THE EMPOWERMENT OF WOMEN
IN WATER SUPPLY AND SANITATION PROJECTS
IN THE RURAL EASTERN CAPE PROVINCE

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SUMMARY

THE EMPOWERMENT OF WOMEN
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The issues concerning women and their participation (or rather lack thereof) in the development process have been increasingly examined over the last few decades. The interpretation of women’s roles and gender relations, especially in water supply and sanitation projects, have been marked by shifting positions and changing political priorities over the last few decades.

This study contributes to the knowledge regarding issues surrounding the roles and equality of women and men in water supply and sanitation projects in the Eastern Cape Province. It provides a background to the origins and development of gender and gender mainstreaming in the developing world in relation to the changing roles and responsibilities of women in water supply and sanitation projects.
The roles and responsibilities of women, men and children are closely interlinked with their cultural perceptions, the way they grow up and the way they are brought up within their cultural environment and relationships with people close to them.

The key to understanding how development work affects women, men, girls and boys, is in grasping the concept of gender. The term “gender” refers to those characteristics of women and men that are socially determined. This dissertation discusses gender-awareness approaches in development projects such as water supply and sanitation and the effect these projects have had to date on the empowerment, position and roles of women.

The research in the Eastern Cape Province for this study is one of only a few case studies which could be identified in South Africa. This research and the case studies illustrate that development in South Africa needs to be made gender aware and gender sensitive, and that the mainstreaming of gender in South Africa is a long way behind the rest of the developing world.
SAMEVATTING

DIE BEMAGTIGING VAN DIE VROU
IN WATervoORSIENINGS- EN SANITASIE PROJEKTE
IN DIE PLATTELANDSE OOS-KAAP PROVINSIE

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Kwessies rondom die vrou en haar deelname (of gebrek aan deelname) in die ontwikkelingsproses, veral in watervoorsienings- en sanitasieprojekte, is toenemend ondersoek oor die laaste paar dekades. Die interpretasie van die rol van die vrou en die verhoudings tussen geslagte is gekenmerk deur veranderende politieke prioriteite oor hierdie laaste paar dekades.

Hierdie studie dra by tot die kennis van kwessies rondom die rol en gelykheid van vrouens en mans in watervoorsienings- en sanitasieprojekte in die Oos-Kaap Provinsie. Die studie handel oor die ontstaan en ontwikkeling van die begrip en beginsels gekoppel aan die term "gender". Die studie fokus ook op die veranderende rol en verantwoordelikheid van die vrou in watervoorsienings- en sanitasieprojekte in die ontwikkelende lande in verhouding met die vrou se kulturele omgewing.
Die rol en verantwoordelikheid van vrouens en van kinders is nou verbind met hulle kulturele persepsies en waardes, en die wyse waarop hulle groot geword het en groot gemaak is binne die verband van hulle kulturele verhoudings.

Die sleutel tot die begrip van hoe ontwikkelingswerk vrouens, mans, dogters en seuns raak is die konsep van gender. Die term “gender” verwys na daardie karaktertrekke van vrouens en mans wat sosiaal vasgelê is. Hierdie verhandeling bespreek die sogenaamde gender-bewuste invalshoek tot watervoorsienings- en sanitasieprojekte en die effek wat hierdie tipe van projekte tot op datum op die bemagtiging, posisie en rolle van vrouens gehad het.

Die navorsing vir hierdie studie wat in die Oos Kaap Provinsie afgehandel is, vorm deel van slegs ’n paar gevallestudies wat in Suid-Afrika in hierdie verband geïdentifiseer kon word. Hierdie navorsing en ander gevallestudies illustreer dat dit nodig is vir ontwikkeling in Suid-Afrika om “gender”-bewus en “gender”-sensitief te word. Dit wys ook dat die begrip oor die belangrikheid van “gender” in watervoorsienings- en sanitasieprojekte in Suid-Afrika nog baie moet ontwikkel om te kan vergelyk met ander ontwikkelende lande.
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CHAPTER 1
INTRODUCTION, DEFINITION OF TERMS AND RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

1. INTRODUCTION

The issues concerning women and their participation (or lack thereof) in the development process have been increasingly examined over the last few decades. However, the ways of addressing these issues have varied as the understanding of women’s position in development - and of gender roles themselves - has grown. Although the principles of the equality of men and women are recognised in both the United Nations Charter of 1945 and the United Nations Declaration of Human Rights of 1948, the majority of development planners and workers do not fully address women’s position in the development process (INSTRAW 1985: 6).

Although women were still not necessarily consulted, their key position in the development process became more widely recognised in the 1970s, especially regarding population growth and food issues. Women were viewed as resources to be integrated into the development process, rendering projects more efficient and more successful: “These are the women upon whom the success of our population policies, our food programmes and our total development efforts ultimately rely” (Sipila, The Times, 23/04/75).

The United Nations has done a great deal to advance the cause of women and improve their status. The “International Women’s Year” in 1975 was followed by the United Nations Decade for Women. An international conference regarding the position of women in the order of things was held in 1985 in Nairobi and another one in September 1995 in Beijing. The theme for the 1995 World Water Day was
"Women and Water" in recognition of the special relationship between water and women (Anon 1995:2).

Due to cultural differences, the roles that women play in general are different in different communities. These roles are determined by cultural values, legislation, religious norms, economic status or class, ethnicity and types of productive activity in their country, community or village. Women are usually responsible for domestic work, the care of children, family health, cooking and providing food and other household services (Syme 1992:4).

In the total package of daily activities, water collection is one of the most time-consuming domestic chores in the rural communities of the developing world. The heavy work, time and effort involved in water collection affect socio-economic and health conditions in many ways (INSTRAW 1985: 6). If the water is also of a low quality due to a polluted source, or contamination on the way home from the water source, the negative impact on people is even more devastating.

In a Western context, a typical African woman is probably the most unprivileged human being, illiterate and with limited access to resources in general. She not only faces discrimination and segregation, both in the organised labour market and in informal sector employment, but even has different legal rights regarding inheritance, land and credit. Adult African women get less education, lower pay - although they work longer hours - and have less access to professional training than men (Population Crisis Committee 1988:8).

For many years development projects have been technical projects, focusing on construction work for water supply and sanitation facilities. Villagers and communities were seen as just users and beneficiaries. Since the 1970s,
possibilities for participating in the planning, management and maintenance of development projects were broadened for these villagers. But although the managers and planners of water supply and sanitation projects said they worked with “villagers”, “leaders” and “committees”, they almost always dealt only with the male population living in such villages. Women were usually targeted only for health education (IRC 1994: vi).

Since 1980, a more gender-sensitive approach has shown that women have several roles to play in matters of development, by tradition and by necessity. Women have very specific ideas about what they want and what they need. Additionally, their participation in projects enhances the efficiency and effectiveness of the installation and operation of water supply and sanitation facilities (Syme 1992:6).

2. STUDY OBJECTIVES

The gender research, on which this dissertation is based, was launched to provide the government, international funding agencies, developers, implementers and policy makers with information and guidelines regarding the involvement and participation of women in water supply and sanitation projects. The process of a project, and the policies implemented, have a great impact on how men and women act in normal life. Instead of increasing the divide between men and women, policies regarding gender roles and responsibilities in water supply and sanitation should seek greater cooperation between sexes in achieving mutual goals of providing a basic service, alleviating poverty and securing the environment. Therefore, the research reported on below attempted to ensure the following objectives:
to influence the formulation of more realistic, effective and equitable policies regarding gender in water supply and sanitation projects so as to try and make a difference in living standards of rural women;

- to find solutions to the problem of commitment from developers to work towards the sustainability of development projects; and

- increased commitment from communities to work towards the sustainability of their development projects.

3. DEFINITION OF TERMS

In order to understand the objectives of the research, it is necessary to discuss the terminology used in this dissertation. Most of the terms originate from the field of development studies and are not commonly used in the field of anthropology. One has, therefore, also to understand these terms in an anthropological context.

3.1 COMMUNITY

The word “community” has been in the English language since the 14th century, and comes from Latin. According to Day (1996: 186-210) the word “community” has, however, became established in English with a range of different meanings:

- the commons or common people, as distinguished from those of rank;

- a state of organised society;

- the people of a district;

- the quality of holding something in common, as in community of interests, community of goods; and

- people with a sense of common identity and characteristics.
The first three explanations mentioned above indicate actual social groups, while the last two explanations indicate a particular quality of relationship (Day 1996:186-210).

The complexity of the term "community" relates to the difficult interaction between the tendencies originally distinguished in the historical development: on the one hand - the sense of direct common concern; on the other hand - the materialisation of various forms of common organisation.

The contemporary and general uses for the word “community” are summarised by Day (1996: 3-21) as follows:

- local groupings based on proximity and sometimes face-to-face relationships (as in local community, community work);
- community of interests (as in research community, business community) and characteristics (as in ethnic community); and
- quality of relationships - sharing of common goals, values, identities; participatory decision-making and symbolic production; and connected with these are emotional and moral investments.

Butcher (1993 : 3-21) developed three insights into community that relate to public policy issues and can be used in an information society context.

The first, descriptive community draws on the word’s etymological origins of having “something in common” and tends to be used by social scientists. Butcher (1993: 3-21) explains that this “something in common” can refer to a neighbourhood, village, town, etc. but can also refer to some other social determinant such as ethnicity, religion, sexual orientation, etc. Thus two forms of community -
geographical communities and communities of interest - are identified. Butcher (1993: 3-21) mentions that Rheingold (1994) identified a third form called virtual communities, which display many of the characteristics of geographic or interest communities but are based in Cyberspace (i.e. the Internet). This, however, falls outside the terms of reference of this study.

Communities based on location or interests are not necessarily mutually exclusive. Geographic communities often comprise different cultures and it is not uncommon for groups and individuals to share knowledge and draw from each other’s experiences, creating new forms of common interests as a consequence of processes of culture change. The opposite is also true and conflict can and does arise (Sclove 1995: 23).

Frankenberg (1969 : 32) addressed this diversity of cultures by defining community as a coherent area of social existence identified by a sense of locality and community sentiment. Butterworth & Weir (1970: 25) suggest that the development of a community can be determined by time, common residence, shared activities and the degree of involvement in them, the characteristics of members (especially where they come from), and the kinds of leadership present.

However, not all geographically based populations share such characteristics. This leads to the importance of Butcher’s second insight into the term community - community as value. In this context the existence of community is based on certain shared values, which are identified as the principles of solidarity, participation and coherence. Solidarity sustains community members at an emotional level, inspiring affection and loyalty towards the group through mutuality and cooperation in relationships. Participation benefits individuals through the recognition of their contribution to collective life and the aspirations of the group. Coherence connects
the individual to the community and leads to an appreciation and comprehension of self and situation that gives meaning to and awareness of themselves and their social world (Butcher 1993: 3-21).

Recognising the contested nature of values that are open to interpretation, Butcher (1993: 3-21) asserts that these principles provide the value base of community initiatives. Although this analysis of community values is in the communitarian tradition it should not be assumed that the communal is always subsumptive of the individual. Outlining the Communitarian agenda, Etzioni (1993:12) establishes a need for balance between community and self, and research into the "sense of community" in suburban America presents some interesting insights into the thoughts of 'real people' (Wilson & Baldassare 1996: 27-43) in this respect.

Community values are the social product of individual people living in, and identifying with, a specific "something", often but not always in a geographical space. The collective community, comprises individual community members that have developed an inherent interest in each other. In addition to sharing the same geographical space and social experiences community members respect and celebrate a diversity of human interests. This diversity distinguishes the individual from the collective but at the same time contributes to that collective - this is the paradox of community.

Frankenberg (1969: 9-15) reflects that community is a sense of identity, of belonging to the local community that encourages people to be actively involved in everyday community life. Whilst society has undergone significant changes since the time of Frankenberg's studies, modern community commentators raise similar issues. For example, Scott Peck (1987: 14-26) identifies eight characteristics of community, whilst Schuler (1996: 17-20) detects a web of six core community
values all of which involve active involvement.

This recognition of the importance of active involvement in community life leads to Butcher's (1993) third insight into community - the active community. This refers to collective action by community members embracing one or more of the three communal values identified previously. Such activities are purposively undertaken through the vehicle of groups, networks and organisations, where the ability to communicate honestly is paramount (Scott Peck 1987: 24). The active community is based on the participation of community members in shaping community life. In addition it requires a shared value-base between community and policy makers. This shared value-base is crucial to the formulation of policies that develop, maintain and build on the active community. According to Glen (1993: 22-40), a method for promoting such policies in community practice, consists of three elements:

- community development - promoting community self-help;
- community action - campaigning for community interests and community policies; and
- community services approach - developing community-oriented organisations and services.

On the other hand, George Foster (1973: 8-10) already indicated in 1973 that humans and their activities within social groups, can be analysed in three basic systems. The first is a system of social relations in which persons and groups are linked together by rights and duties, expectations and obligations, called the society or community. In Anthropology, this concept of community is also understood as the concept, a people. The second system is a system of group conduct that predisposes humans to think and behave in normative ways according to their perception of circumstances. This system is called the culture or cultural system.
The third system is a system of individual cognition and behaviour that is rooted in the combination of biology and life experience, and determines how the individual will react in a given situation. This third system is called the psychological system and underlies the other two systems (see Foster 1973: 8-10, Coertze 1980: 94-96).

The terms community and culture are often used interchangeably as development terms. Development experts direct their efforts towards groups of people or communities, often easily recognisable as a village or a small town.

Wasserman & Kriel (1997: 14-18) discussed the concept of “community” and concluded that a huge variety of definitions exists for the term “community”. Wasserman & Kriel showed that Hillery (1955: 118-119) compared 94 definitions of the term “community” and that Hillery concluded that “all the definitions deal with people; beyond this common basis, there is no agreement”. Wasserman & Kriel (1997: 14) defines community as a specific group of people in a specific geographical area at a specific time, bound by one or more bonds of “togetherness”. This definition by Wasserman & Kriel supports the definition of community by Swil (1982: 10) who says that: “The term ‘community’, which by sheer conditioning seems to loom large and unharnessable, should be dissected into its prime component - the people - in a particular place at a particular time with a particular need”. Helm (1977: 115) says that “community is more than territory, it implies what Durkheim has called “conscience”.

For the purposes of the research on which this dissertation is based, a community is seen as a particular, recognisable, finite body of people living in close geographical vicinity to each other (i.e. a village), with a commonly recognised chief (inkosi) or headman (isibonda) and sharing a similar way of life (culture).
3.2 CULTURE

In older dictionaries, for example a 1958 Webster’s, the definition of culture is stated as:

- the cultivation of soil; and
- the raising, improvement, or development of some plant, animal or product.

This use of the word has its roots in the ancient Latin word *cultura*, "cultivation" or "tending," and its entrance into the English language can be traced to 1430 (Oxford English Dictionary). By the time the Webster’s 1958 definition was written, another definition had begun to take precedence over the old Latin denotation; culture was becoming to mean "the training, development, and refinement of mind, tastes, and manners" (Oxford English Dictionary). The Oxford English Dictionary traces this definition, which today is associated with the phrase "high culture," back as far as 1805. By the middle of the 20th century, this interpretation was fast becoming the word’s primary definition.

The American Heritage English Dictionary (AHED) provides a primary definition of culture which is substantially different from both given above. Culture is "the totality of socially transmitted behavior patterns, arts, beliefs, institutions, and all other products of human work and thought" (AHED). The difference between the definitions can be attributed to the fact that, in the past 40 years, the use of the word "culture" has been heavily influenced by the academic fields of sociology and cultural anthropology. These fields have gradually brought what was once a minor definition of culture (the last of eight definitions given in the old 1958 Webster’s quoted above) into the mainstream. Over time, the new use for the word culture has eclipsed its older meanings, those associated with cultivation of the land and the production of crops.
Chapter 1: Introduction, definition of terms and research methodology

Culture is a uniquely human characteristic, the ability of humans to make adjustments to their environment to make sense to themselves. Culture is the motivation behind the way people do the things they do. Culture is also a community’s material and intellectual activities and the outputs. It relates to the views, ideas, conscious forms, ways of serving and the material and intellectual products of their activities (Coertze 1977: 56-72).

Every individual is born from members of a specific people. Then follows the process of “moulding” the newcomer by subjecting him/her to discipline, order and regularity. This is known as the process of enculturation. It is a gradual conditioning process to which every newcomer is subjected, to enable him/her to fulfil his/her role alongside others within his/her specific culture (Coertze 1977: 56-72).

There is much disagreement about the word and concept "culture" and any definition, including the above, is part of an ongoing conversation (and negotiation) about what should be understood as "culture". No perfect or definite definition of culture exists as so many different academic disciplines define it in their own conceptions and manner. The modern definition of culture, as socially patterned human thought and behaviour, was originally proposed by the nineteenth-century British anthropologist, Edward Tylor, while the first inventory of cultural categories was undertaken in 1872 by a committee of the British Association for the Advancement of Science, which was assisted by Tylor. The committee prepared an anthropological field manual that listed seventy-six culture topics, in no particular order, including such diverse items as cannibalism and language. The most exhaustive such list is the "Outline of Cultural Materials," first published in 1938 and which is still used as a guide for cataloguing great masses of worldwide cultural data for cross-cultural surveys (Bodley 1994: 2).
Chapter 1: Introduction, definition of terms and research methodology

There has been considerable theoretical debate by anthropologists, since Tylor, over the most useful attributes that a technical concept of culture should stress. For example, in 1952 Alfred Kroeber and Clyde Kluckhohn, American anthropologists, published a list of 160 different definitions of culture. Their list indicates the diversity of the anthropological concept of culture (Bodley 1994: 3).

From this it is clear that culture involves at least three components: what people think, what they do, and the material products they produce. Thus mental processes, beliefs, knowledge, and values are parts of culture. Some anthropologists would define culture entirely as mental rules guiding behaviour, although often wide divergence exists between the acknowledged rules for correct behaviour and what people actually do. Some researchers pay most attention to human behaviour and its material products.

For the purposes of this dissertation it is enough to state that culture has several properties: it is shared, learned, symbolic, transmitted cross-generationally, adaptive, and integrated (Bodley 1994: 4). As a system, culture consists of a number of inter-dependent aspects that function together to form a whole (Coertze 1980: 56-72). A culture system also exists through time, is dynamic and is made up of structurally different but interrelated sub-units (Knudson 1978:92). According to Struever (1971:10) “culture and its environment represent a number of articulated systems in which change occurs through a series of minor, linked variations in one or more of these systems”.

Seen against this background, the aim of this dissertation is to explain the role of Xhosa women in water supply and sanitation projects in the Eastern Cape in context with on the one hand, development, and on the other hand, their culture.
3.3 VALUES

Values, and the role it fulfils in culture, have been addressed in length by other authors (see Bergner 1989, Campbell 1981, Coertze 1977, Els 1996, Foster 1973, Gardenswartz & Rowe 1987, Macnamara 1980, Mbiti 1969, Wasserman & Kriel 1997, Williams 1994). It is not the purpose of this study to discuss this concept in a theoretical manner but rather to understand what the function of values are in every day life according to what other authors say on the matter. For the purposes of this dissertation one, therefore, needs to recognise the following aspects of values.

Values can be defined as preferences for certain thoughts or actions or events. Values form the core of culture. It tells us what to care about, what to strive for, and how to behave. From values arise other elements such as etiquette, life-style, language, symbols, attitudes and behaviour (Gardenswartz & Rowe 1987:13). An innate dignity in personal bearing and a pride in their way of life, characterise the bearers of every culture, and is reflected in a belief about the behaviour appropriate to the recognised roles and responsibilities in that particular culture (also those that constitute gender roles). The ideas as to what constitutes modesty are instilled in the members of all cultural groups through processes of enculturation and differ greatly from one cultural group to the other. Proper behaviour among members of one culture may be shockingly improper in another. For example, in some cultures schooling is associated with childhood, and completely inappropriate to the adult state. Thus, adult training or adult schooling is viewed with disdain.

The roles and responsibilities of women, men and children are closely interlinked with their cultures and the way they grow up, the way they are brought up within their cultural environment and cultural relationships. However, these cultures never stay stagnant, it develops and grows, it is dynamic and changes constantly (Ember & Ember 1988: 18-26).
According to Kriel (1992: 14) and Hoff (1990: 6) the similarity and pattern in the values of the members of the same cultural group are linked to the world view of the members of the cultural group. The concept “world view” consists of the understanding, attitudes, ideas and assumptions of the members of the same cultural group regarding life (see Forde 1954: viii, Mbiti 1969: 2, Macnamara 1980: 21, Kearny 1984: 41, Hoff 1990: 6 and Kriel 1992: 14). Kriel (1992: 14) explains that “world view” is a system of meaningful views and understanding that come from learnt and inherited knowledge, and participative and emotional involvement in the experience and activities of the cultural group in which the individual was born and raised.

For the purposes of this dissertation it is, therefore, important to note that the roles and responsibilities of women and men in each culture is a mutually agreed upon concept underwritten and dictated by the individuals that make up the culture group. Any intervention or action or development from outside of that specific cultural group, will be judged according to the prevailing values and responsibilities underwritten by such a cultural group (Knudson 1978: 85-92).

Therefore, it is also important for this dissertation to understand that values of the people among whom the research was done, and who identified themselves as Xhosa, will have an influence on development efforts that are introduced from outside the villages where the research was done.

3.4 **EMPOWERMENT**

As is the case with the concept “culture” (see 3.2), the term “empowerment” is used differently in various contexts by various different disciplines in the development field, concealing different meanings based upon different perspectives. Empowerment can mean the taking on of power at both the individual and social levels. “Empowerment conveys both a psychological sense of personal control or influence, and a concern with actual social influence, political power and legal
rights” (Rappaport 1987:121). On the other hand, McArdle (1989) quoted in Craig & Mayo (1995:50) defines empowerment as “the process whereby decisions are made by the people who have to bear the consequences of those decisions”; implying that empowerment is not important as the achievement of goals, but that the process of making the decision regarding the actions necessary to achieve those goals, is.

In the context of development, empowerment is linked to self-help, participation, networking and equity. People who achieved collective goals through self-help efforts, pooling their knowledge, skills and other resources, are empowered as they have achieved their goals without the intervention or help of external agents (Craig & Mayo 1995: 1-11).

Slocum et al. (1995: 4) defines empowerment as “a process through which individuals, as well as local groups and communities, identify and shape their lives and the kind of society in which they live”. The concept of empowerment is located within community development, connected to concepts of self-help, participation, networking and equity. People must be involved in those decisions that affect their lives, thus gaining confidence, self esteem and knowledge, and developing new skills (Craig & Mayo 1995: 50). This infers that capacity building and skills building become part of empowerment. Without the application of capacity, however, empowerment does not exist.

Analysing the definitions of empowerment by different people from different frames of references, it becomes clear that the definitions have a central theme around self-help, control over decision-making, resources and benefits. “Any activity that leads to increased access and control over resources and to the acquisition of new skills and confidence, so that people are enabled to initiate action on their own behalf and acquire leadership, is an empowering activity” (Narayan 1994: 10).
In the context of water supply and sanitation, and for the purpose of this dissertation, “empowerment” is understood to be the process or state of being enabled to make informed decisions, to have control over and to have access to natural and material resources and benefits of any development initiative or action in a specific community by the specific community’s members. The manner in which community is understood has been explained above (see 3.1).

3.5 COMMUNITY PARTICIPATION IN DEVELOPMENT

In the literature, arguments regarding the need for community participation in development projects abound (see Cohen & Upphoff 1977, Korten 1980, Lisk 1985, Paul 1987, Fernandez 1989, Ghai 1989, Sharp 1992 and Thomas-Slayter 1993). All these authors include, in some way, the concepts of contributing, influencing, sharing power and control over resources, benefits, knowledge and skills by being involved in decision making (being empowered) concerning any development project.

The terms “participation” and “sustainable development” (see below) are not far apart in the general understanding of the process of development by the average developer (Slocum et al. 1995: 3). Community participation is widely understood as the active involvement of people in making decisions about the implementation of processes, programmes and projects that affect them. However, many community projects are giving the people a choice of service, tailor-made to the needs of that community. The way in which the process is executed, however, remains firmly in the hands of professionals, external agents or the developer. The people of the community are involved in the process (such as digging trenches, laying pipes, building toilets), but the decision-making and the control of resources are still handled by outsiders. Thus the concept of self-help, local decision-making and control over services and resources - the essence of empowerment - within this context of so-called participation lies not with the community but with the developer.
or with the funder/donor. Involvement must, however, be the first step towards full participation and empowerment of the community (see Duncker 1997:12).

Community participation in development should be put in context, as it can bring about positive and negative change. The relations between power that is embedded in the broader social context and the participatory process itself, should be carefully balanced. Participation should therefore imply "constant readjustment and on-going information exchange, discussion and conflict management under complex, changing and highly uncertain conditions" (Rochelau 1994: 21).

Community participation as a process of empowerment can help to strengthen the confidence of all the members of a group, to impact positively on the processes in which they are involved. Participation can be for purposes of transforming a present system or maintaining the status quo, depending on the needs of those who participate in accordance with their own perceptions. It involves the raising of awareness and a shared understanding of problems and needs, as well as a vision for the future that leads to commitment and ownership of projects by the community members themselves (Slocum et al. 1995: 4).

For this dissertation it is important to note that the water supply and sanitation projects in the study areas were implemented by outsiders with the aim to involve the community members, and therefore, trying to empower the community members. It was thus not processes identified by the communities themselves.

Participation in terms of this situation then means the community participates with "us", and that "we" participate with the community.
3.6 SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

The term "sustainability" was first used by foresters in the 18th and early 19th centuries, and in its original context had to be understood as an economic concept (Barton et al. 1995: 6) and although it was first introduced into environmental discussions, it has since been adopted by several disciplines. In recent times, the developer's biggest problem is being faced with tension between different facets of environmental concern: nature conservation; energy efficiency; purity of air, earth and water; archaeology; landscape; countryside preservation - each with its own set of experts and specialist agencies (see the stipulations of the National Environmental Management Act 107 of 1998). The challenge is to make sense of these disparate elements in terms of understanding sustainability.

Overall, sustainability means living on the earth's income rather than eroding its capital. It means keeping the consumption of renewable natural resources within the limits of their replenishment. It also means handing down to successive generations not only man-made wealth (i.e. buildings, roads, infra-structure) but also natural wealth, such as clean and adequate water supplies, good arable land, a wealth of wildlife and ample forests. It further suggests a constantly maintained level of well being of people through time (Barton et al. 1995: 8).

"Sustainable development" is an attempt to balance two moral demands. The first demand is for "development", which implies economic development and economic growth. The demand for development arises from people in developing countries whose level of poverty gives them a low standard of living and calls for steps to urgently improve that standard of living. The second demand is for "sustainability", for ensuring that what is started, maintains its momentum and growth by itself in such a way that one does not mortgage the future for the sake of the gains of today, and do not waste what is presently available (Barton et al. 1995: 8).
Although these two moral demands (development and sustainability) can be in conflict, they have a parallel basis. Economic well-being is a central human need. Economic activity usually occurs in ways that are robust in the face of environmental limits. The key to sustainable development is, therefore, a choice. Good design for sustainability is not to force a particular brand of behaviour onto people, but to facilitate behaviour that is environmentally benign - to open up options which may be squeezed out by current dominant market trends (such as the focus on delivery only) or policy conventions (Barton et al. 1995: 8).

The starting point for sustainable development is the satisfaction of the basic human needs of shelter, warmth, health, opportunities for work, access to facilities and a pleasant general environment (Siocum et al. 1995: 4). Sustainable development is a long-term and complex process of engagement, involving negotiation, bargaining, dialogue and conflict resolution. Intensive and sustained interaction is required to facilitate these processes (Narayan 1994: 30).

For the purpose of this dissertation, one would, therefore, understand sustainability in development projects as *the ongoing and continuous successful functioning of any development effort or project in an area and in a community.*

3.7 QUALITY OF LIFE

According to Wood-Dauphinee (1999: 52, 355-363) the term, “quality of life” was first mentioned by Pigou, in 1920, in a book on economics and welfare in the United States of America. He discussed governmental support for the lower class and its impact on their lives as well as on the national finances. It failed, however, to strike a responsive chord and disappeared until after the Second World War. After the Second World War two events occurred. First, the World Health Organization (WHO) broadened the definition of health to include physical, emotional, and social well-being. This led to considerable discussion as to whether or not these could be
measured. Second, the social inequalities across Western societies became widely acknowledged, giving rise to social movements and policy initiatives of the 1960s. “Schuessler and Fisher noted that the term ‘quality of life’ was actually used in the ‘Report of the President’s Commission on National Goals in the United States’ in the mid-1960s, and about the same time Elkington wrote a thoughtful editorial in a medical journal article titled ‘Medicine and Quality of Life’. He addressed issues about the responsibilities of medicine in this domain and used patients undergoing renal transplant as an example” (Wood-Dauphinee 1999: 355-363).

The terms "quality of life" and more specifically "health-related quality of life" refer to the physical, psychological, and social domains of health, seen as distinct areas that are influenced by a person’s experiences, beliefs, expectations, and perceptions (Testa & Simonson 1996: 334, 835-840). Quality of life is also an individual’s satisfaction or happiness with life in domains s/he considers important. Known as "life satisfaction" or "subjective well-being", it is sometimes referred to as "overall quality of life" or "global quality of life" to distinguish it from "health-related quality of life". It is the broadest of all concepts, being influenced by all of the dimensions of life that contribute to its richness and reward, pleasure and pain. These dimensions include, but are not limited to, health. A person’s assessment of satisfaction with life involves two subjective considerations: how important a given domain is for that person, and how satisfied he/she is with that domain. A person can be unsatisfied with a domain that he/she considers to be of relatively little importance, and thus maintain a satisfactory overall quality of life. Dissatisfaction with a domain of great importance to a person, however, would clearly contribute to lower the overall life quality.

Numerous categories of life domains have been proposed by social, psychological, gerontological, and health sciences researchers based on studies of general populations of both well and ill people. A typical categorisation is that of Flanagan (1978: 142), which categorises 15 dimensions of life quality into five domains, as
shown in Table 1.

Table 1: Flanagan’s Domains of Quality of Life

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Domains</th>
<th>Dimensions</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Physical and material well-being</td>
<td>1. Material well-being and financial security</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2. Health and personal safety</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Relations with other people</td>
<td>1. Relations with spouse</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2. Having and rearing children</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>3. Relations with parents, siblings, or other relatives</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>4. Relations with friends</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social, community, civic activities</td>
<td>1. Helping and encouraging others</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2. Participating in local and governmental affairs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Personal development and fulfilment</td>
<td>1. Intellectual development</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2. Understanding and planning</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>3. Occupational role career</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>4. Creativity and personal expression</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Recreation</td>
<td>1. Socializing with others</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2. Passive and observational recreational activities</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>3. Participating in active recreation</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Adapted from Flanagan (1978: 142).

Note that health (#2) is one of many dimensions contributing to overall quality of life in Flanagan’s taxonomy. The World Health Organization defines health as “not merely the absence of disease or infirmity”, but as a concept that incorporates the notion of well-being or wellness in all areas of life (physical, mental, emotional, social, spiritual). Health, according to this definition, is a broad concept that subsumes the related concepts of disease, illness, and wellness. When considered as a dimension or domain of quality of life, however, health is best thought of in the narrower sense of factors that are generally considered to fall under the purview of health care providers, or that are likely to be the target of a health care intervention” (Flanagan 1978: 33, 138-147).
While there is general agreement on the potential value of quality of life measures as key evaluation variables, there is an absence of clear agreement on a definition of quality of life: definitions of quality of life in the health context are mostly vague or absent. As mentioned by Bergner (1989:18), Deyo and Patrick noted conceptions relevant to health and quality of life are diverse, scattered through many disciplines, and use many different labels (e.g. health status, functional status, disability scale, quality of life). There seems to be acceptance that health-related quality of life is a "multi-dimensional concept that encompasses the physical, emotional, and social components associated with an illness or treatment" (Revicki, 1989: 16). There is no agreement on precisely which dimensions to include. For example, Torrance & O'Brien (1995: 593) states that physiological and emotional functioning contribute directly to quality of life, and "taken together, these two constitute health-related quality of life" (Torrance & O'Brien 1995: 593), with social functioning (e.g. social role and social contacts) outside the scope of health-related quality of life. On the other hand Anderson et al. (1989: 55) use the term health-related quality of life to refer to the impact of health conditions on function, but include social role, although suggesting that health-related quality of life may be independent of quality of life relevant to work setting, housing, or similar factors.

To develop a clear conceptual base it is useful to attempt to clarify a notion of "quality of life". The term "quality of life" can have several meanings. It may be used to refer to outward material circumstances, such that good quality of life is represented by good physical health, material security, supportive family and friends, etc. Alternatively, it can refer to subjective well-being, by this being meant an individual's sense of happiness or satisfaction, typically reflecting a global assessment of all aspects of their life. McCauley et al. (1991:36) make a similar distinction between outward circumstances and personal assessment in their proposal of "objective well-being" versus "subjective well-being".
Both emotional and cognitive factors may be referred to as part of subjective well-being, while objective conditions such as health, wealth, and comfort are seen to be potential influences but not inherently or necessarily part of the notion. As noted by Diener (1984: 18), the literature on subjective well-being broadly concerns notions such as happiness, morale, positive affect, etc., and covers both positive judgement and affective reactions; it has been concerned either with what leads people to evaluate their lives in positive terms (a global judgement regarding life satisfaction), or happiness in terms of a preponderance of positive affect over negative affects.

The work of Campbell is often referred to when interpreting quality of life as subjective well-being. For example, Donovan et al. (1989: 89) cited Campbell (1976) in suggesting that an accepted general definition of quality of life is "a person's subjective sense of well-being, derived from current experience of life as a whole". Within this framework, quality of life is seen to be influenced by quite idiosyncratic factors, with a major determinant of an individual's quality of life being the perceived discrepancy between what is and what could have been. In further support of this interpretation, Campbell (1981: 65) reported that when they were questioned about the quality of their lives, apparently healthy individuals respond in terms of life satisfaction, usually in relation to specific domains, where satisfaction is proportional to the closeness between aspiration and achievement. Bergner (1989: 39) also reports the notion that quality of life is enhanced as the distance between attained and desired goals diminishes. The implication is that changing expectation can lead to altered perceptions of quality of life in similar circumstances, and different experiences may have different quality of life implications for different individuals. The notion may also help to explain why some people appear to adapt to changed circumstances very rapidly, i.e. by reducing their aspirations.

There is little doubt that subjective well-being is influenced by major life events and experiences, e.g. housing, employment, health, marriage etc. A great deal of research has been concerned with the notion that the major cause of change in
subjective well-being is major life events and experiences (see Diener 1984; Heady et al. 1985; Heady & Wearing 1989).

Many people shy away from using the phrase "quality of life." They fear it is an insidious concept creeping into our conversations and decisions that is capable of destroying the basic tenet that human life has as inherent value. One of the problems with using the concept of quality of life is definitional. By "quality," some actually mean "utility" in that a person has little quality of life if he or she is not productive. Others may take quality to mean "worth," i.e., importance to others. Even when people use quality to more correctly mean "value to self," there is still the problem of defining "life". Most quality of life discussions refer to biological life. When quality of life is deemed to be very low, some may say that the individual's personhood is gone, and they may then shift the focus from the quality of life of the person to that of society.

The dimensions of life include the physical dimension (performance of the activities of daily living, self-care, mobility, symptoms), the psychological dimension (presence or absence of depression, anxiety, anger, hope), the social dimension (relationships, activities, recreation), the cognitive dimension (memory, alertness, judgment, recognition), and the spiritual dimension (peace about the meaning of life and death). In addition there is the general appraisal which may be called life satisfaction.

Quality of life and management of living resources is one of the four thematic programmes of the Fifth Framework Programme (1998 - 2002) of the European Union. Quality of life means the quality of European Union citizens' individual lives (especially in terms of health), quality of the environment, and quality of communal life. It also includes harnessing the economic benefits of the expected developments in life sciences and technologies. In concrete terms, the Quality of Life Programme supports research aimed at development which is truly sustainable - for individuals,

For the purposes of this dissertation, quality of life, therefore, means a personal statement of the positivity or negativity of multiple attributes that characterise one’s life. It is personal. It is subjective. It may be different from person to person. It may change from day to day. Quality of life is, therefore, very difficult to use as a criterion to measure development success without conducting extensive research on the matter.

3.8 STANDARD OF LIVING

The concepts of quality of life and standard of living are often regarded as the same concept in the development world. Human Rights Article 25 (1) says that “everyone has the right to a standard of living adequate for the health and well being of himself and of his family, including food, clothing, housing and medical care, and necessary social services, and the right to security in the event of unemployment, sickness, disability, widowhood, old age or other lack of livelihood in circumstances beyond his control”.

Standard of living can be defined as a minimum of necessities, comforts, or luxuries held essential to maintaining a person or group in customary or proper status or circumstances, and refers to “quality of life” as measured by income and available goods and services. This definition implies that standard of living is closely linked with economic performance and economic and material progress/growth. The Electric Library Encyclopaedia says that standard of living is “the level of consumption of goods and services to which an individual or group is accustomed, usually thought of in national terms. Although an evaluation of a standard of living is relative, the use of gross national product (GNP) or per capita income provides a more objective yardstick for comparing the living standards of two or more
countries. The elements that make up a standard of living include not only the goods consumed but also the number of dependents in a family, educational opportunities, and the amount spent for health and recreation". (http://www.encyclopedia.com/articles/ 12263.html).

The lack of an internationally-accepted definition for standard of living has reflected indecision as to whether an international standard definition should allow comparisons of well-being across countries compared to some international norm, or whether poverty lines should be established according to the norms within each country.

The proposed poverty lines have included, among others, relative measures (you are poor if your means are small compared to others in your population) and absolute measures (you are poor if you lack the means to buy a specified basket of goods and services designated as essential). Both approaches involve judgmental and, hence, ultimately arbitrary choices. In the case of the relative approach, the fundamental decision is what fraction of the overall average or median income constitutes poverty. Is it one-half, one-third, or some other proportion? In the case of the absolute approach, the number of individual judgements required to arrive at a poverty line is far larger. Before anyone can calculate the minimum income needed to purchase the "necessities" of life, they must decide what constitutes a "necessity" in food, clothing, shelter and a multitude of other purchases, from transportation to reading material.

The underlying difficulty to define standard of living is due to the fact that poverty is intrinsically a question of social consensus, at a given point in time and in the context of a given country. Someone acceptably well off in terms of the standards in a developing country might well be considered desperately poor in Canada. And even within the same country, the outlook changes over time. A standard of living considered as acceptable in the previous century might well be viewed with
abhorrence today (Fellegi 1997: 23).

Poverty consists of having insufficient spendable resources to maintain a standard deemed to be adequate for civilised survival (subjective). Poverty is separated into two different terms - relative poverty and absolute poverty. A relative poverty line is different in all countries. It is a constant proportion of the mean and median income in the country. Relative poverty changes as income changes. The absolute poverty line is set in terms of a particular living standard, defined in a common currency and held constant for all countries and regions. If the basic needs are not available - housing, food, clothing and water - one is said to be 'absolutely poor'.

According to May (1998: 10) there is a very strong correlation between level of education and standard of living: the poverty rate among people with no education is 69%, compared with 54% among people with primary education, 24% among those with secondary education, and 3% among those with tertiary education. There is also a correlation between poverty and ill-health, although this is more difficult to measure, and access to effective health care is specific to particular social and environmental situations.

Poverty and unemployment are also closely correlated: 55% of people from poor households are unemployed, compared with 14% of those from non-poor households. Poor households are characterised by a lack of wage income, either as a result of unemployment or of low-paying jobs, and typically rely on multiple sources of income, which helps reduce risk. Access to basic services such as electricity, toilets and piped water is also closely correlated with poverty (May 1998: 10).

A nation's standard of living is the most significant indicator of its economic performance. Productivity growth (the rate of growth in output per unit of input, usually output per worker), income distribution, and the unemployment rate are the
three variables that most directly affect the standard of living of large numbers of people (Borrus & Stowsky 1997: 8).

Many of the changes presently occurring in the social structure have a direct impact on individual and collective consumer decisions. Changing sex roles, changes in the work force, variations in lifestyle, and the variety of demands emanating from a pluralistic culture - all these things affect the nature and quantity of goods and services which are used by consumers. Social pressures for or against change may create tensions which find their outlet in the way resources are earned or spent. While seldom given direct focus in consumer education materials, the impact of the social system rivals that of economic and political concerns in overall influence on consumer decisions (Bannister & Monsma 1980: 17). Yet another method of calculating living standards is by noting how long an average person has to work to earn enough money to buy certain goods. If people have to work less time to buy goods, then there has been an increase in the standard of living. An increase in the standard of living may not mean a better life-style for the majority if only a small minority of wealthy people consume the extra goods, or if the increased output of certain goods results in more noise, congestion and pollution, or if leisure time is reduced to achieve the production increase (http://www.bized.ac.uk).

For the purposes of this dissertation, standard of living is understood as the level of consumption of goods and services to which an individual or group is accustomed, usually thought of in national terms. Although an evaluation of a standard of living is relative, the elements that make up a standard of living include not only the goods consumed, but also the number of dependents in a family, educational opportunities, and the amount of money spent for health and recreation, its effect on development interventions such as water supply and sanitation projects and the empowerment of women.
4. **THE RESEARCH AREA**

The area where the research for this study was conducted (the rural Eastern Cape Province), was chosen for the following reasons:

- the accessibility of the research area;
- the amount of foreign aid money designated for the area and the resulting developmental initiatives taking place in the area; and
- it presented an opportunity to measure all the above development jargon in terms of realities in project implementation.

In order to obtain valid and comparable data, the main determinants for selection of the six target villages where the research was conducted, were the following:

- three different villages should have a good water supply system (yard taps and/or street taps) in order to determine the effect of the availability of water on the daily roles and responsibilities of women in these villages; and
- three different villages should have a poor water supply (no taps) in order to determine the effect of the non-availability of water on the daily roles and responsibilities of women in these villages.

The secondary determinants for the selection of the target villages were:

- the villages should be defined and acknowledge as being rural, therefore at least 200km from a major metropolitan area;
- the target villages should not be bigger than 200 households in total to enable the research team to draw a 10% representative sample of the total households; and
- The target villages should have the same broad socio-economic and demographic profiles in order to minimise the variables affecting the roles and
responsible responsibilities of women and men in the villages.

According to the determinants set out above, the following villages were targeted for the research:

- Manyosini, Dubeni and Sandile which had no formalised water supply system;
- Lubisi, Thembalethu and Sabalela which had formalised water supply system in the form of street taps (See Map 1 for the location of these villages).
4.1 THE RESEARCH TEAM

The research team was headed by the author (head researcher) and consisted of personnel from the Rural Support Services in the Eastern Cape Province (5 local research assistants who assisted in the research process). The personnel from the Rural Support Services in the Eastern Cape Province acted as research assistants to the research team because of their experience in working in communities, their proximity to the target villages and the relationship of trust that already existed between them and the community members of the villages where the research was conducted. The research assistants helped the author to gather information in the field according to the process explained below.

4.2 OBJECTIVES OF THE FIELD RESEARCH

In order to address the main objectives of this study (see p 3), field research and information gathering were done in the Eastern Cape Province in the areas described above. The objectives of the field research and information gathering in the field were the following:

- to determine the role and responsibilities of rural women in water supply projects in the rural Eastern Cape Province;
- to determine the impact of women’s participation in water supply projects on the empowerment of the rural women;
- to determine the influence of traditional cultural values on the roles and responsibilities of the rural women in water supply projects; and
- to determine the influence of traditional cultural values on the empowerment of the rural women in the Eastern Cape Province in water supply projects.

The field research in the Eastern Cape Province consisted of quantitative and qualitative fieldwork done in six rural villages. This process took place in six sets
of one-week period for each village, between August 1997 and October 1998. Thus, a total of six weeks was spent in each village. The fieldwork was conducted by the author who was assisted by the research assistants from the Rural Support Services (see 4.2).

5. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The research methodology consisted of a continuous literature study on gender, a participatory approach during the information gathering phase, a process of data analysis and interpretation, and a process of writing the report.

5.1 LITERATURE STUDY

The research consisted of a literature study of books, articles, reports and documents regarding gender and gender issues on an international scale, but with specific reference to Africa and South Africa (see References).

The literature study revealed that there were numerous international case studies reported on in books, research reports and articles on gender and gender issues in water supply and sanitation by the research departments of the United Nations, Oxfam, the World Bank and Development Bank; donor organisations such as the Canadian International Development Agency, Swedish Development Agency, and NGO’s involved in development in Asia, Latin America and Africa (see Chapter 2). The literature study, however, also revealed that very little was documented on gender and gender issues in South Africa. This study, therefore, breaks new ground in terms of gender and gender issues in water supply and sanitation in this country.

Because of the time constraint and a severe budgetary problem, it was clear from the outset that the “traditional” way of conducting anthropological research, i.e. the
ethnographic method (in-depth interviews over a significant period of time as described in Pelto & Pelto 1978: 67-122) could not be followed. It was, therefore, decided to test three different participatory methodologies which are related to the field of community development, as vehicles/methods for not only planning development, but also gathering research information in order to be able to conduct such development (see Conway & McCracken 1988:18).

5.2 RESEARCH APPROACHES

The following approaches to community development were incorporated into the research process:

- The Participatory Rural Appraisal (PRA);
- The Demand Responsive Approach (DRA); and
- The SARAR approach.

5.2.1 Participatory Rural Appraisal (PRA)

Participatory Rural Appraisal (PRA) is derived from the concept of Rapid Rural Appraisal (RRA) which was developed by Gordon Conway and Robert Chambers with support from the International Institute for Environment and Development’s (IIED) World Resources Institute (WRI 1990: iv). Similar to its parent methodology, RRA, PRA is a "systematic yet semi-structured activity carried out in the field by a multi-disciplinary team and designed to acquire quickly, new information on, and new hypotheses for rural development" (Conway & McCracken 1988:18). Its goal aims at socially acceptable, economically viable and ecologically sustainable development. PRA works on the assumption that rural communities are the primary agents of natural resource degradation, and that these communities need committed local leadership and effective rural institutions to bring about development. PRA helps communities mobilise their human and natural resources
to define problems, consider previous successes, evaluate local institutional capacities, prioritise opportunities and prepare a systematic and site-specific plan of action - a Village Resource Management Plan (VRMP) for the community to adopt and implement.

PRA enables multidisciplinary teams of specialists and rural leaders to work more closely together and to understand their problems, needs and opportunities better. It is an excellent tool to bring together the development needs of the community groups and the resources and technical skills of government, donor agencies and NGOs (WRI 1990: iv).

PRA integrates traditional skills and external technical knowledge in the development process, assisting communities to mobilise their human and natural resources to:

- define problems;
- consider previous successes;
- evaluate local institutional capacities;
- prioritise opportunities; and
- prepare a systematic and site-specific plan of action (Conway & McCracken 1988).

PRA was a useful tool in gathering information regarding gender roles and responsibilities in the research areas. However, the PRA’s lack of action plans to address issues and problems that were identified during the research, led to a feeling of dissatisfaction amongst the women and men in the villages.
5.2.2 The Demand Responsive Approach (DRA)

The DRA has emerged as a strategy for assisting communities to develop. It recognises the existing capacity in communities to take responsibility for identifying and solving their own development needs. This approach increases the potential for user satisfaction, sustainability and re-orienting the development agencies to respond to the needs of the community where the development took place. It is therefore a strategy that empowers a community to initiate, choose and implement a development project in which they are willing and able to sustain the development process (Gichuri 1997:3).

This approach served the research very well as it afforded the spokespersons the opportunity to take ownership of whether they wanted to change or not, or whether they wanted to share information with the research team or not, regarding the roles and responsibilities of women and men in water supply and sanitation projects.

5.2.3 The SARAR Approach

The acronym SARAR is made out of the first letters of the following explanatory paragraphs of the method:

- **Self-esteem** - the self-esteem of groups and individuals is acknowledged and enhanced by recognising that they have the creative and analytic capacity to identify and solve their own problems.
- **Associative strengths** - the methodology recognise that when people form groups, they become stronger and develop the capacity to act together.
- **Resourcefulness** - each individual is a potential resource to the community. The method seeks to develop the resourcefulness and creativity of groups and individuals in seeking solutions to problems.
• **Action planning** - planning for action to solve problems is central to the method. Change can be achieved only if groups plan and carry out appropriate actions.

• **Responsibility** - the responsibility for follow-through is taken over by the group. Actions that such responsible participation do results become meaningful.

The SARAR approach focuses on the development of human capacities. SARAR enables the community to assess, choose, create and take initiatives themselves. These skills then spill over to many other aspects of a person’s life or to that of the community. SARAR is a participatory methodology that was pioneered and has been championed by the United Nations’ PROWESS programme (Promotion of the Role Of Women in Water and Environmental Sanitation Services). SARAR is a flexible methodology using non-traditional learning materials. It releases the creative energy of the participants and communities through the combination of skills, teamwork and a positive learning environment; in the process addressing community needs and problems. This participatory approach is known as a learner-centred approach and is a means of helping the community members to take greater control of their lives and their environment by developing their skills in problem-solving and resource management.

The aim of the approach is emphasised in the five characteristics described above (SARAR). The responsibility for the quality of community participation rests largely in the hands of both the community and the developer/researcher (Srinivasan 1994: 37). The research process proved to the research team that participation should be opened up to all community members, as well as to other stakeholders and researchers who, through the process, would have an effect on the community.

The research team recognised that approaching the members of the communities where the information gathering was done by way of the SARAR method, made the
spokespersons feel relaxed and confident in the research process. The research team concluded that the spokespersons felt relaxed because they felt that they had a say in what was happening to them. The SARAR method also helped to build and strengthen the relationship of trust between the researchers and spokespersons.

5.3 RESEARCH PROCESS

Against this theoretical and methodological background, the research team followed a process of introducing the research project to the community members in order to break down a barrier that already existed due to the actions of previous researchers and developers in the area that was perceived as negative by the particular communities. At the same time, "permission" was requested from the community and their leaders to conduct the research project in their villages.

The process followed during the research was the following:

5.3.1 Determining authority structures in communities

Local people were contacted during the first field visit in places like shops, beer halls and schools and asked about the social structures in the village and who the important people were within the community. Valuable information about the authority structures and the right persons to contact, was obtained in this way.

Two distinct types of authority structures were identified in the villages in this manner.

Firstly, traditional authority structures were identified in the areas where the research was conducted. The traditional structures consisted of the chief (inKosi) and his council. The tribal council consisted of the headmen (induna) of the specific wards within the area of the jurisdiction of the Chief. Secondly, a development
structure referring to government structures (district councils, local councils, civic organisations and specific development committees) that had an impact on the communities where the research was conducted, was identified. Thirdly, the existing development structures such as development committees, water committees or women’s groups in each of the villages were identified in this manner.

The working relationship between all the relevant authority structures in the different communities, were confirmed as the possibility existed that there could be conflict between individuals on these different authority structures and the community, or between the authority structures themselves. This conflict (if present) would need to be managed carefully and tactfully by emphasising the aim and goals of the research project without excluding anyone or any structure from the process.

After this initial contact phase, and because the research team knew who to contact, the research team made appointments with the different chiefs of the tribal areas where the research would be conducted.

The research team approached the chief through one of the headmen, or through a member of the development committee in the communities because that was the accepted protocol in the communities where the research was conducted. The different chiefs were informed in detail of what the research project aimed to achieve, and the length of time that could be spent in their specific areas. Permission to work in his area was also requested from the chief. After obtaining the chief’s permission, reporting to him on every visit during the execution of the project was not necessary. Incidental visits to the chief, reporting on the progress of the research project was good practice as it kept the chief up to date with developments as well as the progress of the research project.
Some unavoidable problems were encountered in the process of contacting and meeting with the chiefs. The chiefs were not always accessible by telephone and making appointments beforehand was not successful. The alternative was to arrive at the chief’s place without an appointment and hope that he will have time for a meeting. At least an appointment for another time could be made in this manner. This was a tedious and often frustrating process. Often one had to wait many hours or return at another time, which increased the costs of the research project. This process is unavoidable in order to achieve success with research and was to be followed. One also has to include these uncertainties into one’s budget - however difficult that might be.

On the other hand, the tribal areas where the research was conducted, are divided into wards and each ward is under the jurisdiction of a ward headman. The headman is the chief’s representative in that ward and usually has the power to solve most community matters. Depending on the code of conduct between the headman and the chief, a headman may allow the introduction of the research project to the community without awaiting the consent of the chief. As headmen are usually members of development committees and are involved in projects, they are very important persons to work with since they could also arrange introductions to the chief. Invariably, experience has shown that it is always better to start with the chief and work down to the headman, as this saves time and money.

Despite recognising the traditional authority structures, the acceptance of researchers into communities was frequently easier in the target villages when the researchers were introduced to the community members by people the community members know. Therefore, after obtaining the permission of the chief, the project can be introduced to clergymen, or school principals, or social workers, or clinic personnel in the area. He or she then organised community meetings for the proper introduction of the research team members in order for them to explain the objectives of the research project.
In some communities the school principals also sometimes organised parents’ meetings during which the research team members could introduce the objectives of the research project to the people in that particular community.

People such as engineering consultants, training agents, Civic Organisations, Development Forums and Women’s Groups that had a history of working with specific communities were very useful in introducing the researchers and the project into some of the communities. These institutions had already had experience in dealing with community members and could assist in the clarification of the aims and objectives of the research project. These organisations were also already known to the members of the community, the development committee, the headman, and the chief in whose area the communities where the research was to be conducted, were situated.

Due to the dynamic politics in South Africa, one did not become involved with party politics before or during the conducting of the research. However, it was important to recognise the roles of the political parties in the villages where research was done, and to involve them on a level of discussion concerning the outline of the research project.

5.3.2 Arranging of meetings with community members

The community members often view new or unfamiliar organisations and research projects with some degree of suspicion. Therefore, care was taken to build up the community’s confidence in the research team and the research project.

Community members in the villages were presented with the history and experiences of the research team regarding development projects in which they had already participated. Both bad and good experiences were conveyed. Such openness introduced the community members to the aspects that were good and
those that were bad for community development projects and encouraged them to learn from the experiences in other communities. This eased access into, and acceptance of the research team in the communities.

5.3.3 Meetings with spokespersons

During the community mass meetings, time schedules were drawn up by the community members for interviews with women and men at their homes, focus group discussions with groups of women and groups of men, and for meeting with children at different times. The time schedules simplified the research to a great extent and saved on time wasted in setting up meetings where the spokespersons were absent.

5.3.4 Ad Hoc meetings

As community members were aware of other activities in the communities, such as tribal meetings, funerals, weddings, soccer matches, pension day pay-outs, clinic days, church meetings and school meetings which would have interfered with the research, this method of arranging interviews saved a lot of time and frustrations.

5.4 INFORMATION GATHERING TECHNIQUES

There are various techniques for gathering information from communities. The general rule is that no single method or technique on its own is perfect for assessing gender issues in rural communities. Following a pilot period of trial and error, where several techniques and tools were tested in the Limpopo Province by the CSIR, the techniques discussed below proved to be the most appropriate for the gathering of information regarding gender issues in the rural communities (see Duncker 2000). These techniques were the most appropriate for the following reasons:
• Gender issues are potentially very sensitive issues. In the identification of the techniques, care was taken to use those techniques that accommodated the sensitivity of the issue, as well as the modesty of the female spokespersons.

• The pocket chart method afforded the men and women in the villages the anonymity they needed in order to respond truthfully to the questions regarding the roles of women and men in water supply and sanitation projects.

• The techniques were easy to use and easily understood by the target groups. During the research process it was concluded that complex techniques hampered the target group in providing relevant information as they concentrated on mastering the technique rather than providing the information.

The techniques developed and used during the research by the research team were the following:

5.4.1 Interview schedules for discussion groups

This interview schedule was developed by the author, with assistance from knowledgeable people, to serve as a basis for the discussions with the focus groups. During the interviews the following subjects received attention:

• how the people identified themselves in terms of a cultural adherence;
• active institutions in the village;
• decision-making processes in water supply and sanitation projects in the village;
• the roles and responsibilities of women and men in water supply and sanitation projects in the village;
• any training received by women and men in water supply and sanitation projects in the village;
• the needs of women and men in water supply and sanitation projects in the village; and
• the importance of customary cultural values in water supply and sanitation projects in the village.

This interview schedule was pre-tested in the Limpopo Province, and then revised in the light of the recommendations of the target groups as well as the interviewers. The interview schedule was made available in English, but the interviews were conducted by a member of the research team in the vernacular of Xhosa used by the target group. The interviewer translated back to English and completed the interview schedule in English. This research phase was conducted through focus group interviews which consisted of six people - three men and three women (see Annexure A).

5.4.2 Interview schedule for individuals and households

An interview schedule was developed by the author in light of the pilot study, to serve as a basis for the discussions with individual women and men. The interview schedule covered the following topics:

• age of the spokespersons;
• level of education of the spokespersons;
• level of income of the spokespersons;
• active institutions in the village;
• decision-making processes in water supply and sanitation projects in the
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village;

- the roles and responsibilities of women and men in water supply and sanitation projects in the village;
- the training received by women and men in water supply and sanitation projects in the village;
- the needs of women and men in water supply and sanitation projects in the village;
- the importance of traditional cultural values in water supply and sanitation projects in the village.

The interview schedule was made available in English, but the interviews were conducted by a member of the research team in the vernacular of Xhosa used by the spokespersons. The interviewer translated back to English and completed the interview schedule in English. A total of 120 interviews were conducted which included 46 men and 74 women (see Annexure B). More women were interviewed during the research due to the availability of the women in the villages. Most of the men in the villages were migrant labourers and were away working in the cities.

5.4.3 Pocket Chart method

The pocket chart method is a technique/tool to enable the interviewer to gather sensitive information from the target group. The spokespersons remain anonymous in answering the questions put to them and therefore do not feel reticent in providing valid, appropriate information.

The pocket chart consisted of several pockets (ordinary envelopes worked well), fixed to a board or piece of material in a matrix. Relevant pictures of the possible responses to the questions asked were fixed on the horizontal line, while the questions were posed on the vertical line. When the question was asked, the spokespersons replied by putting matches or stones, etc., into the relevant pocket
(see Annexure C for the questions posed, and Annexure D for the pictures used during the sessions).

5.4.4 Observation

Observations of the daily activities of women and men in the villages by the research team while they were visiting the villages formed an important part of the research. These observations were not verified with the spokespeople as these observations were observations from outsiders. These observations of the daily activities of women and men were incorporated in the final data analysis to cross-check the data as well as to assist in the interpretation of the data.

5.5 ANALYSIS OF RESPONSES FROM SPOKESPERSONS

The responses from spokespeople were written down as they were made in Xhosa, care was taken in the translation from Xhosa to English to capture the correct meaning and to stay as close to a literal translation as possible. What was said, was written down, the responses were not interpreted by the researchers. The responses were many and varied and, therefore, a process of prioritising the responses became necessary. The responses were ordered in the frequency they occurred (number of times mentioned), i.e. if a response was given more than once it was deemed more important than a response that was only mentioned once, and therefore placed higher on the list.

All the responses that occurred more than once are reflected in the data in Chapter 3. The responses that occurred only once are not reflected in Chapter 3 as they were too few in number to warrant consideration, and were also the opinions of individuals.
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The similarity in the responses from the spokespersons from the three villages with a water supply system and the three villages without a water supply system was immediately apparent. Therefore, the arduous and time consuming process of cross-tabulation of the data between the two sets of villages was deemed not necessary.

For the purposes of the research and this dissertation, emphasis was placed on the qualitative nature of the data as it reflected more accurately the perceptions and views of the spokespersons regarding their culture and their roles and responsibilities in water supply and sanitation projects. A quantitative analysis of the data would not have been valuable as it only reflects numbers and not the perceptions of the spokespersons.

The socio-economic data obtained during the research was used only to verify the selection criteria for the research area, i.e. the socio-economic and demographic profiles of the villages, and was not intended to form part of a quantitative analysis.

5.6 TRAINING OF INTERVIEWERS

The research team acted as the interviewers in the villages. These interviewers were trained by the author in basic interviewing skills, the implementation of the interview schedules and the pocket chart method of gathering information. The interviewers were also instructed in the following:

- the aim and objectives of the study/research;
- interviewing skills;
- listening skills;
- recording skills;
- communication skills; and
- rephrasing skills.
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Explanatory notes were made available to the interviewers to assist them in conducting the interviews and implementing the pocket chart method. This training was very valuable as the interviewers shared their knowledge and experiences of previous research projects. This shared knowledge assisted the interviewers in overcoming problem areas they previously had been unable to handle.

5.7 SAMPLING AND RESEARCH DATA CHECKS

Sampling formed an integral part of the research strategy. A representative random sample (at least 10%) of the total number of households in each of the villages was drawn. The total number of households in a specific village was provided by the chief, headman or Development Committee of that area. Even though random sampling may place limits on the conclusions that can be drawn, in this case it was the most appropriate manner of sampling.

The data that was gathered during the research was of a quantitative as well as a qualitative nature. For the purposes of this dissertation, emphasis was placed on the qualitative data in order to draw conclusions regarding the perceptions of women and men concerning the influence of their culture on the empowerment of women in the water supply and sanitation projects. The quantitative data was gathered as a back-up to the qualitative data.

Both sets of data were correlated with the observations made by the interviewers. The quantitative data was punched into MS Access and imported into a quantitative data analysis computer package (SAS) used by the CSIR. The qualitative data was ranked according to the number of times a response was mentioned, then listed and grouped according to the responses. The lists and groupings were punched into MS Access and analysed in MS Excel.
The nature of qualitative data is subjective and can be interpreted in many ways. Therefore, processes for checking and validating the understanding, meaning and trustworthiness of the information obtained, were put in place before the start of the information gathering and occurred throughout the conducting the research. The responses from the spokespersons were discussed with the spokespersons by the interviewers to ensure a common understanding of what the exact meaning of a response was. The interviewers relayed the discussions to the research team in order to compare the responses from the different discussion groups.

The data checks used were the following:

5.7.1 Triangulation of results, methods and interviewers

Cross-checking of information on the same topic gathered from different sources/spokespersons, using different methods (interviews and observation) by different interviewers was implemented. For example, the spokespersons were asked how many street taps were in the community. The number of street taps was cross-checked by comparing the responses of the spokespersons with the observations of the research team and the design of the engineers. This enabled the interviewers to triangulate the data in order to make sure that the data was valid and true.

5.7.2 Participant evaluation

Periodic feedback sessions to the spokespersons enabled the interviewers to present the results of the research data to the members of the community to test whether they agreed with the interviewers’ understanding of what they had said during the interviews. Corrections were then made, when and if necessary, to the research data.
5.7.3 Peer reviews of research results

The research data was presented to colleagues as well as to the members of the Water Research Commission Steering Committee. The colleagues and the Steering Committee had the opportunity to explore the research data and to make recommendations from their previous experience regarding the research process and the information.

6. SUMMARY

For the purposes of this dissertation the following terms were discussed:

- community: a particular, recognisable, finite body of people living in close geographical vicinity to each other, with a commonly recognised chief (inkosi) or headman (isibonda) and sharing a similar way of life (culture);

- culture: is shared, learned, symbolic, transmitted cross-generationally, adaptive, and integrated (Bodley 1994: 4). As a system culture consists of a number of inter-dependent aspects that function together to form a whole (Coertze 1980: 56-72). A cultural system also exists through time, is dynamic and is made up of structurally different but interrelated subunits (Knudson 1978:92). During the research process people were asked to identify the cultural system they belonged to, as they are in a position to make such judgements;

- empowerment: is understood to be the process or state of being enabled to make informed decisions, to have control over and to have access to natural and material resources and benefits of any development initiative or action in a specific community by the specific community’s members;
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- community participation: the active involvement of people in making decisions about the implementation of processes, programmes and projects that affect them;

- sustainability in development projects: the ongoing successful functioning of any development effort or project in an area and in a community;

- quality of life: a personal statement of the positivity or negativity of multiple attributes that characterise one’s life. It is personal. It is subjective. It may be different from person to person. It may change from day to day;

- standard of living: the level of consumption of goods and services to which an individual or group is accustomed, the number of dependents in a family, educational opportunities, the amount of money spent for health and recreation, its effect on development interventions such as water supply and sanitation projects, and the empowerment of women.

The following villages were targeted for the research:

- Manyosini, Dubeni and Sandile which had no formalised water supply; and
- Lubisi, Thembalethu and Sabalela which had formalised water supply in the form of street taps (See Map 1 for the location of these villages).

The field research in the Eastern Cape consisted of quantitative and qualitative fieldwork done in six rural villages. This process took place in six sets of one-week periods, between August 1997 and October 1998. The fieldwork was conducted by the author and a research team. The research team consisted of personnel from the Rural Support Services in East London as research assistants.
The research methodology followed by the project team consisted of a continuous literature study on gender in water supply and sanitation projects, a participatory approach during the information gathering phase, a process of data analysis and interpretation, and a process of report writing.

The following approaches to community development were incorporated into the research process:

- The Participatory Rural Appraisal (PRA);
- The Demand Responsive Approach (DRA); and
- The SARAR approach.

The research team followed a process of introducing the research project to the community members in order to break down a barrier that already existed due to the actions of previous researchers and developers in the area that was perceived as negative by the particular communities.

The process followed was:

- introducing the project to the target areas by determining the authority structures in communities, arranging of mass meetings with community members, meetings with spokespersons and ad hoc meetings;
- gathering the information in the field through the techniques developed for this study. These techniques were interview schedules for discussion groups, interview schedules for individuals and households, the pocket chart method and observation; and
- data analysis and data checking through triangulation of results, methods and interviewers, cross-checking of information on the same topic gathered from different sources/spokespersons, participant checking and peer reviews.
CHAPTER 2
GENDER IN DEVELOPMENT PROJECTS

This chapter discusses basic concepts of gender and its origin. The application of gender and gender sensitive approaches in development projects are also discussed and supported by case studies world-wide.

1. THE TERM GENDER

The key to understanding how development work affects women, men, girls and boys, is in grasping the concept of gender. There are several different definitions for the term gender. Basically the term gender refers to those characteristics of women and men that are socially determined, in contrast to those that are biologically determined.

There is a difference between the terms sex and gender, and the difference has very important implications. The distinction between sex and gender is made to emphasise that everything women and men do, and everything expected of women and men, with the exception of their sexually distinct functions, can and does change over time according to changing and varied social and cultural factors (Williams 1994: 7).

The sex of a person is the biological characteristics of that person. It does not change over time. Sex is a fact of human biology, we are born male or female. It is men who impregnate, women who conceive, give birth and breastfeed the human baby. On this biological difference we construct an edifice of social
attitudes and assumptions, behaviour and activities - our gender roles and responsibilities (Williams 1994: 7).

Gender can be seen as the culturally prescribed roles of women and men, and the relevance of these roles to a set of economic and population concerns, especially the recording of the economic and demographic facts upon which policies and plans are supposed to be based. The attributes of female and male roles include the extent to which domestic, conjugal and kin roles overlap and interlink with occupational and parental roles (Adepojou & Oppong 1994: 10). Gender is socially constructed, learnt from culture and changes with time and place (Moser 1989: 9). Gender refers to the culturally constituted and socially moulded relationships between women and men, men and men, and women and women at different stages of their lives. Gender shapes the opportunities and constraints that women and men face in securing viable livelihoods and in building strong communities within cultural, political, economic and ecological settings. The relationships between women and men are constantly changing due to the influence of class, religion, political, economic and cultural aspects. Gender is a dynamic concept and roles for women and men vary greatly from one culture to another, and can even vary from one social group to another within the same culture. Understanding gender is being aware of the complex ways in which society slots people into different categories and roles, and of the ways these roles can be the basis of both cooperation and conflict (see Duncker 1997:15).

During an international workshop near Pretoria on gender (November 1997), initiated by the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation (UNESCO) in partnership with United Nations Children’s Fund (UNICEF) and the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP)-World Bank Regional Water and Sanitation Group in Nairobi, gender was described as follows:
"Gender refers to the roles and responsibilities of women and men. These roles and responsibilities differ from country to country, place to place and even community to community and are influenced by class, religion, culture and social, political and economic factors.

Gender is related to how we are perceived and expected to think and act as women, men or children (girls and boys), because of the way society is organised. Roles and responsibilities refer to the different work women and men do, their different needs, their different access to resources and the different areas in which they can make decisions and exercise control over resources and benefits" (Proceedings of UNDP-World Bank Gender Workshop, Nov 1997).

2. GENDER IN WATER SUPPLY AND SANITATION PROJECTS

The attempt to disentangle the interactions between gender and sustainability is confounded by definitional problems as well as by common biases in the literature. The current difficulties are analysed below by Martine (1997: 7) and include:

- evolving perceptions and changing praxis concerning the role of women in development;
- a predominant focus on women rather than on gender relations and the tendency to take the category of "women" as a homogeneous entity, whose constituents are assumed to perform universal gender roles;
- quasi-exclusive attention to gender/sustainability issues within the context of poor and rural habitats, thus neglecting the overwhelming thrust of current economic globalisation.
Chapter 2: Gender in development projects

The interpretation of women's roles and gender relations has been marked by shifting positions and changing political priorities over the last few decades. Although the specific contents of their actions have varied, the central thrust of women's movements has generally involved denouncing women's oppression and advocating women's rights and equality. The impact of such movements on social organisation, (over the last hundred and some years in Anglo-Saxon countries, over the last 30 years in developing countries), is indeed impressive. "Feminism (defined herein as the political expression of women's movement), has been one of the most inspiring and subversive critical analyses and practices of this century. Its opposition to the dominant modes of production and politics, its re-evaluation of accepted ways of thinking and behaving, its critique of culture and everyday life is derived from a wide variety of positions which sometimes intersect and at others are contradictory" (Braidotti et al. 1994: 59).

The recent history of women's movements is critical in understanding current attempts to link gender and sustainability. Feminism has presented quite a heterogeneous front at any one time, and it has evolved considerably in recent decades. Several authors have attempted to classify the various currents within the women's movements (inter alia, Young: 1985, Braidotti et al. 1994, Chapters 4 and 5). However, it is not the purpose of this study to report on these different faces and phases of feminism, except in as much as they relate to the current discussions of sustainability, particularly within the context of international development efforts.

In the first two decades after the concepts of "development" and "underdevelopment" were first voiced (in President Truman's 1949 Inaugural Speech), the economic role of women was perceived basically in the area of reproduction; the contribution of women to the economy was largely overlooked. However, in reaction to criticism of this approach, the term Women in Development (WID) was coined in the early 1970s.
Chapter 2: Gender in development projects

The Women in Development approach emerged in response to the realisation that development initiatives promoted among the poor failed to address women's needs, did not promote their participation, and left them out of the ensuing benefits. The natural path to follow was thus to devise ways of incorporating women in current development programmes and projects, regardless of their scope and methodology. The focus was on women as a "special" group and success was measured in terms of the number of women participating in such development actions. The approach, concerned solely with the incorporation of women in ongoing interventions, did not question the type of activity itself, nor the implicit development model, nor did it concern itself with the probability that the model, as well as its underlying inequities, would reproduce itself over the long range.

The world economic crisis of the 1980s led to increasing poverty among "developing" countries and it became evident that women were being most seriously affected. The term "feminisation of poverty" was coined to refer to the increased role of women as providers and as the prime victims of cutbacks in government spending. The 1980s were also marked by a considerable growth of women's movements in the developing countries and some of these groups began to assail the very notion of development, spawning alternative visions of it from a feminist perspective (Martine 1997: 9).

Towards the end of the 1980s, a new approach thus emerged. This focused on Gender and Development (GAD) and sought to express the mobilisation and integration of women in development. The Gender and Development approach emerged as a reaction to the meager results of Women in Development, wherein women were at best incorporated through minor components in larger projects, or were involved in small projects aimed at women only, thus continuing to be left out of the main thrust of development interventions.
The issue was no longer one of incorporating women (who were involved in much of the work, yet continued to be left out of most of the benefits), but rather of empowering them in order to transform unequal relations. The point of the Gender and Development approach is to examine how the relative positions of men and women in society, and the system governing the relations between them, affect their ability to participate in development. Whereas the Women in Development approach had attempted to increase women’s participation and benefits, thereby making development more effective, Gender and Development sought to empower women and to transform unequal social/gender relations. It aimed for full equality of women within the framework of economic development (Braidotti et al. 1994: 80-82).

The Gender and Development approach thus posed the issue of equality, equity and rights as central to development efforts, and by addressing these questions, it questioned the kind of development model, its relations of power and the conditions for its continuation into the future. In this train of thought, the issue of sustainability and its relation to gender inequality and inequity followed naturally.

One of the most critical problems facing many societies world-wide is to ensure an adequate water supply, which is the very basis of human survival. Recognition of the seriousness and the vital importance of improving water supply and sanitation world-wide was underlined by the international community at the United Nations Water Conference held in Mar del Plata, Argentina in 1977, which resulted in the subsequent launching of the International Drinking Water Supply and Sanitation Decade (IDWSSD) in 1980. The United Nations General Assembly during its 35th session proclaimed the period 1981 to 1990 as the International Drinking Water Supply and Sanitation Decade, during which Member States were to assume a commitment to bring about a substantial
improvement in the standards and levels of services in drinking water supply and sanitation by the year 1990 (INSTRAW 1985: 6).

Since women in many societies and communities are the most concerned with water, the World Conference of the United Nations Decade for Women: Equality, Development and Peace held in Copenhagen in 1980, addressed the water problem and realised that women of the world spend as much as one third of their day locating and transporting water for drinking, agriculture, food production, food preparation and family hygiene. The World Conference adopted Resolution 25 which called on Member States and United Nations agencies to promote full participation of women in planning, implementation and application of technology for water supply projects (Conference Proceedings 1980).

When the Water Decade started in 1981, the biggest challenge was providing safe drinking water and adequate sanitation systems to a huge proportion of the global population who were unserved in terms of water supply and sanitation. According to INSTRAW (1985: 2), 80% of all sickness in the developing world and 25 000 deaths a day were attributable to water-related diseases. Diarrhoea kills as many as 18 million people annually, of which 6 million are children. Three out of five people in the developing countries are without access to safe drinking water and only one in four people have access to sanitation facilities (INSTRAW 1985: 10).

During the International Water Decade, two major issues surfaced regarding water supply and sanitation. Firstly, Saunders & Warford (1976) and OECD (1978) in two broad studies determined that rural water facilities in the developing world were falling rapidly into disrepair and disuse, even abuse, two or three years after completion of the facility. Several issues could be the cause, such as that operation and maintenance costs were too high for the limited economic activity of the users, and the water systems were rejected by the
community members whose needs, preferences and cultural beliefs and practices had not been incorporated into the project design.

Secondly, the assumed health benefits linked to improved water supply and sanitation showed that human behaviour in relation to water and sanitation was critical. Improved water quality and quantity meant little in terms of health if access to and the reliability of the improved water or sanitation facility were not adequate.

These issues had a major impact on the agenda for and the approach to the International Water Decade in the sense that the emphasis moved away from the conventional “coverage” or number of installations, to the “effective and sustainable utilisation of water and sanitation services implemented in ways that are replicable” (Narayan-Parker 1989B: 20). This shift in approach reflected a growing awareness of social sustainability where factors such as greater need, limited financial resources, physical and social environments including gender issues, play a major role. The approach of social sustainability in improving development projects is now widely accepted and advocated beyond the realm of water and sanitation projects (Syme 1992: 6).

In preparation for the Earth Summit in Rio de Janeiro in 1992, an International Conference on Water and Environment was held in Dublin in January 1992. This international conference gave rise to the four ‘Dublin Principles’. The four Dublin Principles are the following:

- freshwater is a finite and vulnerable resource, essential to sustain life, development and the environment;
- water development and management should be based on a participatory approach, involving users, planners and policy makers at all levels;
• women play a central part in the provision, management and safeguarding of water;
• water has an economic value in all its competing uses and should be recognised as an economic good.

These Dublin Principles subsequently formed the basis of the Earth Summit’s key discussion document known as Agenda 21, pressing, amongst other things, environmental aspects (1992). Agenda 21 called for fundamentally new approaches to development and management of water resources. The activities list of Agenda 21 includes the following actions linked to “community development”:

• encouragement of water development and management based on a participatory approach involving users, planners and policy makers at all levels; and
• encouragement of the local population, especially women, youth, indigenous people and local communities in water management.

During the April 1998 General Assembly Special Session of the United Nations Commission on Sustainable Development, the “urgent need for action in the field of fresh water” and dialogue to help identify the necessary steps and activities were called for. Following on this call, countries within the European Union (EU) launched a freshwater initiative known as “Water 21”. Much controversy arose regarding the economic value of water and the idea of integrated management. Some development experts argued that the individual needs of women, men and children could be ignored in the wider debate.
During 1999 and 2000 the World Water Vision (WWV) process continued, giving further strength to the case for mainstreaming gender in water supply development at all levels - globally, internationally, nationally and locally.

Studying development within the context of gender awareness reveals that women’s needs, as distinct from men’s, have been invisible in most development projects, resulting in the failure of many such projects (INSTRAW 1985: 16). Gender differences within communities are rooted in the respective realities of men and women in that community. It is often said that water and sanitation are “women’s issues”. In fact they are issues for every woman, man and child if the essential nature of water to all life is considered. However, the task of assuring the family a water supply and adequate sanitation has fallen mostly on the women and the children. Thus, women’s role in the gender division of labour in developing communities means that they generally have a greater interest than men in improving water and sanitation facilities, as well as more knowledge about what this might involve.

For many years water supply projects have been technical projects, focusing on construction work for water supply and sanitation facilities. In many instances the needs and expectations of target communities were not taken into account. People living in cities and villages were seen as no more than users and beneficiaries of water supply and sanitation projects. Since the 1970s, possibilities have broadened for the inhabitants of cities and villages to participate in the planning, management and maintenance of water supply and sanitation projects. However, when the developers stated that they worked with “villagers”, “leaders” and “committees”, they almost always only dealt with the male population. Women were usually only a target group for health education (IRC 1994: vi).
In the 1980s, a more gender-sensitive approach showed that women had several roles to play in matters of water and sanitation, by tradition (custom) and by necessity. Additionally, their participation often enhanced efficiency and effectiveness in the use and operation of water installations and sanitation facilities (see Duncker 1997: 9). Currently, engineers and project managers are increasingly required by their clients to take account of gender in their work, and gender issues are commonly included in Project Documents and Terms of Reference.

Working with a gender perspective often means giving a voice to those who are at present silent and reducing the vulnerabilities of those who are most vulnerable. This group is frequently (but not always) the women of a community and this in itself can cause friction especially in communities where there is a large difference in power between women and men.

Focusing on gender means focusing on both women and men and the ways they interact in making decisions, sharing tasks and complementing each other in a variety of roles. As women have been forgotten so often in the past (and many times continue to be in the present), they frequently need to have their concerns specifically stated and highlighted in order to be recognised, and unless men are aware of and support women’s involvement in projects, in many cultural contexts women’s participation will be curtailed (Wakeman 1995: 22).

Gender differences in the articulation of priorities within a community are rooted in the respective realities of women and men. “During interviews with community members in the early stages of a CIDA/World University Service of Canada in urban Peru, women named the ‘improved health of children’ as the prime reason for needing water and sanitation improvements. The men, on the other hand, were most interested in the ‘prestige’ that a new water system would bring” (Williams 1990: 26).
3. **MAINSTREAMING GENDER IN DEVELOPMENT PROJECTS**

The concept of mainstreaming gender in development has been promoted since 1995 with a view to incorporating a gender-sensitive approach into development projects, such as water supply and sanitation. It was endorsed in September 1995 at the 3rd United Nations World Conference on Women, held in Beijing, China. The resulting Beijing Platform for Action contains the following commitments:

- "Governments and other actors should promote an active and visible policy of mainstreaming a gender perspective in all policies and programmes so that, before decisions are taken, an analysis is made of the effects on women and men, respectively" *(Economic and Social Council of the United Nations 1997: 9).*

- "Mainstreaming a gender perspective is the process of assessing the implications for women and men of any planned action, including legislation, policies or programmes, in all areas and at all levels. It is a strategy for making women's as well as men's concerns and experiences an integral dimension of the design, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of policies and programmes in all political, economic and societal spheres so that women and men benefit equally and inequality is not perpetuated. The ultimate goal is to achieve gender equality." *(Economic and Social Council of the United Nations 1997: 12).*

A gender mainstreaming strategy in development projects is, therefore, concerned with meeting both practical and strategic needs of women and men. Gender mainstreaming has two major aspects:

- the integration of gender equality concerns into the analyses and formulation of all policies, programmes and projects; and
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- initiatives to enable women as well as men to formulate and express their views and participate in decision-making across all development issues.

Gender mainstreaming means that projects should aim to transform women’s lives (that is, meet their strategic needs) and not just reinforce women’s traditional roles as unpaid community managers (WEDC\(^1\) 2000: 21). A gender mainstreaming approach does not concentrate on women as a special group, but on women as half the population - the half which has often been left out of decision making processes in development projects in the past. However a gender mainstreaming strategy does not preclude initiatives specifically directed towards women. Similarly, initiatives targeted directly at men may be necessary and complementary as long as they promote gender equality and balance.

Gender mainstreaming combines a “gendered” approach with a gender analysis. A “gendered” approach to project planning and management is an approach in which the different roles, viewpoints and power relations between women and men have been identified. Tools such as gender analysis allow planners to identify these differences at the start of a development project. Once these differences have been identified and understood a project can be designed and implemented to meet the needs of the whole community.

Most countries now have legislation and guidelines which incorporate international declarations on gender as part of their policies regarding all development initiated.

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4. GENDER AND DEVELOPMENT

Development in general is concerned with enabling and empowering people to take charge of their own lives, and to get the opportunity to improve their standards of living and their quality of life. The central issue of women’s development is the empowerment of women, to enable women to participate in development projects beside men in order to achieve control over the factors affecting their lives on an equal basis with men.

Gender cannot simply be “stitched on” to existing development models, or added to development projects as an extra component. Gender is not a separate or additional issue to be addressed; it is a way of seeing, a perspective, a set of insights which informs our understanding of people and society. Gender is at the heart of human identity and all human attitudes, beliefs, customs and actions (Adepojou & Oppong 1994: 3).

It is important to note that women, men and children have quite different needs (and perceptions) regarding water and sanitation services, which impact on the development initiatives taken in developing communities. To understand gender, the activities of men and women need to be addressed in terms of the reproductive, productive and social/community roles women play, as well as the roles played economically and socially by men. By examining women’s and men’s roles, a greater understanding of their needs and involvement in power and decision-making around specific tasks and issues in water supply and sanitation projects will be reached (see Duncker 1997: 17).

Work can be divided into three main categories, and women’s roles encompass work in all these categories:
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- **Productive work** involves the production of goods and services for consumption and trade. Both women and men can be involved in productive activities but their functions and responsibilities will differ. Women’s productive work is often less visible and less valued than men’s (Moser 1989: 31). The role of men in development projects is more visible because they are paid for their productive work, while the women’s role in development projects is taken for granted and given relatively little recognition (Adepojou & Oppong 1994:10).

- **Reproductive work** involves the care and maintenance of the household and its members, including bearing and caring for children, food preparation, water and fuel collection, shopping, housekeeping, and family health care. Reproductive work is crucial to human survival but is seldom considered “real work.” Reproductive work is almost always the responsibility of women and girls (Moser 1989: 31).

- **Community work** involves the collective organisation of social events and services such as ceremonies and celebrations, local political activities, community improvement activities, etc. Both women and men engage in community activities, although a gender division also prevails here (Moser 1989: 31).

In order to assess the effects of development interventions on women, the concept of gender needs or interests has been developed. Gender needs may be defined as ‘practical’ or ‘strategic’ (IRC 1994: 8). These ‘practical’ and ‘strategic’ needs are closely interrelated:

- **Practical gender needs** facilitate existing gender roles. They enable women to do their existing work better by overcoming practical problems. These may
include time-saving technologies, and enhancing knowledge and skills relating to women’s tasks (IRC 1994: 8).

- **Strategic gender needs** change existing power relations between women and men in order to achieve greater equality. They may involve raising women’s status, altering established gender roles, increasing freedom of choice, and improving access to and control over resources (IRC 1994: 8).

Meeting strategic gender needs is more difficult and takes longer to achieve because they challenge unequal gender relations. It also involves overcoming a male bias which is implicit in most development practices. This male bias might be a result of conscious prejudice and discrimination. However, often the male bias is “embedded in unconscious perceptions and habits, the result of oversight, faulty assumptions, a failure to ask questions” (Elson 1995: 7).

According to WEDC (2000: 15) the major benefits of considering gender in policies, programmes or projects are the following:

- improved efficiency and effectiveness of policies, programmes and projects by ensuring that the outputs meet the needs and priorities of the end user;
- improved equality and equity;
- reduced vulnerability;
- reduced poverty.

To achieve the above objectives involves being aware of gender-related differences. Gender-related differences can be broadly split into four categories, those that relate to:
the roles of women and men in the societies in which they live;
the differing needs and priorities of women and men in their daily lives;
the distribution of power between women and men, and identification of vulnerable members of society; and
equity or equality of women and men in access to resources and decision making processes (WEDC 2000:16).

The following two case studies illustrate how women’s and men’s perceptions of their respective needs differ:

• **Case study 1: Willingness to pay**
  A 1987-1990 World Bank funded survey into the demand for water in rural areas of Latin America, South Asia and Africa recognised gender differentials in preferences regarding water supply as well as in access to and control over finances. Variations in willingness to pay were partly explained by the gender of the respondent, though not in a consistent direction (*World Bank Water Demand Research Team, 1993: 52*).

• **Case study 2: Willingness to pay**
  In Tanzania and Haiti women appeared willing to pay considerably more than men for access to public taps. However, in Nigeria and India women were not prepared to pay as much. Despite women’s positive response to the suggestion of improved water supplies, they were reluctant to commit the household to a substantial financial contribution, perhaps because they had limited influence over household finances (*Bridge Water Resources Management Report No 21, May 1994*).
4.1 GENDER IN DEVELOPMENT PROJECTS IN ASIA AND THE PACIFIC REGION

The United Nations System, both through the global Women's Conferences and the work of its agencies, has been an important avenue through which mainstreaming gender gained general currency and acquired meanings - the now familiar terms gender analysis, gender-sensitive, gender-responsive and gender perspective - in Asia and the Pacific region in 1985. In June 1994, the Jakarta Plan of Action for the Advancement of Women in Asia and the Pacific region was adopted by the Second Asian and Pacific Ministerial Conference on Women in Development held in Jakarta. Although the term "mainstreaming" was used sparingly in the Jakarta Plan of Action, the term "gender" had entered common usage in the Asia-Pacific region by 1994.

In 1995, at the Fourth World Conference on Women held in Beijing, the term "gender mainstreaming" had entered the development lexicon. After the Beijing meeting, governments and agencies strove to put the commitments they had made at the Fourth World Conference on Women into practice. Mainstreaming, became part of the standard development vocabulary, appearing routinely in projects and other documents, most often described as "gender mainstreaming" but sometimes as "mainstreaming women or women's concerns". However, initially there were few guidelines to indicate exactly what it meant and what should be done to put gender mainstreaming into practice. As a result, mainstreaming has often remained at the level of rhetoric rather than reality.

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The United Nations Development Program (UNDP) supported the Asian and the Pacific governments’ commitments to the advancement of women and greater gender equity made during the 1995 Fourth World Conference on Women in Beijing. Promoting Gender Equality in the Asia Pacific Region was a key element in the response of UNDP’s Regional Bureau for Asia and the Pacific (RBAP) to the Beijing Platform of Action. This three-year regional programme built on the achievements already made by the women’s movement and governments. The programme focused on cutting edge issues where collaboration between stakeholders could strengthen development planning and practice to promote gender equality. The programme collaborated closely with UNDP country offices to respond to common priorities within the programme’s areas of focus. The programme adopted strategies such as developing capacity of regional and sub-regional institutions; building networks and partnerships; demonstrating new approaches through piloting; collecting, analysing, documenting and disseminating good practice examples and lessons learned; and facilitating regional and sub-regional integration and cooperation. The approach of the programme was to build on and strengthen ongoing national efforts by promoting exchange of experiences and lessons among countries.

The Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW) was adopted by the United Nations General Assembly in 1979 and came into force in 1981. The present Convention, comprised of 30 Articles, sets out measures for ending the extensive discrimination against women that prevents them from attaining their human right to be full participants in the political, social, economic and cultural life of their countries. This document underscores the idea that the development of a country and welfare of the world requires the maximum participation of women in all fields, on equal terms with men. By recognising the Convention, governments commit themselves in a legally binding form to undertake the necessary steps to end discrimination against women (CEDAW 1979).
Most Asia-Pacific countries have ratified the Convention, with some exceptions, such as Afghanistan, because of its very strong orthodox Islam approach to life, and some smaller Pacific countries. In spite of this, implementation of the Convention in the Asia-Pacific region has remained uneven and challenging, hampered by unequal provisions in laws, religious customs, traditional norms and patriarchal values in society. One reason for the uneven implementation has been that the CEDAW reporting procedure lacked guidelines on implementation of development projects. Thus, most governments lacked coherent and integrated plans to address the issue of gender discrimination. In the majority of cases, implementation of development projects was left to individual agencies without clear guidance or a systematic approach to implementation. Secondly, governments and civil society organisations lacked a framework and mechanism by which to monitor rates and effectiveness of implementation of development projects.

The International Women’s Rights Action Watch-Asia Pacific (IWRAW), based in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia, is since 1997 the primary regional NGO working to facilitate and monitor the implementation of CEDAW in the Asia Pacific region. Currently IWRAW is conducting a project to develop a common monitoring framework and to support national level women’s organisations to monitor CEDAW commitments. At a regional meeting in Nepal in 1997, IWRAW, in collaboration with a network of NGOs in the region, developed a Baseline Report Outline that reflects this broader view. In addition, they developed indicators and a methodology for collecting the information. Data collection and analysis by core groups in each country are funded by UNIFEM and the Ford Foundation.

The Southeast Asian Gender Equity Program (SEAGEP), a project of the Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA), supports projects that work regionally to raise awareness of gender equity issues and advance gender policy formulation and impact. It, therefore, supports activities that raise awareness of
gender equity issues, advance gender responsive development, and assist Southeast Asia women in the advancement of the Beijing Platform for Action. The Southeast Asian Gender Equity Program also supports the synergy developed by women's networks for sharing ideas, information exchange and the development of long-term relations between the women of Southeast Asia and Canada. The Program's purpose is to strengthen the capacity of Southeast Asian women's organisations, governments, networks and institutions, working regionally, to implement the Beijing Platform for Action.

In the Philippines, an institutional strengthening project (1991-1995) known as CIDA I, funded by the Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA), initiated a consciousness-raising programme targeting one administrative regional body, eight attached agencies and 11 departments to address women's issues across the entire development cycle. The first few gender seminars targeted senior bureaucrats, many of whom later became strategic champions of gender mainstreaming. Parallel with this initiative, a German (GTZ) funded project piloted mainstreaming institutional mechanisms in three regional offices of the National Economic Development Authority and in the Department of Agriculture. A UNIFEM funded project reviewed the role of focal points in six regions to produce a sourcebook “Gender and Development: Making the Bureaucracy Gender Responsive”. This sourcebook guides planners and government programme staff in their application of the gender mainstreaming tools (Corner 1999: 7-10).

In Indonesia UNIFEM funded the Village Development Department in the Ministry of Home Affairs to prepare training materials and train trainers at village level, and the UNDP funded the Planning Bureau in the Ministry of Home Affairs, to prepare training materials and train trainers at central levels regarding planning of development projects. Both programmes also implemented the regulations
necessary to institutionalise the use of these materials on a routine basis (Corner 1999: 7-10).

In India UNIFEM South Asia Regional Office (SARO) supported Women’s Political Watch in Maharashtra to train women councillors and candidates in municipal corporations and councils on the fundamentals of municipal governance, problems, strategies and solutions, budgeting issues and general protocol (Corner 1999: 7-10).

The following case study from Sri Lanka is a good example of selective training for women. The project addressed not only the issues of pump maintenance, but also the wider gender issues of community perceptions about training girls in general, and gender role stereotyping in general:

- **Case study 3: Training for women**

  Sarvodaya Shramadana, one of Sri Lanka’s largest non-governmental organisations developed a hand pump which could be manufactured locally. The organisation selected ten villages in north central dry zone of Sri Lanka to establish local workshops and trained 20 women from 10 nearby villages to drill 50 wells and another 10 women to manufacture, assemble and install the pumps. The criteria for selecting the women were that they had to be between the ages of 18 and 25, with an intermediate education, ability and interest for the work and physical fitness to handle the labour involved. The training lasted four months and included technical and monitoring skills. The women built the main workshop for pump manufactures. The village self-help groups built village workshops for repairing the pumps. The work soon expanded to include production of small agricultural implements and small repairs to implements and trucks.
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The main constraints to the project was the reluctance of parents to send daughters for training in this regard, as this was one of the first attempts of getting girls to be trained in what so far had been considered men’s work. However, at the opening ceremony of the main workshop the visitors were struck by the skills of the women who had been trained. The project demonstrated that women, who are the main partners in water projects can, with proper training in spare parts production and the co-operation of the men in the community, make a great contribution to the maintenance of water infrastructure at village level (Iddamalgoda & Dharmasili, 1987).

In Nepal, UNIFEM SARO supported the Alliance for Women’s Political Empowerment to provide training in gender and communications skills to women and men in order to create more effective advocates on gender issues (Corner 1999: 7-10). The following example from Nepal indicates how men can be disadvantaged by their normal perceived gender role:

- **Case Study 4: Discrimination against men in Nepal**

  NGOs in Nepal are having to find ways of re-integrating men into water committees in order to achieve a balanced gender composition. The policy of encouraging women to take up positions in water committees was a victim of its own success: men ended up feeling excluded and marginalised to the point that they started to resist water and sanitation development initiatives (BOND NGO Workshop: Pers. Com. 1998).

In Bangladesh the Grameen Bank is a well known provider of credit to some 2 million poor and landless people, who are mainly women. The Grameen Bank is also a successful example of extending credit for rural water supply and sanitation. The Grameen Bank’s significant innovation is to organise people into groups of five and ask each person to guarantee the repayment of a loan for any
of the other four members. Peer support of this kind has been very effective and credit groups have an almost perfect repayment rate. To be able to receive loans for sanitary latrines or hand pumps, a member normally needs to be a second time borrower. The borrowers are nearly all women (UNICEF 1997: 7).

The following two case studies, from Bangladesh and Pakistan, illustrate how it is possible for NGOs to overcome inherent discrimination towards women by providing services in water supply and sanitation directly to female members:

- **Case study 5: Involving female farmers in irrigation activities**
  When the Grameen Krishi Foundation research showed that women were highly involved in farming and that women are able to achieve a higher income when given support in their farming compared to the returns to labour in traditional female activities, it shifted it's gender strategy from the development of specific activities for women to 'mainstreaming'. This shift was aimed at more directly involving female farmers in irrigation activities of the Grameen Krishi Foundation. The Grameen Krishi Foundation makes irrigation services available to groups or individuals. These services may be in the form of access to deep tube well or shallow tube well irrigation water, or in the form of access to irrigation technology (shallow tube wells, treadle pumps, or hand tube wells). It is often difficult, especially for women, to fully enjoy the benefits of access to irrigation, because their access to other resources (land, credit, seeds, fertiliser) and services (technical information, marketing) is limited. For this reason, the Grameen Krishi Foundation also attempts to provide these resources directly to its members. The Grameen Krishi Foundation negotiates with landowners to secure land lease arrangements on behalf of women; it provides seeds, fertiliser and agricultural credit, technical training, and marketing services.
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The mainstreaming strategy of the Grameen Krishi Foundation is gradually showing signs of success. Female involvement in its irrigation-related activities has increased dramatically, from being almost nil in 1992 to mainly women in 1997. The study shows that women are very interested in and capable of managing irrigation equipment and irrigated crop production. In spite of some difficulties, all the women somehow involved in irrigation-related activities are very enthusiastic. The seasonal net income from irrigation ranges from Tk 1,000\(^2\) (in the case of a treadle pump) to Tk 5,000 per woman, which is high when compared to what they would have earned as wage labourers (about Tk 500 per season). Many women have plans to expand the scope of their earnings even more (Jordans & Zwartveen, 1997).

- **Case study 6: Women as agents of cultural change**

  The Baldia Town Soak Pit Pilot Project was implemented for the upgrading of conditions in one of the largest squatter settlements in Karachi. In a progressive community development process, the community does not see men and women in isolation, although traditions limit the role of women. But in a socio-political society such as Pakistan, the men are equally subjugated. Even within the present situation of political, traditional and economic constraints in the majority of non-western nations, there is still room for integrated development emerging from within and affecting women in a positive manner. The Home School Teachers organisation has become very strong, and their contribution in education, health and community development is greatly recognised and respected by the women and men of their community.

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\(^2\) Tk = Taka, the Bangladeshi currency.
Once trust and confidence is created the breakthrough in women's role in development takes root. It is now the women of Baldia who are the main agents of change and the focal point of all the community development activities. Initially, the girls were not allowed to come out of their homes, but once the community understood the programme and the outcome, and trusted the intention of the project, all the traditional barriers to the women's participation in community development were lifted. It is essential to have women at all levels of the development projects to break the barriers of tradition. Had the community organiser been a man instead of a woman in Baldia Soak Pit Project, the integration of women in the community development process would not have happened, because of the traditions and outlook of the community. Thus, traditions have strengths and weaknesses and it depends on how sensitive the developer is when making interventions (Bakhteari 1987).

The following examples from Bangladesh indicates how men can be disadvantaged by their normal gender role:

- **Case Study 7: Evaluation based on subjective recollections, Bangladesh**
  In Bangladesh two separate hand pump programmes were evaluated gender-specifically. The reported frequency of breakdowns was significantly lower for the pumps maintained by the women than the pumps maintained by men. The reported duration of breakdown per hand pump was also lower for those maintained by women, but not significantly. More women than men cleaned the hand pump platform regularly. Almost three-quarters of the men in the projects thought that women would be as effective as men at hand pump maintenance (Micro, 1984). These findings, while interesting, should be viewed with caution because they are based on recall of experience over a period of two years and not on monitoring. Also, more than 80% of hand pumps were
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located either on the land or in the house of the caretakers. A possible distorting factor is also the age of the pumps, which was not taken into account in the analysis (IRC Technical Series 33E, 1998).

The key learning points from the above mentioned case studies are the following:

- Selective training for women enhances water supply projects;
- Focus on women only can disadvantage men;
- Providing direct services and opportunities to women may overcome discrimination against women;
- Women can act as agents for cultural change;
- Perceptions of men may be distorted due to lack of awareness of the roles of women; and
- Priorities and needs of women differ from those of men.

4.2 GENDER IN DEVELOPMENT PROJECTS IN LATIN AMERICA AND THE CARIBBEAN

Over the last two decades, the women’s movement has been a vital component in the evolution of democracy in Latin America and the Caribbean. Women have demanded the right to participate within existing structures of democracy, and to expand the very concept of democracy so that it embraces women’s rights. In Latin America and the Caribbean, the recognition of the differential nature, power, and potential of women’s leadership has emerged simultaneously with the increasing inability of governments to meet the basic needs of their citizens and the growing demands of women to participate in the public arena.

The concept of sustainable development owes its power to the energetic and effective alliance between women’s organisations and environmental activists.
Throughout Latin America and the Caribbean, women have organised to integrate the concept of gender-sensitive sustainable development into all development planning and projects (UNIFEM report, 1998).

Women in Latin America still have to work hard to participate in water supply and sanitation projects as the following case study shows:

- **Case Study 8: Water projects initiated by women in Guatemala**

  In Guatemala’s Three Crowns Community in Totonicapan, a non-governmental organisation called ‘Water for the People’ encountered a serious problem with drinking water. As domestic water is not the priority of men, the men refused to take any initiative in solving the water problem. The female leaders in the community formed a committee, looked for better water sources, prepared legal documents needed to acquire the land and looked for funding from external sources. Once the women were able to get funds, the men began to believe in the women’s work and began to support them. Now the men are part of the committee. The men are involved in the construction of the water supply facility, but the women manage the project (Water Supply IT Source Book 1996: 16).

### 4.3 GENDER IN DEVELOPMENT PROJECTS IN AFRICA

In Africa, the participation of local communities and of women in development projects has high priority in all government policy. Access to water is commonly thought of as a right and therefore a legitimate community development need. With the advent of community participation in water supply and sanitation projects in the 1970’s, community participation was synonymous with the participation of men. This led to community participation being executed with the exclusion of the women. As a result, women were portrayed as only passive
beneficiaries, even though they got involved in the physical work (digging trenches, providing food and drinks for the men), which had a big impact on their workload and quality of life (see Duncker 1997).

It has been recognised worldwide that women have a major role to play in the implementation and sustainability of development. In water and land development projects in West Africa, Ethiopia, Kenya and Sudan the needs and demands of the women for the installation of domestic water supply have been overlooked. This resulted in the collection of inadequate amounts of water per household because the women had to walk very long distances. Water collection also reduced the time women had available to participate in other development activities (Simpson-Herbert 1994:1). In Guinea Bissau, Tanzania and Zimbabwe, where women did not participate in the design and location of the water points or latrines, these water points and latrines were not used because the women were not involved. This resulted in a low level of general hygiene in the community (Mogane 1987; Kendall 1982; Moffat 1988; Adepojou & Oppong 1994).

During the 1980s it was realised that the lack of participation of women in planning, maintaining and managing water supply and sanitation projects had negative effects on the quality of the services and on the overall position of women and their participation in development. A large number of case studies in Lesotho, Ethiopia, Kenya, Malawi, Sudan, Tanzania and Zimbabwe have shown that there is a need for women to play a greater role in decision-making from the planning of the projects to their implementation and maintenance (Kivela 1986; Moffat 1988; UNEP 1980). This fact has been recognised and found expression in the formulation of a number of policies and white papers on gender and gender issues in different countries that aim for the sustainability of their development projects.
In Burkina Faso, Somalia, Tanzania and Ghana women have traditionally played key roles in decision-making on the use and management of traditional water sources, such as rivers, springs and wells. Though the men took the formal decisions on water sources, women have culturally accepted ways of initiating and mobilising male resources for the management of domestic water supplies. However, in installing and managing new water supply services, the needs and roles of the women in management of the water sources was not recognised with the result that the new systems are neglected as men did not perceive it as their main function (Gianotten et al. 1994; Adepoju & Oppong 1994).

In order to understand the role women had to play in development regarding water supply and sanitation in Africa, a regional gender workshop on water and sanitation for Eastern and Southern Africa was organised during November 1997 in collaboration with the South African National Committee for the International Hydrological Programme and the Water Research Commission by the UNDP World Bank (Nairobi), UNICEF and UNESCO. The workshop was held to review approaches in the promotion of gender concerns and participation in relation to project/programme performance. The objectives of the workshop were:

- to exchange experiences and lessons learnt from current gender-sensitive approaches and reach a common understanding on how to assess linkages between gender participation and project performance in terms of effectiveness, sustainability and mobilisation of local capacity;
- to develop methodological approaches and guidelines for implementing and assessing how gender sensitive approaches to water supply and sanitation contribute to project/programme performance; and
- to develop a framework to facilitate the exchange of experiences and identify mechanisms for support and commitment at country and regional levels.
The outputs from the workshop were:

- a framework and methodological guidelines for gender-sensitive implementation and assessments of water supply and sanitation projects and programmes in the East and Southern Africa regions;
- country plans for each country that participated in the workshop to test the above-mentioned guidelines and carry out gender assessments in partnership with private and public sector agencies; and
- a framework to facilitate the exchange of experiences and a mechanism for support and commitment between countries in East and Southern Africa at country and regional levels.

These aspects have of late found implementation in water supply and sanitation projects in countries in this region.

4.3.1 Gender sensitive service delivery in Africa

The Ghanaian first lady, Nana Konadu Agyeman Rawlings, made the following statement at the African Women Food Farmer Conference: "In many cases water resource policies and programmes have proven detrimental to women's land and water rights and thus to their sustainable management and use. Interventions such as irrigation often fail to take into consideration the existing imbalance between men's and women's land ownership rights, division of labour and incomes". Agricultural programmes in Ghana still favoured men despite the fact that women produced 70% of the food.

(http://www.thp.org/awffi_brochure/bro_contents.html).

Different types of projects have been implemented during the last two decades in Sub-Saharan Africa. These projects had a significant impact on the roles and responsibilities of women and therefore on their sustainability (IRC 1994: 7).
4.3.1.1 General gender-blind projects

These projects often addressed the community in general without paying attention to differences in gender roles and responsibilities. Communities are usually defined as villagers, or users, or beneficiaries, or the target group, but no notice was taken of the differences in needs, interests or opportunities of the women as opposed to that of the men. Women were not addressed specifically, they were left out and the project was planned and managed by males.

The following case studies illustrate gender-blind projects:

- **Case study 9: Priorities of men in Zimbabwe**
  Research in Nkayi, Zimbabwe, showed that only men sat on dam building committees (for cattle watering) whereas hand-dug wells in the community, used primarily for domestic purposes, were almost the exclusive domain of women. At boreholes in the community, used for both watering cattle and domestic purposes, the user profile was mixed and conflicts arose over the priorities of different users. Cattle watering generally took precedence over domestic use because cattle were deemed more important than domestic issues (Cleaver 1991). This meant that cattle received precedence in water matters above that of the household as men perceived their activities more important than that of the women.

- **Case study 10: Only men were consulted in Zaire**
  In a village near Bukavu, Zaire, a spring was protected through a local development programme. Women, however, were not happy with the development as they indicated that the protection had been undertaken on the wrong spring. The protected spring was the one which dries up in the dry season whereas another spring on the side of the village flows all year. The women had not been consulted before the work was done. (W5
WOM SH:E first draft). Only the men were consulted but they did not fetch water for their households.

- **Case Study 11: Female-headed households excluded from improved infrastructure in Tanzania**
  While important, high interest and priority need does not guarantee that everyone will be able to participate in water and sanitation projects. Households headed by women have been excluded from improved infrastructure, not only because they did not have the required finances for substantiating their demand, but also because they could not supply the labour demanded for construction (IRC Technical paper 33E, 1998).

- **Case Study 12: Women contribute only by cooking for well sinkers in Zimbabwe**
  In Zimbabwe it is a requirement that women feed well sinkers, who are predominantly male. During an evaluation exercise on gender participation in water supply projects in 1991, women expressed their feelings towards this practice. They complained bitterly about it as they felt they were being left out of the actual implementation of the project. The women felt that participating only through cooking is too simple and does not take their possible involvement and responsibilities as main users of the wells seriously (Mwaramba 1991).

4.3.1.2 **General projects with a special women’s component**

These projects are as general as those mentioned above, but had a special component for women, often added as an afterthought or added when the project ran into trouble. Women were consulted at some stages of implementation but the women were still not included in the general implementation of the project, even though it affected them most. In most
cases the women's component (such as training for women specifically) of the project did not have adequate resources (funds and expertise) to really make an impact. This had the result that women's involvement was not seen as important.

The following case study illustrates a project where a special women's component was added:

- **Case study 13: The Mwatara-Lindi project in Malawi:**

  *A Chronology: From Construction to the Participation of Women:*
  The Mtwara-Lindi project, was implemented by an engineering firm, and had as its main objective the construction of water supplies. As a consequence, when the project commenced, no socio-economic or socio-cultural study had been conducted in the area, although some general data gathering was done. A FINNIDA-financed study was conducted on the effects of the Mtwara-Lindi project on the lives of women. The results of the study were as expected:

  - women's participation in the planning and implementation of the project had been very low; and
  - the proportion of women in the project training had been minimal.

Since 1984, rural women were targeted in project documents but with few results. The project documents assumed a strategy according to which special efforts would be made to involve women in all stages and aspects of projects, particularly in planning and maintenance of water supply and sanitation systems as well as health education. There is, however, little evidence of special efforts actually made to implement this strategy. The Evaluation Mission in 1987 stressed the participation of women in the project by saying that: “Efforts to improve water use
practices in the villages should have the support of the women in order to be successful". The Evaluation Mission expanded the argument at another point by writing: "To encourage the participation of women at all stages of water supply development, from planning through implementation to operation and maintenance, should be endorsed. If the project fails to inform and involve this level adequately, little actual benefit can be derived from the water supply facilities development, however high their technical quality".

Following the 1987 Evaluation Mission's strong statements, there is no mention of women in the next phase of the project between 1988 and 1990. Taking their lead from the project document, the Evaluation Mission of 1990 also made no reference to women. In the final project phase of the project, from 1991 to 1993, project personnel included women explicitly in the project document as a target group: "Women of the region, as the main users of water, will be a special recipient group, and the success of the project will greatly depend on their attitudes and participation being responsible for the hygienic handling of water and for the hygienic habits in homes they play a decisive role in the achievement of the health related objectives of the project. In the present situation, economic development that can be foreseen to result from the improved water supply situation will be achieved mainly by the release of women's energy and time from long-distance water fetching to more productive activities" (Finnida 1994).

Finally, it is clear from project reports from the last and final phase (1991-1993) that systematic strategies for involving women are being put in place. For example, in the revised draft of the community participation manual, strategies to reach women are included in the syllabus of a community participation course; a special course on women, water and
sanitation is offered; the role of women in village participation is considered at some length; and statistics are beginning to be disaggregated by gender.

By the time the (1991 - 1993) project document was published it stated that the success of the project depended on the attitudes and participation of women. This statement led to the following questions posed by the evaluators:

- Rural women are seen in the project document as a "special" group. Does this imply that they are only included because they are the water collectors and managers of water?
- Is it not also important to know how men use water so as not to inadvertently disregard their participation and responsibilities in hygiene education and water supplies?
- Should women be viewed as the only keepers of the family health? In a nutrition program in Tanzania it was recognised that targeting only women with nutrition information was inadequate. Men needed to be involved as well, as they were often the ones to provide the money for food.
- Is it valid to say women, released from water collection, would put their energies and time to more productive activities?

Although fetching water is considered a woman’s responsibility, men reiterated that they would give money to women to purchase water if paying for water would guarantee an easy access to a reliable source. This would free men from performing domestic chores. Men perform the chores when women have to walk long distances for water. But provision of a reliable supply of water through a system of water tariff would partly reduce the woman’s workload. The workload in the cassava farms would
still be a hindrance in their full participation in hygiene and water affairs (Finnida 1994).

This project shows clearly that the important role of women in water supply projects were realised as the project implementation continued, and that women were gradually incorporated into the project to ascertain its success.

4.3.1.3 Women focused projects

In Sub-Saharan Africa many projects were started in the 1970s and 1980s which focused exclusively on women. These projects were usually operated by NGOs on a very small scale and also lacked funds and expertise. Many of these women focused projects, however, did not address the needs of the women within their cultural environment, and caused disruption of the community and household harmony.

The following example from Ethiopia indicates how men can be disadvantaged by their normal culturally determined gender roles in crisis situations:

- **Case study 14: Women teaching men in Ethiopia**
  Many young Sudanese men walked long distances to West Ethiopia to avoid conscription into the Sudanese army. When they arrived they were in very bad health. They were given food but morbidity and mortality rates remained high as they did not know how to prepare food due to their normal gender roles which exclude them from this function. Hence a teaching programme was implemented, using the 10% of the refugee population who were women, to teach the men how to cook so that they could eat and be healthy (Walker 1994: 9).
The following example from Ethiopia indicates how the participation of women in water supply projects can be advantageous for the sustainability of a water supply project:

- **Case Study 15: Flexible Timescale for Dodota Rural Water Supply Project, Ethiopia**

  The water supply project had its origins in a study on women in development by SIDA in Ethiopia in 1988. Peasant women in Dodota sub-district who spent four to six hours each day fetching water, identified lack of easy access to clean water as their main problem. From the beginning of the project there was no project blue print and no time schedule to follow, thus allowing many people to influence the shape and content of the project. Women were trained to operate and maintain the communal water points, and to manage the overall scheme, e.g. keep the books and collect fees. There was continuous dialogue between the women and the technical designer of the project which led to some innovative adaptations of the standard design. This was one of the factors leading to a strong sense of ownership of the project. The project took six years from identification to its handing over to the local community (DFID 1997: 26).

4.3.1.4 **General gender-aware projects**

A few projects were implemented with a general gender-awareness approach. Gender-awareness created the ideal situation in which women and men could participate on equal terms, addressing the same issue, acting within their cultural constraints and boundaries, drawing expertise from the women and men in the technical as well as the social aspects of the projects. The gender-awareness approach divided work, position and benefits equally between men and women.
The following case study from Nigeria shows how the participation of women at all levels from state to community can bring success, and it emphasises the setting of gender sensitive indicators:

- **Case study 16: Participation of women brings success in Nigeria**

  The UNICEF Nigeria Country Programme for 1997-2001 has been noted for its "best practices" for mainstreaming gender. One of the Programme areas included was Water Supply and Environmental Sanitation (WES). In the Water Supply component of the project, the two key objectives were to increase safe drinking water supply and to reduce the drudgery and workload of women and girls; and to enhance the capacity of community participation for maintenance and management of water facilities. The key monitoring indicators for ensuring gender mainstreaming in Water Supply and Environmental Sanitation were:

  - percentage of women relative to men trained and functional in water point maintenance;
  - percentage of membership and leadership positions held by women in Water Supply and Environmental Sanitation committees relative to men;
  - percentage of women in Water Supply and Environmental Sanitation management at National/State/Local Government Authority, relative to men; and
  - percentage of women relative to men who are trained in latrine slab production and marketing of other related materials.

  Of all the sector programmes in Nigeria, the Water Supply and Environmental Sanitation programme was found to be the most effective in mainstreaming gender in project implementation. UNICEF advocacy with state and local government authorities facilitated the active support of the state and local Water Supply and Environmental Sanitation offices.
for the participation of women in technology acquisition as well as decision making in Water Supply and Environmental Sanitation committees. In one state, the Water Supply and Environmental Sanitation programme has promoted eight women to strategic positions. The Provision of water points close to communities has reduced the workload of women and girls considerably. Women's participation in decision-making was ensured by promoting the participation of women in Water Supply and Environmental Sanitation committees at community, local government authorities and state levels (Elias 1997).

The key learning points from the case studies are the following:

- Gender-blind projects are not successful.
- A women’s component in a development project does not necessarily ensure a successful project.
- It is possible for men to be trained by women.
- Continuous dialogue between the developers and women enhances the chances of a development project to be successful and sustainable.
- Gender sensitive indicators are important for all development projects.

4.4 GENDER IN DEVELOPMENT PROJECTS IN SOUTH AFRICA

Little research has been done on gender issues in South Africa. However, gender equality, women’s participation and gender balance are high on the priority list of the government and non-governmental organisations (NGOs). Within the current formal water management structures, policies are well placed to allow for equal participation and decision-making for men and women. The gender policy of the South African Department of Water Affairs and Forestry is built around the core principles of equality, sustainability and empowerment in
order to ensure a gender balance in planning and development of the provision of basic services such as water supply and sanitation.

During 1997, the Minister of the Department of Water Affairs and Forestry established a Gender Secretariat to look at issues surrounding women and present day water resource management. Subsequently a gender policy regarding water resource and sanitation development in South Africa and management was approved. Summarised, this policy includes, *inter alia*, the following (Moema 1997:1 - 5):

"The gender policy is built around the core principles of equality, sustainability and empowerment. The policy document is divided into six chapters.

Chapter One sets out the rationale of gender concerns in the Department of Water Affairs and Forestry.

Chapter Two argues the need for a gender policy. The policy context sets out the constitutional imperatives, the Bill of Rights, the White Paper on the Transformation of the Public Service and the Women’s Charter for Effective Equality. It further draws on international conventions such as the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW), the Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC) and the Beijing Declaration and Platform of Action. Under gender issues, a distinction is made between gender issues relevant to the Department in both its internal and external business. External business refers to the Department’s responsibilities to the Community, while internal business refers to the Department’s responsibilities in affirming the value of women and increasing their numbers in all the areas of specialization in the Department’s responsibilities. The external business looks at the burden of labour and its
consequences especially for women and girls for having to travel long distances for water and wood fuel, gender imbalances in decision-making in the communities and special problems related to female heads of households. In terms of the Department’s internal business, attention is given to addressing gender gaps in recruitment and selection for employees for the Department, and as far as placement, promotions and appointments goes.

Chapter Three details principles that should guide both internal and external gender policy in relieving gender inequality. These are the implementation of Affirmative Action, ensuring gender parity in expenditure on further education, training and development, equality in access to resources, the empowerment of women in communities and the position of women in setting up developmental programmes.

Chapter Four sets out the goals and objectives which should apply both internally and externally. Under these goals reference is made to gender representation, equal participation, eradication of discrimination, creation of facilities such as day care centres, and the incorporation of gender differences in roles and eradication of inequality in all programmes. Under the gender objectives reference is made to training and development, advancement, networking, liaising with the Officer on the Status of Women and other Gender Structures, elimination of sexual harassment, paying attention to rural households, particularly single heads of households and flexitime.

Chapter Five proposes the institutional framework for mainstreaming gender and the Strategic Plan for the implementation of this policy. A Gender Committee to advise the Minister on gender issues and focal areas were established".

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A background on policy on gender is important to take note of in order to understand the framework in which gender sensitive planning and implementation of water supply and sanitation projects operates in South Africa.

4.4.1 Gender at institutional level in South Africa

Several institutions and committees on national, provincial and institutional level have been established in the past few years to address gender imbalances and inequalities, such as the Gender Secretariat of the Department of Water Affairs and Forestry, the Gender Commission for Equality, the Centre for Gender Studies at the University of Pretoria, to name a few. These institutions focus on strategies and frameworks for the implementation of gender equality and gender balance at all levels in their respective institutions.

4.4.2 Gender at grass-roots level in South Africa

The deeply entrenched traditional roles of men and women in rural African communities, passed down through generations, are currently regulating the impact of gender at grass-roots level. The woman’s place is at home, producing and reproducing, to the point that her public life is severely limited. She stays a minor, even though the Constitution, policies, and the fact that she is an adult, constitute independence. This has had the implication that most of the major decisions were made by the men, because they are accepted as the decision-makers in the community. This implies that women have limited access to, control over and use of resources in the community for development purposes. In everyday life, women are busier than men because of their responsibilities within and outside the home. In an ordinary day she has to fetch water and firewood a few kilometres away from her home, she has to care for the children, keep the house and yard clean, do the laundry, work in the field or vegetable garden and keep her husband happy. She also belongs to a women’s group and
a church group and has to go to meetings and get-togethers organised by them. All this is done without the involvement of the men and it is considered the normal role of a woman (Dreyer 1998: 4).

Traditionally women have not been involved in the initial stages of development projects at the community level in South Africa because the decisions are made by the men. As a result women have no knowledge of development projects to be implemented in areas where they live. Women do not know about meetings or about available positions on the committee. Because of the relatively low status of the women in communal rural areas, they are not seen as important enough to be informed, or to take part in the decision-making process. Some men will inform and consult their wives only after the major decisions have been made. The result is that very few women in South Africa’s communal rural areas are confident enough to recognise their own potential and become involved in development without first consulting their men folk (see Duncker 1997:16).

Only a few case studies could be identified in South Africa. The following case studies illustrate that development in South Africa needs to become gender aware and gender sensitive. The mainstreaming of gender in South Africa is a long way behind the rest of the development world.

- **Case study 18: Water supply project in Mpumalanga**
  The people of Tisane village contributed towards the capital required for the establishment of a water scheme. Where cash contributions were insufficient, the people of Tisani village contributed in labour to make up for the short fall in the capital required. The people of Tisane continued to contribute in cash and kind towards the operations and maintenance of the water system. This continued contribution resulted in the sustainability of the water project. The commitment to pay for services was encouraged by the committee’s strict financial management. The proper management
of financial and technical aspects of the projects was a factor in the sustainability of the project. The composition of the committee was gender and poverty sensitive as it included both males and females, rich and poor. However, women tended to be involved in secretarial and financial responsibilities, other than their male counterparts who were also involved in technical matters of the projects. While women, men, rich and poor enjoyed the benefits of the water projects, the rich men did not rate the benefits, such as time saving and reduced distances to the water source, high (Sithole 2000).

- **Case study 19: Water supply project in Limpopo Province**

The Laaste Hoop water project was implemented as a demand-responsive project. The project was initiated by the community itself, who had sought technical advice as well as financial support from supporting agencies, i.e. Lepelle Northern Water Board and the Development Bank of Southern Africa (DBSA). The people of Laaste Hoop village contributed in cash and labour to the establishment of the water project. While the design of the water system in Laaste Hoop was of good quality, in working condition and functional, no attention was given to the problem of illegal connections. As a result, the quantity and reliability of the water supply was affected. This resulted in the people of Laaste Hoop to abandon the service during rainy seasons, resorting to the use of old and alternative water sources. The composition of the water committee was gender and poverty sensitive as it included both males and females, rich and poor. The participatory approaches adopted in the planning and implementation of the water schemes contributed to capacity building in the community. Women were excluded in the decision making processes during the implementation of the project with the result that the women perceived the project finances as mismanaged. This was evident in the reaction of the women in Laaste Hoop: the women decided to collect the cash
contributions as they were not satisfied with the management of the finances by the water committee. The water committee consisted of men only (Sithole 2000).

In contrast to virtually all the above-mentioned case studies, the following case study illustrates full participation of women in development projects:

- **Case Study 20: Development projects in the Eastern Cape Province**
  Most of the development projects in the Eastern Cape Province were predominantly initiated and managed by women. Where men were involved, the roles of the men were set out very clearly. The women started vegetable garden projects, bread baking projects, poultry projects and piggery projects (Mkhonjwa 2000).

These case studies in general concur with the research findings of Archer (1997: 1) regarding the constraints in national policy implementation. Archer (1997: 1) found the following constraints to be the major negative aspects of the implementation of water supply projects in South Africa at that time:

- a lack of corporate will and political buy-in for gender sensitivity in development projects;
- a lack of gender awareness in organisations;
- a patriarchal society in which the roles of men and women are clearly defined, putting men and women in categories that are not allowed to overlap;
- a lack of processes to facilitate women’s access to decision-making processes in organisations and projects;
- the heavy workload of the women, especially in rural areas, that prevent women to participate in development projects;
• a lack of definition by the women on the role they should play in water resource management and development;
• a lack of understanding by the men of the role and work of the women and the converse.

5. DISCUSSION

The following conventions and declarations had an impact on the concept of gender and the mainstreaming of gender:

• Water Conference in Argentina in 1977 - subsequent launch of International Drinking Water Supply and Sanitation Decade (IDWSSD);
• Resolution 25 of World Conference of UN Decade for Women, Dublin principles;
• Beijing Conference;
• Agenda 21; and
• Water 21.

The United Nations Development Program (UNDP) supported commitments to the advancement of women and greater gender equity made during the 1995 Fourth World Conference on Women in Beijing. The Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW) was adopted by the United Nations General Assembly in 1979 and came into force in 1981, and sets out measures for ending the extensive discrimination against women that prevents them from attaining their human right to be full participants in the political, social, economic and cultural life of their countries. This document underscores the idea that the development of a country and welfare of the world
requires the maximum participation of women in all fields, on equal terms with men.

The interpretation of women's roles and gender relations has been marked by shifting positions and changing political priorities over the last few decades. The Women in Development (WID) approach emerged in response to the realisation that development initiatives promoted among the poor failed to address women's needs, did not promote their participation, and left them out of the ensuing benefits. Towards the end of the 1980s the Gender and Development (GAD) approach emerged as a reaction to the meagre results of Women in Development, wherein women were at best incorporated through minor components in larger projects, or were involved in small projects aimed at women only, thus continuing to be left out of the main thrust of development interventions.


During the International Water Decade the agenda for and approach to the International Water Decade moved away from the conventional “coverage” or number of installations, to the effective and sustainable utilisation of water and sanitation services implemented in ways that are replicable, reflecting a growing awareness of social sustainability where factors such as greater need, limited financial resources, physical and social environments including gender issues, play a major role. The approach of social sustainability in improving
development projects is now widely accepted and advocated beyond the realm of water and sanitation projects. This lead to a more gender-sensitive approach being followed which proved that women had several roles to play in matters of water and sanitation, by tradition (custom) and by necessity. Additionally, women’s participation often enhanced efficiency and effectiveness in the use and operation of water installations and sanitation facilities.

The concept of mainstreaming gender in development has been promoted with a view to incorporating a gender-sensitive approach into development projects, and endorsed in September 1995 at the 3rd United Nations World Conference on Women, held in Beijing, China.

A gender mainstreaming strategy in development projects is concerned with meeting both practical and strategic needs of women and men. A gender mainstreaming approach does not concentrate on women as a special group, but on women as half the population - the half which has often been left out of decision making processes in development projects in the past.

The United Nations System, both through the global Women’s Conferences and the work of its agencies, has been an important avenue through which mainstreaming gender gained general currency and acquired meanings - the now familiar terms gender analysis, gender-sensitive, gender-responsive and gender perspective which were made prominent and steadily gained ground for inclusion into development at large.

In Africa, the participation of local communities and of women in development projects has high priority. During the 1980s it was realised that the lack of participation of women in planning, maintaining and managing water supply and sanitation projects had negative effects on the quality of the services and on the overall position of women and their participation in development. This fact has
been recognised and found expression in the formulation of a number of policies and white papers on gender and gender issues in different countries that aim for the sustainability of their development projects.

Different types of projects have been implemented during the last two decades in South Africa and Africa. General gender-blind projects often addressed the community in general without paying attention to differences in gender roles and responsibilities. General projects with a special women’s component, often added as an afterthought or added when the project ran into trouble, women were still not included in the general section of the project, even though it affected the women. Women focused projects were usually operated by NGOs on a very small scale and did not address the needs of the women within their cultural environment, and caused disruption of the community and household harmony. General gender-aware projects created the ideal situation in which women and men could participate on equal terms, addressing the same issue, acting within their cultural constraints and boundaries, drawing expertise from the women and men in the technical as well as the social aspects of the projects. The gender-awareness approach divided work, position and benefits equally between men and women.

Gender equity, women’s participation and gender balance are high on the priority list of the South African government, institutions and non-governmental organisations (NGOs). Within the formal water management structures, policies are well placed to allow for equal participation and decision-making for men and women. The gender policy of the South African Department of Water Affairs and Forestry is built around the core principles of equality, sustainability and empowerment in order to ensure a gender balance in planning and development of the provision of basic services such as water supply and sanitation. During 1997, the Minister of the Department of Water Affairs and Forestry established a Gender Secretariat to look at issues surrounding women and present-day water resource
management. Subsequently a gender policy regarding water resource and sanitation development and management was approved. Several institutions and committees on national, provincial and institutional level have been established in South Africa in the past few years to address gender imbalances and inequalities, such as the Gender Secretariat of the Department of Water Affairs and Forestry, the Gender Commission for Equality, the Centre for Gender Studies at the University of Pretoria, to name a few. However, the mainstreaming of gender in South Africa is a long way behind the implementation of these principles in the rest of the developing world.
CHAPTER 3
THE ROLE OF WOMEN IN WATER SUPPLY AND SANITATION PROJECTS IN THE EASTERN CAPE PROVINCE

1. INTRODUCTION

It was the aim of the study to evaluate the role and position of gender sensitivity in water supply and sanitation projects in the Eastern Cape Province of South Africa, against the world trend in gender sensitivity in projects of this nature. For this purpose six villages were chosen in the Eastern Cape Province where such projects had been implemented, three villages with a water supply system and three villages without a water supply system. The aim of the research was not to conduct an ethnographic study, but to focus on extracting information on the values and perceptions of the Xhosa speaking people regarding the customary and contemporary roles and responsibilities of Xhosa women and men in water supply and sanitation development. This was done because the people identified themselves with being Xhosa people in what they called the way in which Xhosa people live. The research was conducted against the background of the description of the customary Xhosa roles as set out in Soga (1932: 112-374), Tyrrell (1968:6-189), Jonas (1972:9-208), Brownlee (1977:7-109), Olivier (1981:17-112), Hammond-Tooke (1974: 11-124), Du Preez (1983:21-55) and Pauw, BA (1987:84-140).

The breakdown of a big number of water supply and sanitation facilities and the unsustainability of projects has been to a great extent attributed to the insufficient involvement of women. If development is to be effective, it must be a cooperative enterprise between women and men in all sectors and sections of society (Water and Sanitation News, Sept 1995).
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For any development effort to succeed, the community (women and men) and the developer have to work together as partners. Within the communities, women and men must work together to ensure that their needs are met and that the improvements will impact positively on both women and men. All partners in a development project continuously learn new aspects, including how to deal with gender issues, and how to improve the participation of women in the development process (see Duncker 1997: 21).

Gender balance in participation and decision making in development projects leads to shared responsibilities between women and men in the family and the community as a whole. Improved access to resources (e.g. land, water, information, training) for women results in the increased ability to make decisions about their own lives, their family life, and the development of their community. Experience to date in South Africa in the water supply and sanitation fields, shows the importance of long term engagements between implementing agents, donors/funding agents, training agents and communities/users. Long-term involvement supports participatory development and sustainability, through training, experimenting and learning through experience. Keeping this in mind, it is clear that community participation is a major component in sustainable development (IRC 1994: 9), because in participatory development the priority needs of the people involved are addressed by involving the direct users in decision making processes during development projects.

The concept “sustainability” has been discussed in Chapter 1 (Section 3.6). Sustainability in water supply and sanitation projects implies the successful implementation, operation and maintenance of the water scheme and sanitation facilities in the community. These water and sanitation facilities should remain in a good condition, and should be used and maintained by the people in the community. Effective and sustainable use of facilities and infrastructure places people, their behaviour and their interaction with the environment at the centre of all development project activities. This has forced project planners and developers to
Chapter 3: The role of women in water supply and sanitation projects in the Eastern Cape Province

consider factors such as the community’s perceived needs, preferences, beliefs, willingness and ability to pay, their ability to organise themselves, make changes and to operate and maintain new systems (Syme 1992: 7).

As was stated in Chapter 1, Section 4.2, the research was conducted to determine whether the participation of women in the water supply and sanitation projects had an influence on the sustainability of these projects, and whether these projects empowered rural women in the Eastern Cape Province.

In order to understand the influence of the participation of women in water supply and sanitation projects, it is necessary to look at the customary roles and responsibilities of Xhosa\(^1\) women and men in general, the contemporary roles and responsibilities of Xhosa women and men in general, the roles and responsibilities of Xhosa women in water supply and sanitation projects, and what effect these roles and responsibilities have on the sustainability of these projects.

2. RESEARCH RESULTS


As indicated in Chapter 1 (Section 3.2), the focus of the study is on the contemporary roles of Xhosa women and men in the development of water supply

\(^{1}\) The people among whom the research was conducted identified themselves as Xhosa speakers and bearers of the Xhosa culture.
and sanitation projects. However, it is necessary to be aware of the customary roles of Xhosa women and men because the contemporary roles of Xhosa women and men developed from their customary roles and currently impacts on the manner in which their respective gender roles impact on water supply and sanitation projects implemented in this region.

In the following discussions the elements consistent with customary roles of Xhosa women and men, and those roles different from customary roles of Xhosa women and men will be highlighted.

3. THE CUSTOMARY GENDER ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES OF WOMEN AND MEN

During the research conducted in the communal rural areas around Queenstown in the Eastern Cape Province in 1997, spokespersons identified the customary roles and responsibilities of Xhosa women and men as they perceived it. As indicated in Chapter 1 (Section 5.4), the responses were obtained by holding discussions with individuals as well as with groups of people on the customary and contemporary roles of Xhosa women and men, girls and boys in everyday life.

Emphasis was placed on water and sanitation in order to focus the discussion and address the needs and requirements of the funding agency (the South African Water Research Commission). During these discussions, consensus was reached between the participants in the discussion on a specific issue amongst themselves, before an answer or explanation was offered to the researcher or interviewer.

When asked about the customary roles of women and men, girls and boys, spokespersons indicated that they understood that customary roles meant to be those things that happened in the times when their grandparents and great
grandparents were still alive. Some spokespersons indicated that the customary role differentiation was still practised up to the 1950s but that it started changing after that time due to the migration and urbanisation of the Xhosa people. Despite these statements, people still identified with a Xhosa way of life as they perceived it to be with changes having taken place over time in the customary way of living.

According to the spokespersons the practice of migratory labour influenced the family structure and therefore also the individual responsibilities of the people in the households.

3.1 CUSTOMARY ROLES: WOMEN AND GIRLS (Female Spokespersons)

No water or sanitation projects existed in the time classified by the spokespersons as the so-called traditional/customary time in the Eastern Cape Province. Therefore the responses allude to the perceived and taught customary roles and responsibilities of women and men in the household set up. (See Chapter 1, Section 5.5 for the manner in which the translation of the responses from spokespersons were handled).

The 72 female spokespersons identified the following customary roles and responsibilities of women in the Eastern Cape Province, and all confirmed that these roles were important as they are set out below in order of priority:

i. Women fetched water and firewood and cleaned the house.

ii. Women were not expected to get a job, rather to get married, to look after the household, to have a family and children and for the father to receive marriage goods for her.

iii. The old women were responsible for the young women, to teach them about good conduct (e.g. visits with boys were regulated), and what to do in the household, how to work in the house.
iv. Women depended on men for money and to care for them.

v. Women grew their own food and made sour porridge and traditional beer.

vi. Men took decisions on behalf of women, as it happened in the house, they (the men) wanted to let it happen in the community. Women could talk, but men took decisions.

vii. Only some women without husbands would attend community meetings, normally the husbands represented their wives at these meetings. Women did not attend or participate in community meetings, they only saw the men attend these meetings.

viii. Women respected their cultural customs and followed these rules in daily life.

ix. The youth behaved themselves and had respect for their bodies.

x. Children were under the control/guardianship of their parents.

xi. Girls cared for the cattle when the cattle were around the house.

xii. Young girls were obedient because the parents were strict. Girls were expected to stay at home and were punished (beaten) when they did not stay at home.

The responses from the female spokespersons regarding the customary roles and responsibilities of Xhosa women concur with the roles of Xhosa women as indicated in the literature (see Soga 1932: 112-374, Tyrrell 1968: 6-189, Jonas 1972: 4-208, Hammond-Tooke 1974: 11-124 and Pauw, BA 1987: 1-18). No noticeable differences were identified between the three villages with a water supply system and the three villages without a water supply system.

According to female spokespersons the Xhosa people lived in family units (imizini) of a man, his wife (wives) and children. During the research female spokespersons indicated that physical maturity was not regarded as the only prerequisite to become married and attain adulthood. Young Xhosa girls were initiated individually and instructed by their mothers and other older women in the community in the roles and responsibilities of a married woman before the young girls could marry. This is

Female spokespersons also indicated that the main focus of a woman’s daily activities was on the household and the family. The responsibilities of a married woman were to have children, to take care of the household (fetching water and firewood), to care for the children, and to take care of her husband.

Each Xhosa family owned a number of cattle, goats, chicken and pigs. The men in the family were responsible for the cattle and the milking of the cows, while the women tended the goats, pigs and chickens in the kraal/household. Female spokespersons further indicated that young girls also looked after the cattle when the cattle were close to the kraal/household. Xhosa women also planted and tended their own fields for food and made traditional beer and sour porridge.

It was customary for women not to attend any meetings, only old and single women attended meetings. Men attended meetings and made decisions regarding issues in the community. The women were represented by their husbands at the meetings. Decision making was the responsibility of the men in the household. Women respected these things and were satisfied with men making the decisions.

3.2 CUSTOMARY ROLES: WOMEN AND GIRLS (Male Spokespersons)

The 47 male spokespersons identified the following customary roles and responsibilities of Xhosa women. The answers were ordered in the frequency it occurred, i.e. if an answer was given more than once it was deemed more important than an answer that was only mentioned once and placed higher on the list.

i. Women looked after the household and raised the children.

ii. Women stayed behind at home when men went to the towns and cities to
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Women cooked for the household, collected firewood, fetched water, cleaned the house and washed the clothes and dishes.

Women were expected to get married, with or without consent. The example given here was *ukutwala* custom (the girl is abducted without the consent of her parents, even though the parents eventually gave permission for the marriage to happen).

Women were minor to men, men made the decisions.

Girls passed through initiation rites.

Girls did not attend school, they fetched water, collected firewood and took food to the fields where the boys were planting.

Some girls worked but had to stop working when they got married to look after their own household and husband.

Girls and women wore traditional dresses with a “kopdoek”.

The responses from male spokespersons regarding the customary roles and responsibilities of Xhosa women concur with the literature of the roles of Xhosa women, as it was described by Soga (1932: 112-374), Tyrrell (1968: 6-189), Jonas (1972: 4-208), Hammond-Tooke (1974: 11-124) and Pauw, BA (1987: 124-140). No noticeable differences were identified between the three villages with a water supply system and the three villages without a water supply system.

According to male spokespersons the Xhosa people lived in family units of a man, his wife and children. During the research the male spokespersons indicated that physical maturity was not regarded as the only prerequisite to marriage and adulthood. A young Xhosa girl was traditionally initiated on an individual basis as soon as she started her first menstrual cycle. After initiation the young girl was regarded as an adult woman with the roles and responsibilities of an adult woman regardless of her physical age. According to the male spokespersons, young girls were initiated and instructed by their mothers and older women in the roles and
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responsibilities of a married woman.

The male spokespersons indicated that the Xhosa acknowledged abduction (ukutwala) as a form of marriage even though the transfer of marriage goods (ukulobola) had not taken place initially. The marriage goods usually consisted of a number of cattle or blankets, which in the case of the ukutwala custom, were handed over at a stage after the girl’s parents had consented to the marriage taking place. A Xhosa woman was supposed to get married with or without her consent. Women were also supposed to have children. Even when an unmarried woman had started to work somewhere else, she had to stop working when she got married to fulfil her roles and responsibilities in her household and to have children. Therefore, according to male spokespersons, girls did not go to school but stayed home and learnt to take care of a household.

According to male spokespersons, women were traditionally regarded as minors by the men in the communities, and therefore, men had total power over the women. The men made all the decisions in the community as well as the household. The main focus of a woman’s daily activities was on the household and the family, and not on community issues.

3.3 CUSTOMARY ROLES: MEN AND BOYS (Female Spokespersons)

When female spokespersons were asked about the customary roles and responsibilities of the men and boys in the communities in general during the work sessions, the 72 female spokespersons identified the following customary roles and responsibilities of Xhosa men and boys in the Eastern Cape Province:

i. Men had to work and bring an income home or post it home from wherever they were.

ii. If men were not formally employed, they had to cultivate land and own
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livestock or do contract work.

iii. Older men determined the upbringing of the boys. The older men instructed the boys in their roles and responsibilities, e.g. to look after livestock, to start their own households, when to get a wife and household, and when to settle down.

iv. Men also instructed the boys on how to treat their wives in order to have a peaceful marriage, e.g. if there was a quarrel, to keep it in the household.

v. Men conducted themselves well and were not forceful in relationships.

vi. Men’s roles were respectable and secretive, women were not allowed to know what men were doing.

vii. Men were more important than women. Women needed permission from men to do anything. Men were the heads of the households.

viii. Boys had respect for older men. The older men were strict and the youth were obedient.

ix. Boys would grow up, get circumcised and look for work, look after their homes, try to get wives to help them and their mothers. They lived with the parents in their homes until they could stand on their own feet.

The responses from the female spokespersons regarding the customary roles and responsibilities of Xhosa men are in accordance with the literature of the roles of Xhosa men, as it was described by Soga (1932: 112-374), Tyrrell (1968: 6-189), Jonas (1972: 9 - 208), Hammond-Tooke (1974: 11 - 124) and Pauw, BA (1987: 124-140). No noticeable differences were identified between the three villages with a water supply system and the three villages without a water supply system.

According to female spokespersons, physical maturity of a person and the completion of initiation rites were the main prerequisites for marriage. During the initiation ceremony the boys were circumcised and left in isolation in a ceremonial hut until their wounds have healed. The boys were instructed by the older men in their roles and responsibilities when they would become head of a household. From

The activities of the men were regarded as confidential and women did not have to know what men were doing. The female spokespersons confirmed that men were regarded as more important than women and were respected by the women. Men were the heads of the households and made all the decisions in the community and the household.

3.4 CUSTOMARY ROLES: MEN AND BOYS (Male spokespersons)

When male spokespersons were asked about the customary roles and responsibilities of the Xhosa men and boys in the communities in general during the work sessions, the 47 male spokespersons identified the following traditional roles and responsibilities of Xhosa men and boys in the Eastern Cape Province:

i. Men used to plough, used to drink traditional beer, and do traditional dancing.

ii. Men were concerned with farming and administering the land for grazing and planting.

iii. It was the role of the man to fend for his household and to protect it. Men had to bring money home and if they had their own households, they had to feed them.

iv. Men used to get circumcised and after that, looked after the livestock of the family.

v. Boys were always in the presence of older men.

vi. Boys did not attend meetings.

vii. Boys used to go to the fields to look after the cattle, old men would give the boys a mug of beer, which they would drink quietly and then go to sleep or
go to traditional dancing with other men.

The responses from male spokespersons regarding the customary roles and responsibilities of Xhosa men in the Eastern Cape are in accordance with the literature of the roles of Xhosa men, as it is described by Soga (1932: 112-374), Tyrrell (1968: 6-189), Jonas (1972: 9-208), Hammond-Tooke (1974: 11-124) and Pauw, BA (1987: 124-140). No noticeable differences were identified between the three villages with a water supply system and the three villages without a water supply system.

According to male spokespersons, Xhosa boys were circumcised before the boys were regarded as adult men, regardless of their physical age. The responsibilities of the men were to fend for and protect their families, to take care of their livestock and to earn money for the household. Men were concerned with farming and administering the land for grazing and planting.

Male spokespersons also indicated that boys did not attend any meetings in the community until they were regarded as men. Boys were always in the presence of older men in order to learn how to be proper adult men.

3.5 DISCUSSION

The responses from both female and male spokespersons regarding the customary roles and responsibilities of Xhosa women and men are in accordance with the literature of the roles of Xhosa women and men, as it was described by Soga (1932: 112-374), Tyrrell (1968: 6-189), Jonas (1972: 9-208), Hammond-Tooke (1974: 11-124) and Pauw, (1987: 124-140). No noticeable differences were identified between the three villages with a water supply system and the three villages without a water supply system. The responses that were different were too low in number (three individuals) to take into consideration in the data analysis.
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The above data shows that the female and male spokespersons agreed that in the so-called traditional times there was a clear distinction between the roles and responsibilities of men and women, boys and girls. No overlapping of roles and responsibilities occurred, role distinction was very clear and generally accepted. Female and male spokespersons were in agreement that Xhosa men were the heads of households and the protectors and providers, while Xhosa women were the supporters and nurturers of the households. Xhosa girls and boys were raised to fulfil these roles and responsibilities in adulthood without question.

4. THE CONTEMPORARY GENDER ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES OF WOMEN AND MEN

The responses regarding the contemporary roles and responsibilities of Xhosa women and men in the Eastern Cape Province were obtained by holding discussions with individuals as well as groups of people on the traditional and current roles of women and men in everyday life. The discussions were held on the matter of water and sanitation in order to focus the discussion in gathering information for the needs and requirements of the funding organisation (Water Research Commission). During these discussions, consensus was reached between the participants in the discussion on a specific issue before an answer or explanation was offered to the researcher/interviewer (see Chapter 1: Section 5.4).

The contemporary roles of females and males were defined by spokespersons as those fulfilled by the spokespersons, their families and their communities at the time of the research in 1997.

The responses of the spokespersons were grouped and ranked during the data analysis according to the frequency (number of times) the response was mentioned.
by different spokespersons. During the data checking process (see Chapter 1: 5.7),
which consisted of feedback to the community members in discussion groups, the
importance and ranking of the responses were confirmed, or changed if necessary.

4.1 CONTEMPORARY ROLES: WOMEN AND GIRLS (Female spokespersons)

When female spokespersons were asked about the contemporary roles and
contemporary responsibilities of Xhosa women and girls in the communities
regarding water and sanitation projects in general during the work sessions, the 72
female spokespersons regarded the following roles and responsibilities of Xhosa
women and girls as being the right reflection of the current situation:

i. Women are still expected to look after the household, to have a family and
children and to get marriage goods for their fathers. But women don’t marry
any more, they and their lovers just live together. Women are free today,
they have a choice to continue working even if married and have children.

ii. Now is the age of enlightenment, everything is permitted. In the olden days
women did not go to work, but due to hardships they have to work now.

iii. Women still fetch firewood and clean the house.

iv. Women leave their men and go to work. They are independent. Women now
have earning power, and consequently power over their own lives.

v. Women must still agree with what the men do, it is our culture. Women are
still the minors. Women still have to respect men, it is right that men are
respected, the men still feel superior, though they now do consider women’s
views. Women still only give suggestions, because they have to respect
men.

vi. Women attend water and sanitation meetings and participate in the
discussions. It is progressive that women now attend meetings in the
community, what you did not know you learn at meetings. It is a good thing
(women attending meetings now), we advise the men and work with them.
vii. Men still make decisions on behalf of the women, but women are starting to wake up a bit now (sic), (i.e. women do not agree any more with the fact that men make decisions on behalf of the women).

viii. Women want to be the head of the household now, but men are still stubborn and some women are still afraid of men.

ix. Women now have a voice in water and sanitation development meetings, but it is still difficult for men to accept it.

x. Housewives do not depend on the husband any more. Women can now play the same role as men in the villages, they can do the same job.

xi. Girls come and go as they wish, they do not stay at home anymore, even though they have husbands (are married).

xii. The youth is not accountable any more, girls do not ask permission to go out and to visit boys anymore.

xiii. Girls finish school and get employed. Women leave their men and go to work. They are independent.

xiv. Girls have children at a young age now, and then they expect grandparents to look after them (the children).

According to these responses from female spokespersons, the contemporary roles and responsibilities of Xhosa women seem to have changed substantially from their customary roles and responsibilities. The women have, to a large extent, become independent from the husbands and generate their own income. The female spokespersons indicated that women want to become heads of households and make decisions regarding the household, but that the men prevent the women from becoming heads of households. The women still respect the men in such a way that the women will not go against the will of the men when it comes to being the head of a household. The women are still expected to care for the household, to have a family and children and to get marriage goods for their fathers, but women now choose to continue working, even after the women got married and have had...
children.

The female spokespersons see contemporary times as the age of "enlightenment" even though the women are still regarded as minors. Women still have to respect the men because it is the culture and expected of them. The men still make decisions on behalf of the women, even when the women do not agree any more with the fact that men make decisions for them.

The women attend water supply and sanitation meetings and participate in the discussions during these meetings. According to the female spokespersons, the women feel they advise the men and work with them on water supply and sanitation projects. The women are also free to participate in the development of their communities. However, the women still only give suggestions during water supply and sanitation meetings, because they still have to respect the men as the decision makers. The last mentioned situation was also encountered during the meetings that were held during the time the research for this study was conducted.

As was the case with the responses regarding the customary roles of women and girls in the Eastern Cape Province, no noticeable differences were identified regarding the contemporary roles of women and men between the three villages with a water supply system and the three villages without a water supply system.

4.2 CONTEMPORARY ROLES: WOMEN AND GIRLS (Male spokespersons)

When the male spokespersons were asked about the contemporary roles and contemporary responsibilities of the Xhosa women and girls in the villages regarding water and sanitation projects in general during the work sessions, the 47 male spokespersons regarded the following roles and responsibilities of women and girls as being the right reflection of the current situation:
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i. Women earn their own money now and are able to employ maids to clean their houses.

ii. Women work now and develop themselves, but they still have children and fetch the water.

iii. Women attend meetings and participate in the discussions and voice their opinions. Women are more outspoken and forthright in meetings.

iv. Women have children before they get married because there is no punishment any more. Women still bring up the children and clean the house.

v. Women go to schools now to get an education. Even if the husband is not educated, the wife still goes to school.

vi. Women smoke and drink with men now and easily go out with men.

vii. Women are still the minors of their husbands or their fathers, but it is better than in the olden days. The situation is improving.

viii. Women do not help in the fields any more, they are involved in development projects.

ix. Girls go to school, go to disco’s and want to get a job. But the girls still help their mothers to clean the house after school.

x. *Ukutwala* (abduction marriage) is very rare now, the girls could get hurt because times are tough.

xi. Girls dress differently now, they wear short skirts and perm their hair.

According to these responses from the men, the contemporary roles and responsibilities of women seem to have changed significantly from the customary roles and responsibilities of women. According to the male spokespersons the women earn their own money and want to have an education and develop themselves. The women do not want to be dependent on the men any more but still have children and take care of the household and children.

According to the male spokespersons, the women attend water supply and sanitation project meetings and voice their opinions during these meetings. The
women do not tend the fields any more because the women are involved in development projects in the community. However, the women are still regarded as minors by the men, but, according to the male spokespersons, the situation is improving in the sense that more women are listened to and women are becoming involved in decision making in development projects.

The male spokespersons further indicated that girls are still raised by their families to fulfil the role of wife and mother, but the male spokespersons indicate that the girls prefer to receive an education and find jobs for themselves.

Again, the responses from the male spokespersons showed no noticeable differences regarding the contemporary roles of women and girls between the three villages with a water supply system and the three villages without a water supply system.

4.3 CONTEMPORARY ROLES: MEN AND BOYS (Female spokespersons)

When the female spokespersons were asked about the contemporary roles and responsibilities of Xhosa men and boys in the communities regarding water and sanitation in general during the work sessions, all 72 female spokespersons regarded the following roles and responsibilities of men and boys as being the right reflection of the current situation:

i. There are still expectations for men - that they should start a family, look after that family and to transfer marriage goods - the customary role for men is still strong.

ii. Men’s roles are still respected and confidential, women are still not allowed to know what the men do.

iii. Men keep their earnings for themselves, they don’t give money to the wife or the family any more.
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iv. In some cases men as such are not respectable anymore, they have no money, there is a lack of employment. Unemployment affects men’s superiority.

v. Men are still heads of households, because of lack of gender education. Women still need permission from men. Men are still the head of households in villages and still preside over ceremonies, it is customary and men are stronger and are our households’ heads.

vi. Men have the same roles as before, even today the boys are taught the same roles as before. But now it is up to the youth to accept or reject it.

vii. Boys look after cattle, milk them, but they are also in a rush to go to town - there are no jobs here and money is scarce.

viii. Now there are difficulties, some boys think they are old (grown up) now and do not respect older men any more.

ix. Boys also go to school now. Education brought enlightenment, but there is also crime now.

The contemporary roles and responsibilities of the men seem not to have changed significantly from the customary roles and responsibilities of men. The contemporary roles and responsibilities of the men are basically the same as their traditional or customary roles and responsibilities. However, the roles and responsibilities of boys have changed significantly in the sense that the boys do not accept the authority and discipline of the older men any more. The boys have the freedom to choose whether they want to accept the customary roles and responsibilities of boys or reject these customary roles and responsibilities.

According to female spokespersons, men are still expected to earn money and protect their families and livestock. The men are still the heads of the households and are still expected to make the decisions in the households and regarding water supply and sanitation projects. However, female spokespersons indicated that the lack of employment and the resulting lack of income and money of the men
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undermine the position of men in terms of the superiority of men.

As was the case with the responses regarding the customary roles of men and boys in the Eastern Cape Province, no noticeable differences were identified regarding the contemporary roles of men and boys between the three villages with a water supply system and the three villages without a water supply system.

4.4 CONTEMPORARY ROLES: MEN AND BOYS (Male spokespersons)

When male spokespersons were asked about the contemporary roles and responsibilities of men and boys in the communities regarding water and sanitation projects in general during the work sessions, all 47 male spokespersons regarded the following roles and responsibilities of men and boys as being the right reflection of the current situation:

i. Men use tractors to plough the fields. They don’t go to traditional dancing any more, men spend time in bars, drinking.

ii. The household still depends on the man, the owner of the house. He administers the household together with his wife, he cannot just decide, the wife must give consent.

iii. A man does not have to give his salary to his parents anymore. Some men still give money to their parents, but in many cases it does not happen anymore. Times have changed, people have changed.

iv. Men help in the house and there is no pressure on young men to get married and start their own households. When the men get married, they work hand in hand with their marriage partners, men do not carry the knobkierie anymore (meaning that men do not have to be encumbered in order to be able to defend the household with a weapon).

v. Men teach their sons to help in the house, to also fetch water, but not to carry it on their heads.
vi. Nowadays, men do not teach their sons to look after the livestock, they send them to school rather (the fathers now look after the livestock). Boys play with boys their own age.

vii. Young men (not attending school any more but not specifically circumcised) attend meetings and there is a new feeling of openness.

viii. Young men now do not know how to span oxen and plough with them, they learn different things today. Education has changed things, the young men do not rely on land and farming for survival anymore.

ix. Nowadays, boys get circumcised even after they started working. Married men help in the house, and there is no pressure on unmarried men to get married and start their own households.

x. Young men are not interested in the old days and will even pick a fight with older men. Young men do migrant work, such as sheep shearing.

The contemporary roles and responsibilities of men seem to have changed to a large extent from their customary roles. According to the male spokespersons, the roles and responsibilities of men have changed. The men are still the heads of the households but do not make decisions unilaterally any more, but in consultation with their wives. The men are not pressurised to get married any more, but when the men get married, they work hand in hand with their marriage partners.

The boys are not interested in the customary roles and responsibilities of men any more, the boys prefer to have an education and to do migrant work.

Again, the responses from the spokespersons showed no noticeable differences regarding the contemporary roles of men and boys between the three villages with a water supply system and the three villages without a water supply system.
4.5 DISCUSSION

From the above, it is obvious that the traditionally clear distinction between the roles and responsibilities of women and men, girls and boys have faded away. The spokespersons indicated that men now help in managing the household and doing household chores, while the women also earn an income to provide for the financial needs of the household. Circumcision is, however, to a large extent seen to be a mark of an adult man, despite the fact that he might not have attended the "official" initiation ceremony.

Many of the customary ways have changed, such as the **ukutwala** (abduction marriage) which does not occur any more. So too, the clear distinction between the roles and responsibilities of girls and boys. Girls and boys are now raised to assist each other in their chores, such as fetching water and firewood, looking after the livestock and assisting each other in their schoolwork.

The roles and responsibilities of the women and girls have changed more than those of the men and boys. It is reflected in the responses where the women focused on personal and interpersonal development and growth, while the men focused on circumstantial and practical differences and changes between the customary and contemporary roles and responsibilities.

The inherent roles and responsibilities of the women and girls have changed from being mainly supporters and nurturers of the household to being fellow providers for the household. The women and girls have become more independent and self-supporting, and prefer to find jobs rather than just getting married and looking after their households.

The analysis of the data shows a difference in the perception of the female and male spokespersons regarding the contemporary roles and responsibilities of men.
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The female spokespersons are of the opinion that the contemporary roles and responsibilities of the men have basically stayed the same as the customary roles and responsibilities of men. The male spokespersons indicated that the contemporary roles and responsibilities of the men have changed from the customary roles and responsibilities of men. According to the female spokespersons the men still migrate and work in the towns and cities and come home once in a month or once in three months to be looked after and be supported by the wife or the mother. Men still want to be married and supported and be the heads of households and make the decisions.

According to the male spokespersons the men manage their households and make decisions in consultation with their wives, even though the men are still the heads of the households. The female spokespersons indicated that the men are still the heads of the households and make decisions, but the men do not necessarily consult the women.

The analysis of the data also showed that the responses from both the female and male spokespersons in the three villages with a water supply system as well as the three villages without a water supply system were similar. This may be ascribed to the fact that the villages without a water supply system were geographically situated close enough to villages with a water supply system to facilitate the exchange and cross pollination of ideas, perceptions and views of the members of the communities.

Another explanation for the similarity in the responses may be that the extended family structure of the people in the villages facilitates constant contact with the members of other communities due to family ties and, therefore, the exchange and cross pollination of ideas, perceptions and views of the members of the communities occur.
5. EXPECTATIONS: CONTEMPORARY ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES OF WOMEN AND MEN

The research in the Eastern Cape Province showed that the women and men had certain expectations regarding one another in respect of their roles and responsibilities in the community in the sense of what women are expected to do and what men are expected to do. The expectations of women and men of the other guide the process of culture change in the Xhosa way of life. The section below focuses on what women and men currently expect from one another regarding their roles and responsibilities, and why these roles and responsibilities are accepted by these women and men. Listed below are the responses of the spokespersons.

5.1 EXPECTATIONS FOR WOMEN IN THE RESEARCH AREAS

The following were regarded as roles and responsibilities expected to be fulfilled by women, as expressed by women and men respectively during the discussion group sessions. The responses were once again ranked according to the number of times a certain response was mentioned by different spokespersons (see Chapter 1: Section 5.4).

The 74 female spokespersons regarded the following roles and responsibilities to be those expected to be fulfilled by women and girls:

i. Women should have children and raise them well.
ii. Women should enjoy life with their husbands.
iii. Women should clean the house, cook, fetch water, collect firewood and do the laundry.
iv. Women should look after the livestock when their husbands are absent.
v. Women should plough and plant and grow vegetables when their husbands
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are absent from home.

vi. Women should make a living (earn an income one way or the other) when their husbands are away working in the mines or in the cities.

The 47 male spokespersons regarded the following roles and responsibilities as those expected to be fulfilled by women and girls:

i. Women should cook, clean the house, do the laundry and look after the livestock.

ii. Women should have children and raise them well by disciplining them.

iii. Women should take care of their husbands and their households.

iv. Women should obey and respect their husbands.

v. Women are responsible for the happiness in the home.

5.2 EXPECTATIONS FOR MEN IN THE RESEARCH AREAS

The following were regarded as roles and responsibilities expected to be fulfilled by men, as expressed by women and men respectively during the discussion groups. The responses were ranked according to the number of times a certain response was mentioned by different groups.

The 74 female spokespersons regarded the following roles and responsibilities as those expected to be fulfilled by men and boys:

i. Men should share in the chores in the household, plough the fields and look after the livestock.

ii. Men should bring in money to feed and clothe their children.

iii. Men should maintain peace in their families.

iv. Men should protect their families and look after the children.

v. Men should respect their wives and children, not beat and abuse them.
vi. Men should fetch water to give their wives a rest or when they are ill.

vii. Men should go to church and should not have girlfriends.

The 47 male spokespersons regarded the following roles and responsibilities as those expected to be fulfilled by men and boys:

i. Men should protect their families and maintain peace.

ii. Men should work for their families and earn an income.

iii. Men should share in some of the household chores.

iv. Men should fetch water but not carry it on their heads.

v. Men should feed and clothe the families.

5.3 ACCEPTANCE BY THE WOMEN AND MEN OF THEIR CONTEMPORARY ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

The following is a summary of the reasons that were provided by female and male spokespersons as to why women accept their contemporary roles and responsibilities in their communities.

i. It is the responsibility and the role of the women to do these things.

ii. Culturally, it is what women are supposed to do. Women are forced by the men to accept these roles and responsibilities.

iii. Men marry women to be their helpers at home, because men have other things to do. Women are aware of this when they get married.

iv. The women were instructed during the ukuyolwa (initiation) in what their roles and responsibilities are once they are married.

v. The women were brought up to fulfil these roles. It is the custom to accept these roles when they get married.
5.4 DISCUSSION

The data indicates that in the research areas, the expectations of women and the expectations of men in respect of the role of the opposite sex, were complimentary. The basic expectations of women and men such as food, water, fuel, housing, security and health care, were very important for both women and men. The women and the men wanted a harmonious and peaceful family with enough to eat and clothes to wear.

The women wanted to develop and improve their quality of life by obtaining an education and finding jobs elsewhere. The men also had a need to see the women develop and become independent, as long as it did not interfere with their roles and the perception of their needs, or disrupt the family or community harmony.

6. INFLUENCE OF PARTICIPATION: WOMEN IN WATER SUPPLY AND SANITATION PROJECTS

The need for rapid delivery and specialist inputs during the last decade of the implementation of water supply and sanitation projects have often meant that water supply and sanitation programmes were conceived and implemented in a top-down manner. Complex logistics requiring co-ordination with a wide range of governmental organisations, political sensitivities, and the very large numbers of people to be served were also factors which affected the implementation of water supply and sanitation projects. The approach whereby speed of delivery is a priority, had often precluded proper discussion with the affected people, overlooked gender considerations, and resulted in inappropriate and therefore ineffective and non-sustainable projects and facilities (WEDC 2000: 19).
Many water supply and sanitation projects in the Eastern Cape Province have been successful, but in almost all the cases, the benefits have bypassed the rural women in the sense that the women’s workload increased instead of decreased. Even though water is more readily available to people in the rural areas, women’s chores in respect of her household and her other responsibilities have increased. She does not have to fetch water from a long distance any more, but she has to attend meetings, dig trenches and lay pipes for the water supply project, and is responsible for the operation and maintenance of the street taps and pipes close to her household, as well as the toilet in her yard. This increase in workload can be ascribed to the fact that the planning and implementation of water supply and sanitation projects had been executed with the exclusion of the women. As a result the women were portrayed as only passive beneficiaries, although the projects had a major impact on their workload and quality of life (INSTRAW 1995:18).

Traditionally, the women’s role was centred on giving birth to children and taking care of the home, as was shown in 5.1. Consequently, all matters regarding participation, decision making and community development were the exclusive domain of the men. The old customs and values kept women “behind the screen”, where they had to make their influence felt by subtle, and only sometimes overt, influencing strategies. However, times and cultures have changed and are still changing. For the last three decades more and more women and girls have been educated. Women are now becoming more and more knowledgeable on issues regarding development in their communities (see Duncker 1999: 24) because the women are usually left behind in the communities when the men migrate to towns and cities to earn a living. This has had a profound influence on how women in rural communities in the Eastern Cape Province see their roles and responsibilities in everyday life.

According to estimates, one in four water supply systems in South Africa which were constructed through water supply projects, does not function at any one time,
and the number of those being abandoned is nearly equal to the number of new ones being commissioned. Even functional systems often remain in disuse due to the lack of involvement and participation of the end users (the community, and specifically the women) in the planning and decision making regarding the construction of the water supply system. Even when water supply systems function, women prefer to use the water source they used before the system was built because they do not have to pay for the water and do not have to operate and maintain the system, therefore saving the women time and effort (see Duncker 1997: 18). In some cases the monthly operation and maintenance fee is too high for the family to be able to pay, and then the women choose to use the old water source (Schreiner et al. in print: 4).

A gender study in the Northern Province, however, showed that the constraints to the participation of women in development projects can be overcome (see Duncker 1997). The developers who were implementing a gender sensitive project indicated that the women excelled, and even performed better than men when they were given equal training and equal employment opportunities than those of the men (Syme 1992: 8).

6.1 THE PARTICIPATION OF WOMEN IN WATER SUPPLY AND SANITATION PROJECTS

The views of the women and men regarding the participation of women in development projects regarding water supply and sanitation in their villages are listed below. The responses were obtained through household and group interviews during which open-ended questions were posed on the participation of women in water supply and sanitation projects in their villages. The responses were written down on a flip chart by the interviewer, and then prioritised by the members of the household or the discussion group. The interviewer also noted the frequency of the responses and correlated the frequency with the prioritisation. The responses were given freely by the spokespersons, but lively discussion ensued with prioritising the
responses. The responses were written down as they were said, care was taken in the translation from Xhosa to English to capture the correct meaning and to stay as close to a literal translation as possible (see Chapter 1: Section 4.4.5).

6.1.1 Women’s views on the participation of women in water supply and sanitation projects

As indicated below, spokespersons had specific views regarding the participation of women in water supply and sanitation projects. The 74 women interviewed during the research, all of them living in rural settings, agreed upon the following as the prerequisites for women’s participation in water supply and sanitation projects:

i. In the past, women could talk, but men made the decisions. However, women these days have a voice, but it is still difficult for men to accept that women can voice an own opinion in public. Men give women the opportunity to participate in water supply and sanitation projects, but the opportunity is limited – “custom says we must respect men”.

ii. Women can give suggestions, but may not take major decisions; men should have the last word.

iii. Women are inferior to men (the women’s perception). Women must agree with what men do.

iv. Men still feel superior, though they do consider women’s views.

v. Women are starting to become aware of their rights these days; women also want to be the leaders now, but men are still stubborn and some women are still afraid of men.

vi. Men see themselves as important people and women do not unite to bring forward their views strongly.

vii. We have women on committees these days.
6.1.2 Men’s views on the participation of women in water supply and sanitation projects

The 47 rural men interviewed during the research, agreed upon the following as the prerequisites for women’s participation in water supply and sanitation projects:

i. The father is still head of household and men make decisions, because that is the custom - but, with the times, all things are improving; it is not exactly like the old days any more.

ii. Women also attend meetings on development issues in general; it is good for the women to be part of discussions and for the men not to talk over the women’s heads.

6.2 REPRESENTATION OF WOMEN AND MEN ON WATER SUPPLY/SANITATION COMMITTEES

In the different committees in the villages that were part of the research, representation between both sexes was unevenly spread. The positions of chair, vice-chair, treasurer and bookkeeper (positions with responsibility) on the committees were generally filled by men, while positions with less responsibility, such as secretaries and ad hoc members, were filled by women. As one young woman remarked: “...it is always the men who are the chairs....”.

Figure 1 shows the gender breakdown of the positions filled on the six committees for water supply and sanitation projects in the communities where the research was conducted. Not all the positions in these six committees were filled. The representation of women did not differ between water committees and sanitation committees, even though sanitation was regarded as a woman’s issue by the majority of the spokespersons.
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Interestingly enough, the water committees generally also managed the sanitation projects.

Figure 1: Positions of water/sanitation committee members in the Eastern Cape according to gender

![Bar chart showing positions of committee members by gender]

The policy on water supply and sanitation states that women must fill a third of the positions on water committees (Government Gazette 1998: 4). The committees of the villages where the research was done consisted mostly of men. Only one committee in one village, the bread baking committee, had a woman as the chairperson and the majority of the other positions on the bread baking committee were filled by women. No water/sanitation committee consisted of more women than men.

This tendency corresponds with what is perceived by the men and women in the villages as the customary roles for women and men. Men are the decision makers and women are the supporters. This is an indication that the recommendations of the government’s policy on water supply and sanitation does not reach the grass
roots level to influence the increase of the participation of women in water supply and sanitation projects.

However, this tendency negates the responses from the spokespersons as was discussed earlier. According to the spokespersons, women should participate in development projects and decision making processes, but the reality shows that it is not happening yet. Women are still not participating in decision making processes as the lack of representation of women in decision making positions of water supply/sanitation committees illustrates. Women fulfil the supporting roles of secretary or additional members, men fulfil the roles of chairpersons, vice-chairpersons, treasurers and bookkeepers.

6.3 PARTICIPATION OF WOMEN IN DECISION MAKING IN WATER SUPPLY AND SANITATION PROJECTS

The information shown in the following two figures was obtained from the women and men through the pocket chart method (Chapter 1: Section 5.4.3). This method allowed the spokespersons to identify the persons making decisions in certain circumstances by putting stones into pockets below a representative picture of the person making the decision. Thus, the responses of each spokesperson were anonymous, allowing the spokesperson to be honest and truthful in his or her reply. The matches or stones in each pocket were counted and graphs were drawn from the results.

6.3.1 Decision making in water projects

Figure 2 shows that the decision-making on water supply projects was basically shared equally between the women and the men in the communities where the research was done. It was, however, observed that the women attended meetings but did not voice their opinions. Probing the women after the meetings revealed
that the women had already discussed their opinions with their husbands and that the husbands were their voices at the meeting.

It was important that the men were seen to be making the decisions, although the women were part of the decision making process before they attended the meetings.

Figure 2: Decision makers in water projects according to gender

The research data indicated that it was mostly men (60%) between the ages of 21 and 60 who were involved in decision-making regarding water supply. In the cases where women participated actively in the decision making, it was the older women in the community or in the households, who were respected in the community, and who were consulted by the other women and the men in other instances too.

The youth of both sexes between the ages of 10 and 20 did not have any say in issues regarding water projects. These young people were busy with schoolwork and were not regarded as old enough to have a say in the implementation of the water project. In most cases the youth finish with school and leave the community to live in the cities where they can find employment.
The aged of both sexes who were older than 60 years, had little say in water supply issues. In most cases the old people were not interested in these “modern matters” as it would not change their daily activities in a major way. The old people were consulted and involved on a small scale as a token of respect for their age and wisdom.

6.3.2 Decision making in sanitation projects

Figure 3 shows that the decision making regarding issues in sanitation projects lay mainly with the men in the community. Even though sanitation was seen as a woman’s issue by the spokespersons, cleaning of the house and toilet was not work for men. The men participated in the decision making processes regarding the type of toilet and the construction of the toilets, but the women were seen as responsible for the operation and maintenance of the toilet.

It was observed that the women on the water/sanitation committees were not free to express their views or to participate in the decision making. The women were mostly illiterate and only sat on the committee to fulfil the required quota of 30% expected by the policy on water supply and sanitation and the funding agencies. This strengthened the impression of the researchers that women made the decisions before the issues were tabled at meetings, and that the issues were discussed at meetings in such a way that it was seen to be the men making the decisions. This was confirmed in the discussions with women after the meetings.
The youth as well as the aged were also involved in the decision making processes regarding sanitation. However, in the case of the aged, most men who were older than 60 years did not participate in decision making regarding sanitation. This can be attributed to the fact that these old men were still part of the old traditional mind-set where health and hygiene issues were supposed to be dealt with by women. Another reason for the old men not participating might be that sanitation was never an issue because everybody used the veld and did not worry about toilets or pollution.

In development projects regarding water supply and sanitation in the villages where the research was done, the role of women during the inception of these water supply and sanitation projects was limited, although the women were represented on the water supply and/or sanitation committees. The predominant roles played by women in the water supply and sanitation projects included preparing food for committee members at general and site meetings and preparing the venue for these meetings. When water supply and sanitation projects were initiated, the developers
and consultants usually worked through the local authority structures in the villages, which are male dominated. These authority structures and committees were male dominated because the people in the communities preferred that their educated men represent their village to outsiders. In most cases the developers were also male, and according to the customary belief, women were not supposed to act forward in speaking with educated men from outside the village. According to the spokespersons this practice is rooted in the traditional custom of the Xhosa where the men in the villages were regarded as the decision makers and therefore the representers of the members of the villages – women had to remain in the background.

The men undertook the community liaison tasks such as informing the members of the community about the content and extent of planned development projects. Reasons provided by the spokespersons (female and male) for men undertaking these community liaison tasks, were the following:

- it is a male’s duty to liaise with the people in the community;
- men have more authority and command more respect; and
- men have the required public speaking skills.

During the construction phase of water supply and sanitation projects in the villages where the research was conducted, the women played a more substantive role in the sense that women were employed as team supervisors over the construction teams consisting of women. However, the responsibility of labour payments and overall supervision of construction remained functions of the male committee members. When labourers from the villages were employed on the water supply and sanitation projects, more women than men were involved as labourers. This can be ascribed to the fact that most able men were absent (migrant labour) from the villages. The construction of the water supply or sanitation system also afforded the women an opportunity to earn an income.
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After completion of the construction of the water supply and/or sanitation facilities, women were not given the opportunity to take on the responsibility for either the operation or the maintenance of the water supply systems in the villages, but were wholly responsible for the operation and maintenance of the sanitation facility in their yards. This can be attributed to the fact that the health and hygiene of the household were the responsibility of the women since the so-called traditional times.

6.4 INFLUENCE OF PARTICIPATION: WOMEN IN THE SUSTAINABILITY OF WATER SUPPLY AND SANITATION PROJECTS

The research in the six rural communities of the rural Eastern Cape Province revealed the following regarding the influence of the participation of women in water supply and sanitation projects on project sustainability. The process of eliciting and translating the responses were the same as the process discussed in Chapter 1 (Section 4.4.5).

6.4.1 The influence of women’s participation in water supply and sanitation projects (Female spokespersons)

The 74 rural women interviewed during the research, agreed upon the following as the influence of the participation of women in water supply and sanitation projects. The responses were written down as they were said, care was taken in the translation from Xhosa to English to capture the correct meaning and to stay as close to a literal translation as possible.

i. Everyone has responsibility, development does not belong to one person only.

ii. Meetings need to take account of the fact that for things to get right, women must be involved.

iii. Women should not be at the forefront of the project (running it etc.), because they are busy.
iv. Women now disobey men, men should talk more than women in meetings.

6.4.2 The influence of women’s participation in water supply and sanitation projects (Male spokespersons)

The 47 rural men interviewed during the research, agreed upon the following as the manner of participation of women in water supply and sanitation projects.

i. Men cannot decide for women anymore, they (the women) also have opinions that should be considered. Women won’t believe the men about what was discussed, therefore the women should be there themselves because men no longer want to report back to even single women.

ii. Women should be involved in decision making, otherwise they might reject the decisions made and the process must start over again.

iii. Women are now part of the project, they are co-responsible and want to participate.

6.4.3 Constraints in the participation of women in water supply and sanitation projects (Male and female spokespersons)

During the research, the spokespersons were asked about the constraints to the participation of women in water supply and sanitation projects in the communities, these are their responses. The responses were ordered in the frequency they occurred, i.e. when a response was given more than once it was deemed more important than a response that was only mentioned once, and therefore placed higher on the list.

i. Most of the women were unemployed and were reliant on money given to her by her husband. There is no money for women to use for transport to attend meetings of development projects.
ii. Most women lacked information regarding development projects.

iii. The workload of the women was too heavy already, i.e. they had to fetch water and collect firewood from far away, feed the children, look after the household and their husbands.

iv. The women did not have sufficient time to be involved in development projects due to their heavy workload.

v. The women had no one to look after their babies who were still too young to go to a crèche.

vi. The women lacked formal training and education, most women were illiterate.

vii. The men undermined the women who wanted to be involved in development.

viii. Women were regarded as minors by the men in the community.

ix. Women were not given the opportunity to show their potential.

x. Men were regarded as the decision makers by the women.

xi. Some women were not interested in development issues, they did not see the importance of women being involved in development projects.

xii. There was no guidance or role models in the community for the women to follow.

6.5 DISCUSSION

The analysis of the data showed that the responses from both the female and male spokespersons in the three villages with a water supply system as well as the three villages without a water supply system were similar, constituting conformity in thought processes and perceptions in the six villages. This may be ascribed to the fact that the villages without a water supply system were geographically situated close enough to villages with a water supply system to facilitate the exchange and cross pollination of ideas, perceptions and views of the members of the different communities. The uniformity in the responses may also be attributed to the extended family structure customary among the Xhosa which facilitates constant
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contact with the members of other communities due to family ties and, therefore, the exchange and cross pollination of ideas, perceptions and views of the members of the communities occur.

From experiences in the field, from in-depth interviews and from the data obtained, it was clear that the position of a woman within a household or within a community varies substantially, even within one region. However, the majority of the rural women in the research area, in terms of their position and role, are still entrenched in their custom and culture, even though the women want to change, develop and become empowered. Changing the custom is difficult, particularly when power bases and relationships appear to be threatened. The individuals or groups of individuals (such as the men) with power do not want to relinquish their control, while individuals or groups of individuals (such as women) who are becoming empowered, may not be ready or prepared to accept the responsibility (also see Slocum et al, 1995: 20).

The few women who initiated development projects in a customary male domain, were undermined by their husbands and the men in the community, thus further suppressing the willingness, self-esteem and confidence of all other women to participate in development projects. The men were afraid that their customary role as leaders would be in jeopardy if they allowed the women to manage development projects and to make decisions openly. Where a project committee (such as the bread baking committee) consisted mainly of women, the men stood back and did not become involved, believing that the project will eventually fail. It can also be ascribed to the cultural belief that men should not be seen to be working with the women if the majority of the project members were women.

The data indicated that the women in the research areas had a very heavy workload. Their triple burden of work (at home, in the field and in the community) left them over-tired and over-extended. The women were so busy fulfilling their
roles as wives and mothers that they did not have the energy left to become involved and to participate in development projects on a regular basis.

General illiteracy and unawareness regarding gender balance and gender issues is a great concern. From a young age, girls have heavy duties in the homes, which they had to manage together with their schooling. Many of the women did not reach higher levels of education due to the heavy workload at home. It is expected of young girls to assist in the household chores regardless of their responsibilities to do homework from school. In many cases the young girls become pregnant and have to quit school to stay at home and raise the baby. Illiteracy is also a limiting factor in the woman’s ability to comprehend technical and managerial information, therefore she only participates when technology is simple and easy.

One of the reasons provided by spokespersons why women in the research areas prefer to remain silent during development project meetings is that most of the women are illiterate and it is considered bad form to speak and air an opinion in the presence of someone who has been educated. This implies that, to the rural women in the villages, literacy has connotations of confidence, empowerment and involvement, apart from the fact that men are the decision makers and public speakers at development project meetings. Ironically, the men present in the communities are also not very highly educated, but still had a higher education level than the women.

7. EXPECTATIONS REGARDING WATER SUPPLY AND SANITATION PROJECTS

The objective of water supply and sanitation projects is to strive to address the practical needs (see Chapter 2: Section 4) of women (e.g. improving their conditions through the provision of water closer to the home). However, addressing one practical need may leave more time available to perform another household chore,
like fetching firewood. Owing to the increasing population and the lack of electricity in given areas, firewood is becoming scarcer and more difficult to gather close to the villages. Women have to walk further and further each time to gather enough firewood for the day. The provision of water closer to the home leaves them more time to look for firewood, which, according to research, had the second highest priority after fetching water in terms of the needs of a household in the rural areas (see Duncker 1999: 21).

Another objective of water supply and sanitation projects is to strive to address the strategic needs of women. Water supply and sanitation projects might improve a woman’s position in society by increasing her awareness of her situation, her capacity to make decisions, and her capacity for change. However, as has been indicated by the research and the discussion so far, water supply and sanitation projects do not achieve the above-mentioned objectives on a large scale. The roles of women in the villages with a water supply system were basically the same as the roles of women in the villages without a water supply system. The water supply and sanitation projects in villages have only increased the burden on, and the responsibilities of women.

7.1 ASPIRATIONS REGARDING THE PARTICIPATION OF WOMEN IN WATER SUPPLY AND SANITATION PROJECTS

Listed below are the views of the 74 rural Xhosa women and 47 rural Xhosa men on their aspirations regarding gender issues in water supply and sanitation projects.

7.1.1 Aspirations regarding participation of women in water supply and sanitation projects (Female spokespersons)

The 74 female spokespersons indicated the following regarding the aspirations of women and men regarding the participation of women in water supply and
sanitation projects:

i. The women need more arguments at meetings (meaning that they want to discuss issues for longer), and the women even want the youth to participate, so things can get sorted out.

ii. Women want mothers to attend school, and to work.

iii. Women expect their mothers to take part in decision-making in their homes.

iv. Women need women to attend meetings now, something the women have to accept, even if they do not participate during the meeting.

v. The women want to go to town and look for work after school. They do not want to think about getting married.

vi. Women want to attend meetings. "It is a good thing - we advise the men and work with them”.

vii. Women want to play the same roles as men in the village - they can do the same job.

viii. The women need to cook, look after the children, and wash clothes. This is how things should be. The women still do it, it is natural for women.

ix. Women still have expectations from the men - that men should start a family, look after that family and pay marriage goods. The customary role for men is still strong.

x. Women want to work for themselves.

7.1.2 Aspirations regarding the participation of women in water supply and sanitation projects (Male spokespersons)

The 47 male spokespersons indicated the following regarding the needs of women and men regarding the participation of women in water supply and sanitation projects:
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i. Men want women to attend meetings so that they can know what is going on.

ii. Men are away from home, at work. Only the women are left at home. The women must go to the meetings to represent themselves and their husbands.

iii. The household should still depend on the man, the owner of the house.

iv. The children must learn to be independent; the cost of living is high.

7.3 DISCUSSION

The basic needs such as food, water, fuel, housing and health care, were very important for both men and women. The above statements indicate that the aspirations of the women and the aspirations of the men in the research area regarding gender issues in water supply and sanitation projects were complimentary. The women needed to grow and develop and become more independent from their husbands or guardians by attending school and finding jobs elsewhere. The men also expressed a need to see the women develop and become independent, as long as this did not interfere with the women’s expected roles and responsibilities, or disrupt the family or community harmony. The men’s views in this regard are actually contradictory to how they perceive the roles and position of women.

The men still felt the need to be acknowledged as the heads of the households and the decision makers. The women also said that they needed to acknowledge the men as the heads of the households and the decision-makers, provided the women were consulted in the process - especially concerning projects that had a direct impact on their time and energy (such as water, sanitation and hygiene).
CHAPTER 4

SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

1. SUMMARY

The issues concerning women and their participation (or lack thereof) in the development process have been increasingly examined over the past 55 years since World War 2. Although the principles of the equality of men and women was recognised in both the United Nations Charter in 1945 and the United Nations Declaration of Human Rights in 1948, the majority of development planners and workers did not fully address women’s position in the development process (INSTRAW 1985: 6).

Despite this, it has been the United Nations that has done the most to advance the cause of women and improve their status in developed and developing countries during the last few decades.

For many years development projects in South Africa have been technical projects, focusing on construction work for water supply and sanitation facilities. Villagers and communities were seen as just users and beneficiaries. Women were not perceived to be part of these communities. However, since 1980, a more gender-sensitive approach has shown that women have several roles to play in matters of development, by tradition and by necessity.

Against this background, it was the aim of this dissertation to understand the role of women in water supply and sanitation projects in the Eastern Cape Province in the context of development and the influence their culture (as they identified their adherence to it) has on their roles and position in these projects.

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1.1 GENDER AND DEVELOPMENT

The key to understanding how development work affects men, women, girls and boys, is in grasping the concept of gender. The term “gender” refers to those characteristics of men and women that are socially determined, in contrast to those that are biologically determined. Gender is related to how people are perceived and expected to think and act as women, men or children (girls and boys), because of the way society is organised.

The interpretation of women’s roles and gender relations has been marked by shifting positions and changing political priorities over the last few decades. The Women in Development (WID) approach emerged in response to the realisation that development initiatives promoted among the poor failed to address women’s needs, did not promote their participation, and left them out of the ensuing benefits. Towards the end of the 1980s the Gender and Development (GAD) approach emerged as a reaction to the meagre results of Women in Development, wherein women were at best incorporated through minor components in larger projects, or were involved in small projects aimed at women only, thus continuing to be left out of the main thrust of development interventions.

During the International Water Decade the agenda for and approach to the International Water Decade moved away from the conventional “coverage” or number of installations, to the effective and sustainable utilisation of water and sanitation services implemented in ways that are replicable, reflecting a growing awareness of social sustainability where factors such as greater need, limited financial resources, physical and social environments including gender issues, play a major role. The approach of social sustainability in improving development projects is now widely accepted and advocated beyond the realm of water and sanitation projects.
The concept of mainstreaming gender in development has been promoted with a view to incorporating a gender-sensitive approach into development projects, and endorsed in September 1995 at the 3rd United Nations World Conference on Women, held in Beijing, China. A gender mainstreaming strategy in development projects is concerned with meeting both practical and strategic needs of women and men. A gender mainstreaming approach does not concentrate on women as a special group, but on women as half the population - the half which has often been left out of decision making processes in development projects in the past. Gender mainstreaming combines a “gendered” approach with a gender analysis. A “gendered” approach to project planning and management is an approach in which the different roles, viewpoints and power relations between women and men have been identified. Most countries now have legislation and guidelines which incorporate international declarations on gender as part of policy.

In Africa, the participation of local communities and of women in development projects has high priority. During the 1980s it was realised that the lack of participation of women in planning, maintaining and managing water supply and sanitation projects had negative effects on the quality of the services and on the overall position of women and their participation in development. This fact has been recognised and found expression in the formulation of a number of policies and white papers on gender and gender issues in different countries that aim for the sustainability of their development projects.

Different types of projects have been implemented during the last two decades in Sub-Saharan Africa. General gender-blind projects often addressed the community in general without paying attention to differences in gender roles and responsibilities. General projects with a special women’s component, often added as an afterthought or added when the project ran into trouble, women were still not included in the general section of the project, even though it affected the women. Women-focused projects were usually operated by NGOs.
on a very small scale and did not address the needs of the women within their cultural environment, and caused disruption of the community and household harmony. General gender-aware projects created the ideal situation in which women and men could participate on equal terms, addressing the same issue, acting within their cultural constraints and boundaries, drawing expertise from the women and men in the technical as well as the social aspects of the projects. The gender-awareness approach divided work, position and benefits equally between men and women.

Little research has been done on gender issues in South Africa. However, gender equality, women’s participation and gender balance are high on the priority list of the government, institutions and non-governmental organisations (NGOs). Within the formal water management structures, policies are well placed to allow for equal participation and decision-making for men and women. The gender policy of the South African Department of Water Affairs and Forestry is built around the core principles of equality, sustainability and empowerment in order to ensure a gender balance in planning and development of the provision of basic services such as water supply and sanitation. During 1997, the Minister of the Department of Water Affairs and Forestry established a Gender Secretariat to look at issues surrounding women and present day water resource management. Subsequently a gender policy regarding water resource and sanitation development and management was approved. Several institutions and committees on national, provincial and institutional level have been established in South Africa in the past few years to address gender imbalances and inequalities. Yet, the mainstreaming of gender in South Africa is a long way behind the rest of the development world.

Gender balance in participation and decision making in development projects leads to shared responsibilities between women and men in the family and the community as a whole. Experience to date in South Africa in the water supply
and sanitation fields, shows the importance of long-term engagements between implementing agents, donors/funding agents, training agents and communities/users. Long-term involvement supports participatory development and sustainability through training, experimenting and learning from experience. Keeping this in mind, it is clear that community participation is a major component in sustainable development (IRC 1994: 9), because in participatory development the priority needs of the people involved are addressed by involving the direct users in decision making processes during development projects.

1.2 GENDER SENSITIVITY IN WATER SUPPLY AND SANITATION PROJECTS IN THE EASTERN CAPE PROVINCE

It was the aim of the study to evaluate the role and position of gender sensitivity in water supply and sanitation projects in the Eastern Cape Province of South Africa against the world trend in gender sensitivity in projects of this nature. For this purpose six villages were chosen in the Eastern Cape Province where such projects had been implemented, three villages with a water supply system and three villages without a water supply system.

In order to understand the influence of the participation of women in water supply and sanitation projects, it was necessary to look at the customary roles and responsibilities of women and men in general as they perceived them, the contemporary roles and responsibilities of women and men in general as they perceived them, the roles and responsibilities of women in water supply and sanitation projects, and what effect these roles and responsibilities had on the sustainability of these projects. The reason for this was to try and understand whether gender roles have changed in communal rural areas and whether this had an influence on the implementation of water supply and sanitation projects.
Chapter 4: Summary, conclusions and recommendations


As indicated in Chapter 3 (Section 4), the focus of the study was on the contemporary roles of women and men in the development of water supply and sanitation projects. However, it was necessary to be aware of the customary roles of women and men because contemporary roles of women and men developed from their customary roles and currently impacts on the manner in which water supply and sanitation projects are implemented.

In order not to repeat the contents of Chapter 3, the main aspects from the research results are listed below:

- The female and male spokespersons agreed that in the so-called traditional times there was a clear distinction between the roles and responsibilities of men and women, boys and girls. No overlapping of roles and responsibilities occurred, role distinction was very clear and generally accepted.

- In contemporary times the inherent roles and responsibilities of the women and girls have changed from being mainly supporters and nurturers of the household to being fellow providers for the household. The women and girls have become more independent and self supporting, and prefer to find jobs rather than just getting married and looking after their
households. The clear distinction between the roles and responsibilities of women and men, girls and boys have faded away.

- The customary gender roles and responsibilities of the women and girls have changed more than those of the men and boys. It is reflected in the responses where the women focused on personal and interpersonal development and growth, while the men focused on circumstantial and practical differences and changes between the customary and contemporary gender roles and responsibilities.

- The men manage their households and make decisions in consultation with their wives, even though the men are still the heads of the households.

- The expectations of women and men in respect of the role of the opposite sex, were complimentary. The basic expectations of women and men such as food, water, fuel, housing, security and health care, were very important for both women and men. The women and the men also wanted a harmonious and peaceful family with enough to eat and clothes to wear.

- The women wanted to develop and improve their quality of life by obtaining an education and finding jobs elsewhere. The men also had a need to see the women develop and become independent, as long as it did not interfere with their roles (that of the men) and the perception of their needs, or disrupt the family or community harmony.

- Many water supply and sanitation projects in the Eastern Cape Province have been successful, but in almost all the cases, the benefits in terms of decreasing rural women's workload and empowering rural women in
decision making regarding development projects, have bypassed rural women. Even though water is more readily available to people in the rural areas, women’s chores in respect of her household and her other responsibilities have increased.

- In the water supply and sanitation projects in the villages where the research was done, the role of women during the inception of these water supply and sanitation projects was limited, although the women were represented on the water and/or sanitation committees.

- The men undertook the community liaison tasks such as informing the members of the community about the content and extent of planned development projects, because men have more authority and command more respect and men have the required public speaking skills.

- During the construction phase of water supply and sanitation projects, the women played a more substantive role in the sense that women were employed as team supervisors over the construction teams consisting of women. However, the responsibility of labour payments and overall supervision of construction remained functions of the male committee members.

- After completion of the construction of the water supply and/or sanitation facilities, women were not given the opportunity to take on the responsibility for either the operation or the maintenance of the water supply systems in the villages, but were wholly responsible for the operation and maintenance of the sanitation facility in their yards. This can be attributed to the fact that the health and hygiene of the household were the responsibility of the women since the so-called traditional times.
Chapter 4: Summary, conclusions and recommendations

- The few women who initiated development projects in a customary male domain, were undermined by their husbands and the men in the community, thus further suppressing the willingness, self-esteem and confidence of all other women to participate in development projects.

- General illiteracy and unawareness regarding gender balance and gender issues is a great concern. Many women did not reach higher levels of education due to the heavy workload at home. To the women, literacy had connotations of confidence, empowerment and involvement, apart from the fact that men are the decision makers and public speakers at development project meetings.

- A very strong correlation between type of work and gender existed in the research areas. The division between the roles of men and women was such that technical positions were occupied mainly by men. Women did the administrative jobs which had a very low level of decision making power.

- In the communities where the research was done, only a few women were allowed to attend skills training because of social resistance from the men. The male spokespersons openly expressed that men were the ones better suited for technical work than the women. The women were of the same opinion as the men, also thinking that men are better suited for technical work, even though the labour force consisted mainly of women during the construction of water supply and sanitation facilities.

- The young people, especially the young women, were not involved in decision making during the implementation of water supply and sanitation projects.
Chapter 4: Summary, conclusions and recommendations

- In the communities where the research was done, the women needed more confidence in decision making and, as one woman put it: “Women should unite in order to change their roles and become empowered”. The women generally approved of themselves attending meetings on development issues and the men in general did not have a problem with it, although some men accepted it only because it was “the way of the times that we live in”.

2. CONCLUSIONS

The data from the communities where the research was done showed, contrary to what was expected, that there was not a substantive difference in the perceptions of the roles and responsibilities of women and men between the three villages with a water supply system and the three villages without a water supply system. The responses which differed were mentioned only once by one or two spokespersons and were, therefore, not deemed as important enough to take into consideration.

From the data the following conclusions were drawn:

2.1 THE ROLE OF WOMEN

Culture is the set of rules or guidelines (or spectacles) through which a group of people with an own identity view the world, examine it and evaluate it. What determines propriety is determined by culture. An individual in general is conditioned to view new things from his or her cultural perspective (see Chapter 1: Section 3.3). The women who were the subjects of the research, indicated that gender roles were, and still are, deeply embedded in the cultural and social values of the Xhosa communities in the Eastern Cape Province.
Women play an important role in households. She is the functional head of the household with the responsibility for the daily running of the household. She is the main care person for a number of her children’s children, with or without support from the mothers of the children. She is the main preserver of values and norms, but also the one who decides to change values and norms for practical or other reasons. But these decisions and responsibilities are often made indirectly behind the veil of culturally determined customs.

It was customary for women to look after their households and their children, and that is also what the women among whom the field work was conducted, felt comfortable with doing. The contemporary roles of the women are less directed towards the household and children than in traditional times. Xhosa women now want to be independent and work towards obtaining an education and employment away from home. However, there are still perceptions among some Xhosa communities (including the women) that they as women should only fulfil certain roles. These roles are identified as the supportive roles. The roles of looking after the household and health issues of the family correspond with what they viewed as their natural role. Men are expected to do the manual labour, and women should have the "softer" roles. This is attributed to tradition or culture and does not imply that the women are not interested in other roles that are currently being fulfilled by men. The older women in the villages seemed to want to fulfil the supportive roles while the younger women wanted to become independent (see Chapter 3: Section 4).

2.2 THE ROLE OF MEN

Similarly, the roles and responsibilities of men have also changed. Many men in the communities, where the research was done, are unemployed and assist the women in their daily household tasks. The majority of the men are willing to fetch water, help with tending the gardens, look after the livestock and look
after the children. These are tasks that were considered with disdain by the men in the traditional times. However, unemployment and the influence exerted on them to accept gender equality, has made it necessary for men to change their attitudes regarding customary role differentiations in their communities. There are, however, still some men who prefer women to remain subservient and concentrate on the customary roles of women looking after the house, cooking and having children (see Chapter 3: Section 4).

2.3 THE STATUS OF WOMEN

In the villages where the research was done, the woman’s place was at home, producing and reproducing, to the point that her public life was very limited. However, her roles and position have changed with time and she now enjoys more freedom and a better status in the community than in the past. She still stays a minor, even though the Constitution, government policies, and the fact that she is an adult, constitute independence. The fact that a woman has always been regarded as a minor, has had the implication that all major decisions were made by the men, because they had always been accepted as the decision-makers in the community. This also implied that the women, traditionally, had limited access to, control over and use of resources in the community. In everyday life, women are busier than men because of their responsibilities within and outside the home. In an ordinary day she has to fetch water and firewood a few kilometers away from her home, she has to care for the children, keep the house and yard clean, do the laundry, work in the field or vegetable garden and keep her husband happy. She sometimes also belongs to a women’s group and a church group and has to go to meetings and get-togethers organised by these groups. All these tasks are done mainly without the involvement of the men and it is considered the normal role of a woman.
Chapter 4: Summary, conclusions and recommendations

The participation of women in water supply and sanitation projects is closely linked with their traditional roles and responsibilities within their culture. Many women were satisfied with their current status and roles, and did not want to see any changes, but there were also many women who wanted to be part of the decision-making processes, especially about projects such as water supply and sanitation, which will impact on their way of life, their living standards and their quality of life.

The patriarchal set-up of the communities where the research was done, as well as the perception of women being minor to men, had the apparent effect of the women standing back and feeling that their involvement and participation in water supply and sanitation projects was not important. The few women who initiated development projects in a traditionally male domain were undermined by their husbands and the other men in the community. This further suppressed the self-esteem, willingness and confidence of the women to participate openly in development projects. It seemed that culture (meaning custom) was viewed as an inhibiting factor in development projects. The women felt that women should be equal to men in all development projects in their communities. Where project committees consisted mainly of women (such as the bread baking committee), the men stood back and did not become involved. This can be ascribed to the cultural practice that men should not be seen to work with the women if the majority of the project members are women, because it will impact negatively on their status and position in the community.

2.4 WOMEN IN PROJECTS

Developments in the country as a whole had achieved a lot for positive changes in attitudes towards women. Some old women with no (or a low level of) education showed remarkable insight into the changes in life style and culture taking place with regard to the roles of women in the communities. The old
women accepted the changes and thought it was good for women to go to meetings and to participate in development projects and decision making. The same was true for some old men. The old men had no (or a low level of) education but, because projects were implemented in their area and because times were changing, they accepted that women’s position in the community would also be changing.

The women felt that attending meetings regarding development projects empowered them, since the women gained new knowledge and insights. The perception was that the water supply and sanitation projects gave women the opportunity to do something new and improve their quality of life. The involvement of the women was also accepted by the men.

In the villages where the research was done, the women are satisfied with the extent of their participation and influence in water supply and sanitation projects. The women prefer the men to make the decisions and to take the responsibility since the men are seen as the traditional decision makers. The women want to be able to influence the process, they want to be seen as participating in the projects, but they do not want the responsibility of making and implementing decisions. However, the women do not want to be overlooked or ignored during the implementation and decision making processes of water supply and sanitation projects.

However, the participation of women in water supply and sanitation projects in the rural Eastern Cape Province is not as involved as the participation of women in other similar projects in the rest of Africa.
2.5 THEORY AND PRACTICE

Much of the growing literature in which development projects have been evaluated regarding their impact on women, and the research conducted for this dissertation, suggests that the outcome of development projects on women in rural areas has been unpredictable. It is difficult to predict how far rural women will be willing to increase their work load and intensity, especially in the instance where development projects have the unintended and unwelcome effect of making women worse off by increasing their workload.

There is also a critical lack of fit between models of roles and responsibilities in decision making processes entrenched in development projects, and the complex and particular social roles and responsibilities in the actual existing cultural structure of the households in the communities. The developers’ and planners’ models are based on equal participation by women and men in decision making regarding development projects, while the situation in the communities is based on the customary way of men making the decisions and women playing the supportive roles. This means that women are required by the developers and planners to participate in the decision making processes, sometimes creating competition between women and men which sometimes results in conflict between husband and wife. As is so frequently the case, the gap between ideology, academia and the practice, still remains wide and will probably take a considerable time to close.

2.6 SUSTAINABILITY OF PROJECTS

The concept of sustainable development as discussed in Chapter 1 (Section 3.6), relies on the equitable participation of women and men in development projects to ensure the sustainability of the development intervention. Sustainable development aims to improve the quality of life and the standard of living (see
Chapter 1, Sections 3.7 and 3.8) for both women and men, in essence to modernise their culture. Even unsuccessful development efforts in the communities create a social energy that may re-emerge later in another development effort, therefore, development implies taking small steps forward.

Experience to date in South Africa in the water supply and sanitation fields, shows the importance of long-term engagements between implementing agents, donors/funders, training agents and communities/users. It shows that there is no quick fix. Long-term involvement supports participatory development and sustainability through training, experimenting and learning from experience.

Keeping this in mind, it is clear that community participation is a major component in sustainable development. However, community participation is a long-term and complex process of engagement involving negotiations, bargaining, dialogue and conflict resolution. Communities are never socially and economically homogeneous and therefore most participation processes uncover conflicts of interest within the community. Intensive and sustained interaction is required to facilitate the process of participatory development under such circumstances.

2.7 EMPOWERMENT OF WOMEN

In terms of the empowerment (as discussed in Chapter 1, Section 3.4) of women in development projects, the above poses a big challenge for planners, developers and the people in the communities. It means that the entrenched cultural values, and therefore the roles and responsibilities of women and men, will have to change to accommodate the drive for the empowerment of women in development.

As the research showed, water supply and sanitation projects do not necessarily
empower women in the communities, but they do create an opportunity for women to become empowered should they want to. The biggest obstacles to women becoming empowered are their own attitude and lack of confidence in their abilities. This is exacerbated by the attitudes of the men, which are closely linked to the traditional culture and belief that men are superior to women and therefore the decision-makers. Although during the research the men said that women should be involved in projects and decision-making processes, the reality showed that when this happened, the men reacted negatively. The men felt that empowering women would affect their positions in the community and they felt threatened. This reaction forced the women to withdraw from the projects because they received the message that they were not competent enough to be part of the projects.

Customary norms and values were voiced by the women in the villages as a major barrier to becoming empowered. Even though the men were migrant workers and away in the cities most of the time, and the women had to make certain decisions regarding the household and the community, the women always kept in mind what their men would have wanted, instead of what the women themselves wanted. The process of cultural change is, however, advanced and traditions are changing as demonstrated by the expressed willingness of the men to allow women to make decisions and to participate in the management of services and projects. The real test will be when the women start making the decisions, and how the men, as well as the older generation, will react to that.

Another major barrier to the empowerment of women was the fact that most women in the villages were illiterate and had not received any formal education or training. This had the effect of making the women feel inferior, and believe
themselves incompetent. The water and sanitation projects created the opportunity for the women to attend training, and the attendance levels were very high. However, the training did not impact on the empowerment of the women as it was technical training and did not afford the women the opportunity to influence decision-making or take part in the decision-making process.

The time constraints women have as a result of their household duties can also be a barrier to the empowerment of women. Linked to this is the lack of access to resources such as money, transport, etc, for the women in the villages to attend meetings, training courses or planning sessions. The migrant labour situation makes the women dependent on money sent from the cities by their husbands, which does not always happen. The husband also controls the spending of the money by allowing his wife only a certain amount to see her through the necessities, such as buying food and paying the school fees of the children, with no money left to spend on attending meetings or training sessions for herself. This situation seriously inhibits the chances of empowerment for the women. But it still remains true that the choice remains with the women themselves to become empowered.

2.8 PARADIGMS AND REALITY

This study also once again, highlighted the big divide between the ideas of the world community regarding gender in the development process, and the realities on the ground - at least in the rural Eastern Cape Province.

The massive international drive for gender equality and gender equity, which, in its purest form, is based on the individual position of women in western-oriented cultures, has had a very big influence on accentuating the position of women in
developing countries. But the emotional and technically correct language of the large number of declarations agreed upon to enhance the empowerment of women, have seemingly not had a real effect among Xhosa speaking communities. The main reason for this is that local communities do not necessarily take note of the wording of international declarations. On the other hand, culturally determined values change slowly, and harmony in communities is frequently more important than wishes of people living far away. In the end it seems that only time and realities will change the already changed roles and position of women in decision making, so that they can become part of their own future. It, however, remains an open question as to what level women want these changes to happen and their decision making powers to change.

3. **RECOMMENDATIONS**

In the appropriate environment, involvement in water and sanitation projects will create opportunities for women to gain access to knowledge, skills and resources. This access will give them the confidence to try and improve their quality of life in the community if the women want to use the opportunities. Involvement or participation by women in water supply and sanitation projects will not automatically empower them to develop and improve their circumstances. Empowerment only occurs when the men and women work together and acknowledge the importance of each other's roles and responsibilities, as well as the importance of sharing these roles and responsibilities.

Based on the findings and the data of the study, the following recommendations are made:
3.1 GENDER SENSITIVE DEVELOPMENT

Women are not automatically empowered by participating in water supply and sanitation projects, but these projects create the opportunity for the women to begin the process of empowerment. Many funding organisations and the government focused on a quota system for women on project committees, in an attempt to empower women and ensure the sustainability of the projects. However, these quota systems amounted to tokenism in many cases because the committees with a majority of female members still had men in the key decision-making roles (such as the chairperson and the treasurer).

A gender sensitive approach accepts that the attitudes, roles and responsibilities of women and men are not static, but change over time. Project staff together with the men and women of the community should evaluate existing patterns and look for possible actions to improve the balance between the responsibilities and work of the men and women, as well as their control over resources and benefits within the cultural constraints of the specific community.

3.2 CULTURE AND TRADITIONAL/CUSTOMARY VALUES

Custom was generally voiced as the major stumbling block for the participation of women in projects and decision-making processes. The migrant system has gone a long way towards breaking down the traditional beliefs, showing both women and men that women are capable of making decisions and managing projects and the community successfully. It is also evident that the villages are in a process of cultural change and that circumstances and belief will change as time goes on.
In order to maximise on this, awareness regarding the cultural issues and dynamics of a community has great value for the planner and developer. Such awareness will enable him/her to execute his/her task much more effectively. Cultural awareness enables the planner and developer to:

- improve communication through a better understanding of different cultures and better relations between these different cultures;
- reach the population of South Africa with a positive message, in order to give insight into, and a perception of the need to live in peaceful coexistence;
- identify difficulties and potential conflict situations in development and to facilitate the best option;
- deal with the problems and conflicts of different cultures with understanding; and
- facilitate problem-solving in water supply and sanitation projects by constant communication with and participation of the end users.

3.3 PROCESS OF COMMUNITY INTERACTION

The role of women in water supply and sanitation projects has become more and more important for the sustainability of these projects. Interaction with communities by developers and planners should therefore follow the level of gender awareness in these communities, and also strive to empower both sexes in the process.

Community interaction should also take into consideration the power play and power structures present in the community. It is important for the developer to gain the respect and cooperation of the major authority (traditional, tribal, governmental), in order to implement projects and strategies successfully. Apart from working with the major authority in a community, networking with committees and role players in the community will enhance the chances of a
successful project. The involvement of female facilitators or community liaison officers will also encourage women in the communities to participate in the project and the decision-making processes.

Care should be taken to have a balanced gender sensitive approach. Concentrating on women only in a project might alienate the men and cause the project to be un-sustainable. In order to follow a gender-balanced approach, the developer should assess the needs of the genders and then build the capacity of the community members (men and women) in relevant issues. This will ultimately build the capacity in the community to address their problems and needs in a successful manner.

3.4 ASSESSMENT OF GENDER NEEDS

It is often the case in water supply and sanitation projects that the needs of the women are identified without consideration being given to the needs of the men in the specific area where the project will be implemented. This often leads to the men not wanting to be involved in the project, or impeding the progress of the project because the emphasis on the women is too big.

Both women and men have responsibilities relating to water use, which vary according to their roles in their culture. These varying roles need to be recognised and both men and women need to be involved in discussions regarding these roles. It is also beneficial to assess the benefits and impact of the project on the women and the men, even though the benefits and impact will be more significant for the women.

The women also have a need to decide to participate or not to participate, and this should be respected. If the women are forced in any way to participate, resistance might develop because they are not yet ready to assume the
responsibilities expected of them in leadership and decision-making positions. It must also not be understood that all women will participate in decision making processes as it often increases their already heavy workload. The issue is that all women should have the opportunity to be able to participate in decision making if they want to.

There is also a gap in the perceptions of the men and the women regarding their respective needs. Misunderstandings point to a lack of communication and understanding, which presents an obstacle to men and women in the implementation of projects in a gender sensitive manner.

3.5 CAPACITY BUILDING AND TRAINING

A gender sensitive approach to projects requires a different attitude and improved support from male project planners and local authorities. These groups need to be targeted for receiving practical training that will raise their awareness and change their attitudes and ways of thinking regarding gender issues.

Training and education in general will not necessarily address the need to empower women, but will go a long way in building the confidence of the women to believe that they are capable of making decisions and managing projects successfully. Training is a process of capacity building which will help men and women to understand and appreciate the forces that influence their community so that they can identify, plan and take action as a community to meet their needs as men and women respectively.

Appropriate training concerning the specific project is invaluable and women should be actively included in technical training as well as in the management, monitoring and evaluation of the project. This will increase the level of
confidence of both women and men in the communities that women are capable of operating successfully outside their traditional roles. Literacy and communication skills should also be targeted in the training process, as these are the skills which the women feel they lack and which will increase the potential for their empowerment within water supply and sanitation projects, as well as in other areas of their lives.

3.6 GENDER AWARENESS

Gender awareness was identified by men and women as a major need in the villages. Knowledge of gender and gender issues is very basic and more information is required by the members of the villages.

Apart from the agencies and developers working in the villages, the awareness of the men and the women of these villages needs to be raised regarding gender issues. The research results indicate that most rural men are not aware of the daily responsibilities of the rural women, and that women are unaware of men’s responsibilities. The men therefore need to be alerted to the problems (as well as the possibilities) of women participating in the projects. The women also need to be made aware of the roles and responsibilities of the men during projects.

Creating gender awareness is the first step for men and women to appreciate each other’s values and to realise that various project activities may work out differently for both sexes. Men and women need to be aware of their different positions and functions at all levels in the community, regarding water supply and sanitation projects.
4. CLOSURE

The focus on women in this dissertation was not intended to diminish in any way the importance of community participation, i.e. the organised involvement of a wide spectrum of women and men in development projects. The overriding goal was to place people, their behaviour and their interaction with the environment at the centre of all development activities, and to determine what the impact of cultural beliefs and values are on the roles and responsibilities of women in development projects.

Developers and planners are more and more realising that the participation of women in their projects is advantageous, not only for the sake of the project, but for the sake of the people. Developers and planners in the developing world are now considering such factors as the following in implementing development projects:

- the community’s (women and men) perceived needs, preferences and beliefs;
- their willingness and ability to participate in the project; and
- their ability and willingness to organise, operate and maintain infra-structural as well as social systems which are new and unfamiliar to their culture.

Gender sensitive development in South Africa is still very young and the impact of it cannot yet be seen in the communities. The drive to achieve the ideal should, however, become a major focus.
REFERENCES


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**Chronicle of the World Health Organization.** Geneva: WHO.


SECTION A

Date of group discussion ..............................................
Interviewer ....................................................................
Village .........................................................................
District .........................................................................
Province ........................................................................
Number of interviewees ..................................................

SECTION B

B1. How old are you?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Age Group</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Under 20 years</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>21 - 30 years</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>31 - 40 years</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>41 - 50 years</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>51 - 60 years</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>61 - 70 years</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Above 70 years</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

B2. How many females and males in the group?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Gender</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Female</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Male</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

B3. What is the level of education of the people in the group?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Education Level</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>No schooling</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Up to St 2</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>St 3 to St 6</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>St 7 to St 8</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>St 9 to St 10</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>University/Technikon/College</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
SECTION C

C1. Do the people in the group earn an income?

Yes  No

C2. How do they earn an income?

C3. What is the average level of income per month of the people in the group?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Range</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Up to R 200</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>R 201 - R 500</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>R 501 - R 800</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>R 801 - R 1 000</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>R 1 001 - R 3 000</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Above R 3 000</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

C4. Who earns the main income of the households?

C5. What is the average income per month of the people in the group?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Range</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Up to R 200</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>R 201 to R 500</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>R 501 to R 800</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>R 801 to R 1 000</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>R 1 001 to R 3 000</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>More than R 3 000</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
SECTION D

D1. Do the people in the group know about the water supply/sanitation project?

Yes ☐ No ☐

D2. If yes, how did they hear about the project?

________________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________

D3. If no, why?

________________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________

D4. Do the people in the group know about the water committee/sanitation project?

Yes ☐ No ☐

D5. If yes, how did they hear about the project?

________________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________

D6. If no, why?

________________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________
SECTION E

E1. How was the water/sanitation committee formed?

E2. How many women are on the water/sanitation committee?

E3. If none, why?

E4. How many men are on the water/sanitation committee?

E5. If none, why?

E6. What positions do the men and women have in this committee?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Position</th>
<th>Male</th>
<th>Female</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Chairperson</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vice chairperson</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Secretary</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vice secretary</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Treasurer</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bookkeeper</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ad hoc member</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ad hoc member</td>
<td></td>
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**E7. POCKET CHART**

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<th>Young women (10 - 20)</th>
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</table>

**SECTION F**

**F1.** What is the traditional custom regarding women in the village?

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**F2.** What is the traditional custom regarding men in the village?

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........................................................................................................................................
........................................................................................................................................

**F3.** Is the custom still like that for the women?

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F4. Why?

F5. Is the custom still like that for the men?

F6. Why?

F7. In your opinion, should culture/custom be considered in the implementation of water supply and sanitation projects?

F8. Why?

SECTION G

G1. What training did women attend?
G2. What training did men attend?

G3. Who looks after the reservoir? Why?

G4. Who looks after the water pump? Why?

G5. Who looks after the taps? Why?

G6. Who looks after the latrine? Why?
G7. What makes a woman a good wife? Why?

G8. What makes a man a good husband? Why?

G9. Why do women accept their current roles?

G10. Why do men accept their current roles?

Thank you very much for your co-operation.
ANNEXURE B

INTERVIEW SCHEDULE
Individuals/households
WOMEN IN WATER SUPPLY AND SANITATION

SECTION A

Date of interview.................................................................
Interviewer ........................................................................
Village ............................................................................
District .............................................................................
Province ...........................................................................

SECTION B

B1. How old are you?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Age Group</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Under 20</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>21 - 30</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>31 - 40</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>41 - 50</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>51 - 60</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>61 - 70</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Above 70</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

B2. Are you female or male?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sex</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Female</td>
<td>Male</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

B3. What is your level of education?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Education Level</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>No schooling</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Up to St 2</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>St 3 to St 6</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>St 7 to St 8</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>St 9 to St 10</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>University/Technikon/College</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
SECTION C

C1. Do you earn an income?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Yes</th>
<th>No</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

C2. How do you earn an income?

..........................................................................................................................................................
..........................................................................................................................................................

C3. What is your level of income per month?

| Up to R 200 |  |
| R 201 - R 500 |  |
| R 501 - R 800 |  |
| R 801 - R 1 000 |  |
| R 1 001 - R 3 000 |  |
| Above R 3 000 |  |

C4. Who earns the income of your household?

..........................................................................................................................................................
..........................................................................................................................................................

C5. What is the average income per month of your household?

| Up to R 200 |  |
| R 201 to R 500 |  |
| R 501 to R 800 |  |
| R 801 to R 1 000 |  |
| R 1 001 to R 3 000 |  |
| More than R 3 000 |  |
C6. How many people live in your household?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Age group</th>
<th>Male</th>
<th>Female</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Infants (0 - 3 years)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Young children (4 - 7 years)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Children (8 - 14 years)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Young adults (15 - 22 years)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Adults (23 - 65 years)</td>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Elderly (65+ years)</td>
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</table>

C7. Who is the head of the household? .................................................................

SECTION D

D1. Do you know about the water supply/sanitation project?

Yes | No

D2. If yes, how did you hear about the project?

..................................................................................................................................
..................................................................................................................................
..................................................................................................................................
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D3. If no, why?

..................................................................................................................................
..................................................................................................................................
..................................................................................................................................

D4. Do you know about the water committee/sanitation project?

Yes | No
D5. If yes, how did you hear about the project?

..........................................................................................................................

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D6. If no, why?

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SECTION E

E1. How was the water/sanitation committee formed?

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..........................................................................................................................

..........................................................................................................................

E2. How many women are on the water/sanitation committee?

..........................................................................................................................

E3. If none, why?

..........................................................................................................................

..........................................................................................................................

E4. How many men are on the water/sanitation committee?

..........................................................................................................................

E5. If none, why?

..........................................................................................................................

..........................................................................................................................
E6. What positions do the men and women have in this committee?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Position</th>
<th>Male</th>
<th>Female</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Chairperson</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Vice chairperson</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Secretary</td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vice secretary</td>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Treasurer</td>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Bookkeeper</td>
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<tr>
<td>Ad hoc member</td>
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WOMEN IN WATER SUPPLY AND SANITATION

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POCKET CHART PICTURES
WOMEN IN WATER SUPPLY AND SANITATION

The four pictures used during the Pocket Chart Method exercise.