participants and walking and looking around the study area, rather than seated in an office while waiting for questionnaires to be returned.

The PRA approach was identified as suitable for this research for the following reasons:

- The approach enabled interaction with the participants, and helped to understand their emotions, and also their political, economic and social standing.
- The use of PRA shows appreciation for the skills, perceptions and aspirations of the local people.
- The researcher can play the role of a listener, a learner and a catalyst.

- As the majority of the participants have low levels of literacy, this method provides the necessary confidence to participate meaningfully.

- Under PRA, participants are encouraged to take greater control, ownership, leadership and responsibility using available resources instead of giving the responsibility to one person. This kind of behaviour ensures the sustainability of the resources, as everybody is accountable and in charge.

- PRA is casual, informal and open-ended – no set of rules is to be followed or imposed on the participants.

PRA is regarded as a better approach to development, because it spreads easily to other places through methods, behaviour, attitude and sharing:

- Participatory visual aids such as maps, diagrams, calendars and transect walks are more convincing and add interest. People become much more advanced and ready to teach one another. These methods are easy to manipulate even by the illiterate.

- Under the influence of PRA, people change their attitude and behaviour and become more receptive. The outsiders then step back to learn from the local people as the latter occupy the central position. Any learning that takes place is necessarily accompanied by the transfer of knowledge, skills, attitude and values; this is a characteristic of PRA.

- Sharing knowledge and experience among local people, between local people and outsiders, and between researchers themselves, is common under PRA. Consequently, the spread of PRA to other countries and continents has largely been more lateral, personal, and experiential than didactic.

Nicolau (2013:50-51) identifies at least 24 significant methods used by practitioners of PRA. These approaches followed a variety of interviewing and sampling methods.

Different methods of data collection should be adapted to local circumstances and developed over time with the assistance of communities; this allows these communities to take ownership of the data collection process. While PRA approaches were becoming more relevant in development programmes, the shift from a basic needs approach (development theory) to an asset-based approach (post-development theory) dominated the last decade of the previous century. The PRA approaches identified by Nicolau (2013) increasingly applied an asset-based approach. In order to achieve the overall aims of the research, this approach was considered to be necessary for this thesis. Further inspiration for the selection of an asset-based approach was derived from the research undertaken by the Gender, Agriculture and Assets Project (GAAP), as explained inspection 1.4. The focus on assets rather than income is a result of the critical role of assets in both accumulating wealth and managing vulnerability and in this way addressing gender inequality. Access to, control over and ownership of assets – including land and livestock, homes, equipment and other resources – enables people to create stable and productive lives (Meinzen-Dick et al., 2013:5).

3.3.4 The application of Participatory Rural Appraisal in the discipline of Geography in South Africa

The fieldwork methods in the majority of PRAs have very distinct spatial and temporal characteristics. It has been argued that geographers practised PRA-type techniques long before the post-development theory advocated such techniques (Binns, et al., 1997:2). The fieldwork techniques used by geographers and PRA practitioners which are related to establishing the relationship between people and the environment include resources such as maps, transect walks, asset maps and seasonal calendars (Binns, 1995: 4; Brace, 1995:40). Geographers have long been aware that an understanding between environmental factors such as rainfall, soil and vegetation are as important as appreciating the social, cultural and economic context of decision making among rural producers (Nicolau, 2013:67). The growing concern of people-centred development in relation to the sustainable use of the physical

environment is central to the particular skills and research strategies of a geographer (Motteux et al., 1999:263; Hill et al., 2001: 6-7).

Until the early 2000s, there was little evidence of the use of PRA by geographers in South Africa. Binns et al. (1997:2-5) attribute the lack of the use of PRA to the realities of apartheid, antagonism and disempowerment, which in themselves generated biases that were unique to the South African research situation. These realities included racial prejudice, crime, violence, inequality and discrimination (Nicolau, 2013:67). The disempowerment of the majority of the black rural population for generations was probably the most important constraint on the application of PRA methodology. This sector of the population had been exposed to decades of decision making that was based on the basic needs approach (namely, a top-down approach), and this has negatively impacted on the self-expression of the rural communities (Binns et al., 1997:3). Nicolau (2013:67-68) suggests that there are two very important reasons for the limited application of PRA in rural communities. Firstly, as a result of disempowerment, the rural communities in South Africa are not used to articulating their views to external stakeholders who will actually listen to their ideas. Secondly, constraints to the application of PRA in South African communities are related to the historical legacy which has complicated the access of researchers to communities for physical and political reasons. The result is that communities do not easily accept researchers into their communities and often question the purpose and relevance of the research to be undertaken. Since 1994, these two most important reasons for limited application of PRA by geographers in rural communities have lessened with time.

3.4 ASSET-BASED APPROACH TO THE EMPOWERMENT OF WOMEN IN RURAL AREAS OF THE GLOBAL SOUTH

The asset-based approach is a post-developmental approach that seeks to enable the local people – especially the poor in both rural and urban areas – to drive their own development without external assistance. Instead, the asset-based approach stresses the mobilisation of local resources and assets. 'Assets' and 'resources' will

91

be used interchangeably in the text. Asset-based development is often referred to as community-driven development. The asset-based approach to development has its origin in the international poverty alleviation debate of the 1990s in the Global North.

3.4.1 An understanding of the term 'assets' within the asset-based approach to development

In the asset-based approach to development, assets are considered to be anything that the community possesses in the form of financial, human, natural or social assets. Moser (2002:84) indicates that assets can be acquired, developed, improved and transferred across generations. They are also referred to as capital assets, capital, gifts, talents and strengths. Green and Haines (2008:7) see an asset as a stock that can be drawn upon, built upon or developed. In simple terms, assets can be explained as anything a person uses to sustain life. It is an interesting fact that these assets are often unrecognised or hidden within a person or a community and therefore need to be activated. These assets are the agents of power to act; if a community has no assets, it will have nothing to do. The capacities or the capabilities the local people possess will help improve or multiply these resources to attain sustainable livelihoods. As the poor gain access to assets, they are more likely to take control of the important aspects of their lives and to plan for the future. The assets are therefore seen as ingredients for development, but only if they are discovered. The assets differ in their importance in the ladder of development. In order of significance (Kretzmann & McKnight, 1993:8), capital assets are arranged as follows:

- *Citizens or social capital or the local residents:* citizens include everyone who lives in a particular community – men, women, children, youth, older people and the disabled – with all their different gifts or talents or abilities, such as experiences, capacities, willingness, leadership skills, artistic skills and general education level. The citizens are the primary assets. Social capital is important because it provides access to other resources. Non-

governmental organisations (NGOs) (Khan et al., 2007:13) are able to harness social capital by providing guidance to the community as a whole and stressing the importance of collective action and participatory development. It is the social capital that acts on other assets to bring about development. Social capital is therefore the most important asset.

- *Local voluntary associations:* wherever they are, people have a tendency to voluntarily group themselves to form local associations, groups or social clubs. In any community, people associate with each other to form either formal or informal social groups, such as football, social and youth clubs, prayer groups, policing forums, health care groups. Normally a group has a common interest. Bonding or networking takes place to identify assets, to share success stories and to activate the assets. It is the strength and quality of the relationship that often determines the development process. Embedded in associations is the element of trust, and it is most often due to lack of trust and respect that many associations within communities have collapsed.

- *Local Institutions:* institutions that exist in communities are either profit-making or non-profit-making and can be private or governmental in nature. Institutions found in a typical community would include schools, libraries, parks, tribal offices, churches, clinics, police stations and local businesses. These institutions, together with social associations, identify local problems and search for local solutions from within the community. These institutions can also assist in advancing development by making their economic power, expertise, resources (personnel and equipment) and physical spaces available to the community when such a need arises.

- *Physical or Environmental Assets:* land and everything on it, such as water, vegetation, infrastructure, buildings and streets, are considered to be physical or environmental assets. It is on the land where people's talents are displayed. There could be agricultural activities, road building, settlements, sports grounds, and all other activities that need land. It is normally the type of land available and the type of citizens that will determine the type of activity to be embarked upon.

- *Economic Assets:* these are constituted by things that can be bought, sold, exchanged or shared. What people produce and consume falls in this category. The principle of the asset-based approach is that the money generated within the community should remain in the community by the creation of products that can be sold or bartered within the local economy.

According to the priority list of assets, people come first, and they are to make sure that all other assets are created or developed. Hence, the participants in the projects are keys to the success of the projects.

3.4.2 The Asset Based Community Development (ABCD)

The ABCD was developed by McKnight and Kretzmann of the Institute of Policy Research at North-Western University (USA) in 1993. These researchers developed the approach while working in low-income urban neighbourhoods over a period of two years. The premise of their research was that communities can identify and mobilise existing and sometimes unrecognised assets and drive the development process themselves in response to local economic opportunities (McKnight & Kretzmann (1993:4). This approach was a counter-reaction to the dominant needs-based approach which always sought for local solutions with outside assistance, instead of looking into the assets of the locality to solve the problem. It is against this background that McKnight and Kretzmann (1993:4) defined ABCD as an approach that entails a community's mobilisation of local resources in order to solve the

community's internal problems. In other words, ABCD discourages people from always looking for help from somewhere else, instead of the people using their strengths and opportunities to solve their own problems.

To incorporate ABCD in development projects successfully, the starting point is to undertake a SWOT analysis, whereby the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats are to be identified. The group or the community does what is known as an asset inventory to check what they have or do not have. The threats that seem to hinder the progress should be turned into opportunities. Plummer (2000:49) highlights that where communities do not contribute anything in the form of labour or finance, such projects do not gain a sense of ownership, maintenance and some degree of sustainability. ABCD sees the local people as citizens and not as clients (Mathie & Cunningham, 2008:8) who wait passively to receive services. ABCD is totally against the top-down approach to development, because the top-down approach limits the capacity of people to act. Mathie and Cunningham (2008:9) see the needs-based approach as the Deficit Community Based Approach (DCBA) as opposed to the ABCD, where the DCBA centres on needs, weaknesses, problems and powerlessness of the people and therefore calls on external assistance; this cripples the community further. In many instances, external interventions paralyse and neglect the resources and energy that exist within the people and their communities. Therefore, ABCD advocates that people are able to use their talents and available resources to solve problems of poverty.

One is reminded of the fact that ABCD is adhering to the international view of development that growth in the economy alone cannot lead to sustainable livelihoods. Therefore, it is clear that there is a relationship between the theories of development and the approaches to development. In solving internal problems, ABCD emphasises the mobilisation of the social resources as key solutions to internal problems, as it activates other resources.

3.3.3 The Community Asset Mapping Programme (CAMP)

The Community Asset Mapping Programme (CAMP) was developed by Nicolau (2013) in collaboration with the Greater Rustenburg Community Foundation. CAMP was derived from the application of ABCD in the rural communities of South Africa. While the application of CAMP has been relatively successful in communities in the Global South, the application of the approach in the rural communities of South Africa showed the following shortcomings (Nicolau, 2013:94-96):

- The power struggles that are inherently part of rural communities are not taken into consideration in the ABCD approach. The national, provincial and local government structures that influence the rural communities sometimes result in power struggles which negatively impact on the inherent ability of communities to create and sustain successful business opportunities. This is further aggravated in some rural communities that have to deal with an additional tier of government; for example, tribal leadership. The ABCD approach does not deal with undercurrents within a community that can jeopardise the sustainable change that is advocated by the approach.

- In some of the case studies in which ABCD was applied, matters related to trust indicated that rural communities are sometimes plagued with high levels of jealousy, low levels of trust and a general lack of cohesion. In South Africa, this can be associated with the negative impact of apartheid on the social structures within rural communities.

ABCD focuses on the identification of assets that will provide for economic and entrepreneurial opportunities. Communities are expected to achieve this level of independence after a three-day workshop, followed up by a six-month monitoring and evaluation period by the external stakeholder. On the other hand, CAMP advocates that to equip communities with the necessary skills to identify and utilise assets to drive their own sustainable change, medium-term partnerships must be

forged between communities and external stakeholders to assist communities with the process of using assets and resources to create sustainable opportunities to drive their own indicators of change. During CAMP, communities are provided with the training and skills identified by the community to achieve their own indicators of success. These opportunities are often related, but not limited to the creation of economic opportunities. Empowerment workshops that aim at building levels of trust, self-esteem and social cohesion form a major part of CAMP. In addition, the empowerment workshops allow communities to identify undercurrents and power struggles within their own communities. The ability to negotiate with external partners that will assist communities to achieve their own indicators of success also forms part of the skills training programme of CAMP.

3.3.4 Applicability of the asset-based approach to this research

According to this thesis, the asset-based approach is the right approach to be adopted by communities when it comes to development for the following reasons:

- Asset-based development offers the community more effective participation in decision-making and implementation
- NGOs and other practitioners become facilitators and the community takes the lead
- The tools, methodology and action plan of the asset-based approach are easy to implement and can be understood by rural communities
- The community empowers itself from inside and therefore has a strong voice to suggest to government what suits them
- An asset-based approach enables citizens to realise their rights
- The asset-based approach helps the government to channel funding to deserving people or communities.

The following principles of the asset-based approach are relevant to the projects under investigation for this thesis:

- The asset-based approach relies on what is available in the locality and not on what is to be supplied by someone else, is absent or is a problem. In the projects, people with their varied gifts and relationships are available assets. Although the community has needs, it was realised that by starting with these needs, will not activate the community to do something on its own, and communities would remain beneficiaries. Rather, communities are encouraged to use whatever talents/gifts and resources they have to find solutions to their problems.

- The approach restricts the problem-solving capacities in the locality, whereby local associations and institutions should solve problems. A good example is the action taken by the women of the study area. When they realised that as women they are unemployed and largely responsible for the daily living of their families, they mobilised themselves to come up with a solution that culminated in different projects.

- The success of asset-based approaches relies on the degree of relationship among the local associations and institutions. The relationship must be renewed regularly to keep focus.

The methodology used in this research is similar to the Asset Based Community Development (ABCD), which was developed in the Global North and is now applied in the Global South, and the Community Asset Mapping Programme (CAMP) developed in rural communities in South Africa. This combined approach offered the participants the opportunity to use their own resources to drive their development (Mathie & Cunningham, 2008:276-279; Nicolau, 2013: 247-248). In both of these approaches, the talents, abilities, people associations and anything the people could use to improve their quality of life or satisfy their needs were used. In any community, the basic assets are the environment, the people, institutions, the economy and its political situation. In essence, the asset-based approach emphasises the use of what

people already have in order to improve their quality of life, rather than to always look for external assistance.

A combination of these two approaches will assist in achieving the aims and objectives of the research as both approaches advocate the following:

- Development must involve the skills, knowledge, attitude and values of the local people. These skills and knowledge are not foreign to communities; hence they can improve and manipulate them.
- They are both geared towards the empowerment of the social capital.
- They both discourage the dominance of external assistance and promote the initiatives of the local people in addressing local problems.
- They both have a common goal to engage everybody, with the emphasis on the poor and the marginalised, to reduce poverty and social injustices.

Both approaches advocate that the work of development rests with the local people. Schonhuth (1993:3-5) acknowledges that PRA fundamentally realises that the external agencies should hand the stick to the insider; this fundamental is acknowledged in both methods and actions. Therefore, ABCD and CAMP are equally empowering approaches for the marginalised. To rural women participating in development, each approach provides a means to an immediate end – quality of life – and participation becomes a vehicle towards the long-term goal; namely, empowerment. The participatory approaches are highly linked to the principles of 'uBuntu', which observes, for example, access, accountability and inclusiveness in any undertaking.

3.5 ASSET-BASED APPROACH WITHIN THE MAKHUDUTHAMAGA LOCAL MUNICIPALITY

The main aim of the asset-based approach to development is to bring about a solution to poverty and widespread unemployment among poor people in both urban and rural areas. There is no doubt that South Africa's 2030 National Development Plan is a comprehensive extension of the asset-based approach. The understanding, acceptance and spread of these approaches should definitely benefit South Africa as a country, its provinces and the local municipalities, as was the case in other countries where they have been successfully implemented. The principles of asset-based approaches to development, as well as the National Development Plan of South Africa, complement the main aim of the study which is to show that women empowerment within local municipalities is a pathway to poverty reduction and the betterment of living conditions for women within their own environment.

In order to achieve the objectives of this research, it was necessary to compile an inventory of the projects developed and driven by women in the Makhuduthamaga Local Municipality. The inventory compiled in 2010 highlighted 13 such projects (Table 3.1). Five of the projects had collapsed while eight were still operational. Of the eight projects, a total of five projects were selected as case studies for this research. The most important reason for the selection was the different nature of the projects; each project leader would have different challenges and opportunities in the quest to drive the improvement of the quality of the lives of project members.

All these projects are found within the boundaries of the Makhuduthamaga Local Municipality. All of the selected projects were originally developed as a result of the creative and innovative thinking by women from the local community.

The *Hlabologang Bakery* in GaMasemola was started by a group of local women who were tired of boredom and joblessness and decided to mobilise themselves around a baking project in an attempt to better their living conditions.

***Table3.2: Community projects within Makhuduthamaga Local Municipality
in Limpopo, South Africa: 2010***

Name	Place	Status by end 2010	Inclusion in the research
Lepelle Farming Project	GaMasemola	Collapsed	No
Mashabela Poultry	GaMashabela	Collapsed	No
Hlatlolang	Jane Furse	Active	No
Bakery	GaPhaahla	Collapsed	No
Hlabologang Bakery	GaMasemola	Active	Yes
Stone Crushing	GaPhaahla	Collapsed	No
Gardening and Pottery	Schoenoord	Collapsed	No
Maano A Basadi Dairy Co-Op	Phokoane	Active	Yes
Ba Kgobokane Art and Craft Co-Op	Jane Furse	Active	Yes
Mahlasedi Young Women	GaMashegoane	Active	No
Diphagane Gardening Project	Diphagane	Active	Yes
Raemet Kreaxion Home Industry (Bags)	Glen Cowie	Active	Yes
Raemet Kreaxion	Phokoane	Active	No

The *Diphagane Vegetable Gardening Project* was started in 1993 as a result of a call from members of a non-Government organisation who invited hungry people in the area to plough a plot of land and feed their families. This resulted in 50 women being trained in vegetable gardening and starting vegetable gardens to sustain their families and where possible to sell the surplus.

The *Ba Kgobokane Art and Craft Co-Operative (Jane Furse)* was the idea of a woman who is a teacher by profession. She mobilised local women and men to engage in art and craft works of sewing, beadwork, woodwork and pottery. Her aim was to help the women to improve their living conditions.

Raemet Kreaxion (Glen Cowie) was started by a woman who could not complete her university degree. With the support and assistance of her husband who is talented in handcraft, she decided to open a home industry making bags from sisal (the botanical name is *Agave sisalana* - a plant that yields a stiff fibre that is used to make various products such as rope, paper, and cloth). She invited women and men to join her with the aim of assisting them to feed their families on a daily basis.

The *Maano a Basadi Dairy Project (Phokoane)* was started by a group of women who were mobilised and encouraged by a daughter-in-law from the village (who worked in Gauteng) to start the project. This lady provided the group of women a list of possible projects and the group decided to start a project that would produce drinking yoghurt and amasi (also known as 'inkomazi', fermented cow's milk similar to yoghurt or cottage cheese. It is a popular indigenous drink that can be drunk alone or eaten with a porridge made of maize).

In order to achieve the objectives of the study, the selected projects were investigated to find out how the use of local assets and the talents of women within the Makhuduthamaga Local Municipality had acted as a catalyst in the empowerment of women in the communities. It therefore logically follows that through such participation, their living conditions and quality of life with regard to nutrition, health and social networking have definitely improved.

3.6 DATA COLLECTION

In order to have access to the projects, a letter asking for permission was written to the municipality (Appendix 2), and although rather late, a reply (Appendix 3) was received. Data collection was done in terms of the environment, economic and social factors, assets and challenges that affected the production of the projects. The literature surveyed indicated that participatory methods are highly recommended in the collection of data in social research. PRA, which involves both the researcher and the researched, was used in the collection of data in this study. Data collection

techniques included observations, measurements, facts and unprocessed information.

The type of data collected in this thesis is mostly primary; this is ascribed to the level of literacy of the participants. Participatory research techniques were used to collect data. Depending on the type of research, the techniques were selected from the following: time-lines, mapping, discussions, diagrams, triangulation, piloting, interviews, observation, questionnaires, pictures, calendars, literature review and many more. Of importance is that collection of data in PRA starts with the lived experiences that the participants shared with the researcher. Clifford and Valentine (2003:164) pointed out that participatory approaches do not have specific methodology with exact procedures. PRA draws heavily upon a variety of social research methods. It is for this reason that in data collection the main emphasis was placed on knowledge possessed by ordinary people. It is because of this kind of understanding that it is often emphasised that in PRA a particular issue or phenomenon is studied with engagement of all those affected by it.

3.6.1 Participant observation

Together with the asset-based approach used in this research, the most important tool of data collection is participant observation. Angrosino (2007:54-55) explains different forms of participant observations. The first is the complete observer, where the researcher is totally immersed in the community without disclosing his or her agenda. The second type of participant observation is when the observer or researcher is detached from the community and only visits the participants on specific occasions for special reasons. A third form of this method is that of the participant-as-observer, whereby the researcher is immersed in the community and is known to be conducting research, having obtained permission to do so. Finally, there is the complete participant, whereby the researcher is totally immersed in the community and does not disclose his agenda. The third option – namely, participant-as-observer – was selected as the correct tool to collect data for this research.

3.6.2 The investigator as a tool and asset

The participant observation tool that was selected for the study (participant-as-observer) implied that the researcher had to be immersed in the community and had to obtain permission to conduct the research. While many rural communities in South Africa are often reluctant to welcome researchers within their communities, the researcher felt perfectly qualified to undertake the required research in these communities as a participant-as-observer. In support of this assumption, clarification of the researcher as an investigator for the project is provided.

The researcher is Mahwahwatse Johanna Mashaba (nee *Ramushu*) born 30 January 1950 at GaMasemola village, the fifth child in a family of nine. She received primary education at the local primary school, Arkona, where she achieved a first-class Standard 6 in 1965. Her secondary education took place at the Bopedi-Bapedi High School in the nearby village of Marishane, where she achieved a first-class pass for Junior Certificate (equivalent to present day Grade 10) in 1968. Within the old 'Bantu Education' system of the apartheid South Africa, she was able to use this certificate to train as a teacher from 1969 to 1970. It was only from 1971 to 1972 that she actually completed formal schooling and obtained a Senior Certificate (now Grade 12 or Matric).

The researcher started teaching at the only local secondary school in 1973, and was proud to be the only lady teacher at the school, earning a great deal of respect and trust from her community. After ten years of teaching, she decided to go to the University of the North (UNIN), now known as University of Limpopo, to enrol for a BA degree. Geography was one of her major subjects and she proved her love for the subject by doing well. After completion in 1985, she enrolled for an honours degree in Geography (1986) at the same university.

Returning to the school after completing her BA Honours degree, she was appointed Deputy Principal (1987-1988). In 1989 she became headmistress of a subsidiary secondary school of her former school in her own home area, and is to date still the headmistress of the school. Being a teacher and a headmistress brought her into

closer contact with issues of gender within both the school, and local, provincial and national society. She began to realise the important role played by women in the absence of their men folk who were taken away through migrant labour commitments to cities. In addition to their daily chores, these women participated in every activity that took place in the village. A passion for the role of women within society grew in her, especially as she was also raised by hardworking mother who became her first teacher at home in Maths, English and writing in her home language. The researcher has witnessed the challenges rural women face and how these women are able to struggle for their families' survival.

She always cherished the idea that women can do their best if given the opportunity, freedom and the relevant support. It was actually in 1993 that her late brother, who was studying for his doctorate in education at the University of Pretoria (UP), told her to register for a Master's degree in Geography. She gradually became motivated and registered with UP. Her research topic was an investigation into the *'socio-economic impact of agricultural modernisation on the Batau Community'* (Masemola: 1983-1993). She graduated in 1995 with a Master's degree in Geography. In 2004 her brother graduated with an MBA and she accompanied him to Durban for his graduation ceremony. She returned highly motivated and inspired. He again challenged her persistently to register for doctoral studies; unfortunately she ignored his pleas.

The researcher's interest in gender issues was strengthened when her school was invited to participate in a forum for the gender formulation policy for the greater Sekhukhune District in 2006. She finally heeded her late brother's pleas in 2009, when she decided to enrol at the University of South Africa (Unisa) to register for a doctorate in the Department of Geography. At the time, the researcher proposed a broad topic of women empowerment in rural communities, and was fortunate enough to be allocated the same supervisor, Prof UJ Fairhurst, who had been allocated to her as supervisor for her Master's degree. Her Master's research had established that gender issues had played a significant role in the analysis of the socio-economic

impact of social change in her own community. It seemed so natural to take the recommendations of her Masters' into her proposed doctorate.

The topic for this research was again about women; this time uncovering the impact of women empowerment on the quality of life of women within the Makhuduthamaga Local Municipality. This work acknowledges the important role her mother and brother had played in empowering her as an individual within a rural community. She might have left the rural life and joined the urban world, but allegiance to the community that had shaped her as an individual encouraged her to plough the knowledge and insight gained over her lifetime back into the community where she is respected and accepted. Therefore, her role in this research is a tool to uncover reality and truth and it is an asset to share her experience and knowledge with others in her own community, in wider society and in academe. Her voice is also representative of the many women in the community who have taken the initiative to ensure that they improve not only the quality of their own lives, but also the quality of their families' lives. It is these women who have made a conscious decision to embrace their own empowerment and not wait for external stakeholders to do this on their behalf.

3.6.3 Interaction with the projects

The researcher decided on the interaction technique in order to collect information in its naturalistic state, to establish relationships, and to use information from observation as a way of triangulation for data obtained from other sources of data collection. In order for participants to feel free, they were told why the researcher was visiting them. My observations started in the morning until the knock-off time. Glifford and Valentine (2003:133) distinguish between participant observation and non-participant observation. In the case of the former, the researcher became totally involved in the activities of the participants, while trying to remain as objective as possible. In the latter case, the researcher remained a close onlooker, asking questions where further understanding was needed. Using this technique, the researcher mostly remained a minimal participant observer so that she did not delay

106

progress and had enough time to make notes on what was observed in relation to working conditions, how they communicated and the use of body language. Informal conversations were held here and there, especially when she wanted clarification on some aspects. After permission was granted, some photographs were taken during this period.

Flowerdew and Martin (2005:162-164) note the following as the stages of participant observation:

- *Obtaining access:* this refers to obtaining entry into the area to be researched. In order to adhere to this step, permission was requested from both the municipality and the project leaders (Appendix 2).
- *Visiting people under study:* this was done when visiting the projects on several occasions, with the aim of collecting data and also spending time with participants to see how they carried out their daily activities; this enabled the researcher to understand their world view.
- *Collecting data:* during this stage, the participants were key because the researcher relied on them as sources of information.
- *Transcribing the field-notes:* this is the rewriting of the notes which were hurriedly compiled in the field into proper notes that could be understood and would help in the compilation of the final product. This was done while the information was still fresh from the field to avoid information being forgotten.

Challenging ethical concerns related to participant observation were how to manage expectations and the question of rewards in the research process. Fortunately, these were addressed by indicating from the first visit that the research being conducted was purely an academic venture, and that no resources or rewards should be expected. The researcher also bought their products, such as spinach, cakes and

drinking yoghurt as a token of appreciation of the good work being done. The gesture was not out of the blue, as the researcher was asked on several occasions how she would assist them. That was an indication that the idea of foreign assistance was still rooted in the minds of many people. The researcher felt fortunate that she was aware of the norms and values of the participants.

3.6.4 Interaction with the project coordinator

The project coordinator of the Makhuduthamaga Local Municipality was visited in order to obtain general information about projects within the municipality with regard to their location, their products, who runs them (whether men or women) and how they assist as a municipality. A list of all the projects was supplied, including those that had collapsed (Table 3.1). The researcher was interested to know why some of the projects had failed. To cite but a few reasons, the project coordinator mentioned the following:

- In the past, donors used to give out large sums of money without first finding out what the local people could do on their own to solve the problem that confronted them. The top-down approach was not empowering at all, as the money was misused.
- After the money was donated, there was no workshop on financial management. Therefore, lack of involvement of the local people left them as they were. With no financial skills, the people started by giving themselves salaries before any profit could be generated. It is against this backdrop that development processes started to be people-centred, to allow them to have a share in the issues that involved their own lives.

3.6.5 Discussions with important community members

Information about the historical background and other related matters concerning the projects was obtained through discussions with the project leaders, older members

and participants. Where explanations were not clear, the researcher asked questions for further clarification. In relating their stories, they mentioned their achievements, challenges and ways forward. The discussions were fruitful because the same language was used by all.

3.6.6 The use of questionnaires in PRA

A typical example of a conventional data collection method is the questionnaire; this has subsequently turned out to be unpopular in participatory rural appraisal methodology. Comparing the two methods, Table 3.3 clarifies the reason for this evident reluctance. Questionnaire information applies only to a particular situation at a given point in time; therefore later and different information is not procurable.

Table 3.3: Conventional questionnaires compared to Participatory Rural Appraisal

Questionnaires	PRA
Questionnaires are once-off	PRA is continuous (life-long)
Conversation consist of question and answers	Conversation is throughout the process
No over-lapping of roles	Roles are exchanged
Results are numerical or quantitative	Results are descriptive
Top-down, with participants passive	Bottom-up, with participants active
Widens gap between researcher and researched	Closes gap between researcher and researched
Formal and restrict learning	Informal and facilitates learning

PRA uses questionnaires that are short and simple for basic biographic and background information. Some of the conventional techniques such as discussions and interviews are very useful in the application of PRA. However, PRA takes the approach further by including the visual and practical methods that the local people can create and manipulate. It consists of inflexibly structured questions for which one answer is required, disallowing the opportunity for different opinions or alternative

facts, whereas in PRA conversation between the researcher and the researched is encouraged and engagement takes places whenever and wherever it is needed. Questionnaire data is often quantitative in character and dependent on the researcher's interest and perspective and its application is impersonal. In contrast to the formality and barrier that separates the researcher and the respondent, in PRA the respondent is able to observe and participate during the data collection.

Although PRA is disillusioned by the lengthy and unproductive nature of questionnaires, the use of questionnaires is still recognised under PRA. In order to make the questionnaire attractive, the questions were short, simple and straightforward and required only basic information (Appendices D & E). Vagueness in the questions was avoided. In constructing the questions negative words like 'no' and 'not 'were avoided so as not to confuse respondents. The questions were in general open-ended to allow for more information. In designing the questionnaire, the following factors were considered:

- *Distance:* pertaining to this factor, the researcher visited the municipal offices, meaning that should there be a delay in returning the questionnaires, she would be in a position to arrange a follow-up.
- *Literacy:* as mentioned earlier, the questionnaire was designed to suit the level of education of the municipal official.
- *Clarity concerning the issue under study:* the questions were clear and in simple English, and were based on the information related to their daily work. Additional information could be obtained from their documents or reports.

A questionnaire schedule was compiled and given to the official of the municipality. The questions were open-ended to enable respondents to feel free to answer and to capture the realities of the municipality pertaining to women empowerment. The questionnaire instrument was chosen to suit the level of literacy of the official of the municipality. The questions in the questionnaire were designed to find out the role

the municipality is playing in supporting the idea of empowerment, with special reference to women as the marginalised group in many rural communities. The only problem was that the official took a long time to return the completed questionnaires, and was not available on the phone for follow-up. However, generally the responses were satisfactory.

3.6.6.1 *Piloting the interview schedule for this research*

Piloting is regarded as one of the requirements of a successful interview. It is a pre-field data collection tool, and the interview schedule (Appendix 4) was piloted with three members from each project. This helped to reveal the plausibility of the research situation, how long it would take to conduct the interview and whether the participants would understand the questions. As a result, some of the questions were restructured to suit their understanding. Above all, it refined the researcher's interviewing skills and helped establish rapport and trust (Stoecker, 2005:105) with the participants.

3.6.6.2 *Semi-structured interview as an instrument to collect data for this research*

An interview schedule was compiled for the participants to answer questions face-to-face with the researcher (Appendix E). The interview schedule consisted mostly of open-ended questions and a few fixed response questions. The open-ended questions acted as a guide for the respondents and to give them ample chance to elaborate. Open-ended questions were chosen for the respondents, because, they were easy to understand and to interpret. For consistency, the questions had the same wording and were asked in the same order. The semi-structured nature of the questions gave the participants room to expand on their answers and to ask questions where they did not understand. In using the semi-structured, the six helpers were asked what, why, who, how, where and when questions to probe for more information. A few fixed response questions were included to acquire some personal particulars and every response given was recorded. Each participant took about five minutes to answer the questions. To obtain attitudes and opinions of the respondents, scale that represents different possible responses was used. The Likert

111

scale which has two extreme opposing positions – very happy to very unhappy – was selected. Despite their time-consuming nature, the researcher chose interviews because:

- interviews involve direct verbal interaction;
- more information could be obtained through verbal leads;
- the level of literacy in this research compelled the researcher to use this type of interview;
- non-verbal responses could also be observed; and
- through further clarification and follow-up, the relationship between the respondents and researcher was further strengthened.

The type of questions and reasons for their inclusion in the interview schedule are given below:

- *Questions on personal particulars:* the questions regarding who is working in the project, whether male or female and who is in the majority will have a bearing on gender issues. The age of the participants will show whether a particular age group was selected or not.

  The question on marital status will indicate that if more married women are involved, whether there is a change of mindset in men who in most cases refused their wives to take paid employment. In that way men will also be helping in empowering women.

  The question about their occupation and level of training would help to find out whether the participants' previous occupation was in a way related to their present engagement or not.

  The question on place of birth was asked to find out how many participants are from other places and not from the locality. Finally, the question on how long a participant was in the project will show two things: Firstly, it will indicate the importance of the projects to

the people, and secondly how much hope the participants pin on the projects.

- *Questions on Attitude and Behaviour:* these questions measured attitude, opinions, motives and behaviour of the participants towards their engagement in the projects.

The question on how they heard about the project will indicate the degree of social network available in their communities. Social networking is one of the key ingredients to empowerment in rural areas.

The questions on whether participants are happy working in the project and whether satisfied with the remuneration will indicate whether the participants are only interested in money or the skills and knowledge they obtained through participation.

The number of days spent by the participants on the projects will reveal the value the participants attach to the projects. The number of years participants still expect to work in the projects is also indicative of how much hope they have on the success of their projects.

In requesting the participants to arrange in order of importance the income distribution will help the researcher how participants are trying to improve their quality of lives and their living conditions.

It was hoped and believed that the answers given to the questions would help and reveal to what extent women are empowered within Makhuduthamaga Local Municipality.

3.6.7 Conducting the interview

Recruiting participants is a precondition for any research. The researcher did not have any problem with regard to who was to participate. During passive observation

113

on her first visits, without any reservation she informed the workers about her mission and indicated that their contributions would be highly appreciated. In this research, all interviews were conducted at the project centres. A quiet place was chosen for the exercise. Participants were interviewed one after the other, keeping to the order of the questions. During the interviewing process, the researcher was very careful not to lose focus, as some of the participants were so talkative when explaining how the projects had rescued them from the daily routine stress and boredom to an extent that the interview could have degenerated into a general conversation.

Another challenge was that, in the case of the bakery project, the researcher could not take the interviewees out of the baking room, because they worked in groups of three and had to check on the ovens constantly. All in all, she remained patient until she had completed interviewing all the groups.

3.6.8 Triangulation and the verification of data

One of the most important features of PRA is the involvement of community members; not only does this position the community members as important stakeholders in the research, but it helps to position the researcher as a participant within the data collection process. This ensures that the methods applied are appropriate and relevant to those who will use them or be exposed to them. As community members are involved in the data collection process, more accurate and in-depth data collection is possible. Triangulation is built into the data collection as community members not only provided the data for this research; they also helped develop the data, and analysed and verified the data. To triangulate results and methods is one feature of PRA because of the multiple methods used in PRA. The procedure of using more than one method using the same data is called triangulation. By engaging different methods, the results and methods are cross-checked. Thomas (2011:68) sees triangulation as a means of viewing from several points, rather than viewing from only one point. Swarnborn (2010:108) and Lichtman (2010:146) mention that triangulation increases the credibility of the findings and

research as a whole. Howell and Savin-Baden (2010:79) provide the following areas in which triangulation can be applied:

- *Data triangulation*, whereby the same data is used for different persons at different times.
- *Triangulation by researchers*, where different researchers show their stances with regard to the collected data.
- *Triangulation by methods*, whereby more than one method is used to collect data.

In the case of this research, triangulation was done through sources of data collection such as observation, interviews, discussions and questionnaires. One is reminded that in triangulation there are no guidelines, since different settings require different forms of triangulation. Triangulation will help to increase the validity and reliability of the results and methods. Triangulation enhances the quality of the research and the understanding of the research questions. Triangulation is taken as a principle (Mukherjee, 1995:38) that improves trustworthiness or credibility of data and methods. As a cross-examination, triangulation will be achieved when the participants are involved in the interpretation of the results.

3.6.9 Validity and reliability of the data

In conducting the research, the researcher observed the concepts of validity and reliability. Validity (Henn, et al. 2006:176) tells whether the results or the research methods for the research study measure what they intend to measure. As a result, methods of data collection need to be correctly chosen to ensure the validity of the results. In the case of this research, validity was achieved through the use of various methods. Reliability was also important in this research. The reliability of a research (Curtis & Curtis, 2011:13-14) is achieved when the same results, irrespective of the methods used, are obtained. The use of triangulation later in the chapter will help enhance the validity and the reliability of the research content and methods. From

the above explanation, it is clear that validity, reliability and triangulation are inseparable.

3.7 ETHICS CONSIDERED BEFORE, DURING AND AFTER DATA COLLECTION

It is a norm that in social research, researchers should conduct themselves ethically to protect the rights of individuals, communities and environment involved in or affected by the research. The researcher applied for and obtained ethical clearance for this research from the College of Agriculture and Environmental Sciences (Unisa) Ethics Committee (Appendix 1). She observed the ethics in order to assure a favourable climate during the research. The main reason for ethical behaviours was to maintain and develop public trust. Bless et al. (2000:62-65, Agrosimo, (2007:84)& Thomas, (2011:68-69) associated a number of ethical behaviours with participatory research and these were clarified before and observed during and after the collection of data:

- *Human dignity:* the researcher promised the participants that there would be mutual respect, considering the sensitivity and confidentiality of the respondents.
- *Anonymity:* she made a promise that no participants' names would be mentioned as they engaged with each other unless permission was granted.
- *Voluntary Participation:* participants were told that participation was voluntary as no one would be forced to take part. Hence, all participants signed the consent forms.
- *Sharing Results:* the researcher promised them that the completed thesis would be brought to them for further perusal, and it will be put in the local library of the Makhuduthamaga Local Municipality at Jane Furse.

- *Informed Consent:* in seeking the go-ahead, the researcher made sure that the participants understood the reasons and consequences for their participation before being engaged in the project.

The consideration of ethics paved the way for the data collection, which was carried out more easily than the researcher expected. Furthermore, although the questions were prepared in English, Sepedi – the home language of the participants – was used to communicate and conduct interviews. The participants felt accommodated and much closer to the researcher as they could express themselves freely. At the end of the interview session the participants were thanked for their cooperation.

3.8   CONCLUSION

The chapter has explained the method used for the collection of data. The reasons for choosing such methods have been advanced. Of importance is that the approaches of PRA, and more specifically the asset-based approach (in particular, ABCD and CAMP), have been explained. How the approaches fit into the study has been placed in perspective. From the discussions it becomes clear that PRA, ABCD and CAMP are approaches that fit into post-development theory that is asset-based and is not basic needs driven. The approach aims to empower and assist communities in driving the reduction of poverty and inequality in rural communities. The approaches also aim to reduce the levels of social injustice that are common in many rural societies. The approach used in this research is one that is aimed at achieving equity by involving all. Should the approaches be correctly implemented in the rural settings of the Sekhukhune District, the district would no longer be referred to as the 'nodal point' of poverty.

A range of literature has been written on community development projects and many – if not all of them – have failed. The reasons for their failure relates well with the DCBA whereby the local people did not contribute anything towards the establishment or planning of those projects. This thesis will therefore serve as a contribution to policy formulation regarding women empowerment within the Makhuduthamaga municipality. The researcher witnessed the serious impact of non-

involvement of people within her community, whereby the government established stalls at bus stops along the road. Today there remains not a single brick of those buildings. Everything has been destroyed from the roof to the last brick of the foundation. Why? Because people did not understand those structures and they did not know why they were there. Perhaps fault could lie with the managers, NGOs and all in authority, as they did not hand over the 'whole stick'.

The other challenge could be that the government sector, civil society and academia have regarded development programmes within a basic needs approach and have not considered that community members are the most important stakeholders in any development programme; to succeed, development must take place from the grass-roots level. Therefore, should the participatory approaches be misinterpreted, we will continue complaining about the non-delivery by our democratic government because the power shall be in the hands of the Black minority. External stakeholders that follow the ABCD or CAMP approach, together with Community Based Organisations (CBOs), government (ward committees) and civil society can be of much help in supporting participatory actions by community groups.

Having elaborated on methodology, the task of the subsequent chapter is to give a visual presentation of the projects. Each project is fully explained and evaluated. In this way, a better understanding of the projects will be provided.

CHAPTER FOUR
ORIENTATION AND DESCRIPTION OF THE PROJECTS IN THE MAKHUDUTHAMAGA LOCAL MUNICIPALITY

4.1 LEVELS OF POVERTY AND INEQUALITY IN LIMPOPO

The concepts of inequality and poverty have been linked in the previous chapters as expressions of the same problem. The reality is that these concepts are very different and the differences have important consequences for households. Inequality is often characterised by unequal opportunities and compensation for different social, economic and political positions in society. Globally, the measurement of inequality is hugely contested. However, the generally accepted and applied measure is the Gini-coefficient. While the calculation of the coefficient is not relevant for this thesis, it is important to note that the closer a country Gini-coefficient is to '1', the more economically unequal the society. The closer the country's measurement is to '0', the more economically equal the society. The coefficient also gives an indication of the distribution of income in a population.

On the other hand, poverty can be narrowly defined and measured in terms of income or resources that separate the poor from the non-poor. The implication is that when a population is below this threshold there are high levels of deprivation and this is reflected in the physical, social and emotional state of the population. As poverty is multi-dimensional, the Multi-dimensional Poverty Index (MPI) – the global measure of poverty – includes aspects related to education, health and living standards. In the calculation of the indicators – each of the indicators being weighted differently – living standards have the highest weighting. The MPI is the most important component in the Human Development Index used by the United Nations to measure poverty globally (United Nations, 2013: 40). Countries are considered to have low levels of development if their Human Development Index (HDI) is below 0,5; a value between 0,5 and 0,79 indicates a country with a medium level of development, and a country with an HDI that is over 0,80 is considered to have high levels of development.

It has already been stated that the levels of poverty and inequality in South Africa are relatively high. The reality is that these levels have strong regional dimensions and the spatial distribution of poverty and inequality in urban and rural areas and across the nine provinces are uneven. Statistics South Africa (2012) completed a poverty and inequality analysis of the living conditions survey undertaken in 2008/9. This report indicates that the Gini-coefficient for South Africa was 0.64 (Statistics South Africa, 2012:13), which indicates that South Africa is considered to have high levels of inequality. A breakdown of the Gini-coefficient in the report on levels of inequality in South Africa indicates that rural populations have the highest level (0.63), compared to urban populations (0.60) and traditional communities (0.43). A provincial breakdown of the levels of inequality in South Africa indicates that Limpopo is fairly equal (0.59) to the other provinces (Statistics South Africa, 2012:13).

A breakdown of the levels of poverty in rural and urban areas in the nine provinces in South Africa also presents a specific spatial pattern. The United Nations Human Development Index (HDI) for South Africa indicates that the country is in the category of medium level development (0.5–0.79). As in the case of inequality, there is a distinct spatial pattern to the levels of poverty in the nine provinces in South Africa. The contrast between rural areas and urban areas is significant as the majority of the people who live in rural areas are considered to be poor, and the majority of poor people in South Africa live in poor areas (Statistics South Africa, 2012: 8-15). Unlike the levels of inequality, Limpopo is considered to be the province where the majority of the population have high levels of poverty (0.5943); the implication is that 40.57% of the population are living in poverty. Nicolau (2013:19) indicates that the HDI index for Limpopo is not improving but declining (HDI in 1993 was 0.6365, compared to the HDI of 0.5943 in 2013).

4.2 THE IMPACT OF HIGH LEVELS OF INEQUALITY AND POVERTY AS A TRIGGER TO SELF-EMPOWERMENT OF THE WOMEN IN THE MAKHUDUTHAMAGA LOCAL MUNICIPALITY

A number of rural development programmes were developed and implemented in the post-1994 period. The most recent is the National Development Plan: 2030 (refer to section 1.6.2). In addition to rural development programmes, legislation related to gender (refer to section 1.6.3) has also been implemented with the aim of developing social cohesion and development that is vibrant, equitable and sustainable for all communities. However, despite the attempts of the government to improve the quality of lives of individuals, the process is slow and has been a top-down approach within the basic needs approach. The communities included in this research are rural in character. The households in these communities experience high levels of unemployment, a high percentage of women, low levels of literacy among adults and general levels of poverty. The legacy of apartheid is the most important reason for the gender imbalance in the communities, with women having to support high numbers of economically inactive members of the community. As in many countries in the world, rural women are looked upon as caregivers to families. The result is that women, especially in the rural areas of Limpopo, live in communities that experience high levels of both poverty and inequality. The consequences of inequality for women are expressed in a chronic pattern of unequal distribution of goods, wealth, opportunities and rewards within households.

The most important sources of subsistence in the majority of households are remittances, social grants and pension funds. Some members of the community find temporary employment in the Expanded Public Works Programme (which aims to provide poverty and income relief through temporary work for the unemployed) to supplement their household income.

In this thesis, reference has already been made to the development theory that advocates a Westernised mode of living. The impact of the development programmes focused on the development theory is evident in the mode of living in

the communities in the Makhuduthamaga Local Municipality, which is becoming highly Westernised; consequently arable land is diminishing or being left unused. This trend is problematic for many rural women who wish to follow the way of life they are used to, and is a challenge to some women who are used to crop cultivation for income generation. It should be remembered that mechanisation of agriculture in these areas has also worsened the position of women in the agricultural sector. Among the five communities (GaMasemola, Diphagane, Jane Furse, Clen-Cowie and Phokoane) that are the focus of this research, only Jane Furse (a growth point of the municipality) shows some evidence of having been affected by the growing trend of people to move towards a more Westernised lifestyle and seeing the community as a place, with potential to offer employment opportunities and a way of life that is 'better' than what they had been experiencing in a more traditional and rural setting. However, in reality it can only be described as semi-urban, yet it is their only source of hope for formal employment. Jane Furse is also a centrally located market and the commercial centre of the municipality and attracts a number of immigrants from neighbouring countries. This trend is beginning to make its presence felt, resulting in increasing population pressures becoming a significant problem within these communities.

In an attempt to fight hunger, poverty and unemployment on their own, women in these villages started projects to help sustain their families. The action taken by these women relies on the country's Constitution which encourages women, as one of the specified marginalised groups, to have the same opportunities as men. A detailed description and visual orientation of each project is now given.

4.3 PROJECTS CREATED BY WOMEN OF THE MAKHUDUTHAMAGA LOCAL MUNICIPALITY TO IMPROVE THE QUALITY OF THEIR LIVES

Table 3.1 in Section 3.4 provides details of the projects developed by women in the Makhuduthamaga Local Municipality. A total of five projects were selected for this study; each project is found in five different communities (GaMasemola, Diphagane, Jane Furse, Clen-Cowie and Phokoane) and each project produces different types of

goods to generate income for their respective members. Consequently, each project provides different opportunities and challenges to improve the lives of the women involved in the projects. The number of successful projects in the municipality is a testament to the women who are self-driven to improve not only the quality of their own lives, but also the quality of lives of the members of their households and extended families. The description of the projects is based on information collected during the researcher's visits to the projects and interaction with project leaders and project members (refer to Sections 3.5.1; 3.5.2 & 3.5.3). The information is supplemented by the information provided by the municipal officer tasked with co-ordinating the projects (refer to Section 3.5.4) and community members (refer to Section 3.5.5).

4.3.1 Hlabologang Bakery

This project was started in 2001 by a group of women who were worried about their joblessness and spending their days at home idly with nothing to do. They decided to start a baking project using primitive ovens. Fortunately, a social worker from a nearby clinic happened to hear of their intentions and he offered to assist them. He advised them to collect a small amount of cash and to open a bank account, so that it would be easier for them to request financial aid. This proved successful, and the municipality provided buildings and stoves; some companies donated money, and other companies offered training and workshops on baking of bread, wedding and birthday cakes, scones and biscuits. In 2011, the Department of Health and Social Welfare donated a van to the project; this is used for selling produce around the village and also at pension pay stations on paydays. The van is driven by a woman. Figure 4.1 shows the bakers at work. The project is well situated in terms of market; it is near the clinic; it is on the premises of a local taxi rank; some of the local shops are close by; mobile fruit and vegetable sellers sit at the doorstep of the bakery; and a bus stop and nearby primary and secondary schools are in the immediate surrounds.

Figure 4.1: Participants of Hlabologang Bakery at work, Makhuduthamaga Local Municipality, Limpopo, South Africa *(Source: Field work 2011)*

There are twelve project participants in all; two males and ten females. One male is a young boy who replaced his deceased mother and the other male (in Figure 4.1) is the one who assisted in the construction of the bakery. He said he was at first a cleaner, and as time went by he was co-opted to join the bakers and also continued to help by cleaning. He is very happy with the work. The participants at this project are all satisfied with their engagement and wish for the project to prosper. The man added: 'I am here to stay as long as the bakery is still functioning'.

They work in groups of three for seven days from 7h00 to 17h00, with a resting period of fourteen days a year. They work in their groups from Monday to Sunday. These women have successfully trained other women from three neighbouring villages. Apart from their own personal growth, they indicated that the project had changed their mindset of seeing themselves as failures. One member remarked that working at the bakery was better than nothing, because every day they still had to get

up and wash themselves, and working at the bakery was better than sitting at home with the stress of doing nothing.

The following challenges were mentioned:

- *Water shortage:* there are taps but at times there is no water. In such cases they have to buy water at R30.00 (±US$3) per drum with a capacity of 225 litres.
- *High electricity bills:* the participants indicated that their major problem is the electricity bill which is never less than R4 000 per month (±US$400). that is what shatters their coffers. The researcher encouraged them not to despair but to make use of their big generator to see if that might make a difference.
- *The operation of the National School Nutrition Programme (NSNP)* in schools had reduced their immediate market.

Figure 4.2 will help to provide the reader with the types of activities in which the participants are engaged on a daily basis at the centre.

Like other projects, the Hlabologang Bakery Project has received various certificates as a token of appreciation for their good work (the attendance of three members at the ceremony to hand over certificates provides inspiration to the members):

- *A certificate in recognition of excellent performance for the year 2002/2003* was given by Department of Health and Welfare (Sekhukhune District).
- *A certificate in recognition of excellent performance for the year 2003/2004* was given by the Department of Health and Welfare (Sekhukhune District).

The driver is calculating the money from sales.

Participant is taking bread pans out of the oven as the bread is cooked.

Loaves of bread are cooled and are ready to be packaged into plastic bags

Pans are loaded with bread dough and cake mixtures

Figure 4.2: Daily activities of the project members of the Hlabologang Bakery Co-Op, Makhuduthamaga Local Municipality in Limpopo, South Africa *(Source: Fieldwork, 2011)*

In order to achieve the success in this project, it was established that the project leaders and members were able to identify a number of existing assets (refer to Table 4.1), for example:

- Some participants have inborn knowledge of baking and decoration; this makes the project sustainable and the project has unfolded, strengthened and improved these talents.

- They could initiate decisions without any external influence or leadership and make them materialise. These women are committed, determined and self-confident.

- The women realised that they have the support of the local shops and spazas which buy their products. Hence, their entrepreneurship skills have improved beyond expectations.

- The availability of electricity has accelerated the production, compared to when traditional means were used.

- The women are self-disciplined in the sense that they are always at work, avoiding absenteeism that would otherwise delay production.

- By being *engaged* in the bakery project, these women are successful and able to secure the basic needs for their families daily.

- The women no longer fear failure in life as was always taken to be the norm. They have become breadwinners who take decisions, implement ideas and are accountable for their lives and families.

Table 4.1: Asset mapping analysis of the Hlabologang Bakery Co-Op, Makhuduthamaga Local Municipality in Limpopo, South Africa
(Source: Participant observation 2010 to 2013)

Human Assets	• The group is willing to share experience, knowledge and is passionate for its work • One young lady is exceptionally good in making wedding and birthday cakes • Talents and capabilities are unfolding • The participants have learnt skills through training
Social Assets	• No NGOs and CBOs involved • Network with other women of different projects • There is a good relationship with the Department of Health and Social Welfare
Economic Assets	• Workshops organised by the municipality and the district on entrepreneurial skills • Local shops and spazas buy the products • The community buy the products for various functions • Have a common savings account • Have been able to form social clubs and burial societies to cover their families
Environmental Assets	• The availability of electricity has advanced the project far much ahead despite the high bills • The space on which the project is located is suitably chosen as it accessible • Water is available to enable the daily functioning of the project
Cognitive Assets	• Wish that the bakery be life-long to enable them to supply their families and the whole community with bread and related products • The women's well-being and general living conditions have improved • As members of the community they are becoming increasingly visible to an extent that some are elected as chairpersons or signatories in their social clubs • They have no fear. They are self-confident because they, as females can do it • They have developed the norms and values whereby as a visitor, they will offer you two cakes for taste and remarks

Problem-solving abilities of the group	• When problems arise, the group adjourn to solve the problem until they reach a common solution. For example, the problem of water shortage is solved by buying water from the trucks that sell water • To avoid shortage of stock they have agreed to buy the ingredients in bulk • In case where a member is unable to report for duty he/she is represented by a family member
Power Mapping	• There appear to be no power struggles • All members are knowledgeable about the history of the project • Only for finer details one is referred to the leaders
The groups indicators of their own success	• The women are proud that they can secure basic needs (food, clothing, education and shelter) for their households • They are able to assist their extended families • They are able to attend to their personal needs • They are given more responsibility at the home and in the community at large • The nutrition level of their families has improved

4.3.2 Diphagane Vegetable Gardening Co-Op

At a community meeting in 1993, an invitation was made by a non-Government organisation (NGO) to members of the community, stating that anyone who was hungry could plough a plot to feed his or her family. Consequently, 50 women were initially trained by NGO volunteers on how to grow vegetables. The chief gave the group a piece of land of about 20 ha for that purpose. In 2000 the group was requested to farm this unit using organic input, and further training was given on the difference between manure and organic farming. By then the membership had reduced to 14. The use of organic farming methods rekindled their indigenous knowledge, and the participants started to mix the leaves of six different local trees to make natural insecticides and pesticides. These leaves are mixed in a water tank. For fertiliser they use kraal manure. Vegetables grown include spinach, beetroot, tomatoes, onions, cabbage and green peppers; maize is also grown when there is

sufficient rain. Herbs for diseases such as heart failure, stress, wounds and high blood pressure are planted on another small plot nearby.

In 2010 when the researcher visited the project, she found only five members; one man and four women. They were the founder members of the project and could therefore give her the historical background of the project. It was unfortunate that one of the women had passed away in 2011. The male member also performs the heavier duties, such as pumping water from the river and fixing the generator.

When asked why their numbers had decreased so markedly, the reasons they gave were that:

- Some are discouraged by the risky nature of agriculture
- Some still look down at agriculture as dirty job
- Some still had that belief that only urban areas can provide work
- Profit in agriculture is slow and unreliable.

The good news is that when the researcher visited the project in early 2012, she found that after receiving training from an external provider over a period of two weeks, the membership of the group had increased by seven (Figure: 4.3), and now totalled 11; 10 women and one man.

Figure 4.3: Participants of Diphagane Vegetable Gardening, Makhuduthamaga Local Municipality in Limpopo, South Africa *(Source: Fieldwork 2011).*

The daughter and the daughter-in-law of the deceased woman were among the new members. That was clear proof that the garden had contributed significantly to the survival of their households through their mother's work when she was alive. The old members are proud of their garden because it has won several awards. In 2005 the garden obtained the following prizes:

- First prize in the Female Farmer of the Year Competition received from the Department of Agriculture (Limpopo)
- Certificate acknowledging that the Diphagane Vegetable Gardening Project was the best in the final competitions at an exhibition of gardening products that are produced under the leadership of women
- In 2006 one of their members were awarded second place in the provincial Limpopo Female Farmer of the Year Awards in the Informal Market Category

- In 2008 they obtained a Meritorious Award for the *Exemplary Management of the Project* from the Department of Health and Social Development and Independent Development Trust. These successes have become their sources of inspiration.

They further mentioned that they are often invited by the Department of Agriculture of the University of Limpopo and Tompi-Seleka Agricultural College to give lectures on bio-pesticide and organic farming and this has given them considerable exposure. The women are proud of their self-invented traditional pest control because it is harmless and environmentally-friendly. It was indicated that their families are now immune to common ailments and diseases caused by a lack of vegetables.

The participants mentioned the following challenges faced by the project:

- They lack transport to market their products
- Hiring of tractors to plough is expensive
- The sprinkler irrigation system is old and they cannot afford to buy a new one.

Despite these challenges, the participants continue to love their garden, and they work from 8h00 to 16h00 every day except Wednesdays and weekends. In order to generate extra income, the participants have also organised themselves into cultural dance groups that perform at various community functions.

Participants busy connecting a hosepipe to the generator to pump water from the river to the garden.

Participants are busy struggling to direct the hosepipe into the dam

Participants are busy irrigating and removing weeds from the seedbeds which are ready for transplant.

The new participants who joined the project not too long ago are busy cleaning the cabbage seedbeds.

Figure 4.4 Daily activities at the Diphagane Gardening Project, Makhuduthamaga Local Municipality in Limpopo, South Africa (Source: Fieldwork, 2011)

133

In order to achieve the success in this project, it was established that the project leaders and members were able to identify a number of existing assets (Table 4.2), such as:

- The older members with their indigenous knowledge are great assets as they are ready to share this knowledge with the other members; this will speed up production. With this knowledge, these women have managed to produce their own insecticides and pesticides from leaves obtained from trees in the local hills. Furthermore, the elderly are still willing to take the lead.

- The scope of knowledge on organic farming is widened by the training offered by the NGOs.

- The association of the project with the University of Limpopo has equipped the members of the project with more skills and techniques in agriculture.

- The members of the projects are highly motivated by the shows which the municipality and the district organise.

- The health and nutrition status of households and the community are improving, and therefore the members wish for the sustainability of the garden.

Table 4.2: Asset Mapping for Diphagane Gardening Project, Makhuduthamaga Local Municipality in Limpopo, South Africa (Source: Participant observation 2010 to 2013)

Human Assets	- The elderly members have farming at their hearts - The young ladies who have just joined the project have received training and show willingness to do the work - The experienced members are willing to share their knowledge - The only man among the women is a hard worker and motivates the women to remain persistent

Social Assets	• Young enthusiastic ladies have just joined the project • No social associations visible • NGOs offer training on organic farming • The Agricultural school often invites them for further training • The chief is in support of the project • The University of Limpopo associates with the project
Economic Assets	• The group has formed singing and dancing club that entertain people during community functions • The community buy vegetables from this garden for their various functions • They have a bank savings account • To stimulate their talents and skills, the municipality and the district organise agricultural shows for them
Environmental Assets	• The nearby river supplies water for irrigation • The hills near the project supply the trees that are used to make insecticides and pesticide (IKS) • The land near the river is chosen for the purpose • The cows available supply manure for the garden • The roads facilitate the transportation of the vegetables to the market
Cognitive Assets	• The group wishes that the garden be sustainable as it helps elevate the health status of their households and the entire community • The group feel successful and have therefore become respectful members of the society • Their major fear is the harsh climatic conditions that are beyond control
Problem-solving	• They solve the problems as group • With technical problems, the man helps

Abilities	them a lot
	• They have managed to produce their own pesticides and insecticides to protect their vegetables
	• When they have no seeds, they often agree to contribute to let the work go on
Power Mapping	• No obvious struggle for power among the participants
	• The group members show respect to one another
	• The elderly members do not want to give the young ladies the opportunity to attend meetings and workshops. That will iron out as time goes on
Indicators of success	• Personal care has increased
	• The health and nutrition level of the households and the community is improving
	• Community members are making home gardens
	• Members of the project are increasingly becoming responsible for their households and the community
	• The quality of life of the community improved
	• Basic needs for the households can be secured

4.3.3 Ba Kgobokane Art and Craft Co-Op

The name suggests that women are gathered together to discuss and help one another on how to improve their living conditions and quality of life. Ba Kgobokane Art and Culture project started in 1999, and in 2006 it was registered as a co-operative. Ba Kgobokane Art and Culture Co-operative is a home-based industry located at Jane Furse.

136

It was initiated by a woman who is an educator by profession, and who left the teaching fraternity to respond to her passion for visual art. When asked why she thought of this venture, she replied that she:

- realised that unity is strength and together more can be done;
- had an internal motivation for talent search, because she realised that she was talented in art work and wanted to explore it to the fullest;
- was inspired by her mother who is a traditional woman and a person who always engages herself in all works of tradition, ranging from food preparation to attire; and
- thought of creating jobs for women with an aim of reducing hunger in some households.

She ended by encouraging all South African women to focus on their talents and strengths and to have confidence to show them. There are five men and 12 women involved in this project. Men do woodwork and drawing, while women engage in sewing women's traditional and cultural attire, beadwork, weaving and pottery (Figure 4.5).

To indicate how the participants felt about their engagement, they commented that:

- the skills and knowledge they receive are shared with other people and money can be made in their spare time;
- the project helps them to get to know about places and meet other people;
- the place is also a learning centre for the youth, where they are taught norms and values of life; and
- the most exciting thing is that the participants indicated that they are happy to be free of the monotonous life of the home, whereby one simply worked tirelessly from morning until late at night.

Figure 4.5: Men doing carpentry and a traditionally dressed woman displaying the project's clay products, Ba Kgobokane Art And Craft Co-Op, Makhuduthamaga Local Municipality in Limpopo, South Africa(Source: Fieldwork, 2013)

Of interest to the researcher, was that the project was inclusive in the sense that it also involved the disabled. The woman (Figure 4.6) who was part of the group is trained in the artistic works sector at the centre. This tends to support the belief of ABCD and CAMP as approaches to community empowerment and development, that everybody can be involved. What counts is the person's commitment to and interest in the project.

Figure 4.6: This disabled lady is happy to show her completed beadwork, Ba Kgobokane Art And Craft Co-Op, Makhuduthamaga Local Municipality in Limpopo, South Africa (Source: Fieldwork, 2013)

The products of the project are sold locally at pay points. Another lucrative and innovative idea is that they are hired for wedding celebrations as traditional ornaments, while the traditional dresses are sold or hired for traditional wedding celebrations. Some of the products are displayed at specific spots along the road to attract the attention of passing motorists. The project leader also sells the products at provincial, national and international shows and in overseas countries. She has visited the following places to sell goods and to attend meetings on business matters: Belgium, Italy, Kenya and Botswana. In South Africa, she has stalls at the Durban Indaba, the South African Rand Easter Showground's and the Polokwane Show grounds. She obtains support from the Department of Trade and Industry (DTI) and National Development Agency (NDA). She has managed to put up a thatched-roof structure where all cultural products produced are displayed. During traditional wedding events, couples and other people visit the structure to take photographs, thereby acknowledging their traditional heritage and learning more about it. A visual description of the daily activities of the group can be found in Figure 4.7.

The challenges the project encounters are:

- *Lack of funds:* dress materials are expensive and sometimes material is obtained from outside countries
- *Lack of infrastructure and resources*, such as sewing machines.

The project is supported by the (DTI) in terms of transport and accommodation when overseas countries are visited. The Department of Art and Culture Limpopo often offers to pay for transport to exhibitions and provides moral support, while the municipality assists with transport and information about provincial and district exhibitions.

A mother together with her daughter (the leader of Bakgobokane Co-Op). They are standing under the tree where they used to sit when the mother taught her daughter cultural and art work

Participants busy with their beadwork

Young men busy with art and craft work using grass, sand, cardboard and many other mediums for decorative purposes.

Thatched shelter in which the products at Ba Kgobokane are displayed.

Figure 4.7:   Daily activities of the project members of the Bakgobokane Arts and Culture Co-Op, Makhuduthamaga Local Municipality in Limpopo, South Africa
(Source: Fieldwork, 2011)

In order for this project to succeed, it was established that the project leaders and members were able to identify a number of existing assets (see Table 4.3), for example:

- The woman who initiated the project is talented in traditional and cultural designs and is thus ready to transfer the knowledge to others to enable them to improve their own living conditions. It is the personality of the leader who motivates and holds the members together.

- The exposure of the leader to outside countries helps her to remain proactive; there is no special group that supports the project. The members have developed confidence and self-

reliance through their leader. This kind of behaviour challenges any negative influence that might threaten the project.

- The group members are not fearful about the future of the project because they have internalised the skills. It is because of their 'new' character that these women are gaining recognition within the community.

- The project has a huge market, both locally and overseas. Both the leader and the members are aware that expenditures are to be kept lower than the income; hence their decision not to renovate the evacuated buildings for accommodation was correctly taken.

Table 4.3: Asset mapping for Ba Kgobokane Artand Culture Co-Op, Makhuduthamaga Local Municipality in Limpopo, South Africa
(Source: Participant observation 2010 to 2013)

Human Assets	- The community offered people with skills and talents. - The people are willing to learn more. - The project leader is passionate for talent discoveries. - The accessibility of the project attracts more people.
Social Assets	- No NGOs or CBOs are involved. - The municipality and the district contact the project with regard to transport and times for exhibitions. - No special group of people supports the project.
Economic Assets	- The traditional dresses, beadwork is bought for wedding celebrations. - During wedding celebrations, the couple come here to pose for photographs. - Community members buy some of the products for their homes. - The project has established relationships with DTI. - Products are also sold outside South Africa.
Environmental	The available electricity has made the project

Assets	• to progress.
	• The existing roads facilitate the selling of the products to different places.
	• The evacuated buildings could not be used to house the project, as they needed a lot of money to be renovated.
Cognitive Assets	• The group members do not have a fear for the future of the project, because they have internalised the skills.
	• As females they feel proud that they have made it on their own.
	• They wish to see the project being sustainable and growing so that more women can be engaged.
	• No sign of jealousy among the participants because I often saw them sharing their knowledge and experience.
	• The personality of the leader influences them to preserve the culture and tradition.
	• They are able to supply the basic needs for their households.
Problem-solving Abilities	• Problems are often discussed among them until they reach a common solution.
	• The exposure their leader has helps her to be proactive.
Power Sharing	• No supremacy for power.
	• They all believe that they are learning.
	• The younger ladies and men show respect to the elderly and the latter do the same.
	• No negative influence from the outside that aim to destroy the project.
Indicators of Success	• The participants can make ornaments for their own homes.
	• They can produce traditional dresses and beadwork for wedding celebrations.
	• They are able to provide for the daily living for their households and extended family members.
	• As successful women, they are recognised and given roles to play within the community.

	• The neighbouring youth is taught folklore, praise poems and riddles so as to sustain their culture. • The households have improved living conditions as basic needs are secured.

4.3.4 Raemet Kreaxion Co-Op

Raemet Kreaxion project started in 2008 and is a home-based industry located in the Clen-Cowie village. The project is involved in the production of handbags which are made from sisal, with handles made from poplar and beads for decoration.

The idea of making bags was initiated by the spouse of the lady in charge of the project. He is also talented in creative art and taught and influenced his wife, who could not afford to complete her university degree due to financial constraints. His wife took the idea further by inviting and training people from the locality. This shows that not all is bad about patriarchy. A good example of from patriarchy to empowerment is illustrated. When the wife was asked why she had thought of this idea, she replied that she wanted to:

- inspire people about the use of local resources in generating income;
- assist the municipality in rolling down the sleeves of hunger in its area of jurisdiction and ensuring that something constructive was done;
- enable women to unleash their own initiative and potential;
- assist the government in conserving the environment by using sisal which is an alien plant and therefore ecologically unfriendly; and
- generate income for daily living and for the education of her children.

There are five participants, one of whom was on accouchement leave during her visit. There were two men and two women, and as each person works for themselves, the more bags (Figure 4.8) they produced, the more they earned.

Figure 4.8: Bags produced from sisal at Raemet Kreaxion, Makhuduthamaga Local Municipality in Limpopo, South Africa (Source: Field work, 2011)

A small bag takes two to three days to complete and a big one takes five days. The participants work from Monday to Friday, from 8h00 to 16h30. The cleaned sisal is obtained from Giyani and is dyed before use. The leftovers are used to make multi-coloured ropes by 13 casual workers at the nearby Phokoane village; this means that the workers do not have to start by preparing the rope.

The project owner is a hard worker and has connections with the DTI, Microbicide Trials Network (MTN) and the Department of Arts and Culture that assist her substantially. She sells her products at art and agricultural exhibitions, stages exhibitions (both provincially and nationally) and at the overseas markets. She has

already been to countries such as Germany, Italy, Namibia, Brazil and Botswana to sell her products.

She indicated that the Department of Economic and Development Affairs promised to set up a website for her; a necessary marketing tool in today's technological world. In addition, MTN promised her four sewing machines so she can engage more women in other activities.

The few challenges she mentioned were:

- *Workers are few:* she associated this problem with the idea that people are still inclined to doubt and fear, believing that a woman cannot do anything successfully
- *Lack of transport* when needed to collect the sisal or to transport products.

The participants indicated that they enjoy working with sisal and that they had never thought it could yield such beautiful products. They intimated that they are ready to work with sisal for as long as the project exists (Figure 4.9).

Undyed sisal just obtained from Giyani.

Four committed participants, each busy starting on a new bag. Completed bags are displayed behind them.

Figure 4.9 Sisal and group members working at Raemet Kreaxion, Makhuduthamaga Local Municipality in Limpopo, South Africa
(Source: Field work, 2011)

On a follow-up visit in June 2013, the researcher found that MTN had delivered one sewing machine and an overlocker. They were still waiting for the Department of Economic and Development Affairs to develop the promised website. There were still five workers.

In order to achieve success in this project, it was established that the project leaders and members were able to identify a number of existing assets (see Table 4.4) such as:

- The initiator of the project is talented and is ready to share this talent with other people, starting with his wife. The participation of women in the project has elevated the status of women from being homebound, thus increasing their social responsibilities at community level.

- Sisal is an alien plant that threatens the quality of the environment and this is used to produce useful articles which are also sold at overseas markets, enabling project members to afford to send their children to school up to tertiary level.

- The women have learnt that problems can be discussed and solved rather than left unattended. Despite the progress the women are showing socially and economically, a sign of jealousy is evident as the membership remains low at five.

Table 4.4: Asset mapping for Raemet Kreaxion Co-Op, Makhuduthamaga Local Municipality in Limpopo, South Africa (Source: Participant observation 2010 to 2013)

Human Assets	• The initiator of the project is gifted and he is ready to share the talent with other people • The groups are ready to learn and prove to be hard working
Social Assets	• No NGOs or CBOs as the project is self-initiated • No special group support the project
Economic Assets	• The members have joined various social clubs at their respective locations • The municipality often assist with transport of raw materials and of products to local and provincial exhibitions • The project has developed links with companies such as DTI and MTN • The project selling the products at overseas markets
Environmental Assets	• The available poplar tree is of much in the project • The sisal as an alien plant is reduced • The existing roads facilitate the marketing of the products
Cognitive Assets	• They wish the project to prosper as it is their source of living for their households • Their participation has elevated their status as rural women

	• They have developed confidence and show no sign of fear of whatever • They trust one another especially their leader because she is the one who sells the products on their behalf and does not cheat them in the process
Problem-Solving Abilities	• They discuss problems and agree on a common solution. • The fact that their leader has developed several networks makes her to be proactive
Power Mapping	• No struggle for power is visible among the participants • A sign of jealousy from the community is suspected because the number of participants does not grow. It is as low as five • Participants respect one another
Indicators of Success	• Their personal income and needs have improved • Their social responsibility in the home and the community is increasing. They can secure basic needs for their households and their relatives. • They are able to associate with other women have formed cultural groups of singers and dancers • Their children attend school up to tertiary level

4.3.5 Maano A Basadi Dairy Co-Op

The name of this project in Phokoane village suggests 'plans of women to make their families survive by milking the cow'. The idea of this kind of project came from a daughter-in-law of one the Phokoane villagers; she works in the Gauteng area. She gathered a few women and discussed the possibility of setting up projects to produce and market drinking yoghurt and amasi (also known as 'inkomazi'), a traditional South African drink made from fermented milk which has a slightly sour taste; she

also suggested growing vegetables and making flowers. The women became interested and chose the project of drinking yoghurt and amasi production (Figure 4.10). The chief was informed about the venture and in support he offered them a place to erect a stand for that purpose. The project started in 2004 and is established along the subsidiary road that leads to both Groblersdal and Jane Furse. It has ten female members.

The first time the researcher visited the project in 2010, she met a man who had been assisting the project since the beginning and was laying out a vegetable garden in the backyard, cleaning the yard and doing other heavier duties. He had left the project on the grounds that the returns were too slow and too low. The researcher suspected that in reality he was just undermining the work done by women and associated them with failure. When talking to the women about how they felt about their engagement with the project, they replied happily that they never thought they would ever be as exposed to the public as they were now. In addition, they indicated that they were ready to work hard to sustain the project until it could engage more people; twice their number if possible.

Figure 4.10: The kitchen of Maano a Basadi Dairy Project, Makhuduthamaga Local Municipality in Limpopo, South Africa (Source: Field work, 2011)

The participants at this dairy project work from 8h00 to 17h00 on weekdays. While waiting for customers, they weave hats, shoes and cell phone purses from raffia (which is obtainable from a nearby Chinese shop) to earn extra cash (Figure 4.11).

Figure 4.11: Products produced at spare time, Maano a Basadi Dairy Project, Makhuduthamaga Local Municipality in Limpopo, South Africa *(Source: Fieldwork, 2011)*

The women mentioned that they had started the project because:

- They were just working in the home all day without earning any money.
- They had no source of income.
- They wanted to see the project as the only big supplier of drinking yoghurt and maas, not only in the Makhuduthamaga municipality, but in the whole of the Sekhukhune District.

Milk is obtained locally from an Indian farmer. Other ready-made ingredients such as preservatives, flavours, stabilisers and containers are obtained in bulk from Kempton

Park (in Gauteng), a distance of about 270 km from Phokoane. The following organisations play supportive roles in the sustainability of the project:

- *The Agricultural Research Council (ARC)* from Irene (in Centurion, Gauteng) offered the women training on the processes of making amasi and drinking yoghurt.
- *The Old Mutual* donated R40 000 and furniture.
- *MTN* donated R50 000 with which they bought machines.
- *The South African Social and Security Agency(SASSA)* donated R393 000.00, which was used to build a two-roomed building, fence the yard, make a borehole, buy fridges and tile the floors.
- *The Small Enterprise Development Agency (SEDA),the Limpopo Business Support Agency (LIBSA) and the Department of Health and Social Development* also played pivotal roles in assisting the project.
- *The municipality* bought them uniforms and sometimes paid for electricity, and also transport to the Moordrift factory for empowerment and training.
- Their products are approved by the *South African Bureau of Standards (SABS)* and have secured a bar code and expiry date; these just need to be activated. The products are sold at the Spar Supermarket at the nearby plaza called Moratiwa (Vleeschboom), at schools, pay points and local community functions.

The following challenges are issues with which the project has had to deal:

- Lack of tight security – their kitchen was burgled once or twice
- Lack of transport
- Lack of suitable pastures to enable them to have their own cows
- Not enough machines to cater for all the various processes involved in the production of the final products.

Despite the above challenges, they have managed to open a branch at Burgersfort (Greater Tubatse Municipality) at the beginning of 2012. They regarded the following as their way forward:

- To have bigger premises so that the project could accommodate more machines
- To have their own cows to avoid buying milk from other farmers
- To be the only and biggest supplier of amasi and drinking yoghurt in the entire area under the jurisdiction of the municipality
- Amasi and yoghurt are summer products, and as a result in winter the sales are a bit slow.

At the end of 2012 the project put up a four-roomed structure to serve as a shop. It was completed in early 2013. Like the other projects, Maano A Basadi Co-Op has also received a number of awards in appreciation of their good work. The awards are:

- *Community Builder of the Year Awards: Group Category Winner 2008*, organised by the Sowetan, Old Mutual and the South African Broadcasting Corporation (SABC). The competitions were held at provincial level at Marble Hall. All participants managed to attend the function as it was held nearby.
- *Best Innovative SMME Excellence Awards 2010* from the Executive Mayor of the Sekhukhune District Municipality. These competitions were held at Groblersdal and three participants represented the project.
- *The New Era Award for Technology Innovation and Quality:* Two members represented the project at these awards held in Paris, France, in 2010.
- Exhibition held in Zimbabwe in 2010 at *Zimbabwe International Trade Fair.* Only one lady represented the project.

153

- *Certificate of Achievement* as a winner in the Limpopo 2010 SMME Business Launch pad. It was held in Polokwane and only one lady attended.

The researcher observed that all participants in all the projects are working hard and would like to see their projects become sustainable; they cannot afford to lose them. Figure 4.12 shows what is actually taking place at the Maano A Basadi Co-Operative.

In order to achieve success in this project, it was established that the project leaders and members were able to identify a number of existing assets (Table 4.5), such as:

- The interest and the support the community and the chief have shown in the project remained the driving forces.
- Participation in the project has increased the mobility of the women as indicated by the visit of some of them to overseas countries without any fear. Consequently, these women have had their scope of operation enlarged.
- The improved status of these women has resulted in improved and better relationships amongst their families, with these women gaining more respect than before.
- The degree of networking has increased the problem-solving skills of these women. Furthermore, computers keep them informed and connected.
- The availability of transport enables the collection and the distribution of raw materials and products respectively, enabling the women to see other places and meet people with different ideas.

One participant is seen preparing the stove to cook the drinking yoghurt while the other one is busy washing and rinsing the pot for cooking.

The participants are seen mixing the ingredients of drinking yoghurt while the others are busy packaging the yoghurt in containers for sale.

Figure 4.12 Daily activities of the project members of the Maano A Basadi Co-Op, Makhuduthamaga Local Municipality in Limpopo, South Africa
(Source: Fieldwork, 2011)

Table 4.5: Asset-mapping for MaanoABasadi Dairy Co-Op, Makhuduthamaga Local Municipality in Limpopo, South Africa
(Source: Participant observation 2010 to 2013)

Human Assets	- Participants have been trained and are willing to work. - Participants have mastered the skills - Participants are always at work - Their abilities and talents have unfolded - Some members have visited over sea countries to be empowered
Social Assets	- No NGO or CBOs is involved - No special group is directly in support of the project - The community and the Chief support the project
Economic Assets	- The project has a computer which makes it to be the most advanced project - Participation has enabled these women to form various women's clubs in their respective locations - The municipality and the district stimulate production by offering awards during exhibitions - The local plaza and shops stimulate production
Environmental Assets	- The location of the project along the road is beneficial - The availability of electricity and water within the project's premises contributes to the success of the project - The road enables the collection of raw materials and the distribution of products
Cognitive Assets	- The women have developed self-confidence and are proud that they can stand on their own - They wish to see the project being sustainable to engage more women than now - They have no fear, they are determined and often tell me: 'Forward we go, backward never' - The group has developed an attitude of love and respect to all
Problem Solving Abilities	- When they are faced with challenges, they sit together and share to come up with a solution. - The degree of networking empowers them when it

	comes to problem solving
Power Mapping	• They respect one another • No power struggle • The members with specific positions are respected
Indicators of Success	• They have improved personal income • They have become respectful members of the community • Their degree of mobility has increases • Better relationships with family members and relatives • Personal needs are improving • Basic needs for the household are secured

4.4   LOCATION OF THE PROJECTS RELATIVE TO JANE FURSE, THE GROWTH POINT OF THE MAKHUDUTHAMAGA LOCAL MUNICIPALITY

In addition to what has been illustrated regarding the projects, it is the opinion of the researcher that it is necessary to show part of the structures of Jane Furse as an economic and an administrative centre in the municipality. In Figure 4.13, the photograph on the left depicts part of the Jane Plaza where residents of the municipality obtain most of their services for daily survival. These include Absa Bank, Pep, Pep Cell and Pick 'n Pay and are visible from a distance. The photograph on the right in Figure 4.13 shows part of the new complex called Jane Furse Crossing, established to supply extra services to complement and relieve the plaza. Figure 4.14 show the offices of the Makhuduthamaga Local Municipality, from where daily support services to the communities diverge. Figure 4.15 shows the location of each project within the Makhuduthamaga Local Municipality.

Figure 4.13: Jane Furse as an economic and an administrative centre for the Makhuduthamaga Local Municipality in Limpopo, South Africa.
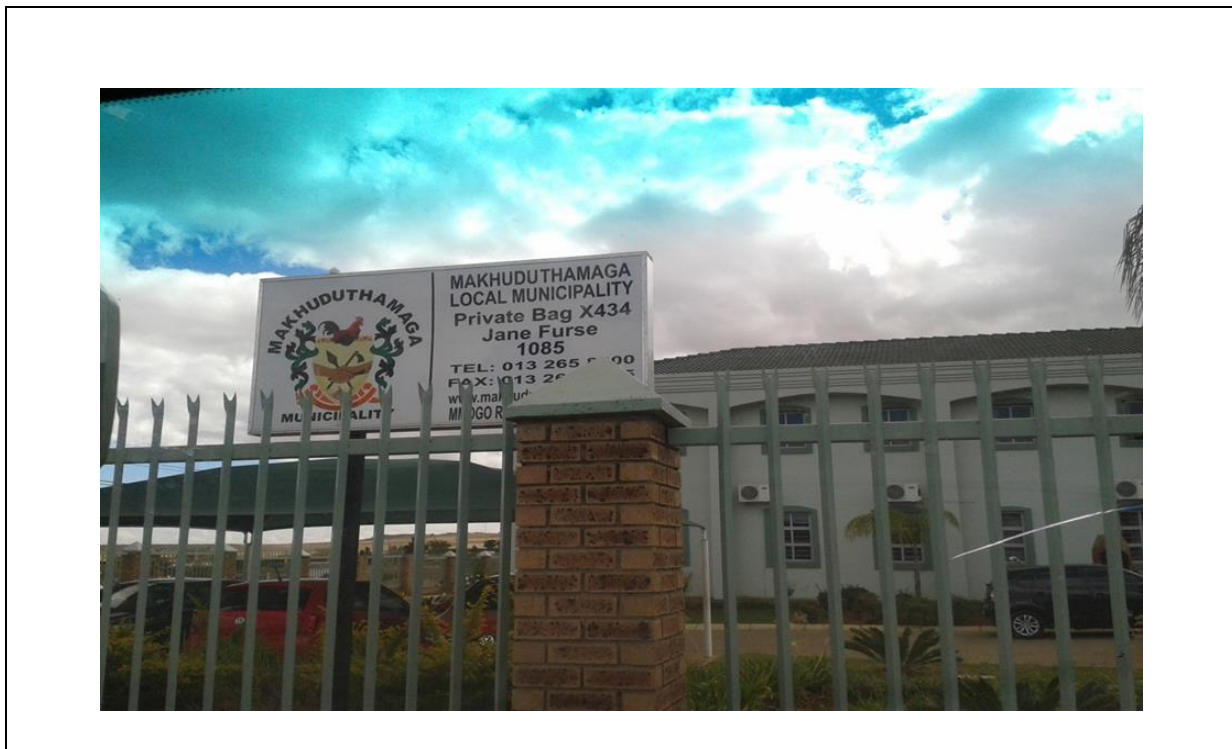
Figure 4.14: The offices of the Makhuduthamaga Local Municipality in Limpopo, South Africa.
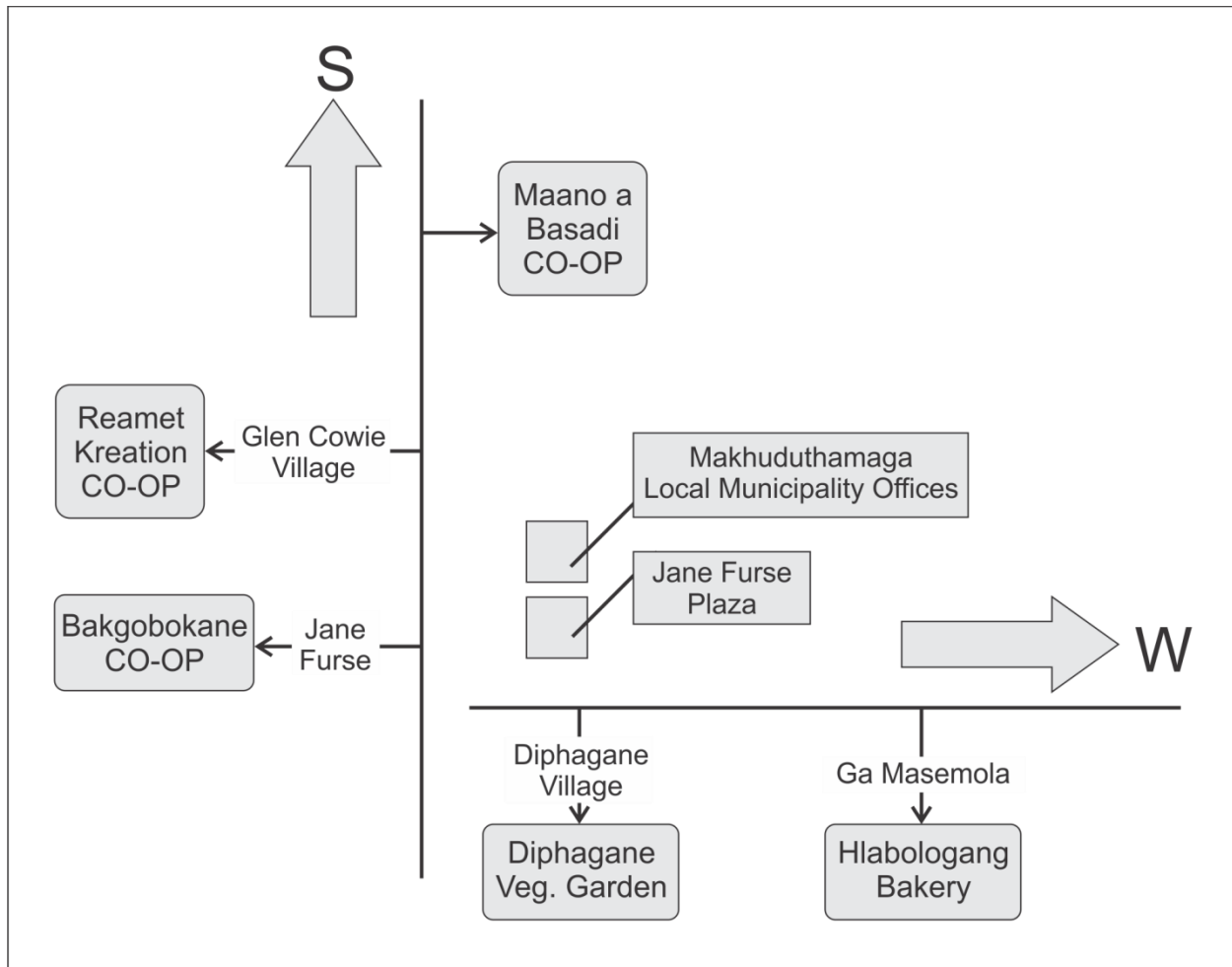
Figure 4.15: Location of the Projects in the Makhuduthamaga Local Municipality in Limpopo, South Africa *(Source: Fieldwork, 2011)*

Despite the fact that transport is a common problem for all the projects, it has been observed that almost all the projects are located close to a road. Where possible, public transport can be used to transport products to nearby markets, as well as from the sources of raw material supplies to the project centres. Besides that, people who pass by are also attracted to buy the products when they see the advertising boards.

4.5 THE USE AND DEVELOPMENT OF LOCAL ASSETS BY WOMEN TO FACILITATE SELF-EMPOWERMENT

The work of Shilubane (2007:51) on empowerment of women through literacy in the Mopani District in Limpopo testifies that empowered women will discover their hidden potential, become conscious of their rights and break away from their traditional roles to meet with others to share new ideas. This concurs well with what the women in these projects are doing and saying. They are saying with confidence that their participation in cash-earning activities has made them realise that they are indeed playing a primary role in the survival of their families. They are no longer 'child number one' in the family and dependent on their counterpart male partners. They, as people in their own right, have started to become important assets to their families and communities in different ways, by broadening their horizons and extending their interests to make the most of their own expertise and labour.

The researcher had the opportunity to discuss the failure of some projects with the project coordinator at the municipality and he gave the following reasons for failure:

- *Lack of financial management skills* on the part of the participants
- *Financial mismanagement* due to lack of budgeting and accounting procedures
- *Lack of entrepreneurship skills:* for example, in one project the donated money was used for monthly remuneration before it could generate benefits
- *Lack of motivation, support and monitoring* by the donors
- *A top-down approach* that ignored the skills and the involvement of the local people in the design of the projects.

Based on the last two explanations, the government insists that any development project that takes place should start by considering the assets the local people have. Today the asset-based approach to development is the preferred way to develop communities. This approach is similar to what the women within the research study are practising. The women have mobilised their capabilities and the resources

available to them to improve their lives; it has therefore become easier to get financial assistance. More was said about ABCD and CAMP in Chapter 3. Using this approach, it appears that development should progress according to the abilities and the available resources of the people.

When concluding the discussion, the coordinator of the Maano A Basadi Dairy Co-op assured the researcher that they would not repeat the mistakes of allowing developers to donate large sums of money before the community had proven their ability in a particular undertaking. In the past, outsiders failed to develop the local people in the true sense of the word because indigenous knowledge was ignored. He said the municipality would prioritise 'participation' as a requirement for development. In his work, Monaheng (1996:6-8) associates participation with the following concepts that have guided the thinking behind this study:

- *Empowerment:* this concept is regarded as the primary objective of the thesis. Through their involvement in the running of the projects, the women are definitely being empowered by having access to new knowledge and acquiring skills that broaden their minds. They are thus empowered financially, socially, psychologically, emotionally and politically.

- *Capacity building:* skills are learnt through participation. The women's capabilities unfold and their creativity is sharpened by being engaged in the various processes of the projects.

- *Benefit-sharing:* when people work as a group, the benefits are usually shared among the group. In the projects, the profit obtained – either in the form of money or material gain – and experiences are shared. Knowledge and skills are also shared as new ideas arise.

- *Sustainability:* through participation, the local people develop ownership over the local resources and as a result the participants take care of the resources they are using to ensure that they last for a longer period.

- *Self-reliance:* once the women are able to use their new-found skills and gain a sense of confident independence to the full, they will be in a position to cater for their needs and those of their family members with less dependence on other people, especially their husbands as bread winners. This has obviously led to an improved quality of life for these women.

From these observations, it appears that people's participation in opportunities (such as the projects) is a key strategy for achieving people-centred development. The engagement of the local people empowers them and opens up their socio-economic spaces for further development.

In keeping with the asset-based approach to development, the women in the various projects under investigation for this research have shown that they are able to take matters into their own hands by identifying opportunities for self-empowerment and using existing local assets and skills in order to develop entrepreneurial opportunities (Table 4.6). By focusing on assets that are not only financial, the women in the projects have been able to act as catalysts to improve their own self-worth. The qualitative investigation has established how the involvement of women outside the confines of the household can offer women the opportunity to empower themselves and at the same time improve their living conditions. Being employed outside the home gives women the opportunity to meet other people with whom they can share their views on how to solve challenges of life. A summary of the development of the project members' self-worth and self-empowerment is reflected in the following observations:

- All participants are proud because of their improved social, economic and cultural standing in the communities.
- In all the projects, the women mentioned that they are becoming important members of their own households and in the community.
- They indicated that they are able to secure basic needs for their children.

- They are happy to have taken ownership of and specialised in an activity outside the household.

The qualitative investigation into the five selected projects has shown how effectively women can engage in order to improve the quality of their lives. While this concept is subjective, quality of life is an intangible and subjective concept and cannot be quantified; women in the projects were able to achieve the right to human dignity which has had a positive impact on the quality of their lives as individuals and members of society. The impact of this improvement in their quality of life has impacted positively by allowing individuals to provide the needs (drinking water, food, health care, shelter and clothing) of members of their households. The investigation has established the positive impact of cash-earning opportunities on the socio-economic standing of the individual women in the projects. Although many of these women have been excluded from formal employment (possibly due to their gender) and their mobility has been limited (possibly due to their role in the household), they have been able to make use of local assets to become involved in cash-earning activities.

Table 4.6: The use and development of local assets by women to facilitate self-empowerment, Makhuduthamaga Local Municipality in Limpopo, South Africa *(Source: Participant observation 2010 to 2013)*

Human Assets	- All projects have members who have passion for the work - Participants have skills and talents that are unfolding - The communities with the exception of one support the projects
Social Assets	- All projects with the exception of one have no support of NGOs or CBOs - There are no specific groups of people that support the projects - The communities at large with the exception of one support the projects
Economic Assets	- All participants indicate that they are able to participate in different social clubs to further improve their economic standing - The municipality and the district give basic support to all the projects - The communities and local businesses buy products of these projects with the exception of the sisal bags
Environmental Assets	- All projects have made use of the environment in a fruitful manner - The available electricity and water have advanced the projects forward - The roads have made the projects accessible enough - The natural trees that the environment provided have helped those projects to remain sustainable
Cognitive Assets	- The participants have no fear as they are determined to work hard - They with for the success of the projects because they are their sources of living for their households and the community - The participants in all the projects see themselves as successful rural women, who never dreamt of such a big venture
Problem-solving Abilities	All participants solve their own problems by way of sharing

	• The degrees of networking with other women who are engaged in other projects help them to meet challenges with less difficulty
Power Mapping	• No struggles for power as participants are determined to see the projects progressing • They respect one another

4.6 MONITORING AND EVALUATION OF THE PROJECTS

The projects researched revealed similar characteristics in all respects. The following opportunities were evident:

- All projects are situated close to the main road that passes through the municipality, linking the municipality to the neighbouring towns of Groblersdal, Marble Hall, Burgersfort and the local plazas. Therefore, public transport is valuable in many respects if accompanying services are provided.

- The participants all speak the same home language, Sepedi, which facilitated communication and understanding. Use of a common language offers the participants opportunities to talk about other issues beyond the projects that touch on the realities of life they share. Hence, they often boast of their internal relationships within the project as being stress-free.

- The slight or even non-participation of men in the projects is a blessing in disguise for the women, as they are then able to seize the opportunity and have a better chance of improving their skills and increasing their knowledge on how to grapple with the challenges of life, rather than remain dependants.

- The most important opportunity is that almost all participants in the projects are children of the soil or daughters-in-law of the communities. Hence, they are patriotic in deed and soul and that is what binds them together.

- Developments have taken place to expand the scope of the projects. In June 2013 the Maano A Basadi project managed to finalise and activate their bar code. The MTN group has given Raemet Kreaxion two sewing machines as promised. This suggests that more people will be to participate in a going concern.

- The resources the projects use are largely obtained locally with the exception of a few, and this does not create much of a problem with regard to obtaining materials needed for the operation.

Despite the opportunities, there are challenges which the projects face on a daily basis:

- The projects do not have a strong financial base. Sometimes they have to contribute extra money from their personal resources to buy seeds, seedlings, petrol or pay for transport to workshops.

- With the exception the Hlabologang Bakery, projects do not have their own means of transport. As a result, they experience high transport costs which drain their coffers. High prices are quoted for hiring tractors to plough the land. In all instances, they were advised to balance income and expenditure and ensure that income is circulated within the community and does not leak out of the community. The concept of the 'Leaky Bucket' of the ABCD and CAMP approaches has provided a value lesson in this regard.

- Although the availability of raw materials is not a problem, the high transport costs are challenging. The unfortunate part is that the transport offered by the municipality is not always reliable due to service problems, kilometre limits, vehicles out of order and many more such excuses.

Above all, the researcher has been convinced that, despite these challenges, the women are determined to fight and win their battle. They work tirelessly to keep the projects sustainable and the researcher has realised that their change in attitude,

behaviour and mindset is propelling them forward. These women are empowered beyond any reasonable doubt.

From what the researcher has seen and witnessed – and from the women's testimonies – the women feel empowered by the fact that they did not hesitate to start projects. The accompanying visual images portray this significantly. They encourage other women to come forward and seize opportunities by availing themselves of opportunities. One participant from Raemet Kreaxion remarked: 'It is not right to always complain of the poor service delivery by the government while seated. The talents and the resources in each community need to be utilised to benefit the community'. From this statement, it is true that unless women stand up and do everything in their power to be proactive they will remain 'seated' and never dare to match men. Women in these projects have proved that they can do it, and it is therefore a challenge to the municipality to help these projects to make sure that they remain sustainable and can in time employ more people than at present, as well as promoting and establishing new projects.

The chapter has presented the projects, introduced the participants and the products and explained the challenges and opportunities. At various stages of the data collection process, participants were given the opportunity to talk and share with the researcher about their experiences. From the various pictures taken, it is clear that the women are eager to go ahead because they have meaningfully lived through the process of what it is like to design their own development. Therefore, it is the aim of the next chapter to present the analysed data and its interpretation to the reader to give further insight and a much clearer perspective of the projects.

CHAPTER FIVE

QUALITATIVE DESCRIPTION OF THE PROJECT
MEMBERS AND SELF-REFLECTION

5.1 INTRODUCTION

In Chapter Three, data was collected through participant observation. Observation and interviews were the major techniques to gather data for this research. It is the purpose of this chapter to present some of the quantitative data to inform the overall aims and objectives of this research. It must be remembered that the data is collected from sampled projects and the results will be generalised to include the rest of the population.

To create meaning from the data collected, a computer was used to process the data into clear tables and simple bar graphs which show relationships and comparisons. The information will be presented and then interpreted. Lichtman (2010:12) maintains that it is the purpose of qualitative research to describe, understand and interpret human experiences. Since the research is qualitative and participatory, the participants were engaged in the interpretation of the processed data to give them a better understanding of the realities of the communities.

5.2 PRESENTATION OF PROCESSED DATA AND INTERPRETATION

5.2.1 Participants per gender

The processed data are given in the same sequence as in the interview and questionnaire schedules (Appendix D, E & F). Table 5.1 presents the distribution of males and females in each project.

Table 5.1: Distribution of males and females in the selected projects in the Makhuduthamaga Local Municipality in Limpopo, South Africa
(Source: Fieldwork, 2011- 2013)

Project	Males	Females	Total
Hlabologang Bakery	2	10	12
Diphagane Vegetable Gardening	1	3	4
Ba Kgobokane	5	12	17
Raemet Kreaxion	2	2	4
Maano A Basadi	0	10	10
Total	10	37	47

In all five projects there are 10 men and 37 women. During discussions with the groups, it emerged that the majority of the members of the projects were women, and when asked for possible reasons for the gender balance in favour of women, the following reasons were provided by the various focus groups:

- In rural communities, women are in the majority and are often not working in formal employment. Therefore, they are more readily available for any opportunity that comes across their paths in the form of possible employment and income generation.

- Many of the groups indicated that some of the men will not readily release the 'power' they have to work with or share their knowledge with women especially in rural settings. Most of these men would consider women to be housewives and have no place working outside the household and should not have a say concerning men's lives.

- Men are often too impatient to wait for income that takes time to generate, as is the case with many of the community projects.

- Migrant labour is common within the municipality. Therefore, women remain being the only labour force available, and thus a reason for fewer men on the projects.

- Men are not willing to work as volunteers to give a project the chance to start generating income; they normally expect payment immediately after the work is done and in the early stages of the project when payment cannot be afforded they decide to leave the project.
- The participants mentioned that despite the advocacies and awareness campaigns for gender equity, most men still do not value the work of women or they do not readily want to mix with women, as their culture prescribes that men are the leaders in the community and not the followers.
- Some men do not want to support the work of women because they regard women as lacking knowledge and unable to succeed.
- The women mentioned that they cannot leave their families and work far from their homes. The projects provide them with relief from the routine housework and the freedom to attend to their households as well as the responsibilities of working as members of the projects.

These reasons give women the opportunity to participate in many of the local projects as workers, planners, decision-makers and implementers. The women also indicated that they are by nature environmentalists and economists and they are able to develop themselves as worthy and valuable members of their communities by participating in projects outside their households.

5.2.2 Participants and ages

From Table 5.2 it is clear that people of different age groups were engaged in the projects. The participants have viewed the engagement of people of different ages as a blessing to the projects in the following ways:

- They mentioned that respect among the participants is automatic; this is an important ingredient for successful social research.

- People from different age groups share knowledge and experiences and this helps to sustain the projects.

- Participants who are over 60 years of age play a special role. The older people in the projects have indigenous knowledge, and transfer it to the younger generation.

- The middle-aged and younger people will help to sustain the projects when the older people retire.

Table 5.2: Distribution of participants by age in the selected projects in the Makhuduthamaga Local Municipality in Limpopo, South Africa
(Source: Fieldwork, 2011- 2013)

Age Group	No. of Participants
20-29	2
30-39	4
40-49	16
50-59	22
60+	3
Total	47

Figure 5.1 illustrates the gender and age distribution within the projects. The Diphagane Vegetable Gardening project is run by older people, while Maano A Basadi is run by one young female participant, and the Hlabologang Bakery by one male. The younger participants were engaged in the project, as they did not have funds to further their studies. This would have a positive implication on the future of the projects. It is fortunate that the vegetable garden project has recently gained five younger participants.

Figure 5.1: Participants per gender and age in the selected projects in the Makhuduthamaga Local Municipality in Limpopo, South Africa
(Source: Fieldwork, 2011- 2013)

5.2.3 Language of the participants

It was found that all participants talk Sepedi as their home language. This is an indication that participants reside within the Makhuduthamaga Local Municipality. They indicated that a common language facilitates communication and connectivity. As the researcher's mother tongue is Sepedi, language was not a barrier during the collection of data, especially when follow-ups or clarifications were made or required.

When questioned on the matter of language used at workshops they had attended, they indicated that they often attended workshops in English and this meant that sometimes when they reflected on what they had learnt they realised that they had understood very little or nothing from the workshops. They therefore, suggested that it would be better if the notes are translated into their home language so that they could benefit from

5.2.4 Marital status of participants

Table 5.3 shows the marital status of the participants. It was important to show the marital status of the participants; despite human rights, married women often receive opposition from their spouses and the public when attempting any activity outside the household.
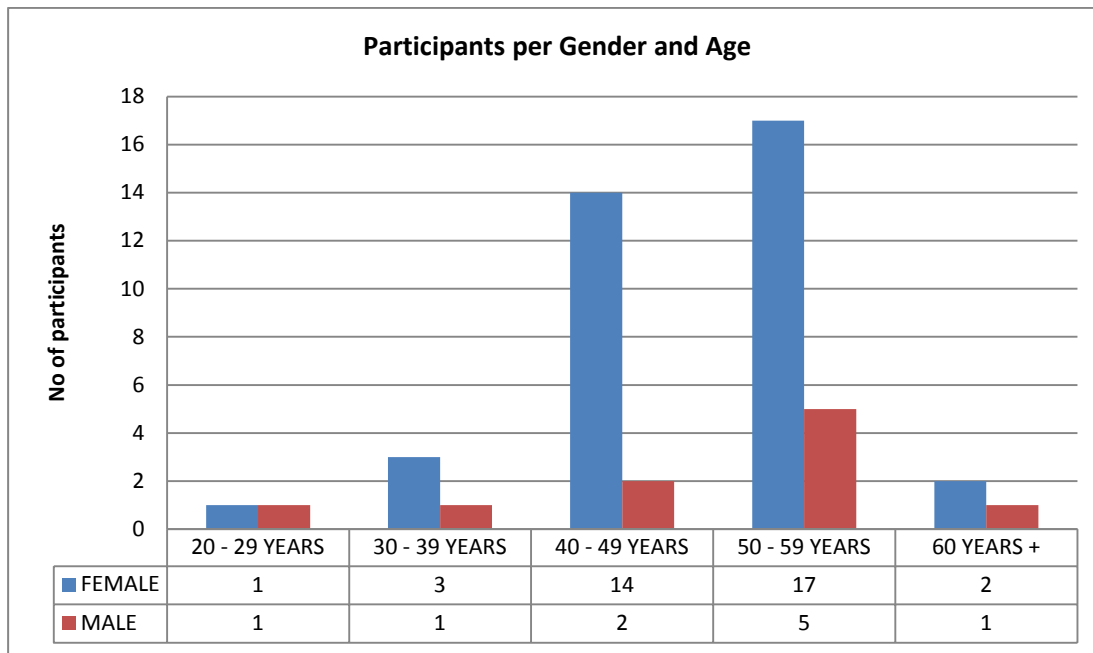
Table 5.3: Marital status of the participants in the selected projects in the Makhuduthamaga Local Municipality in Limpopo, South Africa
(Source: Fieldwork, 2011- 2013)

Marital Status	Number of Participants
Single	3
Married	38
Divorced	1
Widowed	5

Table 5.3 shows that only three participants are single and one is divorced. The marital status is significant to the research as it is an indication that culture and customs are still respected within the study area. The researcher's knowledge of the community and observation during the period of the study, indicated that the women were still of the opinion that to be single or divorced is looked down upon as a sign of disgrace by other community members. A larger number of the participants are married. This denotes two things that prevail in the study area. Firstly, marriage is still respected. To be married is taken as some form of achievement in these communities. In families where the husband is not working and cannot provide the daily needs, the wife has to try and provide for the daily living. Secondly, some of the men have started to understand and appreciate that there is a need for women's empowerment. These men have allowed their wives to be engaged in the projects to assist in providing for the daily needs for the family. One woman added jokingly that husbands could not afford all the needs of the family, and that the women are therefore helping them with their responsibilities. Participation by widows is an indication that as widows they have realised that there is nothing that can improve their widowhood except getting out of the home and working for their children, thus becoming heads of families.

5.2.5 Participants and number of dependents

In order to assess how much the projects are sustaining the lives of the participants and their families, the number of dependents was requested. Table 5.4 shows the relationship between the number of participants and their dependents.

Table 5.4: Number of dependents and participants responsible in the selected projects in the Makhuduthamaga Local Municipality in Limpopo, South Africa *(Source: Fieldwork, 2011- 2013)*

No. of Dependents	No. of Participants
0-3	36
4-6	9
7+	2

Table 5.4 shows that 36 participants have between 0 and 3 dependents, 9 participants have between 4 and 6 dependents, and only two participants have more than seven dependents. During discussions with the focus groups, it was clear that many of the project members were fully aware of the economic implications of larger families and 39 participants indicated that they are responsible for providing for dependents and do not have any other source of income or occupation. They rely solely on the income they earn from the projects for the survival of their families. Economically, a reason for participating in the projects was reiterated by the projects members on more than one occasion and thus it was made clear that the projects are critical for the dependents of the project members and for the communities.

5.2.6 Education level of participants

The results showing the educational level of the participants is important to the research in different ways. Table 5.5 shows the educational levels of the participants.

Table 5.5: Education level of the participants in the selected projects in the
Makhuduthamaga Local Municipality in Limpopo, South Africa
(Source: Fieldwork, 2011- 2013)

Educational Level (Grade)	No. of Participants
2-7	5
8-10	29
11-12	12
Degree (incomplete)	1

From Table 5.5, it is clear that the educational level of the participants is low. Due to the legacy of apartheid, many of the project members did not have the opportunity to go to school or to finish their schooling, and thus the low levels of literacy in the community are not surprising. Apart from the political reasons for low literacy levels, there are cultural reasons for the low levels of literacy amongst female members of the communities. A total of 34 participants have not passed Grade 12 (the highest level of basic education in South Africa). The results show that there is a need for the establishment of Adult Basic Education Training (ABET) centres in communities, and observations showed that the women in the study area would welcome this training in order to participate more effectively in workshops presented to them by external stakeholders. The participant who had started and not finished her degree indicated that she was not able to complete the degree as she had been dependent on a financial sponsor of a family member and that this person had passed away. Despite this negative event in her life and a dream that was not to be realised, she considered herself to be very fortunate (and successful) that she had managed to open a home industry project.

With regard to the level of training for the work they are doing, all participants indicated that they had no prior knowledge or educational level of training. Using their talents and indigenous knowledge, they have all learnt about the work they are doing while working at the project centres. The workshops given at the beginning of the projects added to their talents. Many of the projects relied on talent and indigenous knowledge to solve local problems. One woman from the Raemet Kreaxion was excited and pleased that she could easily design bags of different shapes. That is an

indication that her creativity was high despite her relatively low level of literacy. In all the projects it was established that the women were proud and happy about the skills and knowledge they are gaining and sharing in the projects. They mentioned that they have in a way acquired knowledge which is now permanently part of them. Those engaged in non-farming activities added that with the knowledge they have, they are able to make money in their spare time and were thus meaningful members of their communities.

5.2.7 Sources of income before engagement in the projects

During interaction with the group members, the researcher established that many of the group members were already engaged in some sort of self-employment. Table 5.6 provides the different answers given by the participants.

Table 5.6: Sources of income before engagement in the projects in the selected projects in the Makhuduthamaga Local Municipality in Limpopo, South Africa (*Source: Fieldwork, 2011- 2013)*

Project	Spouse still working	Selling knitted goods or selling tombstones	Social grants or pension	No income	Piggery
Hlabologang Bakery		1	7	4	
Diphagane Vegetable Garden	1		2	1	
Ba Kgobokane Art and Culture	3		11	3	
Raemet Kreaxion	1		1		2
Maano A Basadi	2	1	2	5	
Total	7	2	23	13	2

Thirteen of the participants were without income, and it was clear that social grants and remittances were the major sources of survival for many families of the project members. Therefore, it was no surprise that many of the women had decided to join the successful projects which are a blessing to them. The owner of the piggery is also the owner of the sisal project. He is proud of the project because he benefits financially from the sale of pigs as well as the income from the sisal project.

177

5.2.8 Years worked in the project

Regarding the number of years participants worked in the projects, the responses have been as follows:

Table 5.7: Years worked at the projects in the selected projects in the Makhuduthamaga Local Municipality in Limpopo, South Africa
(Source: Fieldwork, 2011 - 2013)

Years in the Project	No. of Participants
0 – 2 years	2
3 – 5 years	19
6 years	26

The overall number of years each participant worked in the projects is an indication of how much value each participant attaches to the project. They all declared that the projects have contributed significantly towards their improved living conditions, political standing, and their social and economic well-being. Many women stated that for them to have their own source of money which they were free to use when they wished and in whichever way they wished was very empowering. Some of them indicated that the fact that they could call themselves business women was also a major positive part of being involved in projects. During interaction with the group members, the researcher established that those that had worked in projects for longer than six years had gathered enough experience to deal with challenges encountered in the projects' daily operations, and it was therefore concluded that these projects would be sustainable in the future because of this knowledge, skill and expertise. These project members supplied the most valuable data for this research. Those with fewer years of experience were motivated and also promised to persevere and be determined to take the projects further. Figure 5.2 illustrates the gender and years worked in the project. The ratio of women in the projects over time increased, while the number of men in the projects remained stable.

Participants per Gender & Years of service

	0 - 2 YEARS	3 - 5 YEARS	6 YEARS +
■ FEMALE	1	15	21
■ MALE	1	4	5

Figure 5.2: Participants per gender and years in the projects in the selected projects in the Makhuduthamaga Local Municipality in Limpopo, South Africa *(Source: Fieldwork, 2011 - 2013)*

In response to the question whether they were very happy, happy, unhappy or very unhappy while working in the projects, about 35 participants indicated that they are happy. The following reasons were given for their happiness:

- The projects are the source of their daily living in the forms of bread, vegetables and a little cash that enable them to buy extra food for the family or extra personal needs.

- They have become more knowledgeable than before and are starting to gain recognition by the community.

- By working in the projects they are able to be considered when decisions are taken at home, and they are able to make decisions such as buying children's clothes, what to cook and many more household decisions.

- One woman mentioned that they no longer have the stress they had before, as they are working and are able to share their problems and experiences as women.

Three participants indicated that they are unhappy because the remuneration is too low to afford major needs. One of them wanted to pay for a driver's licence but could

not afford to do so. After discussion, they were convinced that they are at least better off than those who remain at home unemployed. Nine participants mentioned that they were happy, and that to be working out of the home is an opportunity that they had never considered. Their emancipation from the home has exposed them to public life and they are able to increase their networks.

5.2.9 Distribution of remuneration by participation

One of the questions asked participants to arrange in order of preference how they use their remuneration to purchase their various basic needs. Table 5.8 summarises how participants spend their money. Figure 5.3 gives a breakdown of the expenditure per project in the same categories listed in Table 5.8.

Table 5.8: Remuneration distribution in the projects in the selected projects in the Makhuduthamaga Local Municipality in Limpopo, South Africa
(Source: Fieldwork, 2011 - 2013)

Remuneration Distribution	Number of Participants
Food	37
Health	35
Clothing	35
Education	23
Housing	17
Transport	8

Expenditure per Project per Participant

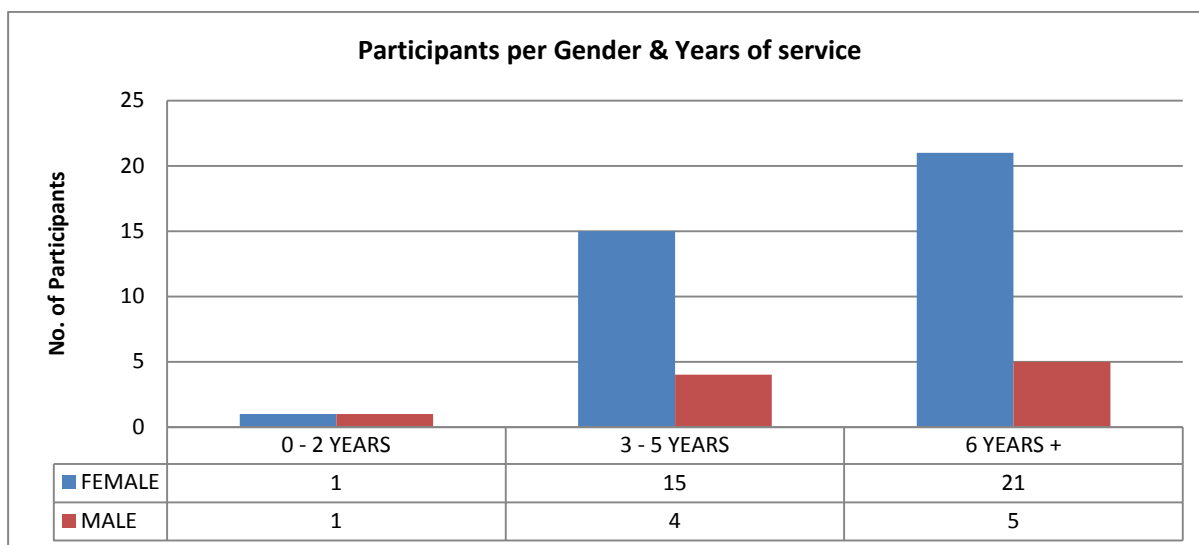|	Bakgobokane	Diphagane	Hlabologang	Maano a Basadi dairy Co-Operate	RaeMet
■ Count of Food	17	5	12	9	4
■ Count of Housing	5	4	4	2	2
■ Count of Health	15	2	10	6	1
■ Count of Clothing	14	3	6	8	4
■ Count of Education	9	3	5	4	2
■ Count of Transport	2		2	2	2
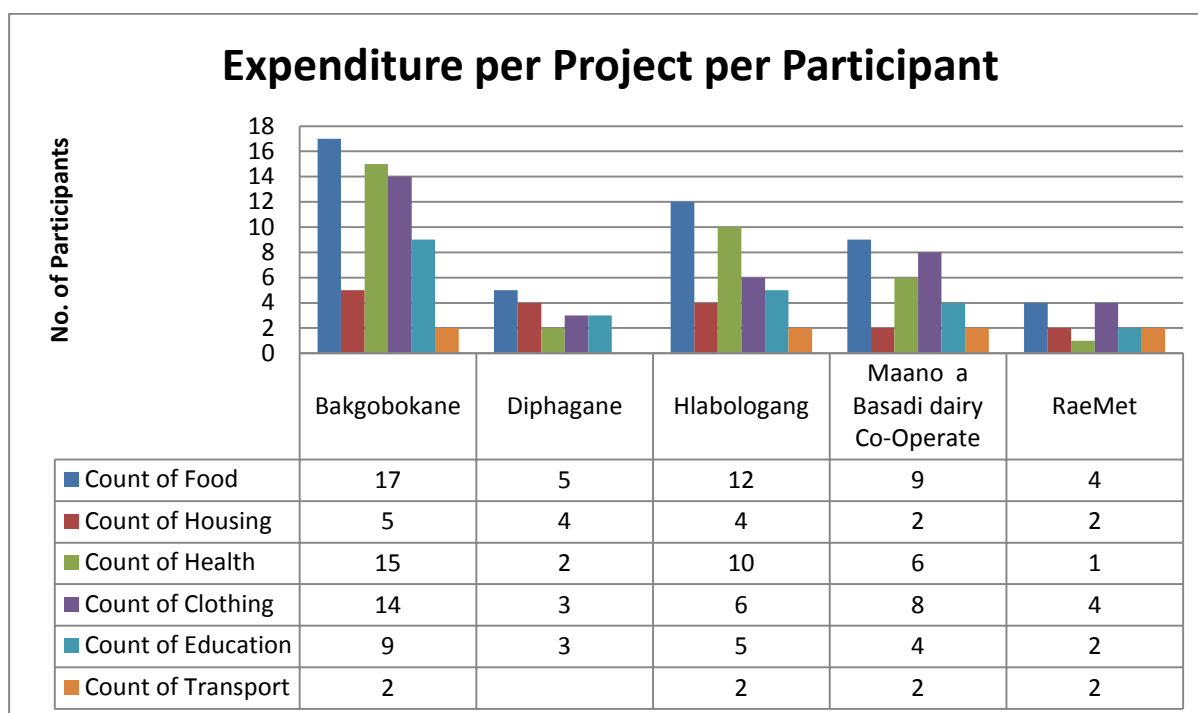
Figure 5.3: *Participants' expenditure in the selected projects in the Makhuduthamaga Local Municipality in Limpopo, South Africa (Source: Fieldwork, 2011 - 2013)*

Most of the project members spend their money on food. It is reflected that the participants use a larger percentage of their remuneration on food purchases. Of the 47 participants, 37 are aware of the need to buy proper food to nourish the body. One woman remarked: 'Once the body is not correctly fed, everything comes to a standstill'.

Of the participants, 35 listed health and clothing equally as their second priority in the expenditure of their remuneration. Their reasoning was as follows: A person who is ill cannot go to work and therefore the family will suffer and could also fall ill. As a result, they use the nearby clinics, private doctors, pharmacies and health caregivers as far as possible to make sure that their families remain fit. In the same breath, clothing is as important as health. It is proper for one who works to clothe herself and her family with the necessary clothes to remain presentable and protected against the unpleasant weather.

Twenty-three participants ranked education as priority number three. The role played by the government in making sure that all children of school-going age are at school helped to relieve parents of the burden of buying school materials as in government schools, books and food are supplied free of charge. Parents just need to top up with other necessities, such as payments for trips and buying of extra textbooks for enrichment.

According to Table 5.8, 17 participants mentioned that they use part of their remuneration for house improvements. The participants mentioned that to build a house is usually the responsibility of husbands and only under extreme circumstances are women forced to build houses. Usually, women assist in buying furniture and improving the home.

Table 5.8 shows that the least prioritised item is transport. Out of the 47 participants, only eight use transport to go to work. The women added that they normally walk to the projects, but use transport when they are late for work. The little use of transport emphasises the fact that the projects are locally based and within walking distances.

5.3   OBSERVED ATTITUDE AND BEHAVIOUR

In addition to the interview data, there is information that the researcher obtained through observation and discussions when visiting the projects. The following behaviour and attitude were observed:

Teamwork: this element was observed among all participants of the five projects. On each visit, the participants were found to be cheerful, talking to one another for assistance or sharing knowledge. It was not easy to tell who was in charge. Each and every one was ready to assist, and one woman at Maano A Basadi Co-Op mentioned that this kind of behaviour sustains the projects.

Knowledge of the work: the participants demonstrated that they knew what they were doing. All the skills learnt (measurement, recording of sales, mixing of ingredients, selling and money and time calculations) were properly applied with confidence. The researcher witnessed the preparation of drinking yoghurt and

baking. The processes needed a lot of skills which were successfully carried out, which proved that the knowledge they gained is worthwhile to sustain the projects. The participants proved that they are enjoying the work as they often sing when they are busy. One member of the Diphagane Vegetable Gardening project indicated that to make work enjoyable, when they are not busy they just come to the garden to relax and prepare for the next activities.

Presence: it was observed that in all the projects absenteeism was uncommon. The participants came to the projects every day, except when they were sick or had a serious family matter beyond their control. In such instances a substitute was sent. What impressed the researcher was that even where the participants worked in shifts everything went well.

The attitude of the participants towards their work was highly appreciated. Everyone indicated that they want to stay in the projects, and have high hopes that the projects will sustain and improve. That was supported by the response of the participants that they are ready to work at the projects for the coming two to three years. That kind of attitude indicated a lot of improvement in the change of mindset of women, who were dependants for decades. It really shows that women have started to see value in their engagement outside the home. The importance of the projects to the community can, therefore, not be over-emphasised.

Location of projects: the researcher made an observation regarding the location of the projects; the projects are not far from the roads that lead to Groblersdal, Polokwane or Burgersfort and this enables participants to buy raw materials which are not available in the nearby plazas or shops. Therefore, they are easily accessible.

Resources: the projects use different resources; some of them are obtained locally and some outside the locality. However, they never seem to be held up due to a shortage of resources. The non-farming producers are often disturbed by network breakdowns, and hence they experience some losses.

5.4   THE ROLE PLAYED BY THE MUNICIPALITY

The questionnaire given to the municipal officer was completed. As indicated earlier, the questionnaire was short and simple and consisted of sixteen open-ended questions. The main aim of the questionnaire was to find out how much the municipality can help the projects. The information gathered from the questionnaire is summarised below.

Of a total of 31 councillors, the municipality has about 10 councillors who are women. Although not part of the discussions, the researcher considered it worth mentioning that the wards which are under women councillors showed more improvement than those under male councillors. Women have more influence and are able to network. It is this kind of behaviour that will influence the top management of the municipality to prioritise the poor and women. Furthermore, the women councillors would encourage more women to start their own projects so that their social, emotional and financial well-being will improve.

The municipality indicated that it gives support to the projects by way of organising workshops for the participants in the various projects. It also helps them with transport. From time to time the municipality holds caucuses for women and community meetings where women's issues are discussed.

The municipality indicated that they seemed to be successful in the provision of basic services such as infrastructure (electricity, roads and bridges), with priority given to the vulnerable and women. The roads make the projects accessible and enable the transportation of raw materials and finished products. The projects that use more electricity, such as Hlabologang Bakery, Maano A Basadi and Ba Kgobokane, are to a lesser extent better off, despite the high maintenance costs they experience. The municipality is providing an enabling environment for these women.

For six years the municipality was headed by a female mayor who introduced a number of projects with regard to education, sports, agricultural and health care services. She was supported by the female speaker who has a convincing tone. Their stay within the reigns of the municipality proved to be very fruitful.

Of note is that although the projects are not initiated by the municipality, the latter plays a supportive role. The reason for this is that these projects help to improve the general quality of life within the municipality. Therefore, it is timeous and relevant support that would definitely motivate, attract and encourage more women to start other projects to make a better living. Discussions with the participants revealed that they love the projects whole-heartedly and wished that the projects could be sustainable. Shortage of funds to expand projects remains a challenge.

5.5   SELF-REFLECTION

Now that the work of the researcher is ending, she would like to look back and share with the reader who she is, how her identity affected the research and how her personality was shaped by the research. This is what is known as reflexivity, self-reflexivity or auto-ethno-biography in qualitative research. According to Gough and Finlay (2003:106), to be reflexive means to have an ongoing conversation about the experience while living in the moment. The aim of self-reflection is to have direct contact with experience lived.

As an African woman, the researcher developed an interest in women issues and always wanted to excel in order to prove that other women can also do so. Throughout her professional and educational career, she excelled and was always looking for areas where women were shown up; that kept her motivated. Being a headmistress, the researcher had an opportunity to meet women with different expressions of social standing and was able to motivate them to do the best they could in the education of their children. At school she would encourage the girls, as future mothers of the nation, to do better than their mothers and to develop a competitive spirit.

The existence of the projects under the auspices of women aroused the researcher's interest in women matters further and she became curious to know more about those women who are able to prioritise, organise, plan and implement their ideas; women who are ready to design and be in control of their own destinies. In conducting the case study, the experience and knowledge of ethics to collect data was used. First,

permission was sought to enter the premises of the projects. This permission was granted by both the municipality and the project leaders (Appendices A, B & C). The researcher approached the projects with openness, respect and willingness to serve and learn. She also tried to understand the participants, and ensured that they also understood her.

The researcher was heartily welcomed at the projects. Bearing in mind the level of education of the participants and the fact that they were the sources of information, she communicated with them in Sepedi, their home language, and respect bound them together. A good working relationship was established, and there was no gap between the researched and the researcher.

From the case study, the researcher also learnt a great deal and that shaped her personality further. She realised that once a person is given an opportunity to participate in an endeavour, their potential unfolds and they become a new being. The fact that the researcher has the same background as the participants made the research process much easier. A woman interviewing other women became a positive factor which kept the research process lively. The researcher's presence at the projects encouraged the women to keep fighting to improve their quality of life

From another perspective, the thesis will help to highlight the barriers community projects face with regard to the municipality, the host community and the broader South Africa. Coming into contact with the participants, the researcher realised that her personality was further shaped as her communication skills – listening, recording and memory capacities – were sharpened. She was able to listen and learn from other people's lived experiences. This self-disclosure is a way of sharing herself, and exposing her beliefs and feelings that contributed to the construction of the research.

In this chapter, the data has been presented and interpreted with the help of the participants. The involvement of the participants in the interpretation of data helped the researcher to understand the social standing of each community in which the projects are located. In all those communities, women proved to be central to rural development. It was observed that men draw back and do not want to work in projects initiated by women, as they are used to being in command. The ball is rolling

in the hands of women, as evidenced by their participation in many spheres within the municipality, such as churches, community meetings, education (as School Governing Body (SGB) chairpersons and members and heads of schools), sports and health (as home-based caregivers). Despite the challenges they experience in their endeavour to improve their status, these women have made an indelible mark in the development sphere. The involvement of these women symbolises a social transformation whereby women are aware and conscious of their own lives.

From being marginalised socially as women and living in a rural area, separated from centres of mainstream development, these women are finding ways of improving their quality of life. Here in their own community they remain overseers of the family household. Moreover, they are doing their own thing. They do their best to find ways of closing the gap that has existed between them and men entrenched from long ago. Many of the men in the community are taken up as migrant labour in cities some distance away. With support from local government the quality of life of the communities in the municipality is improving as indicated by the changing status of these empowered women.

The municipality is therefore encouraged to enhance an enabling environment for women's participation. The chapter that follows gives a general conclusion on the work done and offers some recommendations.

CHAPTER SIX

ROOTS-DRIVEN WOMEN EMPOWERMENT IN THE MAKHUDUTHUMAGALOCAL MUNICIPALITY AS AN EXAMPLE FOR RURAL COMMUNITIES IN SOUTH AFRICA

It was only after the new policies that accommodated the recognition of human rights were in place that women were regarded as human beings who had equal rights and opportunities. This is stipulated in the South African Constitution as the Bill of Human Rights for all South Africans. The recognition of women has international origins as South Africa signed several agreements regarding improvement of women's status. By drawing up the new Constitution (1996), South Africa executed an international obligation that the provinces and the municipalities were to emulate. Geographically, this illustrates how ideas have spread across the world and how policy effects filter down to even the smallest places.

The municipality made sure that the policy interventions were known to all people (specifically women and the disadvantaged) through events such as awareness campaigns, community forums and women's caucuses within its domain of influence in order to allay the fears women might have. Women began to be emancipated in thought and deed and having understood what the policy interventions meant to them, they mobilised themselves and began projects; the main aim was to be able to successfully do things for themselves to improve their overall quality of life.

The chiefs and the municipality worked hand-in-hand to support these women who were very determined to decide their own fate. The chiefs provided land for the establishment of projects, while the municipality helped with the financial sources and markets for the products. By so doing, the chief and the municipality remained accountable and responsible for the people to ensure effective social justice. As the

women understood their disadvantaged position, they voluntarily organised themselves to start different projects and naming them to reflect their awareness and their preparedness to improve their living conditions. They wanted to be independent and do things on their own as the projects would significantly provide them with personal income to enable them to:

- Purchase their families' needs and services
- Provide basic needs for daily living
- Generate employment that would take the women out of their comfort zones and into the world of work
- Give them the skills and knowledge to help them deal with the daily challenges faced by a working and a responsible woman.

The established projects consisted of a bakery, vegetable sales, arts and crafts, a dairy and also the production of bags from sisal. The women are proud that the projects are located in their own communities and are easily accessible and they have clearly stated that they have no intention to relocate.

6.1 GENDER AND DEVELOPMENT IN SOUTH AFRICA

For decades, women all over the globe – including the Global South – remained invisible and deprived of opportunities. Although they have been treated as unequal in matters of development, women played and still do play significant roles in production, reproduction and care-giving activities to sustain the lives of their households. Their invisibility is associated with the development theory of the 1950s and 1960s, when it was believed that the progress men are making will automatically pass over to women. It was unfortunate that the dream could not materialise and that women became more invisible.

What bothered the development practitioners was that development remained skewed and unsustainable. It was decided that development should be human-centred rather than economy–centred; namely, that the abilities, potential and skills of a person – whether a man or a woman – should be considered in order to make development more sustainable. The years of Human Development started in the

1980s when women were accepted as co-partners in development. Various development strategies such as WID, WAD and GAD to include women in development issues were implemented, but unfortunately these strategies bore no fruit.

Like other countries in the Global South, South Africa was no exception to the gender discrimination in all spheres of life; this is captured in this study's conceptual framework (Figure 1.2) and gives the synopsis of the study. Before policy intervention, women were marginalised and hence could not easily mix with men, leading to the common social inequality within society. Such inequalities were accompanied by poor quality of life among women, the poor and the aged in terms of education, nutrition, health opportunities, social status and clothing. Women are therefore seen as central to the study in the sense that their empowerment has touched the lives of many and led to improved quality of life. The involvement of women and the recognition of their capabilities and knowledge have improved their social, economic, political and environmental awareness. Based on the framework, it is clear that the new policies (which were introduced in 1996) emancipated women, and South Africa activated the agreements of CEDAW.

The strategies of gender mainstreaming and women's empowerment are the tools which South Africa employs to improve the quality of life of women, as they form the larger percentage of populations in all South African societies. These are the women targeted by the empowerment process to balance the equation between men and women. In addition to these strategies, there are many legislative and statutory bodies in South Africa to protect and encourage women to forge ahead without fear and hesitation. The responsibilities of women have widened and increased their area of operation. The reality is that half of the population of South Africa are women who live in rural areas, and most of them have always lived in their homes with little exposure to the outside world. Despite obtaining a low level of education, the Bill of Human Rights has led to the increased exposure and empowerment of these women.

As a result, women in South Africa, the provinces and the municipalities are making inroads into various employments normally occupied by men. The research study has shown a number of successful projects which are initiated and run by women in the

Makhuduthamaga Local Municipality. One would therefore mention without hesitation that South Africa is achieving Millennium Development Goal 3, its indicators being especially important in areas of education at primary level, gender equality and women's empowerment. In terms of participation per gender, the study found that 79% of the workers are women who are taken out of their homes by this kind of employment.

Observation has indicated that due to empowerment, the majority of women are highly motivated and consequently engaged in the informal sector as producers and sellers. Despite the small amount of support and assistance the informal sector receives from the central government, the Makhuduthamaga Local Municipality is doing its best to make sure that the projects the women have initiated remain sustainable enough to improve the quality of life of people within the communities of the municipality.

The process of women's empowerment has transformed and removed the boundaries – which seemed to be permanent between men and women, and boys and girls – and have uplifted the lives of the disabled, the aged and the vulnerable as indicated by the appointment of a minister for women, children and people with disabilities. Observation has shown that these groups of people are highly involved in political, economic, social and cultural matters of South Africa as their own country.

The research is relevant and beneficial to the subject of Geography in various ways. The study reveals the importance of human, physical, financial and cultural resources in the process of development. The human potential available with its degree of connectivity and relationships has been able to identify and manipulate the other resources to bring about the desired development in order to benefit and improve the quality of life of people, irrespective of gender, nationality, religion, language and colour. According to the participant observation, such developments have so far not caused the environment to deteriorate.

Furthermore, the diffusion of the international agreements on the empowerment of women has without any hesitation been ratified by the South African government for a better life for all. The nine provinces that constitute South Africa are obligated to

implement these laws and regulations that govern women's empowerment. The municipalities should emulate what the provinces are doing with regard to women's empowerment. Therefore, the municipalities like the one under study – being the rung of government closest to the people – should do most of the supportive work to really bring about the empowerment of the marginalised groups of their people to fruition.

Having been involved in this research endeavour enables the researcher to claim that gender discrimination is becoming rootless in South Africa, although isolated pockets of patriarchy are still resistant; it is believed that these will weaken or be eradicated with the passage of time.

6.2 WOMEN EMPOWERMENT IN THE MAKHUDUTHAMAGA LOCAL MUNICIPALITY

The municipality is located in the greater Sekhukhune District; in 2008 this area was marked as a 'nodal point' that needed immediate attention. Living conditions were unbearable with regard to poverty, unemployment and living conditions, with women being the worst affected by such conditions.

After the realisation of policy interventions that allowed women to participate in all activities of life, women within the Makhuduthamaga Local Municipality started to mobilise themselves to do something that would improve their status quo. The study aims to emphasise that women empowerment is a pathway to poverty reduction and betterment of living conditions for women. In their different groups, these women decided to start projects that would generate income to improve their living conditions and they used their talents, indigenous knowledge and available resources to initiate these projects. The main aim behind such actions was to improve the living conditions in communities with regard to unemployment, boredom, accumulated stress, nutrition, housing clothing, health and social standing.

Projects using different resources and talents were established in the various communities of the Makhuduthamaga Local Municipality. In the community of GaMasemola, women decided on a project where they would bake bread, scones,

biscuits and wedding and birthday cakes. These women were supported in different ways in their venture by the knowledgeable local people, the chief and the municipality. The women sell their products to the community on paydays, at schools during breaks, in hospitals, local shops and spazas, and also to people passing by.

The researcher observed that the training and workshops which these women attended at the initial stages of the projects gave them more skills and determination for their work, and they now work happily on a daily basis from 7h00 to 17h00. The material support which the municipality is giving cannot be over-emphasised. The women are equipped with skills such as taking measurements, calculating time and money, budgeting, interacting socially, cleaning and baking. These skills have added value to their daily living conditions, and the women are more aware of the important role they play in the daily living of their households than before they were tied to the home.

In the community of the Diphagane in the Makhuduthamaga municipality women have gathered around a vegetable project and the differing living conditions of the women are apparent. The women are growing vegetables such as cabbages, beetroot, spinach, carrots, tomatoes and green peppers which are essential for the growth and protection of the human body against diseases. Training on organic farming, combined with the indigenous knowledge of the women sustain this project, and the Department of Agriculture, the chief, the municipality and the associations the project has with other agricultural institutions support and keep these women informed about their obligation. As a result, the women feel more empowered.

The organic insecticides and pesticides which these women make from leaves from local trees help them to avoid poor harvests. The advantages of natural made insecticides and pesticides are environmentally safe and user-friendly. In addition, the nearby river supplies water for irrigation and the community and their households are supplied with fresh vegetables, the sale of which enables the women to secure their personal needs and those of their households on a daily basis.

In the community of Jane Furse a woman who is an educator by profession has mobilised women around the Arts and Crafts project that produces beadwork, sewing

of traditional attire, woodwork and pottery. Her aim is to help these women improve their quality of life by earning cash. With the skills and knowledge obtained, the women are able to produce and sell products in their spare time, and consequently, improving living conditions with regard to nutrition, clothing, socialisation, self-awareness and responsibilities in both the home and the community have improved.

In the community of Clen-Cowie, which is also in the Makhuduthamaga municipality, a woman (who was unable to complete her degree) mobilised women around a project that produces handbags from sisal. The engagement of women in this project has improved their creativity and self-discovery. The sale of these traditionally coloured and shaped bags, especially at overseas markets, produces a high income which enables these women to provide for their households and personal needs which they could not attempt before. Therefore, the living conditions of these women has improved as indicated by their increasing social networking, social responsibilities and the fact that they are becoming decision-makers, planners and implementers in their households.

In the same municipality, the women of Phokoane village were motivated (by a colleague who worked in Gauteng) to establish a project from a list of projects she had provided. The women decided on the project of producing drinking yoghurt and maas. Although the women did not have prior knowledge about the project, the training they received and the visits they made to similar industries kept them empowered. The chief, the municipality and various development donors support the project. The products are sold to the public, the plaza, local shops and schools, and special orders are made for community functions. The women are highly motivated with their engagement and are now happy with their living conditions. The project also gives them the opportunity to visit overseas countries. As a result, they see themselves as pillars of their households in terms of daily survival.

As they are aware of themselves as people in their own right, it has become evident that the women in the Makhuduthamaga Local Municipality have become empowered.

6.2.1 Own initiatives to improve their quality of life

Women within the municipality were aware of the poor quality of their living conditions which did not hold any future for them and their households. As a group, they decided to come up with something that would help improve their quality of life, resulting in a number of projects emerging to keep them busy on a daily basis.

While working on projects, the women are engaged in activities that keep them busy for most of the day; they are performing some of these activities for the first time ever. The bakery project involves the women selling products, and they need to improve their calculating skills when giving change. This activity also broadens their understanding of profit and loss. Baking involves various ingredients and increases their understanding about the production of different breads, cakes and scone flavours. They have to operate and monitor the ovens at specific times, and this keeps them alert and teaches them important time awareness. At the bakery, cleaning of the ovens, pans, floors and the surroundings is a daily activity, and the women are also obliged to be clean themselves, which they rarely were before they came to the project.

The women are expected to budget, measure and weigh ingredients before mixing them, and in that way they can learn to produce tasty goods. When selling their products, the women learn communication skills as people of different ages enter the centre. Working in the project, the women have learnt to save money by opening a bank account and making deposits and withdrawals; this activity is also useful in their homes in preparation for the future.

In the vegetable garden, the women are kept busy with various activities: seed selection helps them to identify the good seed that is disease-resistant; soil preparation keeps the women busy at the early stages of ploughing and helps them understand the fertility of the soil and the type of crop suitable for such soil; transplantation, irrigation, weeding and harvesting keep the women healthy and strong. These women do work on a budget, as they buy seeds season after season

and also pay for the tractors after ploughing. Selling their products to schools, the community, shops and homes for special functions is one of their major activities.

The Arts and Crafts project teaches the women to measure and make designs according to type of material and colours. Consequently, these women can design dresses to suit different occasions, with matching necklaces of traditional designs. In this project the women measure, learn to cut straight and decorate. These products are sold to various people and special orders for weddings are also made. The selling process improves the communication skills of these women.

The sisal bag project keeps the women busy making bags from ready woven rope. Designing the shapes of the bags and decorating them are major activities which the women enjoy; they also compete with each other. The invisible activity is that of knowledge sharing which further helps to unfold their talents. The selling at local level is done on a smaller scale as their best market is overseas.

The project that produces yoghurt and maas keeps the women busy in various ways, ranging from buying ingredients and containers, preparing yoghurt and maas, packaging, cleaning of the centre and the utensils, and finally selling the products. Many calculations are involved and important budgeting needs to be done in this project as the stock has to last for a month or two. These activities increase the knowledge and the skills of these women who never thought could achieve so much.

As outlined above, it is clear that the women are busy all day, working and learning. The boredom and joblessness they complained about is in the past. The projects enable them to network with other women who are emerging entrepreneurs.

6.2.2 The relationship between cash-earning activities and the socio-economic standing of women

It is a known reality that women in the rural areas of the Global South were rarely or never exposed to cash-earning activities. They were known to be caregivers and dependants of their husbands to such an extent that they never bothered to engage in such activities.

Today these women are engaged in cash-earning activities through their own initiatives and this has a significant impact on their socio-economic standing. These women are having an impact on their social sphere in different, positive ways. In their communities, they are becoming more visible and recognised because they now show that they have money to spend on their general outlook in the forms of clothing and personal care.

By receiving money, they become more exposed and able to speak in public and network with women of their calibre in other communities to acquire more information pertaining to their projects. They are able to communicate and socialise at ease, and as observed in their homes and communities, these women are recognised and given responsibilities in the different spheres of decision-making.

In the past, these women were not allowed to chair or to attend community meetings with men, but today the very same women are chairpersons, secretaries and signatories of various community social clubs. These women are no longer confined to their homes, but they move about visiting their relatives in different parts of the municipality, because they have money to pay for taxi or bus fares. They are, therefore, more informed about social matters because of their degree of connectivity.

The improved economic standing of these women is evidenced by the nutrition of those in their homes and those of their extended families. In the past only one type of food was consumed throughout the week, but these women are now able to buy extra food to nourish the body. They now alternate meals twice or three times a week, with fruit and vegetables being purchased to add to the nutritional value; most of their expenditure is on food. Because of their income, the women are aware that their health and that of their children is of value and equally as important as clothing their bodies according to the different seasons.

The women in the projects are happy that although they have no education, they are responsible for the payment of education for their children up to tertiary level. This is a step in the right direction, aiming at the future of their children. With the extra money, the women are able to buy furniture and help to repair, repaint and generally

improve their houses. Their money is also used to travel to their relatives in other areas of the municipality.

These observations make it clear that there is a direct relationship between cash-earning activities and the socio-economic situation of women. Should these women not have been engaged in such activities, nothing would have been known about them, but they are now highly visible because of the cash they receive. It is true that 'money makes the mare go'.

6.2.3 Self-empowerment towards the improvement of living conditions

Self-empowerment is proof that no person can successfully empower another person without that person taking their own initiative. In that case, empowerment is self-driven with little influence from the outside. The women in the different projects have done exactly that in order to improve their living conditions. These women were aware of their deteriorating living conditions because of their joblessness and boredom at home. The policy interventions which the South African government introduced to empower women came to them as a blessing and they started to look around to come up with something that would make a difference in their living conditions.

In the different communities of the Makhuduthamaga Local Municipality, women on their own started different projects to help improve their own living conditions, those of their households and of the community at large. There is no external leadership that runs the projects on behalf of the women; they plan, budget, control, own and run the projects themselves.

The empowerment of these women emanates from their self-discipline, self-motivation, self-determination, self-confidence, cooperation and commitment to their work. The success of the projects adds to their self-empowerment and improves their living conditions; they can now access a balanced diet, clean drinking water, better clothing and shelter and they are able to pay for the education of their children up to higher levels.

Because these women are empowered, they have developed problem-solving strategies which they apply to their home situations to better their living conditions, whereas before their engagement they had no say in the home and had to obey instructions. However, because of their self-empowerment, they have started to earn respect from members of their families and from the larger community. From observations made, self-empowerment is a prerequisite for better living conditions as evidenced by the lives of the women engaged in the projects of the Makhuduthamaga Local Municipality.

6.3 GENDER AND LOCAL ASSETS IN THE MAKHUDUTHAMAGA LOCAL MUNICIPALITY

Access, control and ownership of assets are essential to development and equality in any community. In many rural areas of the Global South, men used to have more assets than women and this situation had given men more bargaining power within the household. However, a growing body of evidence collected by the GAAP has shown that the few assets the women do have are used differently to those of men. Women are observed to be savers while men are spenders, and it is on this basis that women are encouraged to identify and mobilise the local assets in order to improve their livelihoods and those of their households.

This research has shown that increasing women's assets in the form of land, economy, finance and physical assets has shown positive results on a number of factors for the household, such as food security, child care, child nutrition and also women's well-being. In the municipality, women are gaining increasing access, control and ownership of the local assets to improve the quality of life within the municipality.

The establishment of the projects by the women is a clear indication that women in the municipality are ready to access and own assets to improve their living conditions. Furthermore, the control, access and ownership of assets by women empower them. In the municipality, men were used to urban life and as such did not show much interest in the accumulation of assets at local level; consequently, few men are involved in the projects initiated by these women.

Women in the municipality are gaining an upper hand in the accumulation and mobilisation of local assets to empower themselves and improve their living conditions. The human assets which the women identified and mobilised are the skills and talents which are strengthened and unfolded by engagement in the projects. The communities also support the projects and wish them to be sustainable. Furthermore, under no circumstances are the projects to be run by special groups, but the women are fully accountable for them as the owners. The women have therefore developed confidence and motivation to explore and learn more about running those projects.

The supportive role shown by the local businesses and the community in buying the products of the projects keep the women motivated to improve their skills and knowledge. The women see themselves as successful rural women who had never thought of such huge ventures of entrepreneurship. The success of these projects can be attributed to the awareness of the failure of previous projects, where assets were not identified and mobilised. Lack of participation by local people, financial management and donor support added to the collapse of the projects.

As these women continue to access, own and control assets, their socio-economic space broadens to enable them to acquire more knowledge and information on the use of local assets to keep the projects sustainable. Despite their long exclusion from asset ownership, these women are working hard to close or narrow the gap that seemed to be natural and permanent between them and men. It is important to note that access, control and ownership of assets by women should be encouraged and supported so that the quality of life of women – as the large social group in society – improves. It has been concluded that men alone cannot bring about the desired quality of life, and these men need to be supported.

The manner in which the women are struggling to empower themselves is no doubt appreciated by the NDP, as women were viewed as a vulnerable group whose dependency needed to be reduced so that the women could achieve self-empowerment. The NDP is doing everything it can to reduce or do away with inequality by 2030.

6.4 THE SUCCESS AND CHALLENGES OF EMPOWERMENT OF WOMEN IN THE MAKHUDUTHAMAGA LOCAL MUNICIPALITY

As in any undertaking, in the process of empowering themselves the women experienced a number of successes and some challenges. Successes further empowered them, while challenges helped them to strengthen their problem-solving skills.

The successes that have a bearing on the aims and objectives of the study are mainly visible in the improved status of the women within the municipality. The women are empowered to face challenges they experience at work and in their homes on a daily basis. They are able to cope with all their family and work responsibilities, and the fact that they are able to provide for the daily needs for survival for their households is a remarkable achievement.

The empowerment of these women has increased their knowledge, not only to be used at the projects but also to be applied in other situations because they are able to plan, decide and carry out the decisions. The knowledge they have has widened their understanding of different situations and helped them to learn more about the accumulation and mobilisation of assets. Their empowerment has increased their mobility; they are exposed to new places as they go to workshops at institutions, regional and national exhibitions, and some have visited overseas countries to enhance their marketing skills. Moreover, the self-empowerment of these women has left them with a number of skills which they apply in their spare time to earn extra cash. Examples of these skills are communication, baking, decoration and designing.

For these women the major advantage of being empowered is their improved personal well-being, as indicated by their improved health, nature of their needs and awareness of themselves as people in their own right. Consequently, these women are no longer isolated or shy but mix and communicate easily with people and socialise freely.

The sustainability of the projects so far is one of their greatest motivating successes due to the cash generation associated with the projects. The successes are linked to a number of interrelated factors:

- The support and the cooperation the women are receiving from the community, the chiefs, the municipality and the donor organisations contribute greatly to self- empowerment of these women. Without this kind of support the women might have given up.
- The women themselves are good managers of time, resources, finance and of themselves. They are punctual and do the right thing at the right time. They take care of the resources and make sure that they do not experience a shortage of the resources. Some of the women have attended workshops on financial management and have learnt to be accountable for each and every cent that enters and leaves out the coffers of the project.
- The environment provides them with the resources they need coming from their social, physical, economic and political setting. This area is fortunate to have a natural environment that is not too harsh to destroy or disturb the progress of the projects and affect the health of the participants in a negative way, which would, in turn, affect production.
- The good working relations between the women led to the success of their self-empowerment. They have common ethics that bind them together and as a result the participants respect one another, work in harmony and there are no power struggles.

Despite these successes, self-empowerment faces challenges in the Makhuduthamaga Local Municipality, but observations have shown that these challenges do not discourage the women from doing their best.

Funds become insufficient after paying high electricity bills, buying new equipment or repairing the old equipment. In addition, as the project does not have its own vehicle, hiring transport to markets or to collect raw materials also causes a financial burden, and if this kind of problem persists, production becomes poor.

Although agreements have been made beforehand, another challenge is that the municipality's means of transport is often unreliable due to excuses such as lack of fuel, unavailable drivers, vehicle out of order and kilometre limit reached. Lack of support from a community can delay production and the number of participants will not grow, leaving a stressful situation for participants who are faced with more work; it is only hoped that with the passage of time things will change and the community will see the value and need for participation in projects.

Because of their determination, the women are not frustrated by these challenges but instead they forge ahead to achieve their goals and improve their living conditions.

6.5   RECOMMENDATIONS TO FACILITATE SELF-EMPOWERMENT IN THE RURAL AREAS OF SOUTH AFRICA

Against the background of evidence presented in this thesis it can be claimed that self-empowerment is the only and immediate weapon that can be adopted to alleviate poverty and do away with inequality in South Africa. Within this rural setting, the women themselves have personally chosen to embrace self-empowerment and have realised the need to adopt an appropriate lifestyle to facilitate their empowerment. This lifestyle entails self-discipline, self-motivation, self-determination, cooperation, willingness to learn and to share knowledge. Empowerment cannot develop without self-confidence; this is a priority for empowerment and lack of it can lead to a project or an initiative collapsing in its early stages. Despite knowing that the road ahead is steep, one needs to be sure what one wants to do.

Knowledge or discovery of one's talents is important in self-empowerment, as this gives direction to follow a process that will lead to empowerment. If this is not the case, one will copy what other people are doing without much understanding. When empowering oneself, one ought to associate with other people who are seen to have achieved self-empowerment in order to broaden one's mind. The geographical perspective was adopted to understand women empowerment in action in this rural community in all facets of their lives; political, economic and socio-cultural. Although a locality study, established international and national ways of thinking about gender

have been identified and been seen to have evolved over time. It is thus confidently recommended that this trend continue within households.

Beyond personal growth and empowerment, knowledge about the local resources and the needs of the community in which they live will allow wise choice of action in terms of location and type of project envisaged. This implies that entrepreneurial skills will have to be acquired (they are central to self-empowerment) and that the individual should be willing to learn. These skills can be learnt by attending workshops that are often offered free of charge by development-related institutions and will help participants to master planning, budgeting, financial management and other matters related to self-development.

Based on the research done, it is clear that the support of the municipality is necessary for self-empowerment and can give material, financial or motivational support. Where possible, authorities can also supply the individual with a list of people or institutions that can offer support to facilitate empowerment. It is recommended that the municipality undertake to extend opportunities for skills development and knowledge enhancement by organising workshops, visits to relevant institutions and even visits to other countries with a view to promoting women empowerment.

Being the lowest level of government closest to the people, it is suggested that the Local Municipality pay regular visits to the emerging self-empowering groups or contact individuals who might need guidance. Knowing the people, their activities and their needs will make it easier for the municipality to attract donations that could be used for buying seed money or securing advice. Bringing local people closer to those in authority is desirable in communities, and it is also suggested that the municipality make use of female councillors to chair the meetings that focus on women issues as part of the local government's agenda. That will arouse self-confidence in women – both those in leadership positions and those who attend.

The municipality should provide an enabling environment to facilitate self-empowerment at all costs, but one should not put the responsibility on the shoulders of the individual and the municipality only; the South African National Development

Plan also has a stake in this undertaking. Its major concern is to eradicate poverty, unemployment and inequality among all the South Africans. As shown in this thesis, women are the ones most affected by these challenges and they need a great deal of support to empower themselves. National government should therefore ensure that policy implementation allows for opportunities for self-empowerment to build the capacities of the people as they promote their own development and become involved in community life. This will build self-confidence in the women to start their own projects in order to realise their own potential. The research has shown that most of the women are engaged in the informal economy, and it is therefore suggested that this sector be upgraded to become more appropriate and attractive to promoting women's empowerment.

At national level, the Gender Commission should make sure that all South Africans are informed about the contents of the National Development Plan. This would support its attempts to reduce poverty from the current 30% of the population to zero. Poverty is a serious threat that emanates from inequality and unemployment.

In summary, it is clear that self-empowerment is a collective effort of individuals, the municipality and the country as a whole. Each has a role to play in bringing self-empowerment to fruition. Self-empowerment alone, as explained in the context of the research, would bring poverty, unemployment and inequality to a halt if well supported.

6.6   CONCLUSION

This research relates to women's empowerment as a pathway to poverty reduction and improvement of women's living conditions in the Global South. In many countries of the Global South women were badly affected by the effects of historical events such as colonialism and changing socio-political and economic systems. It is for this reason that research and other studies, including this one, put emphasis on women's empowerment in order to address the inequalities which seem to be persistent. This South African case study has characteristics similar to those found in many rural areas of the Global South, and the women themselves, the municipalities and South

Africa as a whole should take it upon themselves to work together to support women's empowerment at all costs.

Should the suggestions made in this study be well implemented, the quality of life of women in the Global South will improve, gradually closing the gap between men and women, boys and girls, children and people with disabilities as far as access to opportunities is concerned. As long as the prevailing inequality continues to exist, women's empowerment will continue to be a burning issue in the countries of the Global South. One important observation is that communities should be taught about women's empowerment so that they and their leadership are able to give full support to women who initiate projects.

The successes of the women involved in the projects described in this thesis should encourage other women to start their own projects so that they are able to reduce their dependency on others and improve the quality of their own lives and those of their families. By doing so, the quality of life of all residents in the municipality will improve. However, men need to be included in the self-help projects as some have knowledge which women do not possess and they should share this knowledge. This suggests that these men also need to be empowered to accept women's empowerment. The giant leap these women have made in empowering themselves is commendable, and the women of the Makhuduthamaga Local Municipality represent how important it is to keep women empowered and not marginalised.

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APPENDIX A: Approval letter from Ethics Committee (Unisa) College of Agriculture and Environmental Sciences.

2011-11-07
Ref. Nr.: 2011/CAES/038
To the student: Student no: 6260101

Ms MJ Mashaba
Department of Geography
College of Agriculture and Environmental Sciences

Dear Ms Mashaba

Request for Ethical approval for the following research project:
A geographic investigation into women empowerment within Makhuduthamaga local municipality, Limpopo, and South Africa 2000 – 2010

The application for ethical clearance in respect of the above mentioned research has been reviewed by the Research Ethics Review Committee of the College of Agriculture and Environmental Sciences, Unisa. The committee is pleased to inform you that ethical clearance **has been granted** for the research set out in the Ethics application (Ref. Nr.: 2011/CAES/038). However, the CAES Ethics committee would like to receive your response on whether Municipal approval is required for the execution of the study. It would be appreciated if the applicant could provide the committee with some feedback addressed in a letter to the CAES Ethics committee regarding this matter by **20 November 2011.**

Please be advised that the committee needs to be informed should any part of the research methodology as outlined in the Ethics application (Ref. Nr.: 2011/CAES/038), change in any way. Should that be the case, a new application, for the amendments, needs to be submitted to the Ethics Review Committee for review.

We trust that sampling, data gathering and processing of the relevant data will be undertaken in a manner that is respectful of the rights and integrity of all participants, as stipulated in the Unisa Research Ethics Policy.

The Ethics Committee wishes you all the best with this research undertaking.

Kind regards,
Prof E Kempten
CAES Ethics Review Committee Chair

APPENDIX B: Application letter to Makhuduthamaga Local Municipality

P.O. Box 5
Masemola
1060

Email: Mahwahwatse@gmail.com
Cell phone contact: 078 355 2044

8 July 2011

Makhuduthamaga Local Municipality
Private Bag X434
Jane Furse
1085

Sir/Madam

Re: Request for permission to conduct research within your municipal jurisdiction

I am Mrs MJ Mashaba, studying towards a doctoral degree with the University of South Africa (Unisa). My research is about women upliftment/empowerment within Makhuduthamaga Local Municipality.

I have identified the projects of: Diphagane Gardening, Ba Kgobokane, Raemet Kreaxion, Hlabologang Bakery and Maano A Basadi for study. A final copy of the thesis will be given to the municipality.

I strongly assure that whatever information I collect will be kept confidential. Therefore, no one is to be hesitant or doubtful to participate.

Your positive response will be highly appreciated.

Thank You

MJ Mashaba (MRS)

APPENDIX C: Reply from Makhuduthamaga Local Municipality

MAKHUDUTHAMAGA MUNICIPALITY

Private Bag X 434
Jane Furse
1085

www.makhuduthamaga.gov.za   Tel: (013) 265 8641   Fax (013) 265 1975

Enquiries: Makgata N.R   27 January 2012
Contact No: 082 5780 138

TO WHOM IT MAY CONCERN

This serves to confirm that Mrs. M.J Mashaba a PHD UNISA student is given permission to conduct research within the Municipality on projects run by women.
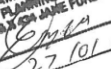
The Municipality will assist Mrs. M.J Mashaba with the information requested to complete the project.

Hope you find the above in order

Regards

....   27/01/2012
Acting Municipal Manager   ....
                                              Date

APPENDIX D: Pre-Fieldwork Data Collection Tool

1. Project Name _____

2. Location _____

3. Support Organisation _____

4. Project's Objectives

    4.1

    4.2

    4.3

5. Major Project's Activities

    5.1

    5.2

    5.3

6. Membership: _____(Men) _____(Women)

7. When did the project start? _____

8. Who assists you in running the project?

    8.1   husband

    8.2   children

    8.3   agent

9. What is your actual occupation?_____

10. Where do you normally market your products?

    10.1

    10.2

    10.3

APPENDIX E: Semi-Structured Interview Schedule

A. PERSONAL PARTICULARS/DEMOGRAPHIC PARTICULARS

   1. Gender

Male

Female

   2. Age

20 – 29 years old	
30 – 39 years old	
40 – 49 years old	
50 – 59 years old	
60 years and older	

3. Place of Birth	
4. Province of birth	
5. Home language	

   6. Marital Status

Single	
Married, living together	
Widowed	
Divorced, separated	

   7. Number of Dependents

Myself only	
1–3	
4– 6	
7+	

8. Children's education

   8.1. How many of your children are at school?

None

2-4

5+

8.2. Who is responsible for your children's education? With regard to payment of fees?

Self

Other (Specify) _____

8.2.1 Who is responsible for the supervision of your children's school work at home?

Self

Other (Specify) _____

8.2.2 Who takes care of your children while not at school

Self

Other(Specify)_____

9. Highest standard/grade you passed at school.

None

Grade 2 – 7

Grade 8 – 10

Grade 11 – 12

Other(Specify)_____

10. Level of training received in the job.

None

Diploma or certificate

University Degree

11. Do you have other occupation besides engagement in the project?

12. For how long have you worked on this project?

1 year or less

3 – 5 years

6 years and longer

13 How many times per week do you work here?

Every day except Sunday

Once a week

3 times a week

Other(Specify)_____

B: ATTITUDE TOWARDS THE JOB

1. How do you feel about working here?

Very Happy

Happy

Unhappy

Most Unhappy

Reasons for your choice of answer

_____

_____

2. How did you secure the job?

Announced at community meeting ☐
Heard about it from a neighbour ☐
Other   (Specify)
_____

3. Are you happy with the remuneration? | Yes | No |

 Reason(s):

_____

_____

4. Do you have any other source of income? | Yes | No |

If   'Yes'   specify:
_____

_____

5. Arrange in order of importance how your household income is distributed. Use the numbers 1- 6

   1. Food _____

   2. Housing improvement_____

   3. Health_____

   4. Clothing_____

   5. Education_____

6. Transport _____

7. How much longer do you think you will work on the project?
_____

C. GENERAL INFORMATION

Questions 11 - 19 will be answered by the non–agricultural participants of Raemet Kreaxion, Hlabologang Bakery, Bakgobokane Art and Craft Co-Op and Maano a Basadi Dairy Project while participants of Diphagane Vegetable Garden Project will answer all questions.

1.   Which crop flourishes well?
2.   Which crop does not do well?
3.   What can be the cause?
4.   What can be the solution?

5. List the crops in order of production output.

6.   Do you use the HYV–Seeds?

Yes	No

7.   Do you have pests and disease problems?

Yes	No

8.   How do you control them?

9.   Is there any water shortage for irrigation?

Yes	No

10.   Is crop rotation practised?

Yes	No

11.   Is intercropping practised?

Yes	No

12.   How do you maintain soil fertility?

Yes	No

13.   Do you have a problem of soil erosion?

Yes	No

14.   Are you happy with the production?

Yes	No

15.   Are markets for your products available?

Yes	No

16.   Mention the main problems associated with marketing of your products:

17.   Of the following: who supports the project? Tick alongside the names.

- Resource centre
- The Chief
- The municipality
- Agencies

18.   What are the major constraints/problems facing the project?

19.   What opportunities are there for the project to remain sustainable?

20.   List the resources which you obtain from the locality.

PROGRAMME FOR ENGAGING PARTICIPANTS IN THE RESEARCH

Programme

The programme of data collection will take place as follows:

On day one, introductions will be done. Purpose of visit will be explained.

On day two business of the day, which is interviewing will start at 10 H00. It will take about 2–3 hours per participant as the questions are open-ended..

A break for 20 minutes will be given in each activity.

I will listen carefully to their explanations and note down relevant points.

I will thank the participants for their active participation in the process. On day three, identification of problems and opportunities by both the researcher and the participants will be done.

I will then thank the participant for being co-operative.

But this does not mean that I have stopped visiting the projects. Constant visits will still be done to monitor progress and collection of more information.

APPENDIX F: Questionnaire schedule to Makhuduthamaga Local Municipality

1. What is the total area covered by the municipality?

2. What was the total population in 2010?

3. How many ward councillors are there?

4. How many of them are women?

s. Does the IDP mention anything about gender, women or female-headed households?

    Yes/No. If yes, explain.

6. What allocations does the municipality make for programmes that are specifically targeted at gender/women?

7. How many projects are targeted at women?

8. How many of the projects are still active and how many have collapsed?

9. What could be the reasons for their collapse?

10. How does the municipality assist in the running of the projects?

11. Is there any structure/committee that is specifically designed to deal with gender issues?

    Yes/No. If yes. Name it.

12. How is information about women issues/empowerment disseminated to the people, especially women?

13. What does the municipality do to promote employment equity within the municipality?

14. Was the municipality, once headed by a female mayor? If Yes, during which period?

15. Who is the speaker of the municipality? Male or Female?

16. Which basic needs provision does the municipality seem to be successful?