

**SURVIVING TRANSITION IN THE GIYANI DISTRICT:
THE ROLE OF SMALL-SCALE RURAL DEVELOPMENT
PROJECTS IN A PERIOD OF
RAPID SOCIO-POLITICAL AND ECONOMIC CHANGE**

by

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Dedicated to my dad, Hannes Buis,

My husband, Bersan Lesch,

and our sons, Dieter and Mikhail.



DECLARATION

I declare that the thesis, which I hereby submit for the degree Doctor Philosophiae (Anthropology) at the University of Pretoria is my own work and has not previously been submitted by me for a degree at another university.

Elmary Buis

Date

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Soli Deo Gloria

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ABSTRACT

The literature on development abounds with examples of development failure, yet people still choose to be involved in small-scale development projects. The study explores the unforeseen and less obvious value of projects in the lives of ordinary people in Giyani, Limpopo, South Africa. During the past three decades, the place and people have experienced considerable political, economic and social transformation – Giyani started as the capital of the Gazankulu homeland, but is now in a unified country, part of the present dual economy. Hence, the link between the Giyani project participants' experiences and the adjustment to the changes was investigated.

Interviews with members of four small-scale development projects formed the ethnographic component of the study. These interviews were augmented by a household survey to determine the participation levels in small-scale projects. The study explores the extent to which the needs of the participants are being met by the projects, using Bourdieu's distinction between economic, social, cultural and symbolic capital as a lens. The effects of 'structural adjustment' measures on qualified professionals (civil servants), their participation in projects and adaptation to changes are examined. The study also investigates the experiences of gender empowerment and changes with regard to subservience to customary law and traditional authorities. The gender and power relations of the ageing process were also examined.

The study examined the Avelanani crèche, which was formed to provide pre-school education for the children of refugees from Mozambique, and which was funded through missionary networks. The Giyani Aged Garden project, established by the homeland government, provides a space for retired people from both the civil service and those from poor backgrounds to share and function for their mutual benefit. Ahitipfuxeni, a town-based project, has stage-managed its qualification for funding from various government departments and agencies. By contrast, Hi Hlurile, a project established during 'structural adjustment' by professionally trained women, straddles the Second

and First Economies and is using business principles, product and service quality, and global connectedness to access 'social funds' and other networking opportunities.

The study has revealed that these four projects have not achieved the goal of economic empowerment, but that they do provide a safe haven for women and men in times of rapid changes in the political, social and economic spheres. The participants demonstrate agency within a project environment that promotes participative decision-making, democratic leadership and activities supporting empowerment through the accumulation of various forms of capital. The survey demonstrated that 16.2% of the residents of Giyani were involved in small-scale projects. Of the project participants, 89% were women, and 63% of the households of project participants depended solely on government grants for regular income.

The findings of the study were used to analyse the government's plan to facilitate development through Community Development Practitioners, a concept that would promote State planning and control that would stifle the agency of people, would increase the size of the civil service and absorb funding that should reach the poor.

Key words: ageing, agency, Bourdieu, capital, customary law, development project, gender, Gazankulu, Giyani, Second Economy.

BIOGRAPHICAL NOTE

‘PURGE...to make clean and free from something evil: to purge one’s soul of hatred.’
Longman Dictionary for Contemporary English (1978:842)

This is what my stay in Giyani did for me.

I grew up in a town where the mayor proudly claimed that his was the first town to implement the Group Areas Act. My family was one of many that had to relocate from the ‘white’ part of town. After I left high school, I attended a university that had a quota for ‘non-whites’ (as non-entities), and I had to apply for permission from the government to attend this white university in the 1980s. This was a period characterised by intense student uprisings and violent protest. I experienced deep conflict because, on the one hand, I wondered whether I was selling out my oppressed fellow citizens and, on the other, I was clinging to my stubborn belief that in the country of my birth I had a right to the best academic education possible. The University of Cape Town (UCT) was the university closest to the Cape Flats, where I lived. At that time, I regarded the ‘Bantustans’ as hateful reserves and believed firmly that their leaders were collaborating with an evil system.

After three decades of living under apartheid, I was euphoric about the first fully democratic elections in 1994. Soon after the elections, I accepted an opportunity to lecture at a college in Gazankulu, which I believed to be a ‘Bantustan’ and not a ‘homeland’, as the previous regime had called it. Because I believed then, as I still do, that universal education is important, I wanted to share my good education with people who had been subjected to an inferior Bantu education in an area of deprivation. This thesis reflects the purging process I underwent in Giyani: my assumptions were greatly challenged as I was confronted with a reality where apartheid policies had been used to benefit the ‘oppressed’. Instead of my teaching the people of Giyani, I became the scholar. After a decade in Giyani, I now live and work happily in Pretoria – a place that I had often referred to before as the ‘home of the oppressor’. I am grateful that Giyani has purged my soul of the hatred caused by apartheid.

I have changed.

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CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

1.1 PROLOGUE AND PROBLEM STATEMENT

There is a general perception that rural life is static, unchanging and predictable, and that for the people who live in the rural areas, time passes in an even flow, and all of people's lives are predictable, from birth to death. However, in the Giyani area of the former Gazankulu homeland,¹ where I conducted my research, the stories related to me by both men and women do not speak of predictability and tranquillity, but of alternating grief and happiness, of opportunities and constraints and of constant change and adaptation.

The women with whom I had contact over a considerable period recalled how ethnic classification affected their lives: when these women were children, they and their families relocated to the various homelands which had been assigned to them by the apartheid government. There, they were married and had children. Some of them had to learn a new language and assume a new identity – that of Tsonga-Shangaan² women. They also recalled how educational institutions became sites of struggle and how, at home, they had to cope with rebellious children during the student unrests of the 1990s, after the release of Nelson Mandela and other political prisoners. Women whose husbands worked elsewhere experienced a particular loss of parental control and felt high levels of uncertainty about the future.

¹ Between 1972 and 1981, ten self-governing territories for different black ethnic groups were established as part of the Apartheid policy. Gazankulu was the homeland established for those classified as Tsonga-Shangaan. These former South African homelands or 'Bantustans' ceased to exist on 27 April 1994 and were reincorporated into South Africa as part of the nine new provinces in which they were located. (World Statesmen, s.a.)

² During the mid-nineteenth century, a Zulu military leader, Soshangana, established his dominance over some Tsonga chiefdoms in the area which is now called the Limpopo Province. The descendants of these conquered populations are now known as the Shangaan, or Tsonga-Shangaan (Country studies: South-Africa, 1996).

Many people in the Giyani area did not experience the changes that occurred after the first fully democratic elections in 1994 quite as positively as many previously disenfranchised people who lived in some other parts of South Africa. Indeed, some of the Giyani residents that I have spoken to admitted that for about 20 years they had been quite satisfied with their homeland leadership and they readily acknowledged that they had benefited considerably from living close to the seat of the former Gazankulu government. However, when the homelands were re-incorporated into a unified South Africa, new provincial and local government structures were established and the seat of decision-making moved from Giyani to the new provincial capital for the Limpopo Province (initially called the Northern Province), Polokwane (formerly known as Pietersburg), 150 km away. During this period of 'structural adjustment'³ and economic recovery, large numbers of teachers, nurses and other civil servants were either retrenched or had to relocate to Polokwane. Many of them could only go home fortnightly or at weekends, which forced them to leave their children in the care of their parents or even grandparents (especially mothers and grandmothers) who stayed in or near Giyani. Financial hardship and intergenerational conflict became common in these households.

³ '[S]tructural adjustment' in the South African context is placed in inverted commas to stress that these economic measures resemble the measures imposed by international financial institutions on other debtor countries. In South Africa, both the pre-and post-1994 governments voluntarily implemented structural adjustment-like policies and the effects were similar to what the people in countries with imposed (real) structural adjustment experienced. It should also be noted that while South Africa, after 1994, implemented 'structural adjustment' measures and eased some aspects of protectionism, it also expanded the social welfare system which is uncharacteristic of structural adjustment elsewhere. Furthermore, to lessen the effects that structural adjustment had on vulnerable groups, social funds flooded into affected countries. Social funds were specific donor funds introduced in the 1980s and 1990s in Latin America in the wake of mounting criticism about the 'social cost of adjustment' (Cornia, 2001:7) to offset the increase in poverty induced by structural adjustment programmes. Social funds enjoyed financial support by donors in the hope of improving the living conditions in developing countries. Social funds were managed independently from the government administration, and were given directly to community projects. The emphasis was on employment generation and human capital development projects and similar funds were, and still are, accessible to projects described in this study. Therefore 'social funds' (meaning funds aimed at promoting income generation and human capital development to counter poverty) in the South African context is placed in inverted commas throughout this report as the findings of this study contribute to the general literature on social funds.

A feeling of hope and optimism only returned in 2000, after the municipal elections and the establishment of Giyani as the capital of the Mopani District. The views, stories and experiences, particularly of the women who lived through these turbulent times, form the backbone of this study, which focuses on small-scale development initiatives in Giyani. During the last three and a half decades (1970-2007), small-scale projects have become an integral part of the daily lives of many of these women. These projects became a kind of sanctuary to many of them and offered them an opportunity to reflect on and cope with many changes in their personal lives, as well as many changes brought about by macro-economic and political policy decisions.

Politically, South Africa is a very different place today from what it was two decades ago. In addition to the obvious shift from minority rule to a post-apartheid democracy, the country has witnessed an enormous increase in its emphasis on human rights, gender issues and attempts to redress past wrongs. Since 1997, the South African government has put in place various structures to ensure that 'legal provisions for gender equity and women's empowerment are implemented at national and provincial level' (Serote, Mager & Budlender, 2001:166). However, continued tolerance of male authority and patriarchal control in individual households and at the local government level makes gender reform extremely difficult in rural settings, where 'traditional authorities' still play a dominant role.

In addition to social policy changes, there have also been economic changes. In the first decade and a half of democracy (1994 to 2008), South Africa's annual economic growth rate has been remarkable, improving from less than 1% to 5% and the benefits of global integration are clearly visible in the great number and variety of luxury cars crowding the country's streets. However, this economic prosperity for some has also been accompanied by a rise in poverty for others, as the gap between the rich and the poor has widened. Webster (2004:16) argues that the widespread increase in poverty in South Africa is the result of the loss of many formal jobs, the increase in the number of insecure and low wage part-time or contract jobs and the expansion of informal trade. Landman (2004:38) cautions that 'even if we accept a higher growth path as an

important instrument to eradicate poverty, a large proportion of our citizens would need the support of special programmes to alleviate the worst poverty – to help them survive’.

The new government could not ignore those citizens that need help to survive. Therefore it expanded social security systems (including pensions, disability and child grants) to ensure that many poor households had some monthly income. By 2008, this shift had been so extensive that Appel (2008:1) indicated that South Africa's social security system had become the main source of monthly income for over 12 million people, and that since 2000, it has played an increasingly important role in reducing poverty and inequality. Thus it is clear that the present government manages a dual economy – a First Economy, characterised by economic prosperity, and a Second Economy, for those who are on the periphery of this prosperity and who are in need of government assistance.⁴ For the people of Giyani, this means that, as a result of their geographical distance from the urban economic centres, they are largely relegated to the Second Economy. This study explores how they cope with economic policy changes that have a direct impact on their lives.

There have also been many changes in the domestic sphere. Many rural households have family members, mainly men, who benefit from economic prosperity elsewhere and (sometimes) support their households in rural areas. Many men have a family in an urban area, as well as a family at their rural homestead. In times of financial stress, many of these men do not regard the members of their rural family as a priority. Rural women therefore often have to assume responsibility for the survival of their households, but, when a woman's husband returns, whether he does so permanently or for a brief visit, the woman has to hand back the reins to him. Rural households are also places of refuge for family members that are sick or extremely poor, and such households are therefore often sites of generation- and gender-related tension and conflict (Mosoeta, cited in Webster, 2004:16).

It is also common knowledge that unemployed men often deplete their households' finances through alcohol abuse, and that young women who receive child support grants

⁴ See Padayachee (2006) for a more detailed critique of economic and social changes in South Africa from 1994 to 2004.

often spend these grants for their personal benefit (on cell phones, clothes and their hair), rather than on the children whom these grants are meant to assist. Mosoeta (cited in Webster, 2004:16) therefore emphasises that the 'power struggles that surround the allocation of resources threaten the potential benefits that family networks have in reducing individual and household insecurities'; and they 'lead to high levels of interpersonal and domestic violence'.

Moving from the domestic domain to the philosophical paradigms of development, it is evident that development discourses are continually changing – especially with regard to development theories and their assumptions. The 1970s were characterised by an emphasis on economic growth through modernisation, fuelled by the hope that the benefits of development would trickle down to all. The work of the economist Walt Rostow influenced much of this type of thinking (Kuhnen, 1987). According to Rostow's development model, the transition from underdevelopment to development can be achieved through a series of stages through which a country's economy must proceed (Kuhnen, 1987:158).

When disillusionment with the 'trickle-down' approach set in, 'basic needs' became a strategy for development in the late 1970s. Development attempts shifted to a quest to meet people's basic needs by redistributing the benefits of economic growth. Whereas the First United Nations Development Decade (1960-1970) considered social and economic aspects separately, the Second Decade (1970-1980) attempted to merge the two (Esteva, 1997:14). The basic needs approach was short-circuited when some developing countries could not repay their debt to international financial institutions.

The 1980s were characterised by the introduction of structural adjustment programmes, imposed by international financial institutions such as the International Monetary Fund (IMF) or the World Bank, which obliged countries with a high debt load to cut their government spending in order to qualify for relief from such international financial institutions. Esteva (1997:14) considers the 1980s to be a 'lost decade for development [because the] adjustment process meant for many countries abandoning or dismantling, in the name of development, most of the previous achievements.' One of the effects of

governments cutting spending on jobs in the civil service was that some professionals, such as teachers and nurses, lost their jobs and joined the ranks of the unemployed.

In the 1990s, there was a shift from donor-imposed blueprint projects to approaches that incorporated beneficiaries' input at both the planning and implementation stages (Stirrat, 1993:299). Furthermore, gender came to be perceived as a fundamental category of analysis of development, taking into account the power relations between women and men and the context in which development occurs (see Coetzee *et al.*, 2001).

Development literature abounds with examples of the failure of development in general, and of specific development projects in particular. Sachs (1997:1) comments emphatically that the 'idea of development stands like a ruin in the intellectual landscape' and concludes that '[d]elusion and disappointment, failures and crimes have been the steady companions of development and they tell a common story: it did not work' (Sachs, 1997:1). Many other authors hold a similar view. For Illich (1997:74), the problem with development lies in the way in which industrialised countries define poverty in terms of 'needed goods and services'. Freire (1985:35) laments that money becomes 'the measure of all things and profit the primary goal – TO BE IS TO HAVE!' For both Esteva (1997) and Escobar (1995), the problem with development lies in the psychological damage that accompanies it. Esteva (1997:7) argues that development has transformed some people into an inverted image of others' reality of what it means to be developed – then these people are called 'underdeveloped'. Such an approach takes diverse people and homogenises them into a narrow way of thinking and of viewing themselves. For Ferguson (2007), the problem lies in the manner in which donor agencies such as the World Bank describe existing conditions in recipient countries. These descriptions are formulated to match the intentions of programmes that are planned and packaged elsewhere, rather than in the countries where these programmes are ostensibly to be implemented.

In view of the prevailing pessimism about development in arguments such as the ones cited above, it seems surprising that people all over the world are still committed to development. In many cases, they opt for involvement in small-scale development projects. In the Giyani area, for example, there are a number of such small-scale

development projects which have existed for more than ten years and in which members are involved on a daily basis. The four small-scale development projects that have been selected for discussion in this study were established locally – that is, these projects were not initiated elsewhere and then imposed on the people concerned. The participants in these projects joined the projects voluntarily, and the groups include men and women, the aged and younger people, people who are literate and ones who are non-literate, as well as professionally trained people. The stated aims of most such projects are to generate income and to ‘empower’ the participants in the projects.

1.2 RESEARCH QUESTION, AIM AND OBJECTIVES

Small-scale development projects⁵ are not rational, neutral entities, but microcosms of the communities in which they are embedded (Rao & Kelleher, 2000:75). This means that the power, gender or status dynamics that are part of the daily lives of community members often also operate within the confines of such small-scale projects. However, such dynamics can be reduced if the leadership and members of organisations attempt to change and empower the members in fundamentally different ways. Thus small-scale projects may play a vital role in empowering participants to face challenges, to grasp opportunities and to change, even beyond project boundaries and even when such projects fail to meet their original goals. The question then arises to what extent small-scale development projects become ‘sanctuaries’ for people who have to deal with rapid change – spaces for reflection and action that enable the participants to survive the transitions that they are forced to make.

The term ‘sanctuary’ has a variety of meanings. According to the *Longman Dictionary for Contemporary English* (1978:926) it refers firstly to places of refuge, in other words, places where people are safe from pursuit, persecution, or other dangers; secondly, to a sacred place; and, thirdly, to a place where injured or unwanted animals of a specified kind are cared for. In this study, the main focus is on the first of these three meanings,

⁵ Refer to Section 1.3 for a brief discussion of the meaning of the term ‘small-scale projects’ in this study.

considering to what extent small-scale projects provide a refuge from emotional or physical harm or just against the vagaries of social, political and economic change. However, taking cognizance of the other two meanings, and reading them very loosely, the study also looks at whether such projects empower members or become places of honour and prestige and so become 'sacred' to the members. The study explores whether some people, such as unemployed professionally trained women or the elderly, find protection in such cocooned entities. It should be noted that the concept of a sanctuary implies an element of inclusion and exclusion, in other words, that those within such a 'haven' are not only in a close relational association with one another, but are also set apart from those outside such projects – at least with regard to some aspects of their daily lives. This means that in the analysis of the small-scale projects as possible 'sanctuaries' for their members, it is necessary to explore both sets of conditions, those within projects and the conditions that project members experience outside the projects. If projects are sanctuaries, one needs to understand what they provide protection from, thus what is happening beyond the confines of these projects.

Since the political, social, legislative and economic conditions beyond the projects are continually changing, the core questions that inform this study are what effects 'project experiences' or 'project episodes' have on the lives of the participants (especially women), their families and their friends. What are the internal dynamics of small-scale development projects? How are they organised internally? How is leadership played out and what benefits do the participants derive from their involvement that assist them in adapting to change?

The specific objectives that are pursued in this study and that are related to this general aim are listed below (they do not necessarily reflect the chapter divisions of the study):

- to identify, contextualise and describe the political, economic and social transformations that occurred in the Giyani area during the last three decades;
- to identify and describe changing development discourses, policies and practices and to explore the link between these transformations and local small-scale development initiatives;

- to examine the extent to which individuals and households are involved in small-scale development projects in the Giyani area and to determine how working conditions in a project and interaction with other project participants meet the needs of participants;
- to explore the effects of ‘structural adjustment’⁶ measures on qualified professionals and former civil servants and to determine to what extent participation in small-scale development projects has facilitated their adaptation to changing personal circumstances;
- to determine how project participants – especially women – have experienced gender empowerment and recent changes with regard to customary law and traditional authorities; and
- to investigate the role of gender, power relations and the ageing process in the establishment, maintenance and evolution of projects.

1.3 KEY CONCEPTS

Concepts in development literature are typically ill-defined and highly contested. To a large extent, the way concepts are defined depends on the perspective of the person who is writing about them. It is therefore important to clarify what I mean by the terms ‘community’, ‘development’, ‘family’ and ‘household’ for the purposes of the study. Moreover, this study deals with small-scale projects located in the domain referred to as civil society and hence ‘civil society’ and its associated concepts require clarification. The concept of civil society has converged with understandings about social capital and community (Pollard & Court, 2005:6) and these concepts are also discussed.

‘Community’ is a concept that is commonly used. Multiple meanings and connotations are therefore attached to the term; and various assumptions are made about it. As long ago as 1955, Hillery (1955) already identified 94 definitions of the term ‘community’. He concluded that ‘all the definitions deal with people; beyond this common basis, there is no agreement’ (Hillery 1955:118-119). Even though the term ‘community’ is ideologically

⁶ See Footnote 3.

loaded and has various meanings in different disciplines (such as sociology, anthropology or economics), in essence it refers to a group of people who are in relationships with one another at a particular time and have a shared attachment to a place (for example, a 'village community') or who have a particular characteristic in common (for example, a 'refugee community'). In the literature, characteristics associated with a 'community' suggest people who live together in a geographical or physical place (Creed, 2006:4; Smelser, 1995:155). It is assumed that these people share a number of demographic features. A community can include interdependent institutions or subsystems, such as religious, social, economic and educational subsystems, which influence the total system (the community) (Seymour-Smith 1988:46).

The literature may also refer to community dynamics, meaning the ability of a community to grow, to change and adapt to circumstances, to re-organise itself and to deal with internal and external conflict (see also Guijt & Shah, 1998; Talle, 1998:36-54). Some authors refer to the existence of a control component such as a leader (Larsen, 1998:31) or institution, for example, a city or ward council. The literature also looks at the community's exposure to environmental influences such as the prevailing political systems (Thornton & Ramphela, 1988). It may also consider characteristics that show solidarity, close and supportive mutual relationships, neighbourly relations or communal objectives (Smelser, 1995:155).

In addition to the characteristics mentioned above, the cultural contexts of a community are also important (Larsen, 1998:31, Talle, 1998). The cultural context refers to shared living patterns and values. Rose (1999) and Bauman (2001) go beyond just considering cultural context to assert that the importance of community is associated with rapid global change, social transformations and dislocations. Globalisation, through the integration of various nation-states, economies and the flow of people and capital, has created much uncertainty and social instability in countries. In such an uncertain world, belonging to a 'community' becomes a source of hope and security.

In this thesis, the use of the term ‘community’ is limited to those groups that have more than a temporary existence,⁷ in other words, social entities that have emerged organically and that transcend generations. Within any community, individuals have a multi-layered set of relationships with other people and act together with others in different social settings. Thus, for the purposes of the study, the term ‘community’ is limited to mean the development or presence of relational networks (through small-scale projects, church groups, burial societies, and so on). Collectively, these networks are also referred to as social capital. I give a brief exposition of social capital below, as one form of capital among other forms (for example, economic, cultural and symbolic capital), which are discussed in Section 4.4.

The idea of social capital probably originated with L. J. Hanifan, who used it to refer to ‘those tangible substances [that] count for most in the daily lives of people’ (Hanifan 1916:130). The concept received more prominence with the work of Bourdieu (1983) on social theory, and especially with R. D. Putnam, for whom the concept refers to ‘connections among individuals – social networks and the norms of reciprocity and trustworthiness that arise from them’ (Putnam 2000:19). Social capital is commonly associated with ‘virtues like honesty, the keeping of commitments, reliable performance of duties, reciprocity’ (Fukuyama, 1999:2). There are also negative aspects of social capital; for example, violent gangs may demonstrate virtues such as loyalty and trustworthiness among members, while their criminal behaviour reflects negative or anti-social capital with regard to the broader society (Campbell, Williams & Gilgen, 2002:17). However, this type of negative social capital is not generally implied in the understanding of development. Development focuses on the accumulation of various types of positive capital by the individual and/or the collective.

⁷ In contrast to so-called ‘cloakroom’ communities formed by groups whose members leave when the ‘event’ that brought them together ceases to play a major role in their lives (see Bauman, 2001)

'Development' is a highly debated and emotive concept that for many people either has positive connotations of progress (as in most World Development Reports⁸) or negative connotations of subordination and dominance (Escobar, 1997; Esteva, 1997; Ferguson, 2007; Sachs, 1997). In the early nineteenth century, missionary work constituted development. Missionaries and other voluntary organisations (such as missionary societies) were precursors to the modern-day development industry. Manji and O'Coill (2002:4) argue that missionaries, motivated by the need to evangelise and discourage perceived idleness or moral degeneracy, transmitted their notion of civilisation to the recipients of missionary work. Manji and O'Coill (2002:3) therefore believe that in doing so missionaries were (knowingly or inadvertently) helping the colonial powers to 'colonise the minds of the colonised' by controlling the expectations and behaviour of the colonised.

Admittedly, in many colonies, missionaries were also involved in education and social services, such as the provision of health care. Missionary engagement in local cultures often also included what the missionaries perceived as 'development' in the form of the codification of local languages and translations of the Bible into these languages. In the area where the research for this study was conducted, the Swiss Mission in South Africa (SMSA) played a large role in nurturing literacy and a love for education, and therefore the missionaries established schools, colleges and hospitals.

However, authors such as Escobar (1997) and Esteva (1997) believe that the concept of 'development' emerged only in the aftermath of World War II when industrialised nations committed themselves to facilitating the 'progress' of other nations. According to Kuhnen (1987), reasons for this commitment included a need for world peace, guilt about the exploitation of the colonies and a sincere desire to combat poverty through economic growth. He also stresses that during the Cold War the Soviet Union and the United States used development aid to win over countries to their respective sides. Development discourses gained prominence in the post-World War II period with the establishment of international financial institutions such as the World Bank, which was created to assist in the economic development of countries that had been devastated by

⁸ The World Bank publishes World Development Reports annually. These reports are available from the World Bank website (see, for example, World Bank Group, 2001).

the war. Since then, international financial institutions have played a dominant role in shaping development discourses.

It is not my intention to select a suitable definition from the myriad of definitions of development in the literature, nor is it my intention to offer yet another conception of development. Instead, I intend to focus on the common thread that runs through most definitions.

For Simon (1997:185), the common thread in the literature is that development involves processes of enhancing the quality of people's lives by satisfying at least some of their basic needs. In addition, development should be environmentally, socially and economically sustainable; it should also empower people to gain a significant degree of control over their own development process. However, although this broad definition may be helpful in creating an understanding of what development means or should mean, it fails to suggest any concrete measure that would show whether or not development is indeed occurring.

In order to assess whether development is being achieved in the small-scale projects in Giyani, the project participants themselves were asked to answer two questions. Firstly, they were asked whether they felt that the projects generate enough income (economic capital) to improve their living conditions. Secondly, they were asked whether they felt better about themselves and more in control of their lives because they participate in the project. These questions deal with participants' basic needs (improved sanitation, literacy levels, nutritional status, the ability to afford improved housing, access to clean water, etc.), as well as with affective matters (whether they feel valued because they have gained prestige or are given recognition in relationships, have better networks of influence and support, participate in decision-making and experience a sense of empowerment as a result of their participation in the project). Both these questions are examined in this study. The issue of the fulfilment of people's basic and affective needs by means of project participation is mentioned repeatedly in this study and is examined in greater detail in Chapter 4. Whilst project participation may meet the basic and affective needs of participants to varying degrees, participation in other civil society organisations is also important to project members.

According to Christine Whyte (s.a.), 'civil society' denotes the arena outside the boundaries of the State, the family and the market that allows for voluntary collective action around shared interests, principles and values. Civil society is often populated by a wide range of organisations such as non-governmental organisations (NGOs), community groups, women's organisations, charities, faith-based organisations, professional associations, trades unions, self-help groups, social movements, business associations, coalitions and advocacy groups or media organisations that operate at different levels – global, regional, national and local (Pollard & Court, 2005:2; Whyte, s.a.).

In the study area, the most common civil society organisations that project members are associated with are church groups and *stokvels* of various kinds. Particularly the women participate in church groups (see Kriel & Hartman, 1991b), assisting with the pastoral care of the sick and aged through home visits and prayers. *Stokvels* are 'collective enterprises, such as savings clubs, burial societies and other (often formally registered) cooperatives' (Louw, 1997:4).

In the Giyani area, a distinction is made between solidarity groups (in which regular financial contributions are pooled and used to assist members with burials and celebrations) on the one hand, and savings clubs on the other. Solidarity groups are locally called *xisosayiti* [societies] and revolving credit and savings clubs are referred to as *stokvels* or *switokofela* (singular: *xitokofela*). The projects in this study (the case studies and those referred to in the survey) are commonly referred to as *projeke*, which is a term used for a group of people who meet daily (Monday to Friday) for eight to nine hours, as if they were in full-time employment.

The total number of civil society organisations makes up the social capital of a society (see Fukuyama, 1999) and, at the level of individuals, the more civil society organisations a person participates in, the greater the social capital he or she possesses. Thus, membership of the small-scale projects covered in this study adds to the participants' social capital. A brief discussion on what is meant by small-scale projects is warranted.

'Small-scale' in the everyday usage of the term refers to something that is limited in size, number or importance, but these connotations should not cloud the understanding of the impact that small-scale projects have on the lives of the participants, as this study shows. The small-scale community development projects included in this study refer to formal groups⁹ of people engage in various kinds of productive activity and or service provision and who meet on weekdays at project sites. A small-scale project of this kind is locally referred to a *projeke* and fall within the 'poverty reduction' or Second Economy framework of the State's social policies (see also Section 5.6.3). This means that these projects 'intertwine with the public sector, and are affected by state policy' (Annis, 1987:129). These projects receive support from government departments, but also benefit from other funders in their attempts to find 'an effective way to address poverty and inequality and empower communities to take forward their own development' (Otieno, 2004:s.p.). Funds received are thus meant to have a social and economic impact on the lives of project participants and are therefore similar to the objectives of 'social funds' although these are not official social funds,¹⁰ since the South African government is not obligated by the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund to implement structural adjustment policies.

Other concepts requiring some comment are the terms 'household' and 'family' and what they mean in the context of the research location.

The term 'family' in the villages near Giyani often still contains elements of the 'traditional African family', in other words, a network of people connected through blood and marriage to form an extended kinship system (see also Ankrah, 1993; Ramphele, 2003). A nuclear family in the Giyani context refers to a husband, his wife and children, whereas an extended family refers to a husband, his two or more wives and all their children. A household may consist of either type of family, but because of the tradition of patrilocality (living with the husband's family) in the area, a household may include grandparents and great-grandparents in the male line of descent. In the past, such a

⁹ Formal groups refer to groups with a constitution.

¹⁰ See Footnotes 3.

unit traditionally developed into a settlement. A number of such settlements can be classified as a village.

However, this family pattern has changed over time, because the migrant labour practices in South Africa meant that a man was often absent from his home for extended periods (Manona, 2001). Then his mother or (if his mother was deceased) his first wife became the *de facto* head of the family. Since each wife is entitled to her own hut and cooking area, a wife seeking greater independence from the extended family would start assuming the decision-making role for her and her children's welfare. Today it is common for a man to have 'independently' functioning homes (homesteads) with wives who earn their own income (usually as domestic workers or as street vendors in town) and who make decisions about their own children. This independence does not mean that the members deny kinship ties with the larger family, but it demonstrates the diversity of kinship structures, family roles, reciprocal obligations and responsibilities found today (see also Ankrah, 1993; Dumon, 1997; Ndwandwe, 2000; Ramphela, 2002).

For the purposes of this study, a household refers to a group of people who live together, cook together, share meals, sleep in the same dwelling and share chores and a common domestic economy and survival strategies. In Giyani town, a household typically occupies a single dwelling (home/house), but in the villages, a household commonly occupies a homestead, that is, cylindrical huts with conical thatched roofs on three corners of a square plot, with an outside cooking area occupying the fourth corner. The open area inside the square plot serves as place for family or social gatherings. Homestead plots have rudimentary boundary fences. One or more homesteads could have the same person as the family head (father) with the homesteads occupied by 'secondary' wives and their respective children. A group of homesteads for the wives of the same man is called a *muti* (settlement) and the layout of settlements differs from place to place (see Kriel & Hartman, 1991b:25).

1.4 THE RESEARCH AREA: GIYANI TOWN AND ADJACENT VILLAGES

Giyani, which means ‘place of dancing’ in Xitsonga, is a small town in the north-eastern part of the Limpopo Province of South Africa at 23° South latitude (on the Tropic of Capricorn) and 30°43' East longitude. The road from Polokwane, the provincial capital of Limpopo, to Giyani winds along the Escarpment. Giyani is at a lower altitude than Polokwane. The altitude greatly affects the climate, and at 471 metres above sea level (810 metres lower than Polokwane), Giyani has very hot summer days ($\pm 36^{\circ}$ C) and mild, frost-free winters, with an average maximum winter day temperature of 22° C. The area's vegetation includes a variety of grasses and trees, such as the Mopani and Combretum (Bushwillow) and Acacia species. The town lies on the northern bank of the Klein Letaba River and to the west of the Kruger National Park.

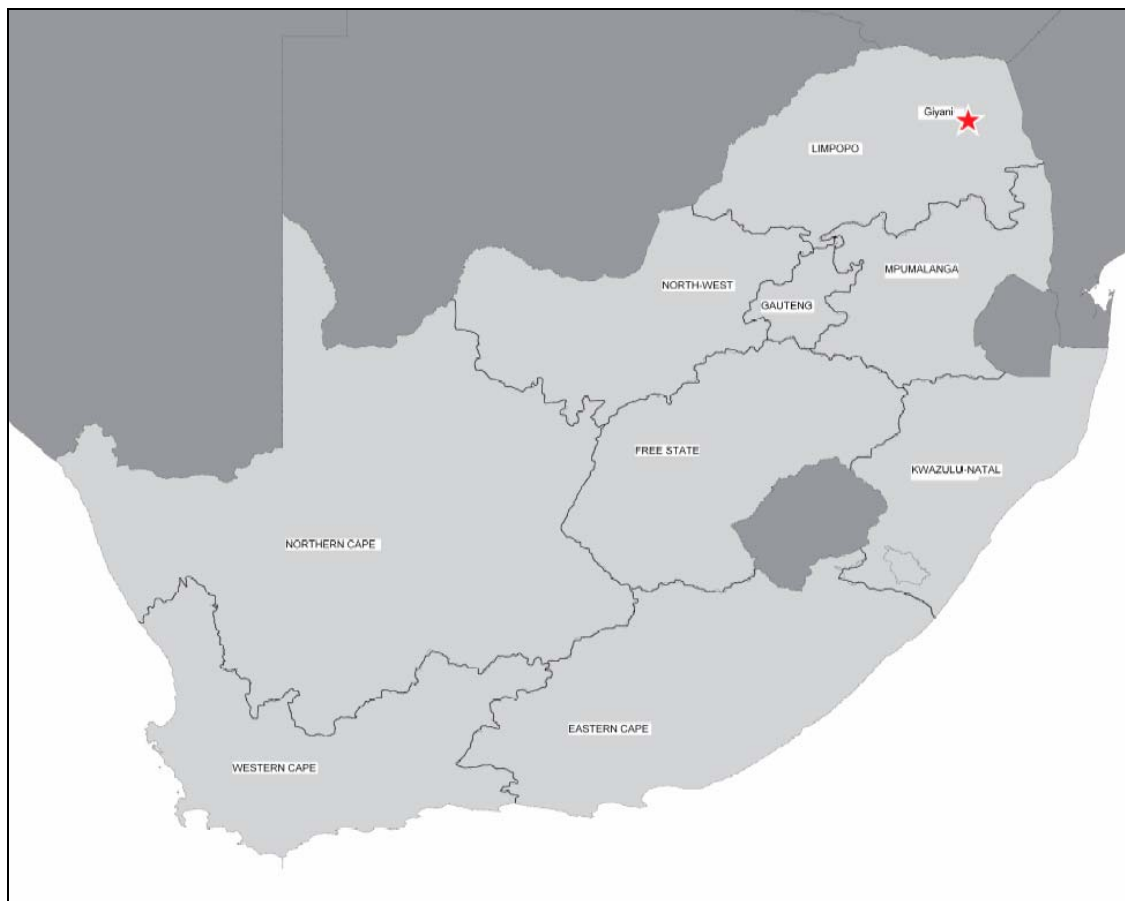


Figure 1.1. Map of South Africa showing the borders of the nine provinces. Giyani, indicated on the map, is in the northernmost province, the Limpopo Province.

Source: Council for Geoscience South Africa (2010)

The town of Giyani is entered from the south along the Polokwane-Thohoyandou road (Route R81), which is joined by the Makhado (or Louis Trichardt) road from the west and the Tzaneen road from the east, just outside the town. The R81 passes the suburb of Kremetart (formerly for white people working in Gazankulu) to the west. Two kilometres further north of Kremetart, the Adolph Mhinga Bridge (over the Klein Letaba River) marks the southern edge of the Giyani central business district (CBD). Beyond this bridge, to the east, is the Mabunda complex, which is an important social gathering place for the men of Giyani. Just before one reaches this complex from the west, one finds the first of two sets of traffic lights where the R81 connects to Main Road from the east.

The Giyani CBD has six shopping centres, or rather clusters of shops and businesses (furniture, clothing, shoe shops, fast-food franchises) with relatively large supermarkets (franchises and chain stores such as Spar, Shoprite and Boxer) as anchor shops. Three of these shopping centres were constructed after the renaissance of the town in 2000, when Giyani became the main centre of the Mopani District, housing both the local and district municipalities. The post office includes a Post Bank, one of four commercial banks in the town. The municipal buildings are in Main Road, and further along, the former Gazankulu Legislative Offices now house the various district government departments.

Beyond the CBD, there are five residential areas with privately owned dwellings: Section A, which is the older part of town, Sections D1, D2 and E, and Section F, which is characterised by low-cost housing.

Beyond Section A, there is an industrial area with two clusters of ten small business sites that are rented from the municipality, where panel-beating, upholstery, auto-repairs and similar enterprises operate.

Historically, Giyani was the capital of the self-governing homeland, Gazankulu,¹¹ and it was designated as the 'homeland' for those classified by the *Bantu Homelands*

¹¹ See Hartman *et al.* (1993:13) for a description of how Gazankulu was established.

Citizenship Act of 1970, Act 26 of 1970 (Republic of South Africa, 1970) as Tsonga-Shangaan. 'Tsonga' clans originally lived in what is today Mozambique, but during the *mfecane* (the devastating inter-tribal wars in the interior of Southern Africa during the first half of the 19th century), some of these clans were subjugated by the Zulu military leader, Soshangana. Others fled westward into the Lowveld of the current Limpopo Province and Mpumalanga, where they were later joined by the followers of Soshangana. In time, the descendants of these people became known as the Shangaan, or Tsonga-Shangaan (Country Studies, 1996; see also Omer-Cooper, 1994). When Gazankulu was established as a homeland, those classified as Tsonga-Shangaan were relocated (see 'forced removals' in Section 2.2) and were allocated land within the borders of Gazankulu.

The history of Giyani is summarised here for easy reference. The town was established in 1969. When Gazankulu became a self-governing homeland in 1973, Giyani became the official capital of Gazankulu. The town also developed as the economic centre for 66 surrounding villages. The last available population figures for this homeland are those of the 1991 census, which indicated that of the 685 150 black people in Gazankulu, 22% resided in Giyani town and the surrounding villages (Hartman *et al.*, 1993:13). Since the municipal elections in 2000, Giyani has been the administrative capital of the Mopani District municipality.

Kremetart, an enclave formerly reserved for white residents, is situated five kilometres from the centre of Giyani town. It was established under the administration of 'white' South Africa during the homeland time and housed about 100 families.¹² The residents of Kremetart worked for the homeland administration or at the Shangaan/Tsonga Development Corporation which was later renamed the Gazankulu Development Corporation (GDC). Some were teachers at educational institutions in the area. Today, Kremetart is a suburb of the town, and the formerly white suburb is now racially integrated, with many black people owning property there.

¹² The exact number of white households that lived in Kremetart is not clear, as Kremetart was technically part of the former Transvaal Province and not part of the homeland Gazankulu. Census and other data are available for the Transvaal as a whole, but not specifically for Kremetart.

The research area for this study is the town of Giyani and villages within a 20-kilometre radius of the town (see Figure 1.2, below).

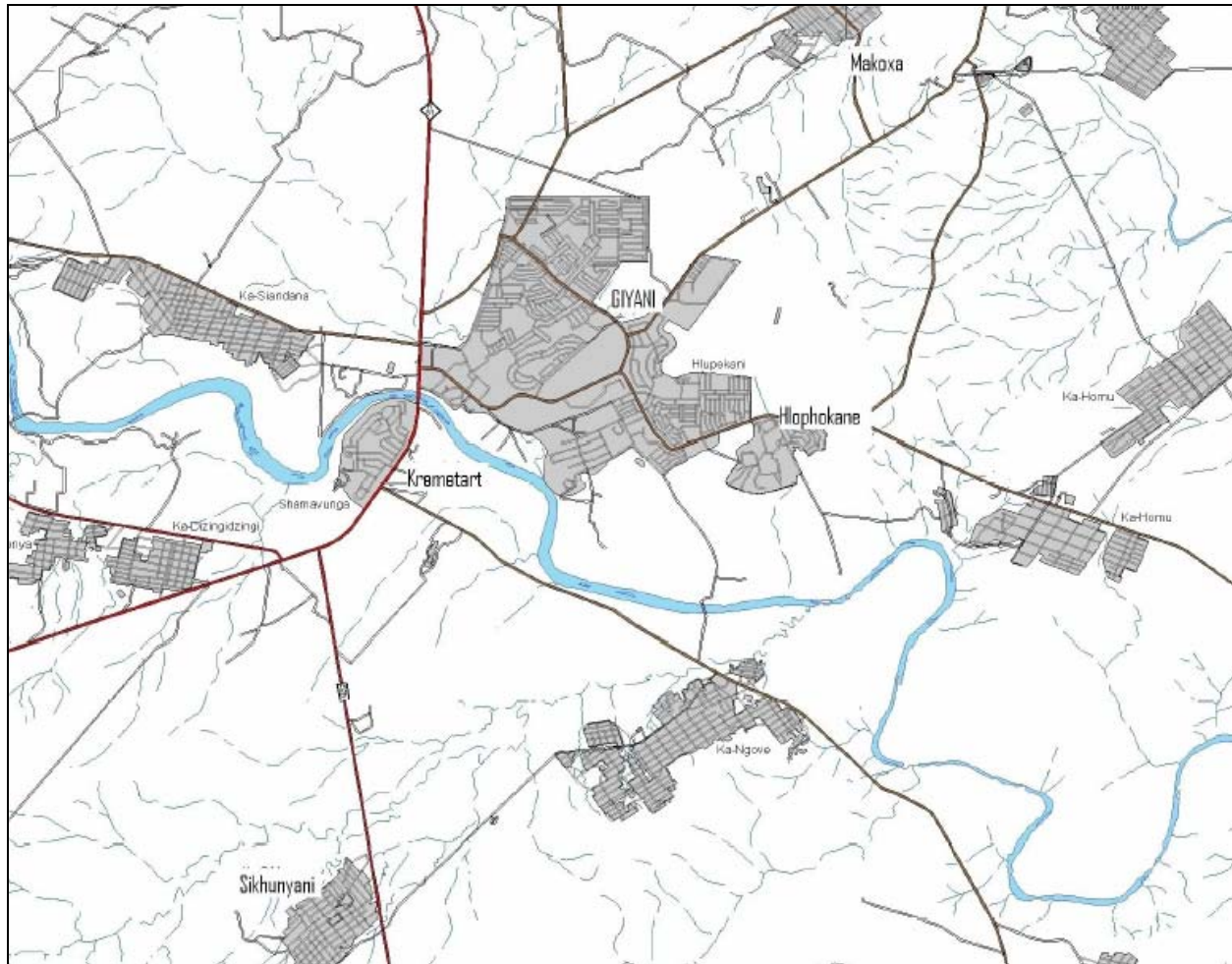


Figure 1.2. Giyani and the villages around the town.

Source: Council for Geoscience South Africa (2010)

Three of the four small-scale projects that are explored in the qualitative part of this study (see Section 1.7.2.1) lie within the municipal boundaries of Giyani. The fourth project is located in Makoxa village, about ten kilometres from town. The survey that was done to quantify selected findings (see Section 1.7.2.2) included the town and a sample of villages within the 20-kilometre radius that constituted the research area.

From the 1970s to 1994, Giyani was the seat of the Gazankulu homeland government, but, as with all the other self-governing territories within South Africa's borders, the homeland's umbilical cord remained strongly attached to the South African government in Pretoria, which continued to provide its economic and development lifeblood. Despite Giyani's dependence on the central South African government (often simply referred to as 'Pretoria'), there was clear tension between the mother, Pretoria, and the child, Giyani, although this tension never degenerated into open hostility.

This tension is best illustrated as follows: according to the *Bantu Homelands Citizenship Act of 1970, Act 26 of 1970* (Republic of South Africa, 1970), all black Africans became citizens of one of ten self-governing territories and when these territories became independent, their respective citizens would cease to be citizens of South Africa. The Gazankulu homeland did not opt for independence, but with the exclusion of black people from broader political participation (Butler, Rotberg & Adams, 1978:29), the homeland presented an opportunity for political expression and decision-making through self-government. Gazankulu's approach was to make the best possible use of this opportunity, even though the leadership stressed that this arrangement did not constitute acceptance of racial segregation. The Gazankulu leader at the time, Professor Hudson Ntsanwisi, articulated this view unambiguously. He stated his belief that a normal society cannot be nurtured through the formalised and institutionalised separation of races, and emphasised that the idea of 'separate but equal' should, at best, only be a stepping stone, but could never be a permanent arrangement or a substitute for effective political participation at a national level. Thus, for Ntsanwisi, the establishment of national states was a means to an end and not an end in itself (Cooper 1987:17-18).

This belief that the homeland period was transient and that Gazankulu would eventually be reincorporated into South Africa informed many of the development activities in Gazankulu. The Gazankulu government emphasised the development of human capacity through education and skills training. In a sense, the residents of Gazankulu were preparing, through education and skills improvement, to take their place in a united South Africa (see Cooper, 1987:29).

1.5 THE INHABITANTS OF THE RESEARCH AREA

Since Giyani was the capital town of Gazankulu, the homeland assigned to those classified as Tsonga-Shangaan, it is not surprising that the majority of the inhabitants of the research area assume this ethnic identity.

The debate about ethnic and racial divisions in South Africa is well documented; and reviewing this debate is beyond the scope of this study. Rather than expounding on the historical origins of ethnicity, which have already been discussed in detail by Boonzaier (1988:58-67), Harries (1988:25-52), Sharp (1988:1-16, 79-99) and Skalnik (1988:68-78), I have accepted the many identities by which the participants of this study define themselves. Sharp (1988:2) argues that people do not have a single basic identity, but define themselves in different ways in different contexts. Therefore, identities such as Tsonga-Shangaan, woman, wife, mother, teacher, project leader or participant can all be present in the same person.

Furthermore, identity and ethnicity have played, and continue to play, a very important role in Giyani, where most residents define themselves as Tsonga or Shangaan. An identity of 'Tsonga-Shangaan' would be particularly problematic to an author such as Sharp (1988:1-13), who states that, in the context of South Africa's past, ethnic identities are social and cultural constructions imposed by the previous government for the sake of political convenience. In other words, ethnicity, race and unique cultures and traditions are all interpretations of reality rather than descriptions thereof. These terms 'do not exist in any ultimate sense in South Africa, and are real only to the extent that they are a product of a particular world-view' (Sharp, 1988:1).

Notwithstanding the above arguments about ethnicity, and whatever the (somewhat contested) historical origins of the Tsonga-Shangaan people, language and identity (Harries, 1989), the fact remains that Giyani and its residents exist within this historical context. Therefore, rather than discuss how the social reality of the residents of Giyani

has been constructed, the study accepts this construction as a given and explores the meaning of small-scale development projects within the present reality or context.¹³

It should be noted that in this study the term Tsonga-Shangaan is used most often, but that the terms Shangana-Tsonga, Tsonga and Shangaan are used in the literature, where they are often linked to concepts such as 'tribal' and 'traditional'. In the South African context, the term 'tribal' is associated with black people. Depending on how one has been socialised, the term could conjure up images and associations ranging from the savage, uncivilised and non-rational to images of pride in one's own culture, language, music, dance and clothing. The use of the term 'tribal' has become unpopular because of its possible negative connotations and its association with past discriminatory policies and practices. The term is now often replaced in the literature with 'traditional' – thus, 'tribal authorities' are now also known as 'traditional authorities'. However, the word 'traditional' has its own baggage and often implies conservatism, unwillingness to change, inflexibility in beliefs and practices. In and around Giyani, the term 'tribal' is most often used in combinations such as 'tribal council' or 'tribal court'. In this study, the terms 'tribal' and 'traditional' are therefore used interchangeably. For example, I refer to tribal leaders as traditional leaders without hesitation and this usage is informed by the understanding that 'tradition' is not static, but differs from context to context, from individual to individual, over time and space (Oomen, 2005:14).

In the villages around Giyani, the tribal authorities still have jurisdiction. Family disputes unresolved at the family or ward level are still settled by the chief or his representative in a tribal court. However, the residents of Giyani town have access to a magistrate's court for remedying disputes. The aspects of living under two systems of authority are dealt with in Chapter 6.

With regard to the people of Giyani, there are a number of things that often strike a newcomer to town: the friendly and peaceful people; the colourful clothing of the older

¹³ Anderson (2000) defines a nation as 'an imagined political community – and imagined as both inherently limited and sovereign'. It is imagined, according to him, 'because the members of even the smallest nation will never know most of their fellow-members, meet them, or even hear of them, yet in the minds of each lives the image of their communion' (Anderson 2000:6).

women, which contrasts strongly with the clothing of the younger women and the men; the co-existence of the middle class and the poor; and the number of women driving cars. The friendliness and peaceful nature of the people of Giyani should come as no surprise – as early as 1875, Erskine commented on the Tsonga people’s abhorrence of conflict (Terblanche, 1994:51). In 1938, Junod wrote about their industriousness and how reliable they were (Terblanche, 1994:51). However, Junod’s (1938:45) reference to the Tsonga people’s being ‘industrious’ is not meant to imply people rushing about, since the pace of life in Giyani is rather slow. Being in a hurry or greeting without exchanging pleasantries is considered impolite.

Along with the slow pace of the town, the colourful traditional attire of the older women is also very noticeable. The women do not wear traditional clothing only for special occasions such as weddings and other celebrations, but also as part of everyday wear. The traditional Tsonga-Shangaan dress consists of a plain-coloured (typically white) T-shirt and a voluminous underskirt called a *xibelani* (plural: *swibelani*) which creates the illusion of wide hips. Over the underskirt, two lengths of colourful cloth, called *nceka* (plural: *minceka*), are draped across the hips and are tied with a knot on each shoulder. A fabric belt is tied around the waist to draw attention to the hips. The effect is that the tall, slender figures of women who would be the envy of many a catwalk model or athlete carry a volume of fabric that accentuates the swaying of their hips as they walk. The *minceka* have brightly coloured patterns or floral designs on equally bright backgrounds. The outfit is completed with a dazzlingly colourful head scarf or *duku* (plural: *maduku*), which is wrapped around the head. Their brightly coloured clothes reflect the friendly and happy dispositions of the women who wear them. It is therefore no surprise that Giyani means the ‘place of dancing’, because it seems as though the women are dressed for dancing.

One local story tells of how, when the Tsonga people were subjugated by Shoshangana, the women defiantly refused to assume the identity of their oppressor, asserting their own identity through their traditional wear. There was a time in the 1970s when the women were less inclined to wear traditional clothes, in favour of more Western clothes, but, according to a long-time resident of the area, the 1980s saw a greater emphasis on

cultural identity and pride and an increasing comfortableness with traditional wear. Even many of the non-Tsonga women of Giyani who have relocated there through marriage have assumed the Tsonga identity and proudly wear a *xibelani*. However, the opposite applies to teenagers and young women, who are rarely seen wearing traditional clothes, and who prefer modern, figure-hugging jeans, skirts and low-cut tops, which are freely available as inexpensive imports from the East, particularly China.

The significance of the contrasting clothing preferences between the young and older women cannot be ignored – it is evidence of the generation gap. The young women are trying to assert and adopt their own identity. This trend is underpinned by the fact that teenage girls with children gain access to some money via child support grants or by having affairs with older men, which gives the girls some financial independence. However limited these resources may be, they enable teenagers and young women to decide what clothes to buy and how to dress, even if their mothers do not approve. It is not unusual for a schoolgirl to have an affair with a male teacher¹⁴, who is often married; the money she gets from him imbues her with a great sense of independence. This often further alienates her from the adult(s) responsible for raising her, typically her mother, since many homes are single-parent households. Considering how the older women feel about their cultural identity, the different views of the youth and the financial assertiveness of daughters who may have children but often leave the children to be cared for by the children's grandmother (with three or more generations in one household) provide a breeding ground for potential misunderstanding and conflict. This aspect of generational conflict is discussed in greater depth in Chapter 7 ('A place of solidarity for the elderly').

The men in Giyani wear Western clothing – shirts, trousers and sandals or shoes. Despite the hot climate, they rarely wear shorts. Also in stark contrast to the women's colourful clothing, the men tend to wear sombre-hued trousers (black, brown, beige or grey) with plain or striped shirts.

The noticeable contrast between the colours worn by the men and those worn by the women suggest a difference in their attitudes towards life. One might argue that the

women's historically passive resistance to subjugation by Shoshangana suggests independently minded womenfolk. However, it was my observation that the women are gentle-natured and are averse to conflict. Against this background, the way in which the women function in marriage is particularly interesting. Within a male-dominated context, Giyani women have found subtle ways of asserting themselves and attending to their needs alongside the needs of their families and their domestic responsibilities. Without public protest or open conflict in their households, the women are able to manipulate marital relationships subtly so as not to bruise the often fragile egos of their husbands. The women may not wish to become the dominant partners, but they are able to avoid being helpless victims of male domination. This makes interacting with the older women in this community fascinating – they will sometimes share their feminine wisdom. Although domestic conflict and violence do occur in Giyani, I suspect that many incidents of conflict are avoided through the women's behaviour. The dynamics that operate in marital relationships in this area is elaborated on in Chapter 6 ('Projects as sites of empowerment legislation and persistent traditions').

Another noticeable aspect of Giyani is the number of women drivers as opposed to people who have to resort to public transport. This observation suggests that, in this area, rich and poor, or rather the middle class and the very poor, live together. Vehicle ownership is a possibility for those with a regular income, in other words, those who belong to the middle class. The middle class in this area consists mainly of people in the civil service.

For those without their own transport, many mini-bus taxis and buses operate between the villages, the town and beyond. Public transport is particularly helpful on the days when pensions or government grants are paid and people flock to town for their monthly shopping. In spite of the hustle and bustle on such days, even pensioners do not fear for their safety, because incidents such as attacks and muggings occur infrequently.

During the 11 years I lived in Giyani, I observed that even on these busy shopping days, one rarely finds men accompanying the women and children. In fact it is uncommon to find men pursuing activities with women and children in public. Women and young

children are most often seen together and men generally gather in groups of various sizes in the villages or town.

For instance, in town, a popular weekend meeting place for men, especially those with cars, is the Mabunda complex, which houses a liquor store, a butchery and public toilets, and has a spacious, well-built *braai* [barbeque] area surrounding a large parking zone. The *braai* fires are prepared by courtesy of the management of the Mabunda complex. This enables a patron to purchase the meat and liquor of his choice and stand at one of the fires, socialising with his friends. For the customers' convenience, the liquor store and the butchery are open until late to satisfy demand – sometimes until 22:00. The nocturnal gatherings are for men – women are not welcome. From time to time, well-groomed young women are seen loitering at the centre, trying to attract the attention of a well-off man, but this kind of behaviour is frowned upon at this venue. It is possible that men may make arrangements to meet a young woman of their choice elsewhere, but men and women do not socialise together at Mabunda's – this assembly point is a 'sacred' male bonding spot. It may perhaps be argued that Mabunda's is on the busiest road in town, so that it would hardly be sensible for the men, most of whom are married, to entertain young women in full view of all who pass by – possibly even their wives. Alternatively, maybe the men's desire to be free of female intrusion or domestic issues is so strong that the men spend hours socialising together till just before sunrise on Saturday and Sunday mornings, away from their womenfolk. Whatever the reason, Mabunda's patrons are reluctant to engage with women at this all-male watering hole.

Another observation is that Giyani men spend hours washing their cars. The car grooming ranges from a daily hose-down and quick buff of the car every morning, to a weekly wash, clean and polish, a process that easily takes up to three to four hours – the better part of a Saturday or Sunday. A practical reason for the frequent washing of cars is that the dusty village roads dirty the cars, but the male obsession with car cleaning in my opinion resembles nothing so much as the preening of feathers that male birds indulge in to be attractive to female birds. Whatever the motivation, it is clear that, on the whole, the men in Giyani give their cars greater attention and time than they give to their wives and children.

1.6 THE RESEARCHED PROJECTS AND THE PROJECT PARTICIPANTS

One of the four study projects, Ahitipfuxeni, is located near the industrial area. Another two projects, the Giyani Aged Garden and Hi-Hlurile, are located in the more affluent Section D2, and the fourth project, the Avelanani Crèche, is located five kilometres beyond Section D2 along the Nsami Dam road in Makoxa Village. This means that three of the four projects are located within the municipal boundaries of Giyani, whereas the Avelanani crèche is under the jurisdiction of a traditional authority.

Two of the projects that form part of this study, the Giyani Aged Garden (started in 1987) and the Avelanani crèche (founded in 1991), were established during the homeland period and reflect an attitude of nurturing human capacity and dignity. The Avelanani crèche focuses on early childhood development; while the Giyani Aged Garden concentrates largely on the needs of the retired. The Giyani Aged Garden is registered as the 'Giyani Society for the Care of the Aged', but is locally referred to as the Aged Garden.

The other two projects, Ahitipfuxeni (started in 1995) and Hi Hlurile (started in 1999), date to a period in the development discourse when the disastrous impact of 'structural adjustment' measures as a means for curbing debt to international financial institutions was realised. 'Social funds' (donor funds aimed at improving people's living conditions by promoting income-generation and building human capital) were made available. 'Social funds'¹⁵ were focused on vulnerable groups, such as retrenched civil servants or civil servants who had retired early and who bore the brunt of the adjustment measures, as well as unskilled rural women. Ahitipfuxeni and Hi Hlurile were funded by 'social funds'; and these two projects serve as examples of the impact of 'structural adjustment' measures. The main focus of Chapter 5 ('Places to deal with countercyclical change') is examining whether 'social funds' have reversed the damage of 'structural adjustment'.

¹⁵ See Footnote 3.

1.7 RESEARCH METHODS

1.7.1 A journey through the literature

Much of the literature relevant to this study has been woven into the fabric of the different chapters. Hence, the literature highlighted in this section is largely discussed here to make sense of the development discourses (macro-dynamics) that had an impact on the small-scale development projects in the research area.

Development literature is a complex minefield of conceptual confusion, philosophical and ideological dispute and conflicts of interest. There is no consensus regarding the answer to what could arguably be considered the most fundamental question in this field, namely: 'What is development?' Other questions, concerning best practices in development, yield even more questions. Why, after decades of development initiatives on which many resources and much time and energy have been expended, do gross economic inequalities continue to exist in recipient countries and across recipient countries? There is still little agreement even on questions such as when development started, whether the work of missionaries should be regarded as development or whether development discourses emerged only after World War II.

Notwithstanding the confusion, the literature on development can be divided into two broad groups, along ideological lines. On the one hand, there are authors who regard development as change or transformation for the good – they are often referred to as 'liberals'. On the other hand, there are authors who are opposed to development because they believe development to be a curse, rather than a cure for human misery and for environmental degradation. The latter group generally supports the dependency theory or neo-Marxist philosophies.

Even within the discipline of Anthropology, the literature falls largely into two camps; the practitioners and the academics. The practitioners practise 'development anthropology', while the academics pursue an 'anthropology of development'. Lewis (2005:1) has identified a third group – those anthropologists who 'combine their community or

agency-level interactions with people at the level of research with involvement with or on behalf of marginalised or poor people in the developing world’.

The development anthropologists subscribe to the liberal belief that economic growth is desirable and that development is needed so that the basic needs of the poor can be met and their standard of living can be improved through development initiatives of various kinds. A number of development anthropologists work in development funding institutions such as the World Bank and the British Department for International Development (DFID).

By contrast, the views of those who oppose development are captured most trenchantly in a 1992 publication edited by Wolfgang Sachs, *The Development Dictionary: A Guide to Knowledge as Power* (the 1997 reprint was used in this study). The front cover of this publication has a quotation by Susan George¹⁶: ‘A brilliant cluster of unconventional scholars provide a powerful antidote to decades of brainwashing about Development, aid and progress and the mortal dangers of the Twentieth century.’ Anthropologists who contributed to the dictionary include Arturo Escobar, who criticises development planning, and Gerald Berthoud, who reviews the history and anthropology of the market as an institution.

In this war of words between these two branches of Anthropology, some academics have been particularly harsh in the criticism of their opponents. However, the co-dependence of these two groups is often overlooked: the guidance that development anthropologists provide in development benefit from the critical reviews of academics’ reflection and leads to a refinement of development initiatives. Conversely, the academics would have fewer papers without the fertile ground provided by the development anthropologists.

It would be erroneous to conclude that within these groupings there is consistency of conviction, because defection to an opposing point of view is fairly common. For instance, Gustavo Esteva, who refers to himself as a de-professionalised intellectual, left his career in the Mexican Ministry of Planning and now focuses on grassroots networks.

¹⁶ Susan George is the author of *A Fate Worse Than Debt*

Esteva (1997:22) states that '(e)ven those still convinced that development goals are pertinent ideals ... should honestly recognise the present structural impossibilities for the universal materialisation of such goals'.

Rather than become disillusioned about development itself, David Mosse (2005), like James Ferguson (2007) became disenchanted with the development/aid industry. Mosse's defection from development anthropology has unleashed a furore among his former colleagues in the British aid industry. In his book *Cultivating Development: an Ethnography of Aid Policy and Practice*, Mosse (2005) does not spare his own role and conceptual confusions as a development practitioner in his aim to highlight the disjuncture between policy and practice. On the basis of Mosse's own experience, he claims that aid policy does not direct practice, but suggests that policy ensures consistent interpretations of practice. For Mosse, social and institutional imperatives often force those who are supposed to implement the policies to avoid issues on the ground, to create or adopt a false appearance in order to conceal facts (which leads to ambiguity), in order for the aid industry to hold together and prosper.

Even in the South African context, especially in the apartheid era, the practitioner-observer divide has had a number of ramifications in the field of Anthropology, with Cultural Anthropology or *Volkekunde* scholars as the 'reluctant participants', and Social Anthropology scholars as the 'antagonistic observers', as Lewis (2005:1) calls the two groups. *Volkekunde* literally means the 'study of different nations' or 'races' within a country. The *Volkekunde* ethnographic work on different 'nations' (for instance, the social and political organisation of the Zulu, the Venda, the Tsonga-Shangaan) has been (ab)used to legitimise the ideology of 'separate development' (apartheid). Because *Volkekunde* was supported by the State, it became the dominant branch of Anthropology in South Africa under apartheid. Social Anthropologists Emile Boonzaier and John Sharp, the editors of *South African Keywords: the Uses and Abuses of Political Concepts* (1988:ix), have challenged the dominance of *Volkekunde* and unambiguously claim that the purpose of their book is to assist students and others to 'analyse the nature of the South African society ... to examine certain key concepts critically and to reorientate their thinking away from conventional meanings of these concepts'. Thus, if

development is concerned with disparities, in South Africa from the 1960s to the early 1990s, the focal point in the discourse was 'race'/'nation' inequalities, whereas the international literature focused on economic and, later, also on gender disparities.

Serote *et al.* (2001) expound on how the 'Gender and Development' discourse evolved from the 1970s approach of 'Women in Development' (WID), which focused on integrating women into development by increasing women's productivity and income without focusing on increasing empowerment. The emphasis on economic growth and industrialisation that characterised the thinking of modernisation theory was followed and was applied to women. The benefits of development, it was believed, would trickle down to all (also see Section 1.1). Development initiatives supported poverty relief programmes that encouraged women to undertake wage work. Western values were stressed, and it was assumed that the Third World needed smaller populations to achieve modernisation and democracy (Serote *et al.*, 2001:158).

Parker, Lozano and Messner (1995) argue that the WID approach has been severely criticised for not considering the multiple roles women play inside and outside the home, especially when it became clear that the benefits of development accrued mainly to elite groups (mainly men) and did not extend to all. By the late 1980s, the 'Women and Development' (WAD) approach, inspired by dependency theory views, argued that the failure of Third World development was a consequence of the historical relationship ex-colonies had with imperial nations. Development policies kept ex-colonies under the control of industrialised nations and deepened unequal power relations, causing structural underdevelopment and dependency. Gender oppression intensified with the spread of capitalism in the ex-colonies, as subsistence production was replaced with capitalist forms of production and consumption. The WAD approach recognised the different positions of men and women in capitalist power relations and the development process. However, the WAD approach was also limited, in that it focused narrowly on working class women and precluded the possibility of coalitions across class lines. It excluded people who were not in formal employment, confined the political field to work-related activity and failed to recognise efforts to achieve legal reform.

By the end of the 1980s, thinking shifted towards 'Gender and Development' (GAD) – an approach that focuses on the unequal gender relations that prevent equitable development and women's full participation in society (Parker *et al.*, 1995:11). GAD considers the relations between women and men and the power context in which development occurs. GAD represents a coming together of the WID and WAD perspectives and maps a more complex feminist approach to development. The Gender and Development approach considers the political, socio-economic and domestic forces that influence development and seeks appropriate empowerment strategies for women within a specific context. Strategies include programmes to support social production (such as child and health care), research into informal sector workers and initiatives to overcome gender and/or generational conflicts. The GAD approach acknowledges women's demand for economic independence, legal reform, social transformation and coalition building.

In recent years, since the fall of communism in 1989, development literature has generally assumed that the capitalist model of market economics is the main model to be used in discussing economic growth, adding a redistributive component for the protection of those who are marginalised from economic activity – this creates the reality of a dual economy. This paradigm is generally adhered to in post-apartheid South African economic planning. Vishnu Padayachee (2006) has compiled a stimulating collection of writings, *The Development Decade? Economic and Social Change in South Africa, 1994-2004*. In one of the essays in this collection, Gillian Hart (2006:14) repeats the observation that Polanyi made in 1944 about the 'double movement' of capitalism, which implies that 'the unleashing of markets for labour, land/nature and money...generates counter-tendencies and demands for intervention and social protection'. Furthermore, she points out how, in 2003, former President Thabo Mbeki pronounced the official First and Second Economy discourses for South Africa (Hart, 2006:24).

The above literature overview highlights the different binary forces within the literature over time – the development practitioner versus the academic, social anthropology versus *Volkekunde* in South Africa, male and female power relations, and a First and a

Second Economy. These dualist forces conjure up the image of two elephant bulls fighting for dominance. The grass suffers in the process. Each different approach comes with different ways to implement development, informed by what is in vogue at a given time. The poor, like the grass, are often left trampled and battered by the inefficiencies of implementation and they are the ones who have to deal with macro-level decisions that affect their lives at the micro-level.

There is a gap in the literature on how the poor deal with successive changes over time. The literature that subscribes to the notion expressed by Robert Chambers (1999), of 'putting the last first', advocate for beneficiary participation from the start – in the planning and implementation of projects. In other words, the views, opinions and suggestions of the people for whom the project is intended should be included in the planning of the project.

This study does not present or evaluate a particular development initiative, for example, the impact of micro-lending initiatives; rather, it looks at how, over the last 35 years, ordinary people in Giyani have coped with the many changes that have been imposed on them or that they themselves have helped to bring about, whether these changes are political, economic, social or age-related, and the role that small-scale projects play in helping them to deal with the changes thrust upon them.

Another aspect in the literature I would like to explore briefly is the two related concepts of 'power' and 'empowerment'. The views of the French philosopher Michel Foucault (1982, 1984) on 'power and subjectivity' and 'knowledge and power' have greatly influenced the understanding of development. For Foucault, power relations change humans into subjects, since the nature of power relations is not simply a relationship between partners, individuals or collectives; rather, it is a way in which people's actions modify the behaviour of others: 'In itself the exercise of power is not violence; nor is it consent. It is a total structure of actions brought to bear upon possible actions; it incites; it induces, it seduces, it makes easier or more difficult; in the extreme it constrains or forbids absolutely; it is nevertheless always a way of acting upon an acting subject' (Foucault, 1982:789). Influenced by Foucault's thinking, Ferguson (2007) and Escobar (1997:133) regard development as a form of domination, with development agencies or

governments wielding power over those they intend to 'develop'. However, a particularly encouraging aspect of Foucault's (1982:794) concept is his claim that 'every power relationship implies, at least in potential, a strategy of struggle', meaning that people are not the helpless victims of those with greater power, but that they can contest the power relationship through their own agency. The contestation of various forms of power is an important thread that runs through this thesis.

Furthermore, Foucault (1982:791) states that 'power relations are rooted deep in the social nexus', so it is important to analyse the 'power relations in a given society, their historical formation, the source of their strength or fragility, the conditions which are necessary to transform some or to abolish others'. I believe that if all projects are a microcosm of the male-dominated power relations in society, people (notably women) would not, of their own volition, choose to be involved. I would contend that it is the fact that often the power dynamics in projects differ from those in society that makes participation attractive to those involved.

Another important aspect to note is that Ferguson (2007) and Escobar (1997) criticise development when it is conceptualised and planned elsewhere rather than in the place where the planned development is meant to occur, as is usually the case with projects funded by the World Bank and other international funding agencies. The projects in this study were all initiated locally; and the members and the leaders of the projects are residents of the Giyani area. However, the projects do receive funding, so, to some extent, donors may influence the functioning of projects. For example, it may be specified that funding is to be used specifically for equipment or training when the real need of the project may be, say, the maintenance of buildings.

On the topic of 'empowerment', which literally means 'to give power to' or to 'make powerful', Sarah Mosedale (2004, 2005) shares very interesting insights, as she differentiates between three types of power. For Mosedale (2004:2), 'power over' is a zero sum model of power: one person's loss is another person's gain. Other conceptualisations of power, 'power to', 'power within' and 'power with' do not imply that one person's gain is necessarily another person's loss. 'Power to' is power that expands possibilities for one person without necessarily limiting somebody else's (learning to

read is a good example). 'Power within' refers to qualities such as self-confidence, self-esteem and a belief that one can make a difference. Such qualities are necessary before anything else can be achieved. In a sense, all power starts from 'power within'. In this regard, Mosedale (2004:2) cautions that the 'internalisation of feelings of worthlessness is a well-recognised feature of women's subordination and therefore many development interventions seek to bring about changes at this level'. 'Power with' denotes collective action, recognising that a group acting together can achieve more than individuals can achieve on their own: 'Many interventions aiming to empower women recognise the importance of creating opportunities for women to spend time with each other reflecting on their situation, recognising the strengths they possess and devising strategies for change' (Mosedale, 2004:2). An important focus of this study is therefore the convergence of the empowerment of women and the reflective spaces that small-scale development projects provide.

Malhortra, Schuler and Boender (2002) are concerned with how 'empowerment' should be conceptualised and measured. They reviewed existing theoretical and empirical literature to identify methodological approaches to measuring and analysing women's empowerment. They found that 'despite the confusion in rhetoric and terminology, there is [now] greater consensus in the theoretical literature on what empowerment means and how it should be conceptualised, and even operationalized' (Malhortra *et al.*, 2002:34). These authors selected Kabeer's definition for empowerment: '...the expansion in people's ability to make strategic life choices in a context where this ability is previously denied to them'. This definition 'contains two elements which helps distinguish empowerment from other related concepts: 1) the idea of process, or change from a condition of disempowerment, and 2) that of human agency and choice' (Malhortra *et al.*, 2002:6). Regarding the measurement of empowerment, they suggest that empowerment is context-specific and personal. This means that an experience may have an impact on a person in a rural area that is different from the impact of a similar experience on a person in a different context, such as a city or another country. Thus, there cannot be standard or universal measures for empowerment, but each person, through reflection, defines what empowerment is.

Cornwall and Brock (2005) reflect on empowerment and other buzzwords, such as 'participation' and 'poverty reduction', and how these words have come to mean different things in policies and in practice. For example, development policies that follow one-size-fits-all thinking contradict notions of participation and empowerment by prescribing how development should take place. They argue that international institutions (particularly the World Bank) have taken these concepts and refracted them (Cornwall & Brock, 2005) into what these institutions intend these concepts to mean. However, Cornwall and Brock (2005:1057) indicate that the mere fact that this 'refraction of meaning' occurs also points to the reversibility of discourse and suggests a 'look at what alternative framing might have to offer'.

Friedmann (1992:8) regards poverty not only as economic disempowerment, but maintains that political and social disempowerment can also be regarded as poverty. One of the questions this study explores is whether the organisation and leadership of projects nurture the empowerment of people – do participants feel affirmed in projects? Empowerment may not lead to radical social change, such as a change in the gender division of labour; rather, participants often experience empowerment as personal change. In this regard, Kabeer (2001:71) has found that an 'important change that featured in many of the women's testimonies related to their sense of self-worth'. The current study provides insights into empowerment as a 'lived experience' in the Giyani context.

I also reviewed literature on age and aging, which is a natural process, but another form of change. "Age" is a standard component of the anthropologist's conceptual tool kit; "aging", by contrast, is not' (Albert, 2002:338). This statement echoes the sentiments expressed in 1967 by Clark (cited in Cohen, 1979:137) about the neglect of 'aging' as a feature in anthropology. Notwithstanding this complaint, the literature that is available presents interesting insights into the anthropology of aging, notably a collection of essays edited by Minkler and Estes, *Critical Perspectives on Aging: the Political and Moral Economy of Growing Old* (1991). In this volume, ageing is viewed from a political economy perspective. Nursing homes or geriatric centres are said to be part of a self-serving enterprise that is usually not interested in finding solutions to the problems of the

elderly (Zelkowitz, 1993:109). Workers are not given a choice in whether they want to retire or not (Minkler & Estes, 1991:304), but a constant flow of retirees ensures the demand for nursing homes or retirement centres.

Old age is defined and experienced differently in different societies. This fact is clearly evident in Steven Albert's (2002) review of the ageing experience in America, Japan and India. Americans on the verge of retirement are often anxious about retirement, since 'productive activity... is still the be-all and end-all of status and self-definition' (Savishinsky, cited in Albert, 2002:339). The Japanese place great emphasis on mental competence, so Japanese retirees 'try hard to stay engaged and productive in community activity... A failing mind... is a moral delict, indicating abdication of one's responsibility to stay fit and engaged' (Albert, 2002:339). By contrast, elders in Bengal, India, 'do not show anxiety about loss of social connections or productive activity with declining competencies' (Albert, 2002:339).

In the current study, the experiences of newly retired government officials provide insights on how retirees experience the aging process in Giyani. *'Around here, old people are thought to become witches and wizards',¹⁷* one newly-retired government official in Giyani said. This statement indicates the isolation that the aged experience in this area and explains why younger people often avoid very old people. The Giyani Aged Garden provides for activity for the elderly, and interaction with their peers, to assist them in adjusting to old age. This project is a very good example of an organisation that caters for the needs of individuals who are coping with change in their lives, and this is the focus of Chapter 7 ('A place of solidarity for the elderly').

The journey through the literature on the aged inevitably leads to considerations of pensions, health care provision and other aspects of social policies. Social policies direct the way in which states fulfil their obligation to provide social services (for example, education and health care) for all its citizens and provide social security or welfare measures to protect vulnerable groups such as children, the aged, the indigent and the disabled (O'Connor, 2007). A country's social welfare policies reflect historical

¹⁷ To highlight the voices of the participants in this study, italics are used whenever they are quoted in the text.

social, political and economic antecedents¹⁸ (see Alcock, 2001; Briggs, 2007; Giddens, 2007; Lund, 2001), therefore welfare policies differ from one country to another. The seminal work *The Three Worlds of Welfare Capitalism* by Esping-Anderson (1990) contributed greatly to the field of comparative social policies because Esping-Anderson examines the various welfare approaches in different countries, groups those with similar characteristics and develops a classification¹⁹ for welfare states (also see Art & Gelissen 2007; Castles & Mitchell, 1993; Ferrera, 1996).

Welfare states are not solely responsible for the social wellbeing of their citizens, but are assisted by families, who care for the young and the aged, NGOs²⁰ (Giddens, 2007) and particularly the private sector through private pension schemes, retirement plans and/or unemployment benefits (Pauw & Mncube, 2007; also see Malan, 2009). The assumption underlying social policies is that people who are employed, with the assistance of the employer, should make provision for their own social security needs (pensions, disability or illness) and that the State should provide social security for the poor. The State is responsible for drafting social policies that guide the contributions of the role-players, but the State also provides welfare for the poor. State-funded social welfare programmes, also referred to as social assistance or social safety nets, take the form of non-contributory transfer programmes that can assist the poor or those vulnerable to poverty and shocks (Pauw & Mncube, 2007:3). Esping-Anderson (2007:435) asserts that '[p]ostwar "welfare capitalism" functioned well because labour markets and families themselves were the principal source of welfare for most citizens, most of their lives'. However, with changes in the labour market as evidenced by the shift towards insecure employment (see Section 5.6) and high levels of unemployment, in addition to demographic changes (such as the proportion of aged in a population) and shifts in family structure (such as single-parent families), states are experiencing great

¹⁸ For the history of social welfare policy of South Africa, see Borat (1995), Natrass and Seekings (1997), Sagner (2000) and Van der Berg (1997).

¹⁹ Esping-Andersen (1990) identified three types of welfare state – the liberal, conservative and social democratic welfare states.

²⁰ In Germany, Belgium, Austria and Holland, NGOs play a major role in the provision of social services (Giddens, 2007:379).

pressure to provide social welfare to an increasing number of people (Esping-Andersen, 2007; Giddens, 2007).

With increased spending on social welfare provision and the precarious world economy, it is not surprising that in recent years a number of authors have debated welfare reforms because of concerns about the fiscal sustainability of welfare states (Bonoli, 2000; Kuhnle, 2000; Myles & Pierson, 2001; Palier, 2007; Taylor-Gooby, 2001). By contrast, social welfare reforms in South Africa were motivated by the need to reform racially discriminating policies,²¹ although some aspects of social security policy reform were already explored in the late 1980s.²² The post-1994 government inherited a fragmented and racially differentiated welfare system, but the commitment of the government to social policy reform (see Borat, 1995; Natrass & Seekings, 1997; Van der Berg, 1997) is evidenced by the committees of inquiry established to advise the government on specific aspects of social policy reform, for example, the 1995 Smith Committee on Strategy and Policy Review of Retirement Provision in South Africa, the 1996 Committee for Restructuring of Social Security (also known as the Chikane Committee) and the Lund Committee on Child and Family Support, also in 1996 (Makino, 2003:17). From 2000 to 2002, the Taylor Committee of inquiry into a Comprehensive System of Social Security in South Africa (Makino, 2003) investigated strategies to ensure that social assistance reaches the correct people or targets – namely the elderly, poor families with children, disabled people, war veterans, and households taking care of children and people in need.²³

At present, social grants take the form cash transfers to people who have been specifically targeted, meaning social grants are means tested. These grants are unconditional, which means that no conditions (such as funding for school attendance by

²¹ According to Black *et al.* (1999:232), the fiscal policy for the period from 1948 to 1974 supported apartheid, but there was a fiscal shift in the mid-1970s (to 1994) to narrow racial spending gaps through social policy reforms.

²² The Mouton Committee investigated the Retirement Provision System for South Africa from 1988 to 1992 (Makino, 2003:17).

²³ South Africa administers means tested grants – ‘means tests are supposed to be the measures to ensure that social grants would correctly reach the “target”’ (Makino, 2003:8).

children or regular visits to health clinics) are attached to receiving a grant. The two main criticisms of targeted grants are that recipients are stigmatised when they receive such grants, and that the administration of the system is complex (Pauw & Mncube, 2007:4). The high administration costs absorb resources intended for poor people (given that grants are usually pooled as household income and that recipients often live in families of three or more generations), which calls into question the cost-effectiveness of the system (Camerer, 1997:s.a.).

The total cost (present and long-term costs) of various social policies in South Africa is often not properly considered, because the State needs to deal with the severe poverty and vast socio-economic inequalities that still remain and reflect the apartheid past, because poverty is concentrated among black people (Makino, 2003:1). The State is chasing a moving target, as an increasing number of South African households subsist on social grants. For example, in 2001, it was estimated that 3.5 million people received grants (Makino, 2003:2), but by 2009, more than 13 million people received grants (Khumalo, 2009:s.a.).²⁴ The problems are exacerbated by the present economic downturn. This trend towards an increased demand for social grants necessitates that the government balance social spending between long-term goals and short-term gains. Pauw and Mncube's (2007:ii) analysis of social security expenditure indicates that '[w]hereas in the past much of the increased expenditure on social security provisioning could be financed out of government revenue overruns, ... there is evidence of substitution taking place within the social budget: expenditure on education and health seems to have declined in favour of increased welfare transfer expenditure'. Such substitution of human capital investments in education and health care with short-term poverty relief measures (grants) is untenable, as education and health provision²⁵

²⁴ Even though the accuracy of these estimates and the reasons for the increase in numbers can be debated, it is clear that between 2001 and 2009, the number of people receiving social grants has increased greatly.

²⁵ Health provision as it relates particularly to South Africa's HIV/AIDS pandemic is very important. Especially initiatives that protect children, such as the programme for preventing mother to child HIV transmission should not be short-changed (see Doherty, McCoy & Donohue, 2005).

(particularly to poor people) should remain important concerns, because they have consequences that will last for generations.

One reason for the fervour with which the present government pursues social welfare is that '[s]ocial security in South Africa is a right upheld by the constitution²⁶' (Camerer, 1997:s.a.). Malan (2009), in his reflection on how this right to social security should be interpreted, clarifies very important issues on the realisation of the right to social security. He states that socio-economic rights are not absolute, but are re-created as circumstances and resources change over time. Also, Malan (2009) asserts that this constitutional right does not compel the government to provide directly the resources to realise the right to social security for all citizens. He explains that the State should, however, provide the conditions for their realisation. The role of the State is firstly to create a social and economic policy environment for self-provisioning, meaning 'the [S]tate's responsibility would be primarily be to ensure ... a society where each person is able to provide for and protect themselves' (Malan, 2009:89). Secondly, the State should regulate and facilitate the actions of non-State social service providers. For example, in the provision of non-State health care, the State should ensure the democratic governance of the service provisioning organisation (civil or market-based) and the State should make available the resources to compensate the organisation for the services rendered. Furthermore, the State 'should also develop a regime to regulate the funding of non-[S]tate actors by other non-[S]tate actors' (Malan, 2009:92). Thirdly, if the first two provisions fail, the State has the duty to provide social assistance. Thus, according to Malan (2009:82), the realisation of the right to social security enshrined in the Constitution places some measure of responsibility on society in general, in other words, on the individual, the family, civil society, the State and the market.

The drafting of the South African Constitution (Act 108 of 1996) involved an inclusive and consultative process with massive public participation in which civil society²⁷ played

²⁶ The Bill of Rights, chapter 2, section 27 (Republic of South Africa. 1996b).

²⁷ 'Civil society' denotes the arena outside the boundaries of the State, family and the market that allows for voluntary collective action around shared interests, principles and values. Civil society organisations cover a wide range of associations, such as NGOs,

a prominent role (Jagwanth, 2003:4). Civil society organisations play an important role in any democracy (see Abé, 2005; Aiyede, 2003; Bond, 2004; Habib, 2000; Robinson & Friedman, 2005). The relationship between civil society organisations and the State can be either adversarial or collaborative, to create push and pull effects (Habib, 2003:11). Historically, the role of civil society in South Africa was in opposition to an oppressive, racist government (Noyoo, s.a.:21; also see Friedman, 1991). Later, during the transition to a democratic dispensation, civil society organisations played an important role as advocates for social and legislative change (Makino, 2003). This collaborative relationship between civil society and government was articulated by Dr Zola Skweyiya, a former Minister of Social Development, who stated that '[t]he basic twin expectations of government are that NGOs will firstly, continue to act as monitors of the public good and safeguard the interests of the disadvantaged sections of society. ... [and] assist in expanding access to social and economic services that create jobs and eradicate poverty among the poorest of the poor' (quoted in Barnard & Terreblanche, 2001:17).

At present, there appears to be a resurgence in civil society's opposition to government at the local government level around issues of service delivery (Brooks, 2009:s.p.; Keepile, 2010:s.p.). However, Noyoo (s.a.:24) laments the absence of civil society's involvement in policy processes. Jagwanth (2003:14) warns that the 'measure of civil society's vibrancy and success will ultimately depend on its role in bringing about socio-economic change'. Furthermore, in discussing the roles civil society plays, the impression should not be created that all civil society organisations are expected to fulfil similar roles, as Habib's (2003) exposition on the plurality of civil society shows.

The plurality of civil society refers to both the diversity of categories of civil society organisations and plurality in State-civil society relations. This means that various organisations promote different interests, for example, the labour movement, faith-based organisations, formal or informal community-based organisations advocating gender,

community groups, women's organisations, charities, faith-based organisations, professional associations, trade unions, self-help groups, social movements, business associations, coalitions and advocacy groups or media organisations (Whyte, s.a.).

youth or service delivery issues; and they all have specific roles to play to benefit democracy and governance in South Africa (Makino, 2003:25).

Habib (2003) distinguishes three categories of organisations and their relationship with the State. Firstly, there are grassroots community-based organisations that enable ordinary people to survive. These do not establish very formal relations with the State as it would 'subvert their character and thus compromise this role' (Habib, 2003:11). This implies that civil society organisations should be involved in community development and should be assisted by the State, but the State should not control community development through 'very formal relations'. The small-scale development projects that form the case studies in this study fall into this category. Hence, I pick up this issue again in Section 8.10.1, when I consider the implications of the study findings for development, with specific reference to the concept of Community Development Practitioners.²⁸ Furthermore, the cadre of community development workers that the State employs to promote and facilitate community development is also criticised in Section 8.10.1. I argue that the deployment of these workers is an initiative that represents the State's attempt to, knowingly or inadvertently, control grassroots development and so stifle the agency of local people.

The second category of civil society organisations and the relationship with the State that Habib (2003) notes refers to more formal NGOs. Such organisations should ideally have a collaborative relationship with the State if they render services to the poor.

Thirdly, Habib (2003) states that by challenging power relations, formal community-based organisations or social movements have an adversarial relationship with the State. Such a relationship enhances democracy for it 'creates a fluidity of support at the

²⁸ Through community development practitioners, the government hopes to facilitate community development in the Second Economy. In 2006, the national Department of Social Development commissioned studies on ways to improve the coordination of development in priority areas of deprivation. These studies led to the concept of community development practitioners (earlier referred to as community development workers) that would facilitate access to government services and initiatives by 'poor, vulnerable and marginalised individuals, households and communities' (CDP toolkit, 2009:i).

base of society and so hold the [S]tate and or political parties accountable to their obligations and responsibilities to the electorate' (Habib, 2003:11).

1.7.2 Field research method

A participatory approach was used in this study, because I realised that Chambers (1983) is correct when he emphasises that sitting, asking and listening are as much an attitude as a method: 'Sitting implies lack of hurry, patience and humility; asking implies that the outsider is the student; and listening implies respect and learning' (Chambers, 1983:202).

The qualitative and quantitative approaches to research and data analysis are still debated, with some researchers valuing one method rather than the other. However, in the 1960s, Pelto and Pelto (1970) already recognised the need to integrate quantitative and qualitative methods in anthropological research when they emphasised that '[c]redibility, in matters of human behavior, can never rest finally on purified numerical analysis. Nor can it depend wholly on rich verbal description that ignores underlying questions of quantity and intensity' (Pelto & Pelto, 1970:ix; also see Nkwi, 1998:65). Therefore, it became common practice in social research to employ a multi-method approach, drawing on the strengths of both quantitative and qualitative methods (see Babbie, 1998; Bernard, 1993; Bulmer & Warwick, 2000; Mouton, 2005; Neuman, 2003; Struwig & Stead, 2001; Taylor, 2000).

1.7.2.1 The qualitative methods

Initially, personal interviews were arranged with three persons who had a long history of involvement in development planning and implementation in the Giyani area. All three had tertiary education and they agreed to be interviewed in English. The first of these was the Principal Cultural Officer in the Department of Education, who was based in Giyani; she shared her perceptions on development success with me and provided me with background information on the projects with which she was familiar. This was

followed by informal conversations and more structured interviews with the founder of the Hi Hlurile Skills Development Project who helped me to gain more insight into the factors that motivate the leaders of development projects in the area. The third person was the founding member of the Giyani Society for the Aged, who provided a wealth of information on the history of their communal garden project.

In addition to the initial interviews, the qualitative part of this study covers case studies of four small-scale development projects, exploring the history, organisational structure and the benefits that individuals derive from their involvement.

The case-study method involves an in-depth study of a particular institution and relies on a range of data-gathering techniques such as informal interviewing, semi-structured interviews, participation and observation of events as and when they occur. Such data-gathering techniques ensure a 'greater richness of data and depth and penetration of analysis' (Bulmer & Warwick 2000:9). The reliability of case-study research depends on the personality and capacity of the researcher and only limited generalisation is possible (Mouton, 2005:149). To combat these limitations, the data were triangulated by combining different types of qualitative approaches and by including a quantitative element. Participant observation with field notes, life histories, unstructured personal interviews, semi-structured small group interviews and semi-structured individual interviews made up the qualitative part of the study.

Participant observation involves establishing rapport with the project groups and participating regularly in the groups' daily activities for the data collection of non-verbal behaviour (Bailey, 1982:239). I recorded the salient features of behaviour in my field notes and in the evenings I reflected and expanded upon the field notes. It should be noted that even though I had established a good rapport with the four case-study projects, my presence and the error involved in the observation and recording of the information are possible sources of bias.

The different types of personal interviews that were conducted (unstructured personal interviews, semi-structured small group interviews and semi-structured individual interviews) allowed the respondents to relate their own knowledge, their values,

interests, preferences, opinions and lived experiences. The time taken for these interviews varied, but ranged from 60 to 90 minutes. The unstructured interviews generally took longer than semi-structured interviews. Even though personal interviews are time-consuming (see Bless & Higson-Smith, 2000:107), I attempted not to rush the interviews, while at the same time being mindful that the interviewees might become fatigued and that they might have other priorities.

The life histories of five project participants were also recorded and provided in-depth understanding of their lives and their past experiences. With these life histories, the accuracy of the account was less critical than the story itself since I wanted to understand their life cycle, their development of self and their experiences of events like the mass relocation or forced removals (discussed in Section 2.2).

The aim of the qualitative part of the study was to obtain in-depth descriptions of the reasons for people's involvement in the selected projects and to determine what role these projects play in individuals' and groups' adaptation to change or changing circumstances.

The guidelines for ethical research that conforms with the *Code of Ethics* approved by the American Anthropological Association in June 1998 (AAA, 1998) and the *Ethical Guidelines for Good Research Practice* adopted by the Association of Social Anthropologists of the UK and Commonwealth in March 1999 (ASA, 1999) prescribe that a researcher should refrain from uninvited infringement upon the 'private space' (as locally defined) of individuals and groups. Mindful of this, I included only projects in this study that I had formed relationships with through my residence in the area.

I would like to describe my acquaintance with members of the projects selected for this study briefly at this point. I was initially introduced to the members of the Giyani Aged Garden when a colleague invited me to accompany her on a visit to her father, who was a project member. Later, I regularly bought produce from the group and this precipitated long conversations with some of the members.

I was introduced to the Avelanani crèche in Makoxa Village through my friendship with Nahle, who is the chairperson of the Makoxa Development Committee, a committee

established by the traditional leader of the village to oversee initiatives within the village. Through my interaction with the principal and staff of the Avelanani crèche, I came to admire their dedication to the children of former Mozambican refugees.

I got to know the third project, Ahitipfuxeni, through the Rotary Ann's club that I was part of. This charity club sourced a donation of five sewing machines for the Ahitipfuxeni project. The Rotary Ann's club took some responsibility for the maintenance of the sewing machines by having the machines serviced every year. As handicrafts interest me, I visited the project outside the ambit of the Rotary Ann's club to learn about and share skills with the women at Ahitipfuxeni informally.

As for the Hi Hlurile project, I initially met the founder of this group in a shop – she was wearing a suit with beautiful embroidery and beadwork and I complimented her on her outfit. Thus began a conversation about sewing and embroidery, ending with an invitation to visit the project site, which I promptly did. From that time, I learned and shared crafting skills with the women at the project, and, in time, a deep friendship developed between the project leader and me. Thus, my relationships with all four projects were well-established, and when I approached the project leaders and members to be part of my study, mutual trust and respect already existed and the project members were used to my presence.

Another consideration in the selection of these four projects was the period in which they were initiated. As has already been mentioned, two of the projects, namely the Giyani Aged Garden (started in 1987) and the Avelanani crèche (initiated in 1991), were initiated during the homeland epoch. The remaining two projects, Hi Hlurile and Ahitipfuxeni, were established in 1999 and 1995 respectively, after Giyani had been re-incorporated into a unified South Africa. The functioning of these projects may therefore provide insight into the development thinking of the time. Who initiated the projects and who the initial funders were are also important questions. In this regard, the influence of *inter alia* the missionaries in the area has to be considered. Some projects such as Ahitipfuxeni and Hi Hlurile were started at a time when the newly-elected government had large international loans to repay and had to look seriously at fiscal discipline. However, at the same time, it was also important for the post-1994 government to be

seen as caring for the poor, particularly rural women. Funds were therefore made available to small-scale development groups, and women were encouraged to start projects in order to access the available funds.

The four projects are set out in Table 1.1, below.

Table 1.1: Projects selected for the qualitative part of this study

Project name	Members/ beneficiaries	Activities	Location of project	Number of people interviewed
Avelanani Crèche (<i>'sharing' or 'together'</i>)	Staff: 7 women and 1 man (security guard) Beneficiaries: 140 children (aged 2 to 6)	Day care and early childhood development	Makoxa village (10 km east of Giyani town)	2 women
Giyani Aged Garden	Men and women (aged 60+) – numbers vary	Grow vegetables in communal garden, social activities, monthly health care services	Giyani town	20 women and 3 men
Ahitpfluxeni Community project	49 women and 8 men (age range: 20 to 50)	Sewing, weaving, tiling, pottery, brick-making, building	Giyani town	3 women and 3 men
Hi Hlurile (<i>'We have overcome unemployment'</i>)	12 unemployed women, some professionally trained (teachers and nurses)	Sewing, silk- screen printing, pottery, weaving, embroidery on clothing, training: computer literacy, project management	Giyani town	6 women

The research involved visits to the projects three to five days a week, over a period of eight months, and ranged from one to five hours per day. The key interviewees were project leaders and 33 project members (total = 37, see Table 1.1) who were interviewed individually or in groups, as circumstances permitted. Formal interviews were always conducted in the respondents' primary language, Xitsonga. I enlisted the help of a research assistant who was a qualified teacher who could not find a teaching position at the time. Interviews were recorded on audiotapes and later transcribed.

My recollections of the conversations and interviews I had with project members are varied. At the Aged Garden, I was mindful that many 'profound transformations of public and personal identities occur at the onset of retirement life' (Luborsky, 1994:411). I spent 160 hours with a mix of elderly people who had once held important posts in government or who had received little or no schooling and who were now relegated to the periphery of society. I always sensed in them a hunger to share their life and work experiences with someone else. I came to realise that many of them did not have people who were prepared to listen to them. Their activities and peer interaction at the Aged Garden help them to adjust, in a social setting, to the changes that accompany aging. Their reminiscences and recollections of life experiences often reflected the wisdom that comes with age; and all this they willingly shared with me.

The time I spent with members of the Hi Hlurile project was quite different. These women were energetic and full of ambition and plans for the future; much of the time was spent learning and sharing ideas, skills and information. At times, the women bombarded me with questions about ideas on what they should include in their next funding proposal, or I was asked what my thoughts were about political issues. Often, I felt energised by their enthusiasm and when they had an order to complete, I was asked to help with the cutting of the fabric that was to be used for bags. But there were also days when it felt as though their energy was spent, and that all of them were in an introspective mood. At these times, we just made small talk, while embroidering or beading cloth, each of us lost in her own thoughts.

In addition to casual chatting and informal discussions, small group interviews were conducted at the projects. These discussions were guided by an interview schedule that

indicated the different topics that were important to this study (see Appendix 1). In the more formal individual interviews, discussions were channelled to aspects of motivation and commitment, and biographical and household income data (see Appendix 2).

1.7.2.2 *The quantitative survey*

A questionnaire, consisting of biographical data and a Needs Test, was used to quantify the extent of involvement and motivation for participation in development projects in the Giyani area. The aim was to determine what proportion of the population in the Giyani area was involved in projects, what the gender and age distribution was on projects and what the sources of household income of project members were. The purpose of the short Needs Test was to elicit what motivates individuals to participate in development projects. My thinking on personal motivation was greatly influenced by Maslow's 'hierarchy of needs' theory and Alderfer's ERG theory (E=existence, R=relatedness, G=growth). Maslow believed that each person operates according to a hierarchy of five needs. These needs, from the lowest to highest, are physiological, safety, social, esteem and self-actualisation needs. As each of these needs is satisfied, the next need becomes dominant (Robbins, Odendaal & Roodt, and 2003:131). Clayton Alderfer revised Maslow's well-known theory in his ERG theory, since research generally did not validate Maslow's theory (Robbins *et al.*, 2003:134). Alderfer identified three groups of core human needs – Existence, Relatedness and Growth needs. This theory differs from Maslow's in that the ERG theory recognises the possibility that, firstly, more than one need may be operative at the same time, and, secondly, if the gratification of the higher-level need is stifled, the desire to satisfy the lower-level need increases (Robbins, 1991:200).

The Needs Test used in this study was adapted from the test based on Alderfer's ERG theory and compiled by Robbins (1991:228). The test (see Appendix 3) consisted of 16 statements, to which respondents had to answer 'true' or 'false'. From the responses, it is possible to assess whether 'Existence', 'Relatedness' and 'Growth' needs are met by their involvement in projects.

The survey employed a probability (simple random) sampling method, as this is considered 'an elegant and powerful method of gathering data on a small number of cases to make statements about (or estimates for) a much larger universe' (Bulmer & Warwick, 2000:11). I believe that this produced a high level of reliability and construct validity, and that the results can be generalised to the Giyani area at large (see Mouton, 2005:153). The questionnaire was translated and back-translated into and from Xitsonga and Northern Sotho (Sepedi) by two mother-tongue speakers who were local language teachers. The questionnaire was pilot-tested among a group of colleagues at the Giyani College of Education.

The sampling frame was obtained by drawing a circle on a map, representing a radius of 20 kilometres from the centre of Giyani town. Only 42 villages fall wholly or partially within this area, although a total of 66 settlements fall within the greater Giyani region (Hartman *et al.*, 1993:36). Six villages were randomly selected from the list of 42 villages.

The households (defined as all the people living at a homestead) in the six villages, plus the households in Giyani town, formed the population for this study. This population consisted of 10 909 households. These households were randomly sampled to ensure that each household within this population had an equal chance of being selected. The head of the household (first preference) was interviewed. If he or she was not available, then another adult, identified by the household as capable of speaking on behalf of the household, was interviewed.

For a population size of 10 909 households, a sample size of 374 households ensures a representative sample, with a 95% probability and a confidence interval of 5% (Bernard, 1993). The distribution of the population across the research area is set out in Table 1.2, overleaf.

Table 1.2: Giyani town and six randomly selected villages

Place	Number of households	Sample size
Gaula	510	18
Giyani town	6 996	240
Hlophekane	575	20
Homu	1 601	54
Shamfana*	414	14*
Npepula*	298	10*
Sifasonke	515	18
TOTAL	10 909	374

* The villages Shamfana and Npepula are predominantly inhabited by Northern Sotho-speakers.

1.7.2.3 *The field research process*

As I have already mentioned, simple random sampling is regarded as the best method for probability samples (Bernard, 1993:73), and was therefore chosen to ensure that the results were representative of a larger population, and to increase the external validity of the study. The initial design for the survey was chosen to ensure a simple random sample. The process that was envisaged involved using stand (residential plot) numbers. A random selection of households was made. The tribal authorities responsible for each of the selected villages have the stand numbers for all the households. From the list of selected households two samples of random numbers were used to create a main sample and an alternative sample. Whenever a household from the main sample could not be surveyed, a random number from the alternative sample would then replace this household. This approach was intended to maximise the representativeness of the sample, because the alternatives would be chosen using the same randomised procedure as the main respondents in the survey.

However, although the tribal authorities had stand numbers for all the dwellings in the villages, the situation in the field was made problematic by the fact that these numbers

were confusing: the numbers of the plots in a street do not follow any particular sequence. Therefore, a less than ideal random sample was selected by ensuring that at the very least, every road in each village was surveyed and that the number of households surveyed in a particular location adhered to the sample size indicated in Table 1.2.

For a survey of this magnitude, research assistants were needed. I employed two of my former students from the Giyani College of Education and girl learners I had worked with before (from a village that was not included in the survey). Previously, several learners from Sikhunyani High School had been involved in the 'Gender and Science Programme', which was offered by the Giyani Science Centre and funded by the Shuttleworth Foundation. I was involved with the Gender and Science programme in my capacity as a member of the Giyani Science Centre, in the Department of Education. The girls who participated in the Gender and Science Programme were trained in various aspects of life skills, communication, career guidance, problem-solving, Mathematics and Science. Through this initiative, I had worked closely with a cohort of learners at Sikhunyani High School. I therefore approached eight girl learners through the principal, and offered them an opportunity to acquire more skills and earn a very modest income as research assistants during the survey. Also, two of my former students, who had been involved as translators and tutors on the Gender and Science Programme, assisted with the administration and supervision of the questionnaire during the survey for this study.

For the learners, permission for participation was obtained, in writing, from their parents (see Appendix 5). In a letter requesting the parents' approval, the parents were informed of the objectives of the study and the areas to be surveyed (Giyani town and the villages Sifasonke, Gaula, Shamfana, Npepula, Homu A and Homu B, and Hlophekane). The survey was conducted at the respondents' homes over a period of three weeks during the July school holidays in 2004.

Thus, a team of ten research assistants, working in pairs, surveyed 374 households in six villages and in the suburbs of Giyani town. The questionnaires were administered in the form of structured short interviews: one research assistant of each pair read the

questions and the other recorded the responses on a survey sheet. These assistants were thoroughly trained on the two Saturdays preceding the survey. During the training, suitable attire was discussed and it was agreed that a conservative dress-code would be adhered to during the survey. The training also involved role-play to ensure that the research assistants were comfortable with how the survey interviews were to be conducted and to ensure standardised procedure. A pre-test was done on the second Saturday afternoon to minimise the instrumentation threat and to reduce risk to the validity of the data. The pre-test also enabled the assistants to understand the survey questions and to gain confidence in administering the questionnaire. During the training and the survey, each of the research assistants wore a name tag, with the 'Culture and Development Study' heading.

Upon reaching a household to be surveyed, the research pairs introduced themselves to the prospective interviewee or family representative by stating their own names and the name of the researcher. In addition to stating the researcher's association with the University of Pretoria, reference was made to the fact that the researcher was a lecturer at the Giyani College of Education, as this institution was familiar to the residents of the area. This provided respondents with recourse to higher authorities if they felt they needed to query the behaviour of the researcher or her assistants.

A short description of the purpose of the study and the questionnaire was given to the prospective respondents. Each respondent was assured of his/her anonymity and the confidentiality of responses. Then the prospective participant was asked if she or he was prepared to be interviewed and in all cases verbal consent was then given before proceeding with the survey. During the period when the survey was done, I collected the assistants at Sikhunyani High School at 8:00 daily and returned them to the same venue at approximately 16:00. They were each provided with a packed lunch and drinking water. Payment for the completed questionnaires was made at the end of the survey period.

1.7.2.4 *Ethical considerations and practices*

To ensure confidentiality and anonymity, pseudonyms are used and care was taken to ensure that specific data cannot be linked directly to specific interviewees or survey participants. The informed consent of all who participated in this study was obtained, and they were assured that all possible effort would be made to ensure their anonymity. However, it was also explained to the interviewees and survey participants that, despite my best efforts, the possibility existed that their anonymity might be compromised as a result of the fact that the research would become part of the public domain. Giyani is a small town and for high-profile individuals pseudonyms would not ensure complete anonymity as residents of the town could possibly associate pseudonyms with specific people and this was explained to all participants but particularly to prominent individuals. None of the people who participated in this study expressed their discomfort with the possibility of being identified nor did anyone withdraw their participation. Therefore, the interviewees and survey participants were reminded of their right to withdraw from the study at any time without any negative consequences to them.

Throughout this study, I was mindful of protecting the physical, social and psychological well-being and dignity of those who participated in the research. In respect of their rights, interests, sensitivities and privacy, I present certain issues from the perspectives of individuals, rather than trying to obtain a general sense of how all the participants feel about these matters. For example, women's experience and assessment of polygyny and bride-wealth (*lobola / ntsengo / xuma*) are too private and sensitive for some women to discuss, so this study includes the reflections of individual women who were comfortable with sharing their experiences with me.

At first, I thought that the above ethical considerations and practices would adequately protect those who contributed to this research. However, after the furore that was unleashed by David Mosse's (2006) ethnographic assessment of international development aid, I am less confident and, I must confess, rather frightened that, as was the case with Mosse's participants, the participants in this study might feel betrayed too. Mosse reminds us that the ethnographic method has two components – the fieldwork and the writing. Fieldwork establishes relationships that are intensely social, but

ethnographic writing breaks fieldwork relations and erects boundaries, since it is of necessity anti-social (Mosse, 2006:935). This means that an ethnographic process involves fieldwork that is then transformed into objective knowledge which is not embedded in these social relationships. I realise that when my interviewees read the representations of their lives and work, they might feel betrayed by 'broken confidences, violations of confidentiality or of the etiquette of gossip' (Mosse, 2006:952). It is with a sense of disquiet caused by Mosse's words that I engage in the writing of this report of my research. Given my good intentions, sincerity and commitment to protect the dignity, confidentiality and anonymity of the participants of this study, I take personal responsibility for the consequences that may result from this study's being in the public domain.

1.8 CHAPTER OUTLINE

When this study is read as a whole, it should be remembered that some of the information in the various chapters overlaps to some extent, because the findings were collected from different projects located within the same place, Giyani. Furthermore, these projects operate in the same socio-political and developmental environment.

Moreover, aspects of both the collective and the individual should be remembered. I am cognisant of the fact that the discipline of Anthropology is most comfortable with establishing general patterns of behaviour or the activities of people in a particular context or location. Drawing attention to individuals is typically met with a comment such as 'one swallow does not make a summer' and is only encouraged if the account elucidates general behaviour. However, during my time in Giyani I observed behaviour and actions that can be generalised into understandings that anthropologists are comfortable with; but I also encountered some truly remarkable individuals. Now, more than ever, I realise that each person is imbued with unique qualities and experiences that he or she brings into any context and that some individuals stand out from the rest. I have therefore infused my study with accounts of such individuals, since, to extend the swallow and summer metaphor, that one swallow has its own story to tell and should

therefore not just be dismissed as insignificant. Furthermore, advocates for an actor-oriented approach (see Biggs & Matsuert, 2004; Long and Long, 1992) believe that the analysis of actor linkages, coalitions and information flows means moving beyond 'structural linkages to unique opportunities, which may depend on a particularly innovative or dynamic personality' (Biggs & Matsuert, 2004:13). The view that people in a specific location may share many characteristics, but that individuals are not all the same, is shared by Long (2002:185), who believes that in the context of local and global transformations (globalisation), diversity is more important than uniformity. For Long (2002:190), the 'issue is how actors struggle to give meaning to their experiences through an array of representations, images, cognitive understandings and emotional responses'.

When one looks back at the last three and a half decades of historical change in South Africa, one asks oneself how that change has affected the lives of rural communities – the lives of real people. One community, Giyani, serves as the basis for the investigation that unfolds in this study. Changes, flux and transition are all words that come to mind when one takes a snapshot in time of a community that has experienced a state of change within itself – in the family and the community. Moreover, this community has made the act of changing an integral part of its agency, laying a foundation for personal growth, social cohesion and family stability.

The central question that this study seeks to understand is how people in the Giyani area deal with rapid socio-political and economic changes, and what role small-scale development projects play in the lives of people, particularly women, in the Giyani area.

In Chapter 2 ('Major historical moments in the history of Giyani and its inhabitants'), the political and economic landscape in which the research was conducted is sketched. The changes that the research area has undergone over the last three decades are described. In a period of just 30 years, Giyani has gone from being the capital of a self-governing homeland to being just another small town in a large province, and eventually to becoming one of the six seats of district local government in the province. This rural area has experienced a shift from being the proverbial step-child of a racially segregated government to becoming a priority area in the post-apartheid government's poverty

alleviation programmes. In line with its agenda for poverty eradication, the young democratic government launched programmes to reduce unemployment, provide job training, build infrastructure and help communities participate in development (for more information, see Adato, Hoddinott & Haddad, 2005).

My concern in Chapter 2 is the lived experiences of those upon whom change has been thrust, and how they are adapting to continual change. Instead of regarding the residents of Giyani as powerless victims of globally and nationally induced change, I consider the fact that, within any situation where power dominance exists, there is the potential to contest that power. In other words, even though the people of Giyani may have little or no say in decisions that affect their lives, they do, through their agency, transform these changes and adapt the programmes to what the people themselves decide the changes should be.

Government development programmes are informed by the global discourses on poverty, as donors recognise poverty alleviation as the leading principle underpinning their aid programmes. In Chapter 3 ('Discourses, policies and practices: the changing development landscape'), donor philosophies and ideologies are examined as a set of discourses that have changed in meaning over time. The effect of missionary efforts and of decisions made elsewhere, and the resultant impact on the lives of individuals and communities many kilometres away, is illustrated by the study of four community projects in the Giyani area. I argue in this chapter that the philosophies and ideologies that prevail in the development discourses at any particular time are reflected in small-scale projects that were established at that time.

Global economic and development decisions do not affect individuals or groups in uniform or linear ways (cause and effect): human agency transforms the impact. In Chapter 4 ('Projects as sites of learning and empowerment'), the question of agency is explored. The discussion in this chapter is based on the understanding of various forms of power and capital. Financial capital is seen as just one form of capital against the background of a broader understanding of personal and collective empowerment.

As a recipient of development aid, South Africa has had to align its governance to the conditions set by donor countries and donor agencies. The consequences of donor conditions for the people in Giyani are discussed in Chapter 5 ('Places to deal with countercyclical change'). This chapter deals with the so-called 'structural adjustment' conditions set by the World Bank, and the ensuing restructuring of the civil service. The effect of the down-scaling of the civil service was unemployment among qualified professionals and civil servants. Women form the bulk of the unemployed professionals and increasingly, the women of Giyani, like many women in rural areas of developing countries, have experienced 'multiple problems that impede[d] their ambition to contribute fully to the economy' (Awason, 2005:1). In response to the dire effects of 'structural adjustment', 'social funds'²⁹ became available with poverty alleviation as the focus.

I contend that the dark side of the noble ideals of poverty alleviation is that small-scale projects have become, intentionally or not, convenient encampments for rural people, particularly women. For rural women who are excluded from the country's mainstream economic activities, small-scale development projects are convenient camps, serving as spaces for social grant-dependent economic refugees. Local government ensures that social grants are received regularly. Periodically, it also disburses funds to projects to fulfil its obligation to help the marginalised.

Recognition of the differential impact of development has led to a focus on gender in development discourses. Internationally, human rights and gender equality enjoy a high profile and therefore a high degree of commitment – South Africa, for example, has passed legislation that ensures equal rights for all. However, while the laws may have changed, often women's lived experience does not reflect those changes. Ironically, on the one hand, the South African Constitution entrenches gender equality and democratic governance, while on the other, it also recognises non-elected, male-dominated, traditional leadership. In Giyani town, people experience and participate in democratically elected government structures, whereas people living in the surrounding villages are subjected to traditional governance and customary law.

²⁹ See Footnote 3.

In Chapter 6 ('Projects as sites for coping with empowerment legislation and persistent traditions'), the recent changes with regard to customary law, tribal authorities and provincial and local government structures are discussed with specific reference to the empowerment of women. In this chapter, I show that, judging by rural women's lived experience, the concept of 'equality for all' is an illusion and that, despite a number of changes in the legislation, some traditional practices persist.

Chapter 7, 'A place of solidarity for the elderly', deals with the ageing process. The study highlights the role that projects can play in the lives of those who are often relegated to the periphery of social life when their economically active phase has ended.

The present government and donors see community-driven projects as a means to overcome poverty through the creation of employment. The study concludes that the participatory, community-driven projects in Giyani and the surrounding areas have adapted to change and have not disintegrated, in spite of the fact that their original goals have not been met. In three of the projects that were investigated, economic sustainability has remained an objective that has not yet been attained, but participation levels remain constant, and are, in some cases, growing. The study shows that in development 'plans are always important, but never in quite the way the planners imagined' (Ferguson 2007:20). The South African government's commitment to poverty alleviation might have to be realised through other means, as the income-generating small-scale projects in the rural town of Giyani are not the beginnings of small businesses that will make people financially self-reliant and less dependent on government assistance.

CHAPTER 2: MAJOR HISTORICAL MOMENTS IN THE HISTORY OF GIYANI AND ITS INHABITANTS

2.1 INTRODUCTION

This chapter is concerned with the changes in Giyani over the last 35 years: from establishment of the homeland to the ‘golden age’ of Gazankulu in the 1970s and 1980s, to the discontent with and demise of the homeland in the 1990s, the lost years from 1994 to 2000, and the economic and social boom after 2000.

Throughout this chapter, it is evident that the theme of education – the development of human capital – permeates the history of Giyani over the last 35 years. The leader of the former Gazankulu, the late Hudson Ntsanwisi, firmly believed that the fate of the people of this homeland³⁰ depended on education, particularly the education of the youth, to remedy the plight of black people in South Africa in general, but specifically that of the Tsonga-Shangaan people. Therefore it is almost impossible to review the changes that Giyani has undergone without emphasising the importance of education and skills development in the history of this town. The focus on education is very evident in the reflections of people such as Mihloti, a 60-year old resident of Makoxa Village near Giyani, who said: *‘We saw schools being built in our village and in other villages.’*

The aim of the chapter is not to chronicle events in a strictly historical manner, but to look at changes and macro-level decisions by the previous and the current government through the eyes of those who have experienced them.

³⁰ Of the ten homelands, only four opted for ‘independence’: Transkei became independent in 1976, Boputhatswana in 1977, Venda in 1979 and the Ciskei in 1981 (they were known as the TBVC states). Gazankulu was one of the homelands that opted for self-governance rather than independence (World Statesmen, s.a.).

In this chapter, I start by drawing heavily on the reflections and insights of Nahle (aged 53), a senior government official who has lived in the Giyani area since birth. She is intimately involved in the development projects in Makoxa village and is the chairperson of the Makoxa Development Committee. Nahle's experiences epitomise the people's experiences of the changes that the town has undergone. She also has a thorough theoretical understanding of health and related social matters and extensive practical experience in the planning and implementation of development projects at the village level. Moreover, she works in government and is therefore fully aware of the role that the government should play in service delivery. Her observations and perceptions were verified against archive material, the available literature, the reflections of other Giyani residents, and my own research and experiences, living and working in the area. It is clear that, in situations where political decisions changed their circumstances, the residents of Giyani were not powerless victims. They used their agency to transform their world, adapted to these changes and, in some cases, turned macro-level decisions to their advantage.

2.2 THE HOMELAND ERA

The establishment of Giyani is fortunately recent enough for the older residents to remember the history of the town. Since the town was purposefully established in 1969 as a part of the government's social engineering plan,³¹ the existence of Giyani is closely linked to the resettlement of black people to designated areas from the 1960s to 1980s.

What was particularly interesting and enlightening to me was that people who were relocated to Giyani did not experience the forced removals to be quite as devastating as I had imagined they would. Upon reflection, I realised that my initial perceptions were influenced by some well-documented accounts of the destructive effects that forced removals have had on individuals, families and communities – such accounts have

³¹ Under the *Bantu Homelands Citizenship Act, Act 26 of 1970* (Republic of South Africa, 1970), a homeland was established for every major black language group in South Africa and all black South Africans were made citizens of one of these 'homelands' or 'Bantustans'. This Act and earlier legislation triggered the infamous forced removals of millions of South Africans who were relocated to designated areas.

become part of South Africa's history. In this regard, I read the work of Platzkey and Walker (1985), who, as part of the Surplus Peoples' Project, documented the magnitude of forced removals. They describe and characterise the nature of these large-scale resettlement programmes. Noting the discrepancy between my own expectations (based on my reading and my own experiences) on the one hand, and what the people in Gazankulu that I spoke to told me on the other, has made me mindful of De Wet's (2001:10) caution in his writing on forced removals that research findings, analysis and interpretations are greatly influenced by the views of the researchers. My interpretation of Nahle's and other Giyani residents' experiences of forced removal must be read against the backdrop of De Wet's *caveat*. The experiences which came to my attention are intricately linked to the history of Giyani, which is the essence of this chapter and is therefore of more than anecdotal value.

Nahle was born about 50 kilometres from Giyani, in a so-called 'black spot'. 'Black spots' were areas that the apartheid government had designated as part of 'white' South Africa (Govinder, 2005) and black people living in these areas were relocated to the particular homeland areas (Bantustans) with which the government believed they had a historical, cultural or linguistic link. When she was in her early teens, Nahle's family was relocated to a village in the Giyani area, inside the borders of what was then the Gazankulu homeland.

The older people in Giyani who experienced forced removal and whom I interviewed did not speak of their relocation as having been a devastatingly negative event in their lives, but rather reflected on the relocation with acceptance. In their opinion, the government decided that they had to be moved; transport for the relocation was provided and so, accepting the futility of fighting against the power of the government, their families packed up and moved to Giyani. Nahle was only vaguely aware of her parents' uncertainty about the future, as, by and large, her parents and others in their community accepted the relocation without much resistance. It would seem that since the process of populating Giyani was not accompanied by government brutality, as was the case in documented accounts of forced removals in other parts of the country (see Platzkey & Walker, 1985), the town of Giyani was established with people who harboured relatively

little resentment or anger. This goodwill from the people helped to establish a homeland and a town that are still characterised by peaceful human relations.

Although Nahle refers to this period of relocation as the 'dark ages' because of the uncertainty the members of her family initially faced in re-establishing themselves in a new location, she and others experienced the homeland era largely positively. In contrast to the 'independent' homelands, Gazankulu opted for self-governance, which allowed the people of Gazankulu the political participation denied to them in South Africa. Thus, the people were afforded the opportunity to vote for their leaders and exercise decision-making powers about their progress without having to accept the idea that Gazankulu was no longer part of South Africa. The view of the Gazankulu government was that the homeland period was transitory and not a permanent arrangement. This was evident from the address that Hudson Ntsanwisi, the leader at the time, gave the State President's Council on 21 April 1986 (cited in Cooper, 1987:17). According to Ntsanwisi, the people of Gazankulu intended to use this opportunity to prepare themselves for the future, when South Africa would be a unified country again.

Interviewees in Giyani maintained that during the homeland era, development '*happened indeed*'. Some people could access piped water and electricity, although these services were mainly for those who could afford to pay for them. In fact, Giyani was an affluent town compared to the surrounding villages or even other areas in the homeland. Toward the end of the homeland epoch, Hartman *et al.* (1993:41) reported that 80% of the homes in Giyani had electricity, compared to 2.5% of households in Mhala, in the south-eastern part of the homeland. This is not surprising, as the town was home to an affluent elite.

Another affluent group was the white administrators living in Kremetart, initially an enclave administered from Pretoria, now a suburb of Giyani. The relationship between white and black people in Gazankulu was reflected at a higher legislative level. In accordance with the *Promotion of Bantu Self-Government Act, Act 46 of 1959* (cited by Butler *et al.*, 1978), a Commissioner-General was appointed for each homeland. Even though he was the official representative of the central government in the homeland, he was not a diplomat, and he had no special responsibility for the interests of other South

African citizens in such a homeland. In addition to providing guidance and advice to the homeland authority, the Commissioner-General's main task involved the co-ordination of policy-making between the homeland departments and the South African Department of Bantu Administration and Development (Butler *et al.* 1978:69). An anthropologist, Professor E.F. Potgieter, was appointed as the first Commissioner-General in Gazankulu after he resigned as rector of the University of the North in June 1969 (Mawasha, 2006:71).

In addition to the services of the Commissioner-General, each homeland also had a development corporation with white staff that were responsible for skills transfer and the development of local staff. All the government departments had Secretaries (also known as Directors-General) and some white officials. These Secretaries were the administrative heads of the various departments, while ministers were the political principals of these departments (Hartman *et al.* 1993:11). The Secretaries were to 'caution, advise, and warn and make information available on matters of fact and procedure' (Butler *et al.*, 1978:69-70). The Secretaries also built the local capacity in the homeland civil services. The Secretaries recruited black and white staff for the departments and trained black staff to work alongside them and take over when the white officials left. Because the white administrators were paid by Pretoria and their salaries did not appear on local estimates, the disparities between the salaries of black and white employees were not publicised in the homeland assemblies (Butler *et al.*, 1978:71).

Minnie, a white woman who lived through most of the Bantustan epoch becomes nostalgic about those years. She arrived as a newly qualified teacher at the Kremetart Primary School in 1974 and later became the school's principal, remembers Kremetart as '*n kinderparadys*' [a child's paradise], an enchanting or magical place, with lush bushveld trees and vegetation and an abundance of fauna. The Kremetart community organised social activities around the school and the church in the community hall. Although the residents who worked for the Gazankulu Development Corporation were more affluent than those employed by the Gazankulu Administration, it was a close-knit community. The views of Minnie and other residents of Kremetart stand in stark contrast

to the assertion made by Butler *et al.* (1978:68) that the officials working in the homelands were more responsible to their employer in Pretoria than to the homelands, because they were seconded from the central government former Kremetart residents had a very high regard for the Chief Minister, because '*he had a vision for his people*'; and '*he set high standards in the Gazankulu administration*', and because '*he was a reasonable man with impeccable manners*'. In this regard, Gazankulu also seemed to have been quite the opposite of some of the other homelands, where, according to Butler *et al.* (1978:69), there were mutual mistrust and suspicion between the white officials and homeland leaders. This deduction is in line with the comments by Cooper (1987:5), who refers to Hudson Ntsanwisi as 'the foremost defender of the rights of the Black people, the uncompromising and eloquent spokesman for racial co-operation, understanding and fair play between Black and White.' Except for two women lawyers, all the whites who initially settled in Giyani were in the civil service, and had made a strong commitment to develop the homeland. Fischer's (1988:123-135) findings that the white officials were skilled, motivated and committed are endorsed by the views of the former and current residents of Kremetart.

Thus, the residents of Giyani interacted and worked alongside skilled white officials, the town as the seat of government was close to the people and the political and administrative systems provided many employment opportunities and prospects for social mobility. Moreover, not all the people who were employed by the government were skilled. The government made a concerted effort to develop human capacity and some government officials responsible for finance and administration were sent for training elsewhere, especially to KwaZulu-Natal. According to Nahle, the skills training model that was used allowed selected administrative personnel to spend six months of the year undergoing training and the rest of the year working and implementing what they had learned.

This training model further underscores the great emphasis that was placed on the development of human capacity in Gazankulu, and the social standing this brought to trained individuals. Social stratification in the area is most noticeable in Giyani, where an affluent middle-class and the very poor are all residents of the same town and the

surrounding villages. However, there is considerable interaction between the classes, as family relations tend to override, ignore and erode rigid class boundaries.

Since opportunities for employment and education in Gazankulu accrued to those classified as Tsonga-Shangaan, one would assume that the population of Giyani would be fairly homogeneous. In fact, this is not the case. For instance, in the case of one of the projects included in this study, 11 of the 12 members of the organisation's committee were from other language groups and had come to live in Giyani because they were married to Tsonga men. They all met their husbands elsewhere, but moved to Giyani because Gazankulu offered them opportunities that did not exist for their husbands or for these women in the rest of South Africa. Of these women, five were in the nursing profession. Two were on the level of matron of Nkhensani Hospital in Giyani and one (now retired) was the first rector of the Gazankulu Nursing College. Yet another member owns and manages a successful guest house and conference facility – her establishment won a tourism award in 2005 and represented Limpopo Province as part of the South African exhibition at the Tourism Fair in London (see Section 2.7 below). Her husband was the first black pharmacist to be allowed to practise in South Africa in the apartheid years and is a poster face for the Link group of pharmacies. He has established four pharmacies in Giyani and Makhado (previously called Louis Trichardt), and owns a small shopping mall in the central business district of Giyani town.

What at first seemed anomalous – meeting Zulu, Xhosa, Venda and Sotho women living in Giyani, speaking and accepting the local language and culture – is explained in part by Niehaus's (2002) description of the principles underpinning Tsonga-Shangaan kinship and marriage. Contrasting Shangaan and Basotho kinship and marriage relationships, Niehaus (2002:572-3) states that '[w]hereas close kin marriage between cross cousins had been preferential among Basotho, Shangaan marriage was strictly exogamous. No man was permitted to marry any of his cousins, nor any person who even had the same surname as any of his four grandparents. Residents believed that transgressions of this prohibition generated a fatal affliction that caused women to bear cripple[d] children'. Exogamy therefore sometimes led Tsonga-Shangaan men to seek potential wives from other ethnic groups. The ethnic mix of women in Giyani has

increased because the women have relocated to Giyani with their Shangaan husbands. Niehaus (2002:582) also explains that Shangaan identity embraces diversity and enables 'the assimilation of people from diverse origins ... not a single category'. Thus my observations of multi-ethnic integration into the Tsonga-Shangaan identity in Giyani support Niehaus's (2002) findings in Bushbuckridge.

Below, I discuss education, agriculture and the economy in the homeland, with particular focus on activities in Giyani.

Education was very important in Gazankulu. It is impossible to review the changes that Giyani town experienced during the last three decades without emphasising the importance of education and the development of skills in the history of this town. Indeed, the development of human capital runs like a golden thread through the history of Gazankulu in general, and Giyani town in particular, and this history is closely bound up with the person and influence of its Chief Minister, Hudson Ntsanwisi, who prioritised education and social services, as is evident from Lund's (1990:6) statement that the Gazankulu government spent almost 60% of its budget on education, health and welfare as a collective.

The Gazankulu administration set out to provide educational opportunities and developed the necessary infrastructure in such a way that Gazankulu was far ahead in that regard compared to many other parts of South Africa at that time. This did much to undo the negative impact of the so-called Bantu education system that was introduced by the apartheid government in 1954. The subject of mathematics, the study of which was discouraged by Bantu education, was, for instance, made a compulsory subject at matriculation level in Gazankulu because Ntsanwisi believed in the value of the 'intellectual discipline and abstract thinking which it fosters in human beings' (Ntsanwisi, cited in Cooper, 1987:100). Four teacher training colleges were established in Gazankulu; and teachers were trained according to the capacity of these colleges. Since the need for well-trained teachers was very great, all these trainees could be accommodated in the profession. Moreover, the Gazankulu government embarked on a three-pronged approach to promote science education – in-service teacher training, pre-service teacher training and the teaching of science at school level.

Firstly, teachers who were already in the profession and had the potential and desire to be science teachers were re-trained. In order to achieve this goal, the Giyani Science Centre was established; and a science education specialist from Britain, Dr Anthony (Tony) Pell (currently associated with the Universities of Leicester and Cambridge), was approached to conceptualise and design the programme and the building of the centre. The Giyani Science Centre was the first science centre in South Africa and it offered a Diploma in Science Education and part-time programmes for in-service teachers who wished to specialise in mathematics, biology, physical sciences, computer studies and technology. In addition, the Giyani Science Centre also provided enrichment classes for primary and high school learners in spacious, stimulating rooms and well-equipped laboratories, according to Mr Mthembi (2009:pers.comm.), the acting director of the Giyani Science Centre, who has been involved with the centre since its inception.

The second strategy for promoting science education focused on pre-service teacher training. A group of academics from the University of the Witwatersrand were approached to develop the curricula and the infrastructure of the Giyani College of Education. This college was established in 1989 and offered courses that no other black teacher training institution offered at that time. The students trained as high school teachers by enrolling for a four-year Higher Diploma in Education (HDE) and they could specialise in Creative Arts (with Drama, Music or Art as majors); they could pursue a Science Diploma (with Mathematics; Biology, Chemistry or Physics as majors) or a General Diploma (with Geography, History, Xitsonga, Afrikaans, English, Educational Studies and Biblical Studies as possible majors). The Human Sciences Research Council's (HSRC's) aptitude tests, additional entrance tests and interviews were used in the screening for admission. All registered students were resident on the campus and their tuition and accommodation were subsidised by the Gazankulu government. Computer literacy was compulsory for all students in their first two years. The HDE was accredited by the University of the Witwatersrand (Wits) and students could transfer their credits to Wits if they wanted to pursue degree studies there, according to Dr Naidoo (2009:pers.comm.), former vice-rector of the Giyani College of Education.

The third approach to promoting science education was the establishment of the Khetonxumayo Agricultural High School (locally known as IK High), which was erected in 1987 at a cost of R1.5 million. The funds were sourced from companies such as Mobil Oil and BP (SA) and the Swiss pharmaceutical giants Ciba-Geigy, Hoffmann la Roche and Sandoz. The school has boarding facilities, four well-equipped laboratories, a library and a mechanical workshop area. The subjects were mainly science subjects and were all offered at the Higher Grade to ensure that successful students were prepared for university entrance (Cooper, 1987:99-106). This school provided many learners with an opportunity to enter any university of their choice. Some are now pursuing careers in science and medicine.

Dr Tina, a petite woman who is the medical superintendent of the Malamulele³² Hospital, relates that when her parents heard about this school in Gazankulu, they immediately applied for admission, even though she was classified as Swazi and was therefore not really eligible to benefit from 'Tsonga' facilities. She and some of her classmates were later accepted by the Medical University of South Africa, where all their costs were covered by the Gazankulu government. Similarly, Lillian, a 52-year old former college lecturer, was adamant regarding the quality of education in Gazankulu. She too benefited from the educational opportunities in Gazankulu and emphasised that her husband's surname opened many doors for her:

With a Tsonga surname I could benefit from educational opportunities which I as a Sotho would not have had. With a Tsonga surname, I could study science at Wits with a scholarship from the Gazankulu Government. I taught at a high school and later got promoted to lecture at a college of education.

The homeland administration offered more than educational opportunities for the youth and competency training for civil servants. The literacy level of those without formal education was also a matter of concern that the administration tried to address. According to Hartman *et al.* (1993:40), the statistics of the Gazankulu Department of Education and Training reveal that in 1993, basic literacy courses were provided at 216 centres and continuation courses at 147 centres, with approximately 11 500 people

³² Malamulele is a town which was also part of Gazankulu, 50 kilometres north of Giyani.

attending these courses. One elderly woman who benefited from the adult literacy programme described how she had always wanted to read what the boards along the road said, because, as she explained: *'I always see the boards from the window of the bus when I came to town [from her village] but it was all dark [unintelligible] to me.'* She attended a basic literacy programme for three years and described her new ability to read as *'a gift'*. She said: *'[M]y life is no longer dark because I know what the words on the boards and the shop windows say.'*

Agriculture was another focus for development for the homeland administration. A number of relatively large agricultural initiatives were undertaken in Gazankulu during the 1980s, but there was little, if any, consultation and participation by the local communities. A notable exception was the training of agricultural extension officers and irrigation-scheme initiatives. Hartman, Kriel and Boonzaaier (1995) give a detailed account of these irrigation schemes. One was near Homu B Village, where bananas, peanuts and vegetables are cultivated under irrigation. This scheme still supplies the two Spar supermarkets in Giyani with fresh produce today. The agricultural projects were initially managed by white officials and, as Fischer (1988:123-135) points out, the schemes were managed soundly; the implementing officials were highly skilled in the technical aspects of farming and they were motivated and committed to improving the lives of the poor in the homelands. However, the schemes did not have the hoped-for widespread impact and only a small elite group benefited from them. They promoted capital-intensive practices, whereas subsistence farming requires little capital input and is therefore more suited to very poor households.

As many households had livestock, the agricultural initiatives also provided for communal dip tanks that were constructed in the villages (Hartman *et al.* 1993:43). Periodically, the Department of Agriculture provided the chemicals for the dipping of the animals. Many interviewees were of the opinion that communities were not enabled to maintain such communal assets any longer.

Concerning the economy of Gazankulu, it is common knowledge that the homelands were not economically viable entities, and were heavily subsidised by the South African government. In the early 1980s, Van Zyl Slabbert (1983:40), then the leader of the

Progressive Party and thus leader of the official opposition, expressed concern that for the homeland concept to succeed, all of the homelands 'have to be developed on all levels of the economy and to the fullest extent in order to provide for all its citizens'.

Harries's (1989:83-110) description of the economic conditions prevailing in Gazankulu in the 1980s is quite negative. Factors such as low wages earned outside the homeland (often on commercial farms in 'white' South Africa), gross overcrowding, overgrazing and marginally productive land, all fed into the economy of Gazankulu. By 1982, the average population density per square kilometre in Gazankulu was 76, compared to 17 in South Africa. This gross overcrowding was the result of influx control and resettlement schemes. It was estimated that in 1982, over 40 000 Gazankulu nationals were working as migrant labourers outside the homeland, compared to 21 000 wage earners within its borders. In 1983, the estimated per capita gross national product (GNP) for Gazankulu was R121, which was in stark contrast to the R3 157 for white South Africa as a whole. Furthermore, agricultural production could at most support 10% of the population (Harries, 1989:83-110). Even entrepreneurial development in Gazankulu was limited. Bank (1994:97) points out that, because traders' access to resources depended largely on the traders' families' ability to accumulate capital through informal sector activities such as *stokvels* (saving clubs) and migrant earnings, this situation did not promote the establishment of a robust middle class.

In Nahle's view, some women opted for small-scale selling rather than subsistence farming. They argued that informal trading (selling sweets, small packets of chips and 'vetkoek' outside school yards at break) can be considered a relatively secure income. This reasoning is hard to understand when one considers that the average profit³³ from this type of venture is just R5.50 per day. This amounts to R110 per month during the

³³ Profit is calculated as the selling price multiplied by the number of packets made, less the cost of the crisps, sweets and plastic bags. 'Vetkoek' are balls of bread dough deep fried in oil, and are only sold at certain times of the month, for example, after child support grant days. The sweets and crisps are bought in bulk from the traders in the villages or in town. These days, the wholesalers, who are incidentally mostly from Pakistan, also sell plastic bags in packs of 100 and 250; and the crisps are repackaged into smaller packs and sold for 50c per pack.

school term and hardly any income during the school holidays. This does not take into account time and transport costs.

Nahle herself remembers how hard her mother worked to plough and tend the fields and yet never had any money to buy the things that were on her own and her children's wish lists. Although she admits that she cannot remember ever going hungry, subsistence farming unquestionably left her with a very negative impression.

Hartman *et al.* (1993:43) make an interesting link between subsistence farming activities and hawking activities. They argue that a considerable number of the community gardens that were established in many of the villages led to the establishment of small markets and an increase in hawking activities. This suggests that some women were involved in tending the crops, while others sold the produce from the communal gardens. It is therefore possible that Giyani residents regard those that are 'earning' hard currency through selling as more economically active than those who produce the commodities for sale.

Transport was another area of focus for the Gazankulu administration. Hartman *et al.* (1993:43) characterise Gazankulu during the homeland era as having 'a significant number of roads linking its many villages'. The roads that formed this network are described and classified as 'major arterials', 'important district roads', and 'less travelled local roads'. They also point out that there was an 'extensive bus and taxi service' (Hartman *et al.* 1993:42).

Thus, public transport was available to and from most villages. However, interviewees recalled that the operating times of these buses were often very awkward: *'People had to catch the bus at 4 am from their villages and often only returned at 8 pm. They ended work at 4.30 in the afternoon, but then had to wait all that time for transport. Some rented a room with families in town and only went to their village on week-ends.'* Today, extensive transport services, in the form of private vehicles, buses and mini-bus taxis, are available daily and in working hours. Even though transport is available between the villages and town and beyond, within the villages, people generally walk. Sometimes the men use bicycles.

One of the main reasons for travelling is the need or desire to visit a clinic. There are health centres or clinics in most of the villages in the research area, and the distances between the nearest clinics are traversed on foot, since the distances (between two and six kilometres) rarely warrant the use of public transport. In some instances, where the clinic was relatively far from their homes, the women who were interviewed related that they walked in a group of two or three to the clinics for their monthly medication.

In many instances, this 'medication' was oral contraceptives, which, the women said, gives them some control over the planning of the size of their family and the spacing between two children. A query as to whether their husbands or partners were aware of the birth control methods they employed generally elicited a conspiratorial wink only – clearly these women did not think that it was their husbands' or partners' business to know about the birth control.

Garenne *et al.* (2007:72) have considered fertility trends in Gazankulu and ascribed the dramatic decline in fertility – from six children per woman in the 1970s, to four children per woman in 1992/3, to 2.3 children per woman in 2004 – to the availability and use of modern contraceptives. The decline in fertility was less marked among adolescents, compared to that among older women of child-bearing age. Garenne *et al.* (2007:70) recorded that in 1998 more than half of the women they spoke to in Gazankulu reported that they used contraceptives. The other common treatments sought at the clinics are child immunisation and medication for ailments associated with aging, such as hypertension (commonly known as high blood pressure).

In the 1980s, a study by Ijsselmuiden (1985:773) found that the nutritional state of the adults in Gazankulu was adequate, compared to the subjects of anthropometric studies elsewhere in South Africa and that the prevalence of hypertension in the area was low compared to that in urban populations. In an earlier study, the same author found that the nutritional status of most of the children under the age of five years in Gazankulu was adequate and that only about one third of the children were underweight (Ijsselmuiden, 1984:346).

Aside from visiting clinics, another reason to traverse great distances on foot – one that particularly those interviewees who lived in the villages refer to – is the collection of firewood. In Liengme's (1983:245) study on wood use for fuel and building in Gazankulu, it was estimated that a family requires an average of 14.9 kilograms of wood daily, which is a heavy load to collect and carry. Mostly, mopani and bushwillow wood are collected as fuel and for the building of traditional huts (Anthony, 2007; Mashabane, Wessels & Potgieter, 2001). In the late afternoon, women and young girls in the villages walking home with a load of firewood on their heads are a common sight. Often they also carry a baby tied to their backs, after collecting this wood over a vast area. However, the effort needed to carry water in the villages around Giyani has been reduced with the provision of communal taps in many villages by the homeland government.

2.3 THE TURMOIL OF THE EARLY 1990S

In South Africa, the 1980s marked a period of widespread, intense and violent resistance to apartheid, with great participation by students and the youth. This resistance reached such proportions that, in July 1986, the government proclaimed a state of emergency to control the uprising (Schmid, 2005:2). The concerns of the student uprisings centred on inferior education, dissatisfaction with apartheid, political leadership, the call to free political prisoners and demands for full political participation in a unified South Africa. These became the issues around which trade unions and student organisations rallied.

However, according to Schmid (2005:3), life in Gazankulu was relatively unaffected by the student uprisings that ravaged other homelands and the rest of South Africa, since the 'political and social climate seems to have been freer in Gazankulu than in other parts of South Africa in the late 1980s'. This situation can be explained by the fact that there was noticeable evidence of positive educational initiatives and, in the minds of many interviewees, the political leaders seemed to have the concerns and interests of the ordinary people at heart. Although the relative calm in the area may have been the

result of political indoctrination and suppression of dissatisfaction, it can also be argued that Gazankulu's geographical isolation from the centres of the struggle also played an important role. Several interviewees in Giyani emphasised that life in Giyani was *'better than any black person could hope for at that time'*, as one of them put it.

However, 1990 marked dramatic changes in South Africa, when political prisoners were released and the African National Congress (ANC) and other political organisations were unbanned. Schmid (2005:1), with the benefit of hindsight, claims that the celebrations that marked the release of Nelson Mandela on 11 February 1990 sparked 'the most dramatic phase of the transition period in Gazankulu', as South Africa began preparing for the transition to a democratic dispensation.

Leon, who was 38 at the time when the current study was done, was a student at the Giyani College of Education in 1990. He recalls that this was a time of political and intergenerational conflict and that the youth, particularly those at tertiary institutions, as well as members of the nationally organised South African Student Congress, were calling for the *'rightful leaders of South Africa to take their place'*, meaning that the students in Giyani considered the homeland leaders and the white leaders in South Africa to be illegitimate leaders – they were not regarded as the 'rightful' leaders.

At the national level, the views about traditional leadership expressed by the South African Youth Congress and the South African National Civic Organisation revealed serious conflict between the older and the younger generations (Schmid, 2005:17). For the youth, the traditional leaders represented undemocratic structures that they wanted to abolish. By contrast, South African National Civic Organisation wanted to subordinate traditional political institutions under a democratically elected government (Schmid, 2005:1-18). Mihloti, now a 60-year old resident of Makoxa village near Giyani, echoes this conflict and confusion at the local level: *'The school children said that they [the homeland government] are Pretoria's puppets. We older people did not understand why the children said this – we were proud of our Chief Minister – we respected him.'*

Other than the confusion of the older people, like Mihloti, about the reasons behind the actions of the youth, several interviewees linked traditional leadership and claims of

witchcraft that *'we heard were happening in other parts of Gazankulu and Venda'*. A strange thing was that even though an association between traditional leadership and witchcraft was mentioned, the interviewees were all reluctant to comment on this alleged connection. Typically, their response would be *'I'm a Christian, we don't want to talk about it'* or some other evasive response.

I was aware of the importance of the Christian faith in Giyani; after all, the homeland leader was closely associated with the Presbyterian Church. My experience in the field of the almost fearful avoidance of the topic of witchcraft suggests support for Dirk Kohnert's (2003) article, 'Witchcraft and transnational social spaces: Witchcraft, violence, reconciliation and development in South Africa's transition process', which describes the 'witchcraft violence' reign of terror by youth in parts of the homelands of Gazankulu, Lebowa, Venda and Transkei in the 1990s: '[T]here had been a dramatic resurgence of witch-hunts which started with the release of political prisoners in 1989 and culminated in a veritable witch craze short after the release of Nelson Mandela in February 1990' (Kohnert, 2003:5).

He describes March 1990 as a culmination point when, in a climate of horror, 'anyone accused of being a witch was killed on the spot; in some villages, up to five accused witches were burnt each night' (Minnaar, cited by Kohnert 2003:53). Typically, the victims were 'necklaced', meaning that a tyre doused with petrol was placed around the victim's neck and set alight. The youth, as ANC sympathisers, were single-minded in their attempts to uproot traditional beliefs and to stamp out what they considered to be backwardness: 'Unfortunately, the young comrades ... utterly misunderstood the Marxist jargon of the ANC, in equating backwardness and evil with witchcraft. On their way to confront alleged witches, the young witch-hunters used political slogans, waved banners and flags of political groups, and sometimes even sang political freedom songs, adapting the wording especially to witch-hunting' (Kohnert, 2003:9). The youth, by taking 'justice' into their own hands, by-passed tribal courts, as they considered the tribal and homeland leaders to be supporters of apartheid.

When one considers Kohnert's account of the convergence of politics and witchcraft and violence in Gazankulu (also see Niehaus, 1998), the avoidance of the topic by

interviewees may be less incomprehensible, even though the immeasurable harm that ‘witchcraft violence’ inflicts on the individuals and their families must also have destabilised the social, economic and political aspects of life in the region. In pondering on this widespread silence on the events in connection with witchcraft in the early 1990s, I am reminded of the song ‘The way we were’,³⁴ particularly the words ‘what’s too painful to remember, we simply choose to forget’. Such ‘witch purging’ did not end in 1990. The issue continued to simmer in the area, necessitating the Witchcraft Summit in Giyani on 28 September 1999, which attempted to address this particular form brutality (Minnaar 1999, cited by Kohnert, 2003:10).

One elderly interviewee commented on the ‘witch-hunts’ of the 1990s that *‘the children were very mad and did not know what they were talking about. What do they know?’* This statement suggests that the youth had no understanding of politics and/or traditional spirituality. As this interviewee had already indicated her confusion about what was happening politically earlier, she must have been referring to the spiritual aspect at this point in the interview.

Niehaus (2002:572) expounds on Tsonga-Shangaan spirituality, explaining that the local form of divination is designed to seek harmony with alien spirits and is rarely used to perpetrate harm. He states that, since the Shangaan are a collective of people from diverse ethnic origins – Tsonga, Zulu and Swazi – the different ancestral spirits would potentially be antagonistic towards one another, and yet the Shangaan spiritual healers who possess these different spirits were believed to be able to appease and reconcile them. This means that the form of healing practised by Shangaan healers, mostly women, implies ethnic assimilation. Niehaus (2002:572) found in his study that Shangaan healers were ‘respected and powerful healers’. With this understanding of the reconciliatory nature of Shangaan spirituality of which the youth may have had little or no knowledge, is it any wonder that my interviewee asked: *‘[W]hat do they [the youth] know?’*

Something that should be noted about witch-hunts in the Limpopo Province is that this practice has strong elements of gender and generation (age) bias. For instance, of the

³⁴ ‘The way we were’ sung by Barbra Streisand, was popular in the 1970s.

228 victims killed in the province between April 1994 and April 1995, about two thirds were women older than 60 years, and the perpetrators were overwhelmingly young men between 16 and 25 years (Minnaar, 1999, cited in Kohnert, 2003:9-10). In Chapter 7 of the current study (A place of solidarity for the elderly) aspects of generation conflict and the perception of the elderly as witches are discussed in some detail.

2.4 THE POST-HOMELAND ERA

With the inauguration of Nelson Mandela as the first democratically elected president of South Africa, all the homelands became part of a unified country. Giyani became part of the northernmost of the nine provinces, with Pietersburg (now called Polokwane) as the provincial capital. For those in Giyani who were close to the seat of government and point of implementation, 1994 changed matters, as decisions were now made 150 kilometres away from Giyani, at the provincial level. The transition from homeland administration to provincial control meant that the provision of services became very poor, as various political and administrative bodies were integrated and re-organised, or set up from scratch. The newly-formed Northern Province (later renamed Limpopo) had to incorporate three former homelands Gazankulu, Venda and Lebowa,³⁵ and parts of the former Transvaal province.

A missed opportunity in the transition was that the new provincial administration was unaware of, or ignored, the visionary regional development planning that the Gazankulu government had researched and formulated. The brilliant plans to develop the region were just ready for implementation when the political change occurred (see Hartman *et al.*, 1993:Annexures D and E). The background to these regional development plans is that, in the Office of the Chief Minister, the Planning Secretariat had been involved in strategic development planning which was based on sound research and investigations. The research focused on the physical potential and constraints of the region, a thorough understanding of the prevailing development trends and an appreciation of the socio-

³⁵ Venda was the homeland for the BaVenda, commonly referred to as the Venda. Lebowa was the homeland for the Basotho or Sotho.

economic circumstances, needs and aspirations of the people. In addition, the interaction between Gazankulu and its surrounding sub-regions had been factored into the research and subsequent planning. On the basis of the research, short, medium and long-term development goals and strategies were set, priorities were determined and development projects and programmes were identified (Hartman *et al.*, 1993: Annexure D). The political change caused the implosion of these exceptional regional development plans – the new provincial administration, instead of building upon these plans, reinvented planning for the province.

In contrast with the homeland period, when the former Gazankulu managed to reach a reasonably good standard of administrative efficiency (Hartman *et al.* 1993), the period from 1994 to 2000 was a very bleak time for former Gazankulu citizens and particularly for the residents of Giyani. Apart from the deterioration of services because of the confusion that normally accompanies institutional transition and the limited capacity of the transitional local authority, Giyani also experienced social fragmentation and large changes in household structure.

Initially, there was great excitement as administrative staff moved from Giyani to Polokwane, since the Gazankulu homeland had developed officials with 'a wealth of experience in legislative and administrative matters' (Hartman *et al.* 1993:10) and this was recognised by the new provincial leaders. Families in Giyani had to start living with a situation in which one or more members were away from home during the week; many grandparents had to take full charge of their adult children's households. Ambivalence characterised the older people's response to these happenings. On the one hand, they were proud of their children for having secured 'promotions' in Polokwane, but, on the other, they also felt that '*the Sothos are in charge and they are just exploiting our children.*'

The exodus of economically active people to the provincial capital had a negative impact on the economy of the Giyani. I took up residence in Giyani at this time and I was acutely aware of the fact that, with each passing year, the neglect of the town became more evident and that its infrastructure, like that of the rest of the former homeland, was falling into disrepair. Soon structures such as the Gazankulu legislative buildings, the

Nursing College, the College of Education, the Archives, the Technical College, and the hotel were in dire need of maintenance and repair. All these edifices, which had once been sources of pride and joy in the homeland, were beginning to look like dilapidated vestiges from a bygone era.

Several interviewees felt that by the late 1990s, the 'new' South Africa was not living up to their dreams of greater prosperity. Giyani was also in the grip of a severe drought and this added to the bleak outlook. The drought was visible in the denuded landscape, in the starving cattle and donkeys that were little more than skin-covered skeletons, and the wind storms blowing away the red clay-like topsoil to impoverish the soil even further. The donkeys and cattle, in their quest for grazing, often ventured close to the edge of tarred roads, where the small amounts of run-off from the roads promoted the growth of slivers of vegetation. While trying to graze on this meagre vegetation, animals frequently got run over and killed by motorists, especially at night. The municipal water was rationed, which meant that the water supply to households was often cut for most of the day and that, even when the supply was restored, the water pressure was very low to discourage wastage. One resident advanced the following reason for this drought: *'The people of Giyani had forgotten to pray and that is why we are being punished with this drought.'* At the height of the drought, interdenominational prayer meetings were organised, uniting the residents of Giyani to pray for relief.

Furthermore, the people in Giyani felt that the politicians were Sotho and, to quote the common sentiment, *'they were looking after their own and neglecting us,'* despite the fact that many Giyani administrative staff were employed in Polokwane. Since the people of Giyani were feeling burdened by a Sotho-dominated Limpopo government and perceived Giyani to be deliberately neglected by the provincial government, they were pleasantly surprised, and indeed proud, when investment in the town came from interesting quarters.

The Nkuna brothers, who are originally from Giyani and had become very successful businessmen in Gauteng, invested in Giyani by developing a large shopping centre. A massive complex was erected, with Shoprite as the anchor business, and housing an

Absa Bank, a new pharmacy, several clothing and furniture shops and fast food outlets. This development spearheaded a new era in Giyani.

At the same time, a white family – a husband, his wife and adult daughter – which was to become pivotal in changing the face of the town, relocated to Giyani and bought the existing Spar supermarket. The commitment that this family showed by investing in Giyani was like balm to the residents of this town, particularly the revitalising of small-scale farming by the sale of locally grown fresh produce in the supermarket.

Within five years of purchasing the Spar, the owners established a shopping mall, housing a second, much larger Spar supermarket, the town's first pizza outlet, a pharmacy and another bank. With the larger supermarket alone, 135 jobs were created and many unemployed matriculants from the town and surrounding villages found employment. Another interesting approach of the widening economic prospects of the town can be seen in the mutual relationship that the owners of the Spar developed with local small-scale farmers who supply the store, mainly with spinach, cabbage, tomatoes and butternut, which are the vegetables that consumers in Giyani prefer. Since the owners of the Spar decided to focus on local procurement, they set up a small-scale farmers' procurement scheme and this plan was communicated through radio advertisements and by word of mouth. The store was approached by small-scale vegetable farmers who were willing to produce vegetables for the Spar. About 12 small-scale farmers formed a stable supplier base.

This procurement scheme is so innovative that two researchers from the University of Pretoria, Estelle Bienabe and Hester Vermeulen, used this scheme as one case study in their 2007 study of 'New trends in supermarkets procurement systems in South Africa: The case of local procurement schemes from small-scale farmers by rural-based retail chain stores'. Bienabe and Vermeulen (2007) describe how the store provides production finance and explain that the agreements are based on trust, with no formal contracts between the stores and the participating farmers: 'Conditions for repayment are flexible for farmers and are based on repayments subtracted from farmers' delivery earnings upon payment on Fridays' (Bienabe & Vermeulen, 2007:10).

The small-scale vegetable farmers also receive technical assistance from the store, since the owner had previously been a commercial farmer. A trusted employee on his farm is now the fresh produce manager at the store. Consequently, these two men have a good understanding of farming; they have an excellent technical knowledge base and they know how to access professional help from input suppliers or commercial vegetable farmers to benefit the collective of small-scale farmers in the scheme. The procurement scheme benefits the farmers, in that they have a secure market for their produce, which increases their family income. Through the loan scheme, the small-scale farmers can acquire assets to improve their vegetable production and the technical assistance from the store builds capacity.

From a business perspective, this scheme is sound business practice, because the store has a shorter supply chain and the vegetables are therefore fresher; the store can procure vegetables more often and can save on transportation costs, as opposed to the cost of transporting vegetables from the fresh produce market in Johannesburg (600 kilometres away). Also, the customers appreciate the community involvement and the fresh vegetables, and are therefore keen to support the store. The type of support provided by the management of Spar is reminiscent of the support given to small-scale farmers by the Gazankulu Development Corporation (GDC) during the homeland days (see Hartman *et al.*, 1993: Annexure E). For obvious reasons, the owners and management of Spar are greatly respected and appreciated by all in Giyani.

During the summer of 1999 to 2000, the drought was broken and with the good rain came a sense of optimism. The nearly dead mopani trees once again produced green luscious leaves on which mopani worms could feed. Mopani worms are an important source of protein for locals in the Giyani area. Even on the political front, things started changing for the better in 2000, particularly after the election of local government representatives in December. The elections coincided with the demarcation of municipal boundaries. Giyani became the seat of both the Giyani local and the Mopani District municipalities.

It is interesting how Giyani, which had initially been isolated by the '*Sotho-dominated*' new provincial government (according to the interviewees), has become the flavour of

the day, as it illustrates the ‘fission and fusion’ between the Shangaan and Sotho in the long history of these two ethnic groups, which Niehaus (2002) discusses in some detail.

With the demarcation of district boundaries, the provincial government had to consider four towns for the seat of the Mopani District municipality. The other three possibilities were Tzaneen, Phalaborwa and Duivelskloof, which had previously been under the Transvaal administration and were therefore considered ‘white’ towns. The collective votes of the Sotho and Shangaan (and Venda) in the provincial legislature ensured that Giyani was chosen as the Mopani District headquarters. The sentiments were between the Shangaan and Sotho between 1994 and 2000 had caused a split or fission between the two groups. However, in 2000 the two groups united in making Giyani the district capital. This fusion ‘presupposes intimate ties of allegiance’ (Niehaus, 2002:583).

2.5 GIYANI TODAY

Since 2004, the developments emanating from the provincial government have started to touch the lives of the people of Giyani and its villages. The establishment of a fire station, the improved emergency services visible in the fleet of ambulances assigned to Giyani and the construction of a large new hospital in Giyani are a few of the initiatives that come with being the regional capital.

The tarring of roads from the town to the villages has brought about a considerable improvement in the quality of people’s lives. The dry dusty roads to and through villages have been replaced by tar surfaces. Some roads were initially repaired through the Expanded Public Works Programme (EPWP) which was launched by the president, then President Mbeki, in 2005 in Sikhunyani village, which is seven kilometres from Giyani on the Tzaneen road. The roads have been tarred in many directions – the road that runs south of the town to Ngove village and that continues to Nkomo village has been tarred for a 26-kilometre stretch. The road to Homu B, which is east of the town, has also been tarred. The long-awaited tarring of the Nsami Dam road initially went up to the dam and to Thomo village. This road, in a north-easterly direction, leads to the proposed Shangoni gate of the Kruger National Park. Since I arrived in Giyani in 1996, the

community has been speculating about the developments which will follow when the road is eventually tarred up to this new gate and when the Kruger National Park gate is opened. The most recent information is that the tarring is continuing to Muyxezi village towards the Mtititi, close to the proposed Shangoni gate.

Today, Giyani is a growth point. Since 2004, the town has acquired its first two sets of traffic lights, a large shopping centre and two smaller malls. Government buildings have been repaired, the municipal offices have been extended and the three taxi ranks have been improved. Giyani town is once again alive with economic possibilities. For instance, because Giyani is the district capital, district officials from as far away as Tzaneen and Phalaborwa, which are 100 kilometres and 150 kilometres away respectively, need to attend meetings in Giyani on a fairly regular basis and need accommodation and/or food and other consumer goods.

The many meetings of the various departments provide catering opportunities for entrepreneurs such as Simon, who operates his business partly from his home, and partly from a large container that forms part of his roadside restaurant. The red container and three long tables and plastic chairs occupy a shady, open area just beyond the parking lot of the post office and adjacent to the municipal offices. Simon's establishment is a popular lunch spot for municipal officials and other office workers in the town. It is not surprising that Simon is often approached to provide the catering for regional (district) meetings and workshops. Simon is assisted by two women, his wife and a close relative, who prepare the salads, meat dishes and *pap* at their home and only heat the food and put the other finishing touches to the food in the container. The tables, covered with lace table cloths, are set up outside the container with six to eight chairs around each table. On the rare occasions when the weather does not permit the patrons to eat outside, two tables are set up in the container, but mostly the patrons enjoy their lunch in the shade of the large acacia tree.

The food that Simon oversees is well prepared and presented, as this tall, slender man, possibly in his late 60s or early 70s, is a professionally trained chef who spent much of his adult life working in upmarket establishments in Gauteng and only returned to Giyani permanently in his later years. Simon is a familiar sight in his light blue station wagon,

the only one of its kind in the town. But it is not his car that makes Simon stand out it is his attire. Simon always wears his snowy white chef's hat that has a large flat top, almost as if he were balancing a white plate on his head, an equally white jacket, neatly ironed trousers and polished shoes. Simon's neat appearance and his chef's attire convey his professionalism and attention to detail, and in the food industry, where hygiene and appetising presentation are important, his manner instils confidence in the quality of the food and the service he provides.

In stark contrast to Simon's food service, Sophie caters for a very different clientèle. She operates her stall quite differently to Simon's. Sophie's table, which forms her stall, is set up among that of the other women who sell fruit, vegetables, snacks and sweets, *atchar*,³⁶ embroidery and sewing thread, etc. from their small tables in the arcade outside the Score Supermarket. On week days, at about 9:00, Sophie arrives at her business spot carrying all she needs for her enterprise. Balanced on her head is a small fold-up table on which she has a plastic stool, a flattened cardboard box, a paraffin stove and two pots in which she places a quantity of maize meal, a few onions and tomatoes. In her right hand is a live chicken, its legs tied with a short length of string and carried head down.

When she reaches her site, she puts the chicken on the ground while she sets up her stall. She places the paraffin stove on the ground, with the sturdy cardboard around it to prevent a draught from extinguishing the stove. The larger of the two pots is filled with water from a nearby tap and placed on the little stove for the water to boil. Later, some of the boiling water is placed in the smaller pot to prepare *pap* from the maize meal, while the rest of the boiling water in the large pot is used for the preparation of the chicken. The ease with which Sophie wrings the chicken's neck, removes the head and innards and plucks the feathers after soaking the bird in the boiling water, attests to her experience at this task. The head and viscera are placed in a plastic bag, tucked under the table and only prepared later for her family at home. Meanwhile, the plucked and cleaned fowl is cut into portions and covered with a cloth, as the making of the *pap* then demands Sophie's attention. The *pap* (maize meal and water) that has been simmering

³⁶ *Atchar* is a spicy relish.

has attained a thick consistency. She attacks it with great gusto with a large wooden paddle (the handiwork of local carvers) and Sophie uses nifty wrist action to stir the viscous mixture. When she is satisfied that all the lumps have been removed and that the *pap* has the right texture, she removes the pot from the stove and transfers the *pap* into a bowl which is also covered with a cloth. The chicken is now prepared in gravy made with onions and tomatoes.

By lunchtime, Sophie is ready to serve her customers *pap* and chicken stew on the strong plastic plates she brings from home every day. Typically, her customers are low wage earners in town and she is able to serve six to eight meals and earn R60 to R80 from just one chicken. After lunch, at about 3 o'clock, Sophie clears up her things, stacks them on her head and starts walking the three kilometres to her home in Section F.

Both Simon and Sophie have carved out very different niches for their food services, and Giyani provides the different clientèle for both ventures. While Simon's catering may earn enough income to be considered a sustainable enterprise, Sophie's daily endeavours only marginally supplement the income she receives from child grants for her two school-going children. She does not have big dreams or plans for how she will grow her business: for now she is content to provide a service to meet a market demand for low-income wage earners during the time in the day when her children are at school. For the rest of the day, she attends to her domestic chores, while her assortment of chickens forages in her yard.

CHAPTER 3: DISCOURSES, POLICIES AND PRACTICES: THE CHANGING DEVELOPMENT LANDSCAPE

3.1 INTRODUCTION

One balmy December day around noon, I soaked up the sights and sounds around me at the Avelanani crèche in Makoxa village near Giyani. The children were less noisy than they had been earlier, and were sitting under the marula tree at the crèche, devouring the *pap* and tomato stew prepared by *Mhani Callie*³⁷ in the complex's kitchen. Most of these children belonged to former refugees who came to settle in this area during the Mozambican civil war in the 1980s, but some of the local children also attended the crèche. The crèche was built for them with funds provided by the Swiss Mission Church early in 1991. The solid brick crèche building houses four classrooms, separated by wooden partitions, so that together they can form one large hall when one is needed, and a bathroom with two child-sized toilets linked to a septic tank. The kitchen is fitted with an electric stove and melamine-covered cupboards, and there are plastic plates and cups. The office is equipped with a computer and printer, a large desk, six plastic chairs and a wooden bookshelf in the corner.

This convenient modern building contrasts starkly with the surrounding mud huts, where in-house tap water and electricity are just a dream. I gazed out, beyond the fenced yard, to the road beyond. A young man passed the crèche on his bicycle, which was really only a frame with two wheels, with the sun warming his back through a threadbare Nike t-shirt. His bare feet were covered with a thick layer of red clay dust as he pedalled along the dusty road. I recognised him as a man whom I had noticed earlier that day when he was buying pre-paid air-time for his cellular phone from a vendor on the eastern side of the village.

³⁷ *Mhani* means mother. Women of roughly 40 years and older are given this title to show respect. Younger women are called 'Sis' by people younger than themselves to show respect.

Swiss Mission funds assisting vulnerable refugee children in this remote rural village in Africa, these children enjoying a plate of food at the crèche (probably the only food they would have for the day), the convenience of electricity and flushing toilets, an office with modern computer technology, a designer t-shirt that has found its way here through the donations of charity organisations, a young man on a bicycle accessing modern satellite technology with his cellular phone – these are only some of the ironies and contradictions that would probably have the uninitiated gasping in wonder. Yet these ironies and contradictions reflect the incongruity of the global flow of people and resources that is commonly called ‘development’ and they provide the threads that run through this chapter.

It is apparent from the discussion in the previous chapter that, while ordinary people have had very little control over the political and economic changes that were thrust upon them, for those able and willing to seize them, these changes presented opportunities, especially for improving their education and business prospects. In other words, people tend to review and accept their macro-reality and explore ways of framing their micro-reality.

The previous chapter also focused on the everyday life of people. At this ‘knowledge level’ – the level of pragmatic interest (see Mouton, 2001:14) people are examined in the context of the social, physical and symbolic worlds that they occupy and the different roles that they occupy in different temporal and spatial frameworks.

In the current chapter (Chapter 3: ‘Discourses, policies and practices: the changing development landscape’), the consideration of the changes in Giyani is taken to a higher level of abstraction. An effort is made to reveal the impact of changes in both ‘development thinking’ and principles (the macro-paradigms or discourses), and development intervention, also called ‘development aid’ (implementation practice), on the people of Giyani in general, and on the participants of the four projects that were explored as case studies in this research in particular. Development theory and implementation approaches such as the ‘basic needs approach’ and the ‘structural adjustment programmes’ that were in vogue at the time when each of the four projects was established influenced the way in which these projects were and are run. However,

the theories and approaches were not assimilated into the projects in as pure and unadulterated a manner as development planners and theorists might have liked, since people and their contexts tend to transform theories in creating realities within such projects that are meaningful to the participants.

In order to clarify discourse concepts and various implementation approaches, it is helpful to distinguish between different levels of knowledge. Knowledge exists at different levels and, according to Mouton (2001:14), pragmatic, everyday life is at the first level of inquiry. At this level, knowledge is based on common sense, practical skills, experience, business acumen, moral insights and wisdom. This would also be the level at which development initiatives are implemented. However, if the pragmatic level becomes the object of inquiry through methodologies such as qualitative or quantitative research, or textual analysis, knowledge operates at a discourse level and becomes of epistemic interest. At this level, development theories such as the Modernisation, Dependency and Regulation Theories become important. Furthermore, when the epistemic interest level is reflected on, it means that this knowledge is at the level of critical interest or of meta-theories such as positivism, Marxism, critical theory, phenomenology or post-modernism (Mouton, 2001:14).

I intend to explain how development discourses and development practices have changed since the era of missionary initiatives, through the post-World War II period (which is often held to mark the origin of 'official' development) to the present era of post-developmental thinking.

The subject of development has generated a large volume of highly contested literature, but it falls beyond the scope of this study to review all the existing literature. Instead, I intend to make sense of the thinking that was associated with the initiation and operation of the four small-scale development projects that featured in this study. Since 'development interventions are transformed, reformulated, adopted or resisted in local encounters [and] development interventions might not in practice function as an expression and concretisation of the ideological baggage on which they are built' (Nustad, 2001:485), this chapter explores the macro-paradigms that informed the establishment of the selected projects and examines the on-the-ground practices or

realities within these projects. At the end of the chapter, I consider what prospects exist for the selected projects in the light of the current global and local economic and political contexts.

3.2 DEVELOPMENT DISCOURSES: AN OVERVIEW

A complete discussion of development thinking over time is impossible within the scope of a study such as this, because it is such a vast topic as is evident from David Simon's (1997) comprehensive list of labels associated with the multiplicity of development approaches over the last 50 years. Simon (1997:184) lists the following terms: 'reconstruction and development', 'economic development', 'modernisation', 'redistribution with growth', 'dependent development', 'independent development', 'meeting basic needs', 'top-down development', 'bottom-up development', 'another development', 'autochthonous development', 'autarchic development', 'agropolitan development', 'empowerment', and most recently, 'post-development', 'anti-development' and even 'post-modern development'.

In essence, development is concerned with progress and advancement. Cowen and Shenton (1995) define the concept of development in two ways: as a process of immanent development (the natural change and advancement of society over time), and as intentional development – the guided transformation of a society. Lie (2005:2) expands on these two meanings, commenting: 'An active intervention in a society (intentional change) is illustrated by the use of development projects, while development as a process that unfolds over time (immanent) is illustrated by e.g. the "development of capitalism".' Intentional change or interventionist development is what development discourses are about.

According to Nustad (2001:481), development, irrespective of the underlying philosophy, has always been based on a belief in some form of trusteeship: '(T)hose who saw themselves as developed took it upon themselves to guide the development of those who were not.' Trusteeship is generally associated with the work of missionaries. In Giyani and in the former Gazankulu, Swiss missionaries had a great impact on the

people through their interventions in codifying the local language, literacy, health care and agriculture. In particular, the work of the Swiss missionary Henri-Alexandre Junod (1927a, 1927b, 1938) is worth noting in this regard.³⁸

The development achieved by missionaries was motivated by a sense of vocation – a real desire to assist the poor. In contrast to the rather cynical view that writers such as Harries (2007) and Manji and O’Coill (2002) adopt concerning the work of missionaries, Stirrat (2008:412) believes that most missionaries are largely motivated by a sense of duty or obligation. He acknowledges that this sense of duty or obligation ‘may derive from a sense of guilt at the poverty in developing countries; it may derive from a particular political agenda or it may be fuelled by some romantic dream’. However, he emphasises that ‘(n)o matter what, the outcome is the same: a sacrifice of self in pursuit of some greater goal’ (Stirrat, 2008:412).

A number of writers have reflected on the link between the Swiss missionaries and the Tsonga-Shangaan people in both Mozambique and the Gazankulu homeland (formerly part of north-eastern Transvaal and currently part of the Limpopo Province). For instance, Van der Merwe (2001, 2002) describes the work of the Swiss medical missionaries associated with Elim Hospital (90 kilometres to the north-west of Giyani town). Harries (2001) and Prinsloo (1999) focus on the literacy work of the Swiss missionaries. Macagno (2009) and Harries (2007) reflect on the ethnographic and political legacy of Junod. Kirkaldy’s (2009) review of the Swiss missionaries covers their contribution to medicine, literacy and education.

Within the research area, the effects of missionary involvement can be seen in the way most people in Giyani value learning and the role that their faith plays in guiding their actions. Even during the homeland epoch, they seized opportunities for development

³⁸ *The life of a South African tribe*, HA Junod's anthropological guide, appeared in 1912, and was reprinted in 1927 and 1962. This work in two volumes focused on the Tsonga/Ronga tribe. The first volume deals with the tribe's social life and the second volume deals with their spiritual life. 'This work has been translated into several languages and is still regarded as one of the best descriptions of an African society' (University of South Africa, s.a.).

and focused on providing educational opportunities and creating educational institutions (see Chapter 2).

The development work of missionaries is often ignored by authors such as Esteva (1997) and Sachs (1997), who believe that the 'official' development discourse was triggered by United States President Truman's inaugural speech in 1949, in which he mentioned the need for intervention and guidance along the path of modernity in 'underdeveloped' areas. The background to Truman's approach is explained by Kuhnen's (1987:157) belief that, in the wake of the devastation caused by World War II, 'people were seized by a desire for harmony ... [and the wish] to improve the world'. Since then, development has become a focal area for many disciplines, such as anthropology, sociology and political studies; and there are various development theories specific to these disciplines.

In view of the many theories and meta-theories covered in the literature, Graaff (2001:5-11) proposed two broad categories into which development theories can be divided, based on the roots of all the theories. In the one camp are concepts such as neo-liberalism, which are associated with modernisation and have their roots in structural-functionalism and neoclassical economic theory. In the other camp are the Dependency Theory, World Systems Theory and the new International Division of Labour Theory, which originated in Marxism and theories on imperialism.

Modernisation Theory, in the post-World War II development discourses, has been dominated by the view of American economist Walt Rostow (1960) that to achieve economic prosperity, all countries need to move in a linear fashion through five consecutive stages, namely traditional society, the preconditions for take-off, take-off, the drive to maturity, and the age of high mass-consumption. He also posited that, through development, economies that have advanced to the final stage can assist poor countries to speed up this process. Development thus came to be associated with intentional interventions in developing countries by rich countries, or international financial institutions, assisting poor countries to reach economic advancement through market economic thinking or Westernisation.

From 1949 to the 1970s, the dominant approach to the development of poor countries was to stimulate economic growth through industrialisation. Then it was realised that the benefits of such economic growth accrue only to a few and do not trickle down to all. In fact, the economic growth that had been achieved had widened the gap between the rich and the poor across countries and within countries. As a result, in the late 1960s and particularly from the 1970s onward, Dependency Theory or Underdevelopment Theory gained prominence as a counter to Modernisation Theory, particularly through the writings of Andre Gunder Frank (1969) and later Emmanuel Wallerstein (1974).

Dependency Theory explains that poverty is caused by unequal structural and economic relations, established through colonialism between the advanced and the poor countries. These relations were sustained after decolonisation: 'Whereas [M]odernisation [T]heory was apolitical ... [D]ependency [T]heory was highly political' (Lie, 2005:7). Dependency Theory considers the inequality of relations between countries, but it also focuses on inequalities within countries where economic activities are located in the cities (at the core), while the rural areas are at the periphery of development – rural areas are therefore usually underdeveloped.

Even though Modernisation Theory emphasises economic growth as a mode for development, and Dependency Theory focuses on unequal power relations, and although these two theories are often considered to be opposites, both are based on the assumption that progress and development are beneficial. However, both the Modernisation and Dependency Theories have been criticised for the continuous failure of development projects (Graaff, 2001:7).

Nederveen Pieterse (2000) discusses various schools of thought that are critical of development. So, for example, the 'post-development' school of thought rejects development because of the underlying premises and motives of development; Dependency Theory focuses on global inequality; 'alternative development' is concerned with the lack of popular participation whilst 'human(ist) development' advocates investment in people (Nederveen Pieterse, 2000:176). However, he raises the question of whether a complete rejection of development is defensible or fruitful, since post-development authors such as Escobar (1997) and Esteva (1997) offer no alternatives

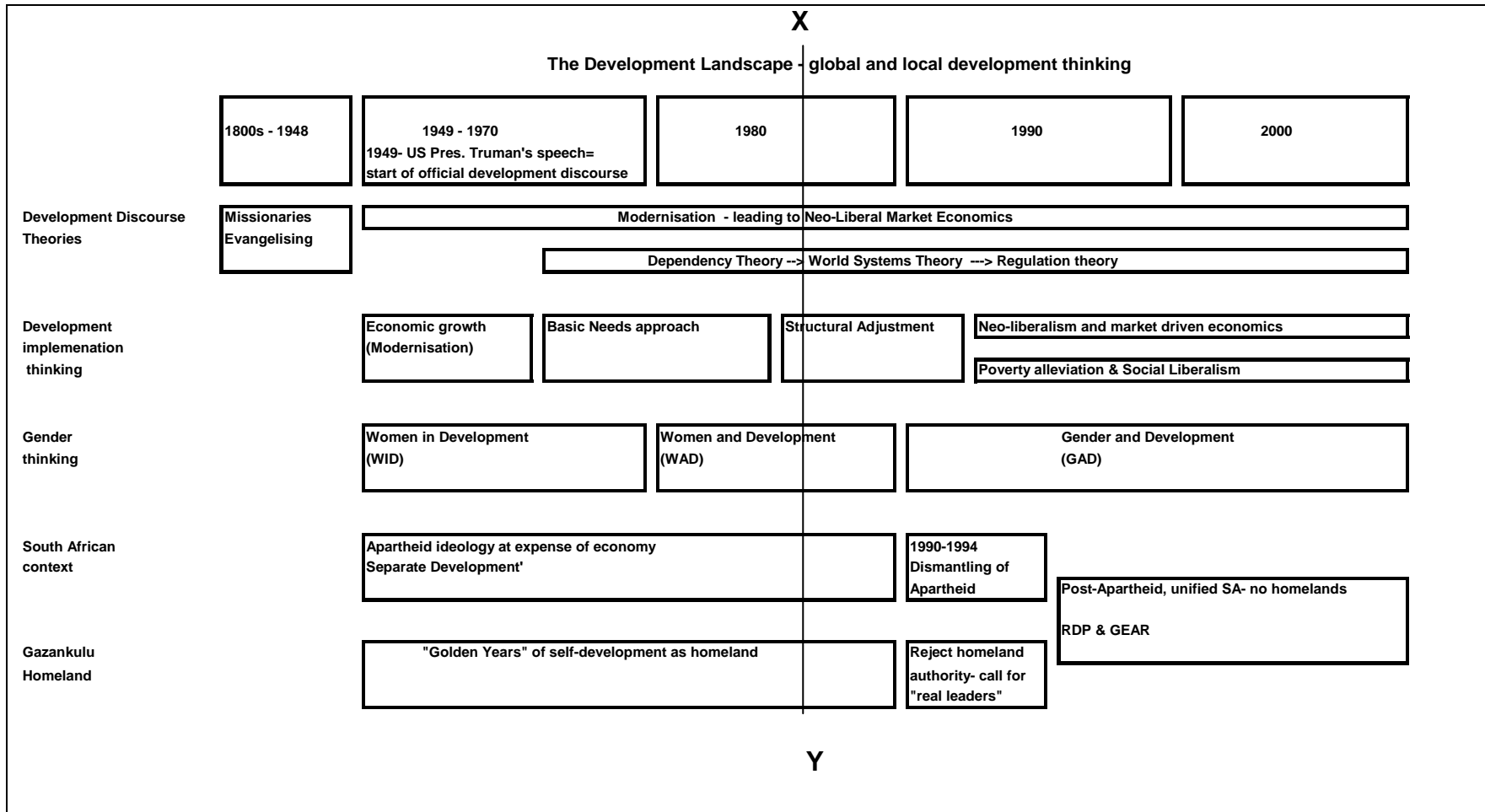
and, more importantly, these development critics deny the agency of the Third World. It is precisely the aspect of agency and how members of small-scale development projects define or transform the project encounter that forms the central focus of the current study.

Superimposed onto the multi-dimensional complexities of development discourses and practices over time, the South African context had its own versions of development. The South Africa context from 1948 to the early 1990s was dominated by the apartheid ideology, which assumed fundamental differences between black and white people. This ideology gave rise to the practice of separate development through the formation of various homelands for different ethnic groups. Also, various pieces of legislation promoted the social fragmentation of the disenfranchised living outside the homeland system. Some examples include the *Population Registration Act, Act 30 of 1950* and the subsequent national register in which every person's race was recorded and the *Group Areas Act, Act 41 of 1950*, which led to the creation of different residential areas for different races (Apartheid Legislation in South Africa, s.a.).

The diagram overleaf attempts to give a picture of how the development discourses and development practices (implementation) have changed over time, both internationally (including gender thinking) and within the South African context.

The temporal and spatial complexities of the development landscape, particularly concerning South Africa and the research area (see Figure 3.1, overleaf), are dealt with in greater detail later in this chapter and various parts of this study. The point that Figure 3.1 illustrates is that if Line XY is a time axis (for example, the year 1987), the life of a Giyani resident would have been affected by various development forces: self-development within a homeland, apartheid ideology and its associated legislation, women and development (WAD) as a focus of development, 'structural adjustment' (although, as I explain later, these austerity measures did not have much of a direct impact in Gazankulu in the 1980s), and the modernisation-dependency debates and approaches raging in the development arena.

Figure 3.1: Simplified overview of the local and international development landscape



In response to the Modernisation-Dependency debates and to counter the unequal distribution of the benefits of economic growth, development policies in the late 1970s were structured along the 'basic needs approach', according to which development was to focus on meeting the basic needs of the poor (for example, safe water and sanitation). However, before this approach could take off, the Third World³⁹ debt crisis occurred – in order to reduce their debt, many indebted countries agreed to implement the 'structural adjustment' and economic recovery programmes that the World Bank demanded. These programmes, which included a reduction of public spending through mass retrenchments in the civil services of already poor economies, soon caused the phenomenon of the 'educated unemployed' and had a severe impact on vulnerable groups such as children, rural people, and particularly poor women (see Chapters 4 and 5).

The consequences of the 'structural adjustment' approach to development in the 1980s and 1990s heralded an era of dual focus, on economic growth and poverty alleviation. On the one hand, economic development was based on neo-liberal market-driven economics, a particular form of capitalism that operates at the core.⁴⁰ On the other hand, alongside the focus on economic growth, policies were developed for the redistribution of some economic benefits, through various forms of social protection, such as state grants for those at the periphery, who are excluded from economic prosperity.

The co-existence of economic growth and social protection is explained by Polanyi's (1944, cited in Hart 2006:14) analysis of capitalism, more than 50 years ago, in which Polanyi identified the 'double movement' of capitalism and the fact that wealth creation has poverty as an unintended consequence – when labour, land, nature or money are

³⁹ The concept of the 'Third World' originally referred to the non-aligned and former colonized nations during the Cold War. The term is now commonly used to denote poor nations. The 'First World' refers to wealthy, developed nations.

⁴⁰ The 'core' can refer to the industrialised countries that are at core of the world economy, while poorer countries are on the periphery. Within a country, the 'core' refers to the cities, where most of the economic growth is concentrated, and the rural areas would be on the periphery.

released to free market forces, havoc ensues, which, in turn, means that protection is required for the vulnerable. Thus, capitalism and development, as Hart (2006) explains, are different sides of the same coin. Hart regards capitalism as a collective term for various forms⁴¹ of the present global economic model, as ‘geographically uneven, profoundly contradictory ... processes of creation and destruction’ (Hart, 2006:14).

The processes of creation are often termed economic progress or economic growth and the accompanying destructive fall-out needs to be mediated in the form of ‘development’, meaning interventions and social protection for the poor. The present South African government has become quite comfortable with the concept of a dual economy – a First Economy functioning along the lines of economic thinking of minimising costs and maximising profits and being globally competitive, and a Second Economy for those who need social protection. These two economies co-exist within South Africa’s political and economic framework, but are also indicative of a global trend of the co-existence of market economics and poverty alleviation (see Hart, 2006:24-27). The small-scale development projects studied in this research are, obviously, relegated to the Second Economy, which implies that these projects were meant to be supported by the government and other donors. This suggests that small-scale projects are meant to be receivers of charity, rather than to be small businesses (see Chapter 5).

Since capitalism necessitates development, an enormous and well-funded development industry of experts and consultants emerged. Their task was to transmit resources and know-how. Lie (2005:10) quotes a report in the *Washington Post* that claimed that the World Bank ‘pumps out around \$20 billion in commercial loans, subsidized credits and grants each year and ... its 10 000-strong personnel component represents the strongest concentration of development expertise anywhere’. Ferguson (2007) alerted the world to the mercenary, self-serving manner in which development professionals and the development industry operate. The development industry is a major world employer and each year ‘millions of dollars pass through this industry financing a huge range of

⁴¹ Capitalism includes neo-classic economics and neo-liberal economics, market economics etc.

activities. Furthermore, it is extremely complex both institutionally and in terms of what it produces' (Stirrat, 2008:406).

In addition to the criticism that the development industry drains large portions of development funds, Nederveen Pieterse (2000) lists a number of reasons why development has been criticised: it is the 'new religion of the West'; it is the imposition of science as power; it does not work; it means cultural Westernisation and homogenisation; and it brings about environmental destruction. Thus development 'is rejected not merely on account of its results but because of its intentions, its world-view and mindset' (Nederveen Pieterse, 2000:175).

I conclude this discussion of the ever-changing development discourses by citing Nustad (2001), who makes an important comment on top-down versus bottom-up approaches to development. Since the 1980s, the bottom-up or participatory approach to development has been advocated – this means that the beneficiaries of development should participate in the planning and implementation of development initiatives (Chambers, 1983, 1992, 1997). However, Nustad (2001:148) states that even though 'newer versions of development argue against a top-down approach to development, ... a development process is always initiated with a specific goal in mind and, although developers portray themselves as "facilitators", they still know where the process ought to be heading'. This means is that bottom-up approaches still involve some form of imposition of the developers' ideas on the beneficiaries of development.

3.2.1 The global context during the homeland epoch

The global development landscape from 1970 to 1990, during the homeland era was greatly influenced by the dynamics of the Cold War⁴² – the tug-of-war between the United States (the free world) and the Soviet Union (communism). Kuhnen (1987:157) argues that this tussle between the two super-powers spurred development, since

⁴² The Cold War began after the end of World War II in 1945. The suspicion and mistrust that characterised U.S.-Soviet relations resurfaced as soon as the alliance against Adolf Hitler was no longer necessary. Competing ideologies and visions of the post-war world prevented U.S. president Harry S. Truman and Soviet premier Joseph Stalin from working together (The Cold War [1945-1991], s.a.).

‘during the period of [C]old [W]ar it was thought that these people's misery would conduct them to communism, and help for combating poverty would retain them for the free world’. Thus the post-war development discourse was dominated by countries of the ‘free world’ who wanted to win Third World countries to their side. The discourses reflects the philosophy that development is tantamount to the growth of national income and that the cause of ‘underdevelopment was the lack of necessary factors of production, especially capital and training. Consequently, capital and technical aid became the instruments of development policy’ (Kuhnen, 1987:157).

The 1970s marked a change in development discourses, as it became evident that economic growth, in particular in developing countries, was not benefiting all. Attention was drawn to the fact that even if the per capita income of a country doubled, this did not imply that development had taken place. Dudley Seers, the director of the esteemed Institute of Development Studies at Sussex University in the United Kingdom, sparked a change in development discourses by advocating that development should be gauged against whether the levels of poverty, unemployment and inequality had changed. For Seers (1969:3) it would be odd to claim that development occurred if any of these three central concerns – poverty, unemployment or inequality – grew worse. Friedmann (1992:2) believes that ‘Seers’ call to give new meaning to development and to reset the policy agenda’ was taken up in a number of international conferences, for example, the 1972 Stockholm Conference on the Human Environment and the subsequent formation of the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP), and the 1974-Cocoyoc (Mexico) meeting (Friedmann, 1992:2). Consequently, the development discourses in the 1970s were characterised by concerns for people-centred development in harmony with the environment. The ‘basic needs’ approach to development prioritised people’s need for food, water and shelter, instead of just maximising economic growth.

In addition, gender became a fundamental concern in the development discourse. In the 1970s the ‘Women in Development’ (WID) approach encouraged women to undertake wage work in an attempt to integrate women into development. The framework of modernisation theory that emphasises economic growth and industrialisation was transposed to women. Furthermore, Western values were stressed and women were

encouraged have smaller families through birth control, the assumption being that, with smaller populations, countries would achieve modernisation and democracy (Serote *et al.*, 2001:158).

During the 1970s, enormous amounts of loan funds flooded into developing countries, which 'gave the receiving countries a fleeting illusion of prosperity' (Friedmann, 1992:4), but these countries soon experienced problems with repaying these high-interest loans. With the debt crises that many developing countries were experiencing, the 'basic needs' approach to development was short-circuited.

The indebtedness of many developing countries to international funding institutions such as the World Bank and the IMF led to much of the damage caused in the 1980s (Regan, 1996:30). At this time, the leaders of two powerful 'free-world' economies, the United States of America and Great Britain, greatly influenced global political, economic and development agendas. Cooke (2006:2) believes that with the coming to power of Thatcher and Reagan in 1980, these neo-conservative governments treated money as more important than people, which was in stark contrast to the people-centred 'basic needs' approach. This is an opportune point to mention that this turn-about, referred to as the 'neoconservative revolution' (Friedmann, 1992:4), re-introduced the present neo-liberal economic thinking and laid the foundation for the 2008 global financial and economic crisis. As Steger (2005:16) asserts, 'neoliberalism and neoconservatism are not ideological opposites ... they represent variations of the same liberal theme; their similarities outweigh their difference[s]'. (I comment briefly on the current crisis later in this chapter.)

The thinking in the 1980s was that development in the Third World had not trickled down to all because of government interference or inefficiencies in such countries. The free market or neoliberalism approach was again promoted through development. Manji and O'Coill (2002:575-576) argue that, according to neo-liberalism, economic policy functions to safeguard the right of a minority to accumulate profits at the highest possible rate and this is referred to as growth. It is believed that when this freedom is unrestricted, the benefits will trickle down to others, and therefore development should promote growth, so that ultimately other freedoms can be enjoyed. According to this

dogma, State expenditure should be directed towards creating an enabling environment for growth and public services can be provided more efficiently by private enterprise.

The 1980s saw significant increases in the cost of borrowing. Many indebted developing countries were obliged to implement austerity measures – structural adjustment programmes (SAPs) – to repay international loans. (I deal with ‘structural adjustment’ in greater detail in Chapter 5). The combined effects of the debt crisis, the structural adjustment programmes and the promotion of production for export had disastrous consequences for the poor and the environment (Friedmann, 1992:5). The 1980s is in fact considered a ‘lost decade for development’ (Esteva 1997:14; Regan 1996:31).

Concerning the discourse on ‘gender’ during the 1980s, the Women in Development (WID) approach was severely criticised for not considering the multiple roles women play inside and outside the home (Parker *et al.*, 1995:10). It also became clear that the benefits of development did not extend to all – the majority of the population in developing countries sank deeper into poverty and gender oppression intensified. Thus it became clear that the Women in Development approach favoured the advancement of individuals rather than of groups. In the Giyani context, the focus on women probably assisted some women in obtaining bursaries from the Gazankulu government for tertiary studies. Lillian and Nahle are just two women who benefited from opportunities at that time. Lillian, a former lecturer, reported that she could study science at the University of the Witwatersrand with a scholarship from the Gazankulu government. Nahle, a senior health official, today plays an instrumental role in the Makoxa Development Committee.

Meanwhile, on the international front, the 1990s witnessed a shift from donor-imposed blueprint projects to an approach that incorporates beneficiaries’ input at the planning and implementation stages (Stirrat, 1993:299). The Avelanani crèche reflects this thinking, as the Makoxa community gave input on the project to be funded. However, funders still held the purse-strings tightly and withdrew their support when things did not go as they wished. One wonders whether meeting the problems head-on and assisting in finding solutions would not have been a better option for the funders. This would certainly have reflected greater commitment and a sincere willingness to assist the beneficiaries, rather than the donors’ wanting to control the beneficiaries.

The 1990 marked yet another shift in thinking concerning women's role in development. By the late 1980s, the 'Woman and Development' (WAD) approach became popular (see Chapter 1). The Women and Development approach was based on dependency theory, which regards the failure of poor countries' development as a consequence of the historical relationship ex-colonies had with imperial nations. These historically unequal power relations, it is argued, kept former colonies under the control of industrialised nations and caused structural underdevelopment and dependency. The spread of capitalism in the ex-colonies intensified gender oppression, as subsistence production was replaced with capitalist forms and men were primarily employed. The differential position of men and women in capitalist power relations and in the development process is recognised in the Women and Development approach. However, the Women and Development approach focused narrowly on working class women in employment and excluded women who were not in formal employment. Other criticisms of the Women and Development approach were that it did not incorporate the possibility of coalitions across class lines and that it did not campaign for any legal reform of women's position in the workplace and society (Rathgeber, 1990; Serote *et al.*, 2001:160; Visvanathan, 1997).

It is perhaps helpful to mention that in the Gazankulu context, social class distinctions are not very rigid – those who have achieved a profession and middle-class status will assist their parents and siblings in the village financially. Thus, socially, strong coalitions and associations between women across class lines exist in the research area.

The subsequent 'Gender and Development' (GAD) approach that emerged towards the late 1980s considers the relations between women and men and the power context in which development occurs. Thus, Gender and Development incorporates the unequal gender relations that prevent equitable development and women's full participation (Parker *et al.*, 1995:11) and considers the political, socio-economic and domestic forces influencing development. It seeks appropriate empowerment strategies for women within a specific context. The Gender and Development approach gives some recognition to women's demand for economic independence, political activism for legal

reform, social transformation, and coalition building (Serote *et al.*, 2001:161; Visvanathan, 1997).

In my study, two projects (Ahitipfuxeni and Hi Hlurile) established after 1994, reflect the Women and Development and Gender and Development viewpoints. Ahitipfuxeni reflects the early Women and Development thinking, when development strategies recognised women's need for economic independence and income-generating projects were encouraged, which concentrated on the production of traditional handicrafts such as sewing and beadwork, and training aimed at building other skills. Women were encouraged to form groups in order to access funding; and training was provided in project management – from formulating vision and mission statements for the group to developing a constitution and preparing business plans for funding.

The Hi Hlurile Skills Development Programme reflects the understanding of the Gender and Development approach of women's demand for economic independence, social transformation and coalition-building. After the 'structural adjustment' measures were implemented by the newly-elected government (I discuss the post-1994 context later in this chapter), professional people, including women in Giyani, were retrenched. To reduce government spending, the public service was rationalised and women in the public sector become unemployed, alongside women with little or no schooling. The Hi Hlurile project reflects a coalition across educational and class lines. Professionally trained nurses and teachers are sharing and learning with women with little or no schooling. The founder and leader of Hi Hlurile is a highly qualified educator (she holds a master's degree) who had to end her professional career through ill-health. Her concerns for unemployed women led to the pooling of the skills of women with diverse educational backgrounds (see Sections 5.5, 5.7 and 5.9).

3.2.2 Changes in development discourses in the early 1990s

The fall of the Berlin wall in 1989 signalled the fall of communism and an end to the Cold War. The period from 1989 to 1991 marked profound changes in world politics. In particular, 1989 was a dramatic and tumultuous year, as communist rule across much of

Europe was lifted.⁴³ The collapse of communism gave impetus to the resurgence of ‘a neo-liberal hegemony’ (Peet & Watts, 1993:227).

In South Africa too, the early 1990s signalled profound changes. After a relatively peaceful and prosperous era, Gazankulu entered a period in which the youth rejected the homeland authorities. The Gazankulu authorities were confronted by boycotts and unrest which some believed were triggered by the unbanning of the ANC and particularly the release of Nelson Mandela (see Section 2.3). Even though Giyani had largely been unaffected by the student unrest in South Africa during the 1980s, students’ protest and unrest affected the town during 1990. Yet, after that year, ‘normality’ returned and it was largely ‘business as usual’ in the homeland (Schmid, 2005).

The year before Gazankulu was incorporated into a unified ‘new’ South Africa, the Gazankulu government was the single largest employer in Gazankulu. Hartman *et al.* (1993:35) even came to the conclusion that ‘the total number of civil servants (26 000 permanent staff and 7 000 casual labourers) seems to be disproportionately large for a total population of 685 150’. Thus, at the dawn of the next phase of Giyani’s history, the situation was such that a large number of people were employed in the homeland administration, with the senior officials resident in the town, the homeland capital.

3.2.3 Development policies in South Africa after 1994

After 27 April 1994, with Gazankulu incorporated into a unified South Africa and the first democratic elections successfully concluded, the ‘new’ South Africa dawned, with great expectations in the hearts of all South Africans. This was evident from the many people interviewed by various local and international television crews in the streets in different

⁴³ For example, on 6 February 1989, the Polish government opened talks with the formerly banned trade union, Solidarity. Later that year, on 4 June, Solidarity won the elections in Poland. On 10 September 1989, Hungary opened its borders. On 9 November 1989, the Berlin Wall, which separated East and West Berlin and that was considered the most powerful symbol of the Cold War division of Europe fell. The next day, on 10 November, in Bulgaria, the long-time leader, Todor Zhivkov, resigned. On 24 November, Czechoslovak dissidents forced the Politburo to resign in what became known as the Velvet Revolution; and on 17 December Romania erupted as violence swept that country (BBC News, 1989).

parts of the country. Books published since 1994 on South Africa's history bear testimony to the importance of the 'new' South Africa to an audience broader than just South Africans (Beinart, 2001; Clark & Worger, 2004; Davenport & Saunders, 2000; McKinnon, 2004; Omer-Cooper, 1994; Ross, 1999; Worden, 2000). Having passed through a period in history that relegated people to a place in society that was based on the colour of their skin and their racial classification, many South Africans anticipated a much better future.

Gazankulu had spent a considerable proportion of its budget on welfare, health and education. According to Lund (1990:6), the homeland areas could be considered 'welfare states'. Particularly the residents in Giyani had been spared much of the hardship that the disenfranchised suffered outside the Gazankulu capital. For 20 years, the Chief Minister⁴⁴ had encouraged the people of Gazankulu to prepare, through education and skills development, for a unified, democratic South Africa. Sadly, the Chief Minister did not live to see the realisation of his dream of a unified South Africa,⁴⁵ as he died one year earlier, on 25 March 1993, of leukaemia. The people in Giyani were ready to face the 'new' South Africa, but they were soon disillusioned.

The economic consequences of the homelands and the tricameral system meant that the post-apartheid government inherited a very weak economy and a cumbersome and inefficient administrative structure (Dollery, 2003:92). In the mid-1990s, the ANC-led government instituted another round of 'structural adjustments' measures to cope with international debt repayments. Unlike the previous reduction in the civil service in a divided South Africa, this time Giyani was greatly affected by the retrenchments in the civil service. At the time when I conducted my research, Clara was a 41-year old

⁴⁴ Chief Minister Ntsanwisi, in addressing the State President's Council on 21 April 1986, said: 'I cannot believe that whilst we have any formalised, institutionalised separation of the races in this country we will ever be able to develop a normal society ... "separate but equal" may be a stepping stone, albeit a very costly one in economic terms. But it is just that a transient arrangement. The establishment of a normal society in South Africa demands nothing less, as an ultimate objective, than a system in which economic means and individual capacities will stratify our society' (cited in Cooper, 1987:17).

⁴⁵ Even in the report that the *New York Times* placed at the time of Ntsanwisi's death, his support for President F.W. de Klerk's reforms aimed at ending apartheid was mentioned (*New York Times*, 1993).

teacher. She articulated the feelings of other unemployed teachers and nurses when she lamented: *'We believed education was the vehicle to escape from the poverty trap – now it did not live up to its promises and I suffer the indignity of unemployment.'* Clara's expectation that education would bring about a better future for herself, her family and her community is not an unreasonable expectation for, as Nkwi (1976:172) articulates, 'education instils in people the aspiration and expectation which can only be satisfied by further social change'. Yet for Clara, this personal, economic and social change did not occur.

Looking at the post-apartheid policy framework, the government navigated its way through three national policy frameworks: the Reconstruction and Development Programme (RDP), the Growth, Employment and Redistribution (GEAR) policy and the Accelerated and Shared Growth Initiative of South Africa (ASGISA) framework.

The RDP was a macro-policy agenda that was to provide an integrated socio-economic policy framework that was designed to accomplish the final eradication of apartheid (ANC, 1994). The RDP marked the period from 1994 to 1999 when Nelson Mandela was president. The RDP's emphasis was dealing with the economic, social, infrastructural and other inequalities inherited from the apartheid era and thus the basic needs of the marginalised were of great concern to the Mandela administration. Greenstein (2009) observes that the RDP approach was socially progressive in merging economic growth and the pursuit of sustainability and greater equality through redistribution and in promoting grassroots, bottom-up development which was owned and driven by communities and their representative organisations (Greenstein, 2009:74).

The second policy framework, the GEAR policy, came to occupy a central role as a macro-economic strategy by 1996. 'This was part of a larger rhetorical shift towards a more technocratic and less emotive language, as well as a growing focus on questions of economic growth largely at the expense of questions of justice and redistribution' (Greenstein, 2009:74; also Padayachee, 2006). Thus, the GEAR strategy was closely aligned to the global market-oriented economic thinking of that time and set as its primary vision the building of 'a competitive fast-growing economy which creates sufficient jobs for all work seekers' (Republic of South Africa, 1996a:1). By contrast, the

‘redistribution of income and opportunities in favour of the poor’ (Republic of South Africa, 1996a:1) and ‘a society in which sound health, education and other services are available to all’ (Republic of South Africa, 1996a:1) were secondary considerations to this policy’s aim of a ‘competitive outward-oriented economy’ (Republic of South Africa, 1996a:1).

By 2006, when it became clear that a substantial increase in employment and redistribution did not automatically accompany the good economic growth of the country, a new policy framework, the ASGISA framework, was set in place (Republic of South Africa, 2006). The ASGISA ‘conceptual document is presented in the language of poverty alleviation and a new development path, with the goal of halving poverty and unemployment by 2014’ (Greenstein, 2009:74).

The ASGISA approach promotes ‘labour-absorptive activities’ to alleviate poverty, including the development of skills through programmes to enhance literacy and numeracy, improve mathematics and science education, and upgrade teachers’ skills. What is particularly noteworthy in the Giyani context is that these aspects (literacy, numeracy, the improvement of mathematics and science education and the improvement of teachers’ skills) had already been essential elements of the Gazankulu homeland administration (see Section 2.1).

A significant aspect of the ASGISA framework is the introduction of the concept of ‘the Second Economy’ which is different from existing economic relations. ‘The second economy is used to denote poverty, inequality and marginalisation, which are to be addressed through giving such groups access to finance, affirmative procurement and jobs, and empowering youth, women and small businesses’ (Greenstein, 2009:78). For the residents of Giyani, who have historically been part of a homeland and considered to be ‘victims’ of economic marginalisation under apartheid policies (thus consigned to the Second Economy), the ASGISA concern of inequality and for the marginalised and poor presents opportunities on which they can capitalise. (I examine the impact that ASGISA has had on local employment in Section 5.6.)

3.2.4 *The present development landscape*

From the South African government's focus on economic growth and poverty alleviation, it is evident that what Polanyi (1944) termed the 'double movement' of capitalism is taken into account. The present government is actively involved in development, or poverty alleviation, through redistribution to the poor, while promoting a free-market component of the economy too.

Global capitalism promotes free market economics, where supply and demand for a commodity determine the price and only those who can afford the price can acquire that commodity. Within this economic system, agents behave 'rationally', meaning that consumers 'have a set of well-established preferences; for equivalent risk, they prefer more to less; they look for the highest rate of returns; they minimise costs; they act in their own interest' (Barthalon, 2003:289). Given this description of economic agents, it means that there will always be those who are able to acquire more than others; those who will want to procure resources (such as labour) at the lowest cost (by paying low wages) while maximising their own gain (profits). What this means is that 'successful' economic agents are characterised by greed and an insatiable desire for more. Given that resources are not infinite; this greed is satisfied at the cost of depriving others and high consumption of natural resources.

The greed that is inherent to free market economics is precisely what sparked the present global financial and economic crisis. In the United States of America consumers have been on a lavish spending spree, financed with credit borrowed against their homes. United States banks allowed excessive credit to their customers, and the United States markets were equally reckless (UN, s.a.(b)) Before elaborating further, I should state that my intention is not to present a treatise on world finance and the present economic woes, but it is imperative that one considers the state of the global economy and the discourses that are currently dominant, if one is to accept that development as poverty alleviation is the flip side of the current economic thinking. Besides, the financial and economic discourses influence, if they do not determine, the development

discourses as witnessed by the global financial and economic crisis that led to what the World Bank euphemistically described as a ‘development emergency’ (UN, 2009).

In brief, the financial crisis started in August 2008 and the ferocity with which this situation snowballed surprised all. Governments in North America and Europe had to bail out banks and corporate giants in the motor industry, in an attempt to contain the avalanche. At the root of the initial crisis was the credit granted by the United States to consumers. Lending to households, through low-interest mortgages on property, grew at unprecedented levels (Barrell & Davis, 2008:6). The United States banks financed the credit they provided to households through innovative financial packages, such as asset-backed securities⁴⁶ (ABSs) sold into other economies. ‘[P]rudent banking rules have been overwhelmed by folly and fraud, masquerading as financial innovation’, Trevor Manuel (2009:s.p.) commented in his February 2009 Budget Speech. Barrell and Davis (2008:9) state that the ‘extensive holding of US ABSs by EU⁴⁷ banks ... spread the impact internationally’.

Thus, when house prices in the United States fell and defaults on the repayment of mortgage loans increased, the financial crisis was not confined to the United States economy only. United States banks were soon heading for disaster, as their debtors were unable to repay their debt and the banks could therefore also not meet their obligations to their creditors. This meant that various governments had to intervene to prevent the collapse of the banking sector. The end of 2008 witnessed a wave of bank nationalisations across North America and Europe (Barrell & Davis, 2008:5).

Alongside the property mortgage difficulty, Wall Street financial institutions were in the midst of a spending euphoria too. They ‘were able to borrow in excess of 30 times their capital ... and Wall Street traders with their 30-1 leverage – [bought] more junk than they could afford’ (Karabell, 2009:27). In an enlightening debate that *Newsweek* (21 March 2009) published on whether Washington (the United States government) or Wall Street

⁴⁶ Asset-backed Securities are short-term debt securities (usually with a maturity of five years or less) backed by loan paper from banks or other providers of credit (Investorwords, s.a.).

⁴⁷ European Union.

(the financial markets) was to blame for the housing bubble, the market crash and the recession, one panellist, Niall Ferguson, made the following statement: ‘Bankers are nearly always actuated by greed, and so are many ordinary people too. But it’s the role of government to strike a balance between market forces and stability, and we should blame Washington more than Wall Street for this crisis. In my view Washington sold itself to Wall Street’ (*Newsweek*, 2009). I discuss this expectation that government should intervene and regulate capitalism later (see Section 5.6).

Obviously, many jobs were lost – in 2008, 2.6 million workers lost their jobs in the United States and in China in 2009 ‘twenty million migrant workers who went home for the Chinese New Year [did] not return to the cities, because those jobs have disappeared’ (Manuel, 2009:s.p.). With the Asian countries cutting back on producing consumer goods that are no longer in demand in countries to which they export (notably the United States and Europe), there is also less demand for raw materials from countries such as South Africa. Manuel (2009:s.p.) explained the inter-connectedness of South Africa with the global economy as follows:

When a global motor company cuts back on making cars, it cancels its orders for catalytic converters ... [from] the Eastern Cape. The mine producing the platinum that goes into that converter is near Rustenburg. The worker in the factory in Uitenhage and the mineworker in Rustenburg are now without work. And the woman who runs the little stall selling vegetables outside the mine is making less money each passing week. And their families, all of them, face a future made more precarious by the vagaries of global finance.

The trillions of dollars that developed economies such as the United States, the United Kingdom and German governments had to spend in bail-out packages makes one wonder whether these economies have any concern for less developed economies. The impact that the global financial crisis has had on the international financing of development necessitated that the United Nations (UN) convene the Doha Conference⁴⁸

⁴⁸ The Doha Conference was a follow-up of the Monterrey Consensus of 2005 that laid the foundations for the international financing for development.

on 'Financing for Development'⁴⁹ in Qatar from 28 November to 2 December 2008. At this conference, developed countries expressed a strong commitment to maintain their development assistance targets, irrespective of the current financial crisis.

It was also decided to convene a UN Conference at the highest level on the impact of the current financial and economic crisis on development and this three-day summit of world leaders was held from 24 to 26 June 2009. One of the decisions taken at the UN Conference on the World Financial and Economic Crisis and its Impact on Development was 'to explore the restructuring of the international monetary and financial architecture' (UN, 2009).

Foroohar (2009) believes the close scrutiny of the international financial and monetary system to be the most important lesson from the current crisis. He proposes that the global economy should be rebalanced so that 'Americans [should] stop spending so much, and China and Germany and all the rest of the surplus countries start spending more'. The sentiments that governments should address the underlying global economic imbalances where some countries produce and save and others consume and spend are shared by Samuelson (2009:19).

A number of writers' reflections on various financial crises in different countries⁵⁰ resonate with Zhang's (2006:169) belief that the prevailing IMF/World Bank paradigm for financial market governance in developing countries is flawed. This paradigm advocates that governments should only play a limited role in the economy and it promotes the neo-liberal emphasis on market self-governance, and the pursuit of market efficiency. What this means is that markets should be allowed to govern themselves, but the global financial and economic crisis that started in the United States proves how horribly wrong things can go when market forces are unrestrained.

⁴⁹ The Doha Conference was attended by some 40 Heads of State or Government, 9 Deputy Heads of State or Government, 50 ministers and 17 vice-ministers of foreign affairs, finance, development cooperation and trade, as well as other high-level officials of 170 States and major institutional stakeholders (UN. S.a.(a))

⁵⁰ See Yeldan's (2006) reflections on 'IMF-Led Crisis in Turkey'; Crotty and Lee (2002) on South Korea's crisis in the 1990s; Sharma (2004) on the Korean financial crisis; Heo and Tan's (2003) comparison of the differential impact of the financial crisis on South Korea and Taiwan.

When one looks closely at how South Africa managed the twins called ‘economic growth’ and ‘development’ in the recent past, it needs to be acknowledged that as the former Minister of Finance, Trevor Manuel has deservedly earned great respect internationally. What is particularly noteworthy is that South Africa has largely resisted IMF/World Bank pressures for unregulated financial markets and provided policy frameworks for both financial institutions (Legislation South Africa, 1996) and consumer spending which largely buffered South Africa from the international consumer and financial crisis, although the trade crisis did, and still does, influence South Africa’s economy.

In the midst of the global crisis, the Minister’s presentation of the February 2009 Budget was awaited with great interest. It was particularly significant that the attempt to shield the poor from some of the harshness of the economic situation was an important principle guiding the formulation of the budget. To this end, ‘[t]he largest adjustments to spending plans go to poverty reduction: R25 billion is added to the budgets of provinces, mainly for education and health care, and R13 billion for social assistance grants and their administration. R4 billion is added to the school nutrition programme and R2.5 billion goes to municipalities for basic services’ (Manuel, 2009:s.p.).

Having discussed the changing macro forces of discourses, policies and practices, I now place the projects selected for this study in a historical perspective.

3.3 THE SELECTED PROJECTS IN A HISTORICAL PERSPECTIVE

The four small-scale development projects are listed in Table 3.1, overleaf, with the year of the inception of each project. Understanding the development influences at the time when the projects were started helps one to get a sense of how the project was intended to function, although the manner in which these projects currently operate may be very different from the initial plans.

Table 3.1: The selected projects, their activities and the influences during their inception and establishment

Name of project	Year started & era	Activities	Main development influences at inception and establishment
Avelanani crèche	1991 / Homeland	Early childhood education for children of Mozambican refugees	Missionary (Swiss) influence; historical links of Swiss Mission with Tsonga-Shangaan in Gazankulu and Mozambique
Giyani Aged Garden	1987 / Homeland	Vegetable garden and other activities focusing on the welfare of the aged	Social welfare focus of homeland government. Retired political and administrative officials.
Ahitipfuxeni Community Project	1995 / New SA	Sewing, beadwork, mat weaving, juice bottling, brick-making	'structural adjustment' programme, 'social funds'
Hi Hlurile Skills Development Programme	1999 / New SA	Sewing, beadwork, pottery, computer literacy, various forms of training, networking with other groups	'structural adjustment' programme, 'social funds'

Two of the projects, the Avelanani crèche and the Giyani Aged Garden⁵¹, date back to the homeland epoch, while the Ahitipfuxeni and Hi Hlurile projects were started after the homeland had been incorporated into the 'new' South Africa after the first democratic elections in 1994.

Of the four projects, the Avelanani crèche is the only one located in a village under the jurisdiction of a tribal authority. This project was initially influenced by the Swiss Mission, which has a long history of development in the study location. The Avelanani crèche is the focus of discussion in this chapter, since the other three projects are discussed in great length in other chapters.⁵² The quantitative findings of the survey serve to quantify

⁵¹ The Giyani Aged Garden discussed in totality in Chapter 7 for coherence and is not discussed in this chapter.

⁵² The Giyani Aged Garden is expanded on in Chapter 7 ('A place of solidarity for the elderly'). The Ahitipfuxeni and Hi Hlurile projects are discussed in Chapter 4 ('Projects as sites of learning and empowerment'), Chapter 5 ('Places to deal with countercyclical change'), and Chapter 6 ('Projects as sites for coping with changing legislation and persistent traditions').

some of the findings of the case studies and are interwoven into the various chapters where these data are appropriate.

In the first part of the discussion that follows, it is shown that the Avelanani crèche, which was established in the homeland era, draws together a number ‘threads’ such as missionary involvement, the assistance of Mozambican refugees and the relationship between the South African government and the homeland administration. These aspects are explored to understand the development landscape – the political and economic context – at the time when the project started. The context can be visualised as a series of concentric circles, with the crèche for Mozambican refugees’ children at the centre. The successive circles to consider are Giyani as the capital of a self-governing homeland, followed by the Gazankulu homeland administration for Tsonga-Shangaan people who have historical connections to Mozambique, then the South African government’s ideology, and, lastly, the global economic and political context.

The second period under discussion is the post-apartheid period – 1994 and beyond. It represents a time when all the homelands were integrated into a unified South Africa. The first democratically elected government had to cope with the legacy of the past in an ever-changing global context. Brief reference is made to the two projects (Ahitipfuxeni and Hi Hlurile) initiated during this period, because this development context forms the backdrop to what happens in these projects, but these two projects are discussed in more detail in the next three chapters.

3.3.1 Avelanani crèche: homeland policies & practices

In 1991, the Swiss Mission in South Africa (SMSA) established the Avelanani crèche to assist the children of people displaced by the Mozambican war. The involvement of the Swiss Mission with the Tsonga-Shangaan people in southern Mozambique and Gazankulu dates back to 1873. The Swiss Mission in South Africa’s efforts to build up an indigenous church led to the establishment of the Tsonga Presbyterian Church, which became independent in 1962 and was later renamed the Evangelical Presbyterian

Church in South Africa (Jeannerat, Morier-Genoud & Péclard, s.a.:1). in addition to sharing the gospel, the Swiss Mission had a profound influence on the people in this north-eastern part of South Africa, particularly in codifying and delineating the Tsonga language (Harries, 1994), in the development of literacy among the people (Gilmour, 2007) and in education, which contributed to the formation of a politically conscious elite (Cruz & Silva, 2001).

The man who was later to become the chief minister of Gazankulu, Hudson Ntsanwisi, was born at the Shiluvane Mission Station⁵³ outside Tzaneen and was a product of Swiss mission education. Later Ntsanwisi became 'the first African layman to hold the presidency of the Synodal Commission of the Tsonga Presbyterian Church for a period of 12 years' (Cooper, 1987:10).

The Elim Hospital for the blind, the Lemana Teachers College and, not least, the Avelanani crèche bear witness to the work of the Swiss Mission and the strong ties between the Swiss Mission and the people of Gazankulu.

The Avelanani crèche was started with funds from the Swiss Mission society through the local pastor in Giyani. The pastor consulted with the people of Makoxa on the need for a crèche for the children of the refugees. Initially, the funders and the local pastor influenced the running of the project even after the buildings and fittings were completed. According to Minah, the principal of the Avelanani crèche, the crèche was established because *'the Mozambicans were being left behind and their children needed help'*. For desperately poor refugees, trying to carve a new life in Gazankulu, education may not have been a priority and their children *'were being left behind'*. The pastor, who was instrumental in channelling the funds from Switzerland to the crèche, was in a very influential position.

Through the pastor, the funders were involved in operational decisions too. For instance, since the crèche was intended for children of refugees, the staff had to seek approval from Switzerland to change the admissions policy to allow children of other

⁵³ Henri Alexander Junod was closely involved with the Shiluvane Mission Station and established a school for the training of evangelists there (University of South Africa, s.a.).

parentage. *'We approached the funders for permission to admit children of local unemployed people'* (Minah, crèche principal).

However, the influence of the pastor was curtailed by the traditional authority and the Makoxa Development Committee. The traditional authorities insisted that the people who were to be employed at the crèche should be representative of the wards under the three headmen (*tinduna*) in Makoxa village. For the chief and the traditional authority under which Makoxa village falls, consultation and fairness are important to avoid conflict. In fact, development initiatives are coordinated through the Makoxa Development Committee, which was established in 1990. The crèche benefits greatly from the commitment and tireless work of Nahle, a senior official in the Department of Health (see Section 2.2). She, as a well-respected government official and widow of the former school principal, was approached by the chief (*hosi*) and the traditional council to establish the Makoxa Development Committee with representatives of existing organisations such as churches, women and youth groups in the village. This committee wanted to improve the livelihoods of the very poor in this rural area and has, since its inception, secured funding from various donors for a variety of projects.

Tension developed between the Makoxa Development Committee and the pastor about the direction the crèche should take. *'The pastor was against the crèche being registered with the Department of Education and the Department of Health, because he did not welcome the possibility of interference. He therefore instructed the funders to stop funding'* (Nahle, Chairperson of the Makoxa Development Committee). Indeed, the Swiss Mission withdrew its funding. Without income from the funders to pay salaries, the staff faced financial hardship. Such direct control and withdrawal of funds when things did not go according to the plans of the developers was typical of the prevailing *modus operandi* of the development industry in the 1980s and early 1990s.

At the time the research was done, only the principal is paid by the Department of Education. The other staff members earn a meagre salary of about R350 per month, derived mainly from the R30 fees that each of the 119 children is expected to pay. Even though the three teachers, the two cooks and the cleaner receive very little remuneration for their work, the tap water and the available fenced land make it possible for staff

members to grow vegetables on site. The vegetables are used mainly for the domestic consumption of the staff, since the Department of Health and Welfare provides the meals for the children.

It seems that the personnel of the Avelanani crèche have a genuine, almost altruistic, desire to help children. The staff of this project, appointed by the community, are supported by a management board elected from the parent body and the Makoxa village community. The board meets every three months and the principal serves on the committee. On the wall of the principal's office are the 'rules and regulations', the names of board members, an organisational chart of the staff, the vision and mission statements, the daily programme and photographs of activities such as a trip to Venda. The principal chats animatedly about each event and outing captured in the photographs.

The staff at Avelanani Crèche state that their main goal here *'is to take care of the children by giving them education, food and help with their health'*. The fact that the staff members were nominated by the community and appointed by the chief adds to their commitment, because of the confidence the community has placed in them. The support from the community through the management board, even though no real financial support is received from this body, can be perceived as subtle coercion that will make it difficult for individuals to leave the project without feeling that they are abandoning children in need. The fact that this small team of seven dedicated workers (four teachers, two cooks and one cleaner) love the children is clearly evident. They know each of the 119 children by name and they are aware of the children's' particular domestic circumstances.

In placing the Avelanani crèche in the context of the Gazankulu homeland, I would like to pick up on three points from the previous discussion: firstly, the refugees and how they came to live in Gazankulu; secondly, the matter of the integration of the refugees with the local communities; and, thirdly, the funders of the crèche.

The community around the crèche lives on the southern side of Makoxa village and most came to live there in 1984, though refugees from Mozambique continued to enter the

homeland in a steady stream during the period from 1984 to 1987. Between 1979 and 1992, during the Mozambican civil war, approximately 5.7 million Mozambicans fled their country (Steinberg, 2005:3). Approximately 37 000 settled in dozens of villages throughout Gazankulu (De la Hunt, 1997). Hartman *et al.* (1993:38) report that from 1985 to 1991, the annual population growth of Gazankulu was 5.85%, largely due to the influx of refugees. For the refugees from the Gaza and Maputo Provinces of Mozambique, it took a four- or five-day walk westwards through the Kruger National Park to reach Gazankulu (Steinberg, 2005:3). These desperate people faced many dangers: electrified border fences, exhaustion, starvation, dehydration, arrest and attacks by predatory animals. In the Giyani area, three camps were allocated to the Mozambican refugees of the 1980s: one camp is situated within the town, another near the western boundary of the town and one in Makoxa village to the east.

Steinberg (2005:4) asserts that ‘the sudden arrival of many thousands of Shangaan-speaking refugees in Gazankulu in the 1980s not only triggered a sense of ethnic solidarity in their South African hosts, but also rekindled inherited memories of refugee origins;⁵⁴ the refugees of a previous century identified with and reached out to the refugees of the present’. In trying to establish how the locals felt about the Mozambicans entering their homeland, I was usually given a variety of positive answers, such as ‘*we welcomed them [the Mozambicans]*’; ‘*there is no difference between us*’, or ‘*we are family*’. Indeed, many of the refugees share surnames with the residents of Gazankulu, and yet they were, and still are, located in special settlements.

From the refugees in Makoxa village (the parents of the children at the Avelanani crèche), very little information on any subject was forthcoming and any questions about their hosts elicited guarded responses or silence. Whether this reluctance to respond

⁵⁴ During the *mfecane* and ensuing upheaval of the nineteenth century, Tsonga chiefdoms moved from Mozambique inland to the Transvaal area. Some successfully maintained their independence from the Zulu, while others were conquered by Zulu warriors even after they had fled. One Zulu military leader, Soshangana, established his command over a large Tsonga population in the northern Transvaal in the mid-nineteenth century and continued his conquests further north. The descendants of some of the conquered populations are known as the Shangaan, or Tsonga-Shangaan (Country Studies, 1996). Also see Omer-Cooper (1994).

was not to upset relations with the staff of the crèche or the villagers, who provide them with employment, could not be ascertained.

In stark contrast to the reticence of the former refugees, the other villagers explain their acceptance of the refugees: *'The chief had arranged a series of meetings with the community and explained that the refugees are our own people and that we cannot let them live like squatters and that they need permanent stands'* (Minah, principal of the crèche). Some of the refugees even accepted the surnames of their host families, so that they could receive identity documents faster, as the host families would explain to the officials that the refugee was a family member. All the former refugees in Makoxa village are registered and have obtained identity documents as residents of Gazankulu. Being registered and hosted by a family meant that the refugees in Makoxa village could receive a permanent stand or plot. This was not the case in other settlements outside Giyani, where the refugee camps still resemble typical informal settlements.

However, concerning the registration of refugees in other parts of Gazankulu, Machava (cited in Steinberg, 2005:18) reported very different experiences. In December 2004, Machava was threatened when he attempted to map the refugee section of the village in Bushbuckridge.⁵⁵ Upon inquiry, a refugee leader told him that many villagers did not have identity documents and were suspicious of people asking questions. Steinberg (2005:19) reports that, even in 2005, 'far fewer war refugees [had] gained permanent residence status than the official figures suggest, and that ... a sizeable minority remains undocumented'.

My experience in Giyani suggests that the Mozambican 'relatives' are treated more like 'in-laws' than true relatives but this is not openly admitted by the residents of Giyani. For example, during my research, I applied to the tribal authority for permission to include a refugee community under its jurisdiction in my survey. I referred to the settlement as Hlophokane (meaning 'place of suffering'), the name by which I had come to know the settlement and as it is named in the official statistics documents. I was politely told by a friendly official of the traditional authority rather to refer to the area as

⁵⁵ Bushbuckridge formed the part of the former Gazankulu homeland.

Homu 14C. He seemed to refuse to acknowledge that the name Hlophokane does exist or that there is any difference between Hlophokane village and other villages.

The refugees in Giyani, even in 2007, had not completely integrated with the other Giyani residents and are still referred to as Mozambicans by the locals. However, the settlement for former refugees in Makoxa village has clearly marked plots, unlike the refugee settlements closer to Giyani town. This aspect generated some interesting information. From Nahle and from the records of the offices of the tribal authority I learned that the settlement had permanent stands or plots allocated to the households living there. Once they had registered and been issued with identity documents, the refugees could apply to the Makoxa Tribal Authority for permanent plots. Once they had been allocated plots, it was up to the refugees to construct their own houses and they could, theoretically, become fully integrated locals. However, it is interesting that the former refugees and the villagers are involved in different activities. From the survey results, only 5% of the people surveyed in the former refugee settlement are involved in small-scale projects, compared to 23% of the rest of the people in the Giyani district.

A number of former refugees work as domestic workers for the residents of the village, who themselves cannot be described as affluent. This labour practice is in line with Steinberg's (2005:7) finding that '[d]espite the strong bonds of ethnic solidarity which have tied the refugees to their hosts, former refugees nonetheless constitute a clearly distinguishable under-class, exploited by fellow-Shangaan speakers and whites alike'.

Hlophokane village, or Homu 14C, is a former refugee settlement under the Homu Tribal (Traditional) Authority. It provides a harsh contrast to the refugee settlement in Makoxa village. For the refugees to refer to their area as 'a place of suffering', having suffered the horrors of war, is very telling. This situation raises the question of whether another reason besides 'ethnic solidarity' motivated the Gazankulu authorities' warm reception during the 1980s. The possible reason Steinberg (2005:6) offers is that, during the homeland era, their Sepedi-speaking neighbours in the homeland of Lebowa still considered the people of Gazankulu as Mozambican intruders even after 150 years of residence in South Africa. Polzer (cited in Steinberg, 2005:6) states that '(t)he threat of being associated with foreignness can be met in two ways: dissociation from the new

arrivals, or their incorporation by denying their difference and outside status'. Gazankulu clearly took the latter option – a point illustrated by the statements of Makoxa residents that they and the Mozambicans *'are all family'*.

Ironically, despite their warm reception, Mozambicans still have outsider status. Even within Makoxa village it is evident that signs of poverty are starker in the refugee section of the village than in the rest of the village. However, it is to be hoped that the rigid social divisions will be eroded in future generations as the children interact in crèches and schools. For example, the present composition of the children at the Avelanani crèche is almost 40% local⁵⁶ children, while the rest are children of former refugees. When the children leave the crèche, most of them register at the primary school in the village, and hopefully this will lead to further social integration of the former refugees with the locals.

In the 1970s to early 1990s, the Chief Minister of the Gazankulu homeland, Professor Ntsanwisi, was highly respected internationally for his intellect and integrity, particularly in Germany and Switzerland. He was invited to these countries on a number of occasions and impressed upon them that by supporting Gazankulu, they *'assisted not in separate development but in homeland development which has as its principal objective the improvement of the quality of life of our people'* (Ntsanwisi, cited in Cooper, 1987:102). The Avelanani crèche's funding through the Swiss Mission and the agricultural school in Giyani, funded by three large Swiss pharmaceutical companies (Ciba-Geigy, Hoffman la Roche and Sandoz), bears testimony to Ntsanwisi's persuasive powers. The focus on education and the concern for children of displaced families reflect the approach advocated in the development discourse at the time – a *'people-centred development'* (Friedmann, 1992:2) approach.

Widening the context to South Africa and the Mozambican refugees, it is ironic that the civil war in Mozambique was fuelled by the white South African regime (Crush, 2000). The South African government aided the war, which drove many Mozambicans to find refuge in South Africa, albeit in a self-governing part of South Africa.

⁵⁶ The inhabitants of Makoxa use the terms *'locals'* and *'refugees'*. For instance, one woman said: *'I'm a local but she [her domestic helper] is a refugee.'*

The acceptance of the refugees by the Gazankulu authorities was in stark contrast to the reception they could expect from the South African authorities. At the time of the Mozambican civil war, the partially South African-sponsored civil war had a disastrous impact on Mozambique because of South Africa's support for the anti-government Mozambique National Resistance, the *Resistência Nacional Moçambicana* (RENAMO).⁵⁷ South Africa, which granted rights of citizenship and permanent residence to fleeing white Mozambicans from the 1970s onwards, when the Portuguese colonial rule ended (De la Hunt, 1997), did not welcome black Mozambican refugees. However, the homeland of Gazankulu received these black refugees. In a somewhat defiant comment on the South African government in 1984, the Gazankulu Chief Minister compared his homelands' favourable reception of Shangaan-speaking refugees to the assistance South Africa gave to white Mozambicans (Steinberg, 2005:5).

For the whole of South Africa, the period from 1970 to 1990 was a period of social fragmentation, as the South Africa government gave effect to apartheid policies at great cost to the economy. Strydom (2003) states that after the strong economic growth of the 1950s and 1960s, South Africa entered a period in the 1970s and 1980s of economic stagnation and decline, mainly because 'the economy was burdened by ideologically driven decisions' (Strydom, 2003:633; Van Zyl Slabbert, 1983). Every aspect of life for all South Africans was regulated along racial lines, and in the case of the residents of homelands, along ethnic lines.

The South African government had to establish infrastructure for ten homelands, fund the establishment of the political and administration levels of homeland governments, entice white civil servants to relocate to the homelands to assist in the development of the homelands, provide for facilities for these white communities in the homelands, and provide incentives to industries to relocate closer to the homelands to provide employment opportunities for the homeland residents to keep them from seeking work in white South Africa (Dollery, 2003:81-82).

⁵⁷ The Accord of Nkomati was signed by the governments of South Africa and Mozambique on 16 March 1984., under which each country would no longer support the other country's opposition movement (ANC in South Africa and RENAMO in Mozambique) (Nkomati Accord, s.a.)

In addition, the South African government also had to accommodate the political aspirations of those classified as Indian and 'coloured'. In 1983, the Tricameral Parliament was introduced, with the House of Assembly responsible for the needs of white citizens, the House of Representatives for the needs of the 'coloureds', and the House of Assembly for the needs of Indians. The three chambers of government further depleted the country's economic reserves and further entrenched apartheid. Discriminatory regulations and practices such as job reservation and discrimination in the per capita spending on education favoured whites, while other population groups had limited opportunities to obtain jobs and skills (Christie, 1990:93-122).

Within South Africa, serious economic and political tensions were rapidly increasing – falling economic growth, a large foreign debt, misallocated resources and fiscal strain created an environment that led to economic stagnation. Public spending was rising, but the tax base was under pressure. Inflation rose and the exchange rate started showing these pressures, as it depreciated. Social decay in urban and in rural areas started to show. Unemployment began to rise noticeably (Omer-Cooper, 1994:193; Strydom, 2003:634).

The South African government needed to prove that its apartheid ideology and 'separate development' initiatives were working, so the government had to use increasing force to quell internal social tensions and faced increasing international economic and political isolation.⁵⁸ This isolation culminated in 'the "debt standstill" of August 1985: South Africa became a net exporter of capital and was obliged to adhere to a strict debt repayment schedule' (Dollery, 2003:82). Although 'structural adjustment' policies were not imposed on South Africa from outside, it voluntarily undertook such policy changes in order to repay the debt.

One way of reducing public spending was to reduce the civil service. Hence, professionals (including teachers and nurses) joined the ranks of the unemployed, but the effect was unequally distributed across the racially divided society. In the

⁵⁸ The ANC website (ANC, s.a.) lists a number of United Nations resolutions from the 1970s to early 1990s, condemning apartheid policies and calling on member state to isolate the government of South Africa.

homelands, the wave of retrenchment was not really felt, possibly for two reasons. Firstly, there was an acute shortage of qualified people to fill the available posts, so that all qualified teachers and nurses could be employed. The second reason is that, in the face of economic sanctions against South Africa, the Pretoria government, having granted these homelands self-governance in the 1970s, hoped to 'demonstrate the success of their ethnically-based philosophy' (Nkomo, Swartz & Maja, 2006:70). The consequence was that mainly 'coloureds' and 'Indians' bore the brunt of retrenchments⁵⁹ in the civil service in the 1980s (Whittle, 2007:79). For example, under apartheid, there were different departments of education for the different racial groups in addition to the departments for each of the homelands. Only teachers classified as 'white' could be employed in all the departments, whereas all other teachers were only employed in the department designated for the group under which they were classified. With the loss of posts in the civil service many white teachers occupied the limited number of posts in other departments. Thus, even though the 1980s were characterised by great socio-economic turmoil and global economic pressure on South Africa, the people of Gazankulu were largely shielded from many of these pressures.

3.3.2 Post-apartheid projects in Giyani

The Hi Hlurile and Ahitipfuxeni projects started in the late 1990s when the effects of 'structural adjustment' policies were being felt and when 'social funds' (funds available to remedy the effects of 'structural adjustment'⁶⁰) became available. The Hi Hlurile project provides an interesting comparison with the Ahitipfuxeni project in terms of their goals, women's leadership, collective decision-making and empowerment. For Hi Hlurile's members, people with tertiary qualifications and work experience as nurses, teachers and administrators, the project encounter presents an opportunity for acquiring

⁵⁹ The rationalisation in education was achieved through Act 113 of 1992: Coloured Persons Education Second Amendment Act, House of Representatives (Republic of South Africa, 1992a), and Act 114 of 1992, Indians Education Amendment Act, House of Delegates (Republic of South Africa, 1992b).

⁶⁰ See Footnote 3.

entrepreneurial skills, so that members can start their own businesses. The understanding shared among the women in this organisation is that their project encounter is not a permanent arrangement, but a transitory association in which knowledge and skills are to be acquired in preparation for the next phase in their lives. For Hi Hlurile members, the funds available for development should be accessed and used to empower themselves, so that they can move on from there, hopefully to start small businesses themselves.

For Hi Hlurile the project encounter is a stepping stone to equip individuals to participate fully in the formal economy later. There seems to be a very strong sense that life presents many challenges and that the best way to respond to these challenges is to find creative solutions. There is a definite 'never say die' attitude among these women. Busi, a 56-year old member of Hi Hlurile, reflects this attitude in the way in which she approaches changes in her personal and professional life. She has a diploma in nursing and worked for the homeland administration for 20 years until she was retrenched in 1996. Busi has known change: she has experienced life as a Sepedi-speaking 'illegal' black woman in a township near Pretoria under apartheid; she relocated to Gazankulu as the young bride of a Tsonga man and benefited from the opportunities in the homelands; she lived through the uprising of 1990 when the youth and others rejected the homeland government in the hope that a united South Africa would be better; she voted for the ANC; and two years later, her career ended when she was told that posts were being cut and that she qualified for a 'package'. She and her husband (who was a senior official in the police service) both accepted these packages. But within two months of his pay-out, her husband left her and their three children for a younger woman. Busi now has to use her money sparingly so that she can provide for her children's studies. She says: *'I understand that life always changes and that we have to go with the flow and roll with the punches.'*

The 'packages' offered by the government were mutually agreed severance packages that seemed enticing to many in the public service, because they offered a bulk once-off payment that was very tempting. However, if one were to calculate the earnings up to retirement and the pensions that the government would have had to provide, this

package represents about half that amount. This means that people ended their professional careers with no further commitment from the State to provide for them in future. Those who accepted a package also had to sign an undertaking that they would not enter the profession again. Ironically, with the current shortage of nurses and teachers, many of those who accepted packages are now employed in contract posts with no medical and pension benefits.

In contrast to the perception in Hi Hlurile that projects are a transitory encounter, members of Ahitipfuxeni, who have a similar age profile as the Hi Hlurile members, but of whom only 12% have schooling beyond Grade 8 (primary school), consider project involvement as more permanent. For Ahitipfuxeni members, the hope is to *'overcome poverty and provide a service – juice bottling and brick-making – to the community. If we get more funding, things will be better'* (an Ahitipfuxeni member). Like Hi Hlurile, the Ahitipfuxeni group was formed in the mid-1990s when 'social funds' were available. They formed a group because *'we heard on the radio that there were not jobs but if we formed groups, the government will give us money'* (an Ahitipfuxeni member). Even though the irregular income is a cause of frustration for most members, they benefit from social interaction, respect and care for others, independence from domestic dynamics and opportunities for personal growth: *[M]ost [members] here did not go to school and here we have ABET⁶¹ classes from Monday to Wednesday for 2 hours a day'* (an Ahitipfuxeni member). The members all value the project encounter, particularly because the project site presents a place of safety, friendship and personal growth.

At an individual level, unemployment has had a deleterious effect on human dignity and self-esteem. The unemployed are forced to survive through assistance from parents, kin and the extended family. The households supporting the unemployed are pulled into poverty. Joblessness injures cognitive efficiency and fosters feelings of helplessness (Mahadea, 2003:29). These negative feelings are clearly evident in Ahitipfuxeni. These project members hope for more funding support and one senses that the members of this group have resigned themselves to the idea that they will always be dependent on outside funds. They lack the drive, vision, energy and agency that characterises their

⁶¹ ABET stands for Adult Basic Education and Training.

counterparts at Hi Hlurile. Many of the aspects associated with Hi Hlurile and Ahitipfuxeni are explored in the next two chapters.

CHAPTER 4: PROJECTS AS SITES OF LEARNING AND EMPOWERMENT

4.1 INTRODUCTION

The discussion in the previous chapter centred on the impact that changes in the dominant development discourses had on the people of Giyani. In this chapter I consider whether projects are sites of learning and empowerment by focussing on the individuals that participate in small-scale development projects in the research area. I argue that even though none of the projects in the study is economically viable in the sense of providing a regular living wage, the projects do cater for the ‘self’ needs of members. The project participants derive much more than mere financial gain from their project involvement. In other words, I posit that the project encounter builds the participants’ self-identity and social identity. ‘Self-identity’ refers to a person’s own sense of him- or herself as a person, while a person’s ‘social identity’ refers to the way others categorise that person (Byrne, 2003:443). Thus, my focus is on project participants’ perceptions of themselves as individual people and as part of a collective endeavour in an era of widespread social, political and economic change.

4.2 RECOLLECTIONS FROM THE FIELD

I met Maria sitting under a mango tree at the Ahitipfuxeni community project, her hands busily weaving a reed mat. The hand-made loom buckled slightly under the heavy and sizeable stones that served as weights. These stones, with colourful twine wrapped around them, were moved across the loom and into the slots where she needed a particular colour. As she wove, she hummed to herself; from time to time, her hands stopped, and she stared into the distance with what I interpreted as a look of contentment. Her weaving, humming, facial expression, and the fact that she voluntarily

walks four kilometres from her home to the project site every day, seemed to indicate that she came to the project site because she enjoyed being there.

This seemed to be the case among all the project participants with whom I conducted interviews. When I first started my research, I naturally wondered why people such as Maria remain involved in small-scale projects that provide little or no income. What needs are being met by involvement in such projects and what benefits are derived from continued participation? In considering these questions, I was reminded of Bourdieu's (1989:16) view that the visible often 'hides the invisible which determines it' and that 'the truth of any interaction is never entirely to be found within the interaction as it avails itself for observation'. What are the invisible relations that determine the actions of a person who commits him- or herself to 'income-generating' projects that have largely failed to provide regular income high enough to sustain such a person? This question necessitates an understanding of 'the self' and the choices people make.

In order to create an understanding of the 'changing self' and the invisible relations that have an impact on people in projects in the Giyani area, my discussions cover aspects of the individual (such as self-identity and needs) and then moves to projects as organisations and the role that leaders perform. Lastly, I analyse household earnings in order to determine the sources of income of project participants. In other words, I focus on people's personal motivation and then discuss factors outside the person, such as organisational structure and leadership.

In this discussion, 'self', 'structure', 'agency' and 'capital' are relevant concepts that have particular importance for the analysis of my research findings as they pertain to the individual people and their place in a small-scale project group. The contested terms of 'the self', 'structure', 'agency' and 'capital' are viewed in different ways in anthropology, and they merit discussion, but the main focus in discussing these terms is their applicability to project members.

4.3 GROWING AND NURTURING SELFHOOD

The concept of 'the self' and the variations of this concept, such as 'person' or 'personhood', 'the individual', 'identity' and 'personality', have typically been used by cultural anthropologists to describe other cultures and to contrast their understanding of the self with the Western concept of the self (Ewing, 1990:251).

One noteworthy source in this regard is Geertz's (1984) portrayal of the Western conception of personhood, which he describes as an integrated motivational and cognitive space – a dynamic core of emotion, awareness, judgement and action, forming a distinctive whole. Geertz (1984:126) believes that this unique and bounded entity – the Western self – is distinct from other such entities (other Western individuals), but is also different from selfhood in other cultures (also see Shweder & Bourne, 1984).

Murray (1993:3) takes issue with the depiction of the Western self as a homogeneous and uncontested construct, in contrast to the non-Western self, which is characterised as 'pluralist, fragmented, emergent, dialogic, relational, inconsistent, and culturally determined'. By reviewing the contributions made by Aristotle, Plato, Descartes, Kant and Hume to the selfhood construct, Murray (1993:11) claims that Geertz and others have generally mischaracterised the heterogeneous, contested and dialectical tradition associated with the Western self.

Ewing (1990:252) also attempts to bridge the divide between the Western and non-Western constructs of the self by asserting that the process of constructing and maintaining self-concepts is similar in all cultures. I find the assertions of Murray (1993) and Ewing (1990) convincing – they claim that even though selfhood is influenced by culture, this is true for all cultures; and therefore the alleged distinction between a Western and a non-Western selfhood is a false dichotomy.

Within the projects I have studied, I have come to realise that the relational and culturally determined self is inconsistent; and this is evident particularly in the manner in which women view themselves. They describe how they see themselves at home, through the roles they perform as wife, mother and daughter-in-law, whereas in the project context

they describe how they feel, how they relate to others and what they learn, rather than what they are expected to do. Thus, in the home context, women express pluralist and culturally determined selves which are in contrast to their relational and dialogical selves in the project environment. The women experience a strong sense of belonging through the acceptance of other members; and since capacity-building and empowerment (for example, through ABET classes and computer literacy) are integral elements of project functioning, the participants acquire new skills and become confident in their ability to learn. However, this does not mean that women's culturally determined selves are completely divorced from the project situation. Quite the contrary, since, through the colourful, traditional clothing they wear to the project sites, the women express an important element of their culturally determined selves.

Ewing (1990:251) contends that selfhood is determined through self-representation and self-experience, but that an individual often has multiple self-representations that may be inconsistent and context-dependent and that may shift. Ewing's statement concerning the inconsistent, context-dependent and shifting self-representation provides some insight into 'the self' in situations of rapid change in the socio-political and economic reality in Giyani and in development discourses, as these changes affect the lives of people (these changes have been discussed in the previous two chapters). Indeed, people's representation and experience of the self are not static or one-dimensional, but ever-changing and adapting.

Quinn (2006:267) expands on the understanding of selfhood through self-representation by advocating a broader definition of the self as the entirety of what an organism is, physically, biologically, psychologically, socially and culturally. For instance, the self of a woman running the Avelanani crèche may be influenced by her need to 'mother' (a biological need), nurture (a psychological need) and teach the children in her care. This is evident from the statement that the '*main goal here is to take care of the children by giving them education, food and help with their health*' (Avelanani staff member).

Quinn (2006) supports her expanded definition by drawing on recent studies in neurobiology, particularly Joseph LeDoux's idea of the synaptic self, and Michael Gazzinaga's work on the part of the brain that he labels the 'interpreter'. LeDoux links

language and memory, claiming that language enhances ‘the brain’s ability to compare, contrast, discriminate, and associate information to guide thinking and problem-solving’ (LeDoux, 2002:197, cited in Quinn, 2006:366).

Projects nurture an atmosphere for talking, sharing and discussing concerns. According to LeDoux’s notion, the use of language to understand, clarify and define reality is associated with structuring the self. Gazzinaga and his colleagues (1998, cited in Quinn, 2006:367-372) describe the ‘interpreter’ as a neural system that is located in the left pre-frontal cortex of the human brain and that is responsible for interpreting life experiences. The function of the interpreter is ‘not unrelated to the anthropological notion of the self as self-representation as Ewing (1990) defines it’ (Quinn, 2006:366).

Bearing in mind Gazzinaga’s (1998, cited in Quinn, 2006:367-372) equation of the concept of an interpreter – who interprets life experiences – to the notion of the self, which is a constantly changing and dynamic conception of the self compatible with self-representation, I am reminded of the professionally trained unemployed women in the Hi Hlurile project. On the basis of their education and work experience as teachers and nurses, these women reported that they had a very positive sense of their self-worth and identity – something which was very different to the frustration they felt at being unemployed. One woman’s rhetorical question echoed the feeling of the other women in the project: ‘Was education not supposed to provide us with a better life than this?’ Yet the project encounter, through their relational identity, allows these women to salvage some of their self-worth and adjust to a conception of self that is very different from how they saw themselves when they were still employed and had dreams of promotion and social advancement. In another project, the Giyani Aged Garden, members shared the difficulty they had in dealing with the physical changes that accompany ageing. (Chapter 5 deals with the educated unemployed that have joined projects in greater detail and Chapter 7 deals with the changes in the self that accompany the ageing process).

Thus the interpreter produces a coherent explanation of the world and the self by integrating available information – meaning autobiographical knowledge, personal beliefs, currently active goal states and conceptions of the self. ‘In short, the left

hemisphere interpreter might be said to be responsible for self-representation, in Ewing's sense' (Quinn, 2006:368). I draw on Quinn's (2006) notion of the self as the person in its totality with all its psychological factors, grounded on the neurological understanding that Quinn presents. I consider the individual within a social environment within and beyond the projects. For instance, a pleasant work environment creates a psychological state that enables a person to learn and to improve the self better than a hostile, oppressive environment would. At a neurobiological level, this means that a pleasant work environment releases brain chemicals called modulators (such as serotonin, which is commonly referred to as the happy/'feel good' hormone). Modulators signal emotional or significant experiences that are learned and remembered. Thus, 'the experiences that trigger modulators have a large role in forming whom we think we are' (Quinn, 2006:369).⁶² In relation to small-scale projects, this means that the presence of a positive (or negative) project environment enables greater understanding of how selfhood is (or is not) nurtured by the project encounter.

All the project participants stated that they felt physically and emotionally safe at the projects, but the aged in particular reported that at home they were often disregarded by family and by others. Project participation also improved the participants' social identity, meaning the categorisations of the individual by others, as prestige is associated with project involvement (this emerged from the small group discussions). The project sites with their solid brick buildings contrast with the mud huts found in most villages in the area and there are tap water and ablution facilities that all contribute to making the project sites impressive and the project encounter an emotionally positive and significant experience.

4.4 ACCUMULATING CAPITAL THROUGH PROJECT PARTICIPATION

In considering the individual person as the focus for analysis, I drew on Bourdieu's (1983, 1989) views on 'capital' to illuminate the needs that small-scale projects fulfil for

⁶² A discussion of neurobiology falls beyond the scope of this study – readers are referred to Quinn's (2006) exposition.

those involved. Bourdieu (1989:16) makes a case for considering a 'relational mode of thinking', meaning the mesh of relationships that an individual is part of, rather than just the individual's or group's reality within projects. Thus each person's social reality becomes a collection of invisible relations and roles into which the person is socialised; and within this network of relationships, various forms of 'capital' can be acquired and can potentially be contested.

Bourdieu (1983, 1989) distinguishes between four types of capital: economic, social, cultural and symbolic capital. Economic capital refers to a person's financial capital – the command a person has over economic resources such as cash and material possessions. Social capital refers to the social networks that an individual has access to or controls (Mohan & Mohan, 2006:1343) or the links a person has to power relations. Cultural capital is the collection of cultural practices, knowledge and behaviours learned through exposure to role models in the family and other settings. It bestows societal status (symbolic capital) on those who possess it. Thus, cultural capital is closely related to symbolic capital, which includes the resources available to an individual on the basis of honour, prestige or recognition.

Bourdieu (1989:17) believes that individuals occupy a particular position in a multidimensional social space and are 'defined' by the amounts of each kind of capital they possess. For instance, a well-educated person (one who possesses cultural capital) who has many useful social or business networks (and thus has social capital) will be more influential (enjoy more symbolic capital) than a person with limited capital. Because the project leaders in case study projects had higher levels of education than the average project member and often interact with funders and politicians, the project leaders have a greater array of capital than the other project participants. However, the ordinary members, mainly women, through skills development and the training of particularly women at the projects, acquire some form of cultural capital. Through their association with influential leaders and visitors to the project, such as funders or politicians, they accrue social and symbolic capital that they might not have been able to obtain if they had just stayed at home in a traditional rural setting. (The leadership aspect is discussed in greater detail in Section 4.7.)

Without digressing too far from the focus on individuals in projects, it can be noted that capital also accrues to those who are outside projects but are associated with them, particularly funders and politicians who want to use their economic capital to acquire symbolic capital from the projects. In other words, projects provide ideal sites for politicians and funders to use their money to impress their constituents or to manipulate the recipients of the funds (for example, to gain votes). Bourdieu (1989:22) sees symbolic capital as a crucial source of power, as it is developed through socially imposed, ostensibly legitimate, social divisions. The negative side of this form of capital emerges when a holder of symbolic capital uses that power to alter the actions of someone with less social capital, when powerful people manipulate less powerful people. Unfortunately, small-scale projects lend themselves to various forms of manipulation, such as gaining votes, or withdrawing funding when the funders are not happy with the functioning of the projects (as was the case when the Swiss Mission withdrew its funding from the Avelanani crèche, as discussed in Section 3.4).

Portes (1998) claims that Bourdieu believes that different forms of capital can ultimately be reduced to economic capital, defined as accumulated human labour: 'Hence, through social capital, actors can gain direct access to economic resources (subsidised loans, investment tips, protected markets); they can increase their cultural capital through contacts with experts or individuals of refinement (i.e. embodied cultural capital); or, alternatively, they can affiliate with institutions that confer valued credentials (i.e. institutionalized cultural capital)' (Portes, 1998:4). This view that other forms of capital can be reduced to economic capital informed the development discourse in the wake of 'structural adjustment' measures in the 1990s. Development now focuses on social capital as the motive to drive development. This shift is evident in the Hi Hlurile and Ahitipfuxeni projects. Particularly social capital has come to be prominent in the development literature. The link between social capital and a particular form of development funding ('social funds') is discussed in the next chapter (Chapter 5, 'Places to deal with countercyclical change').

In the Giyani projects, evidence to support Portes's (1998) view can be found in the fact that project leaders are individuals with a good education and more social networks than

the average project member and the project encounter has added to the capital accumulation of both project leaders and members. For example, four of the seven staff members of the Avelanani crèche acquired accredited edu-care diplomas from a well-regarded institution (the Khanyisa Education Centre) in Giyani – it could be argued that without the project encounter, they would not have acquired this cultural capital. Another instance where project members have acquired ‘embodied cultural capital’ through contact with experts is in the Giyani Aged Garden and the Hi Hlurile projects, where non-literate individuals share membership with professional individuals and so increase their networks, thus improving their social capital, while the prestige of being associated with the project adds to the symbolic capital of very ordinary rural people.

Another interesting aspect of capital accumulation that the principal of Avelanani alerted me to is that which accrues to the parents of many of the children at the crèche (former Mozambican refugees), who are regarded as lowly in the community (see Section 3.5). By having their children taught in a well-resourced crèche, the parents acquire prestige or symbolic capital. Even though these parents are very poor, they agree to contribute an extra one rand (R1) monthly towards an end-of-year party, when each child receives a t-shirt and a small gift – *‘so everyone is interested to bring her child here because they are going to get something at the end of the year and their children will look smart in their new t-shirts’* (Minah, principal of the Avelanani crèche).

It is all very well to discuss the various forms of capital that accrue to individuals through their participation in small-scale projects, but I wanted to quantify the forms of capital that people accumulate through project participation. To this end, and in keeping with Alderfer and Guzzo’s (1979:347) assertion that the ‘starting point of understanding the behaviour of individuals in organisations is human needs’, I conducted a survey and administered a Needs Test to project participants within the Giyani area (see Section 1.7.2.2).

The Needs Test that I used was adapted from Robbins’s (1991:228) Needs Test (based on Alderfer’s ERG theory), which categorises people’s needs into Existence, Relatedness and Growth needs. Existence needs refer to an individual’s concern with basic material existence motivators; Relatedness needs refer to the motivation for

maintaining interpersonal relationships and Growth needs refer to an intrinsic desire for personal development (ERG Theory, s.a.)

Thus, with the Needs Test, I measured the degree to which individuals' needs are satisfied, on the assumption that the needs that are satisfied are indicators for the various forms of capital that each respondent gains from the projects. I shall now discuss the association between 'needs' and 'capital'.

4.5 EMPOWERMENT THROUGH PERSONAL NEEDS SATISFACTION

Many villages around Giyani currently have potable tap water and electricity at their homesteads. Women no longer need to carry water and collect firewood. It may thus be argued that they have too much time on their hands and that they participate in project activities simply to combat boredom. However, by focusing on individuals' needs in relation to the project encounter, it becomes evident that participation is not merely to combat boredom.

There is no denying that the availability of electricity and tap water at their homes has lightened the burden of some rural women. However, there are very few perennial rivers in the research area and many villages have water channelled from these rivers. The taps are functional only in the rainy season. Many households still acquire drinking water from town by paying a local who owns a pick-up vehicle to collect drinking water from town. During weekends these vehicles parked at the Caltex and Shell filling stations in Giyani with loads of 20- and 50-litre containers filled with water are a familiar sight. For washing their bodies and for the washing of clothes, many women and girls still need to collect water from the pools in the near-dry streams.

Firewood is still collected or bought, even though a homestead may have electricity, simply because the money to buy electricity vouchers is in short supply. Electricity is used mainly for lighting. Many households in the villages do own two-plate stoves, but women still prefer to cook primarily on an open fire to save on electricity, and because they believe that cooking over a fire gives the food a better flavour. Moreover, women

still have washing, cleaning, cooking and child-minding to do, since males rarely lend a hand with these chores. Women therefore still do not have much time on their hands, which makes it all the more strange that they remain motivated to spend eight to nine hours at project sites daily.

According to Stevens (2006:1), motivation means that a person 'has a need, desire, expectation, or goal that is not being met at an optimal level'. In such instances a 'gap' develops between the ideal and the actual and this gap helps give direction and generates energy directed towards minimising that gap. Stevens (2006:1) emphasises that '(o)ur basic needs for food, water, air, warmth, learning, etc. all propel us to act as do more socially-learned desires for money, love, respect, accomplishment, creativity, beauty, self-growth, etc.' . Motivation theorists such as Maslow and Alderfer endorse the claim that human behaviour is motivated by needs that are met through a particular behaviour or activity. This implies that humans have personal needs and that these needs induce action in order to satisfy these personal needs (Robbins 1991:200). In other words, project participation is motivated by participants' needs.

Although the Needs Test that was used in the research area (see Section 1.7.2.2 and Appendix 3) is based on Alderfer's ERG Theory, the analysis of test results was done against the backdrop of Bourdieu's different forms of capital framework (Section 4.4). Needs are therefore used as indicators of different forms of capital. For instance, if a respondent answered 'yes' to a question in the Needs Test such as 'I like being in the project because I learn things I did not know', the response alludes to a Growth need that is satisfied, but also indicates a building-up of symbolic or cultural capital. Similarly, the question in the Needs Test: 'I like being in the project because I am paid well for my work' reveals an Existence need (income) and is indicative of economic capital, while 'I like being in the project because it gives me a chance to develop close friendships' describes a Relatedness need or social capital.

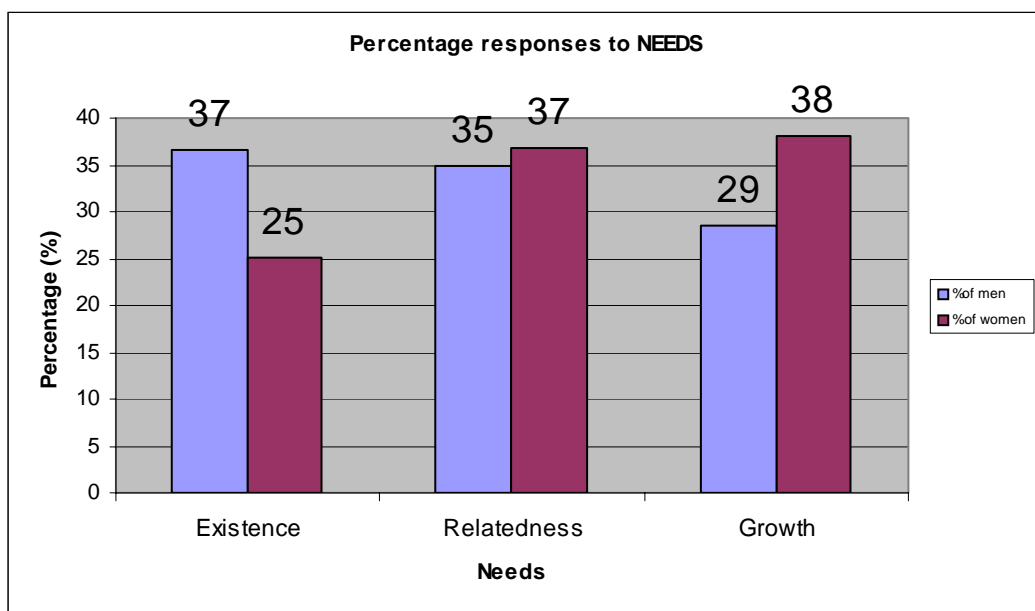
The results of the survey revealed that projects participants in the Giyani area are predominantly women (89% of the participants). Table 4.1, overleaf, shows the traits or descriptions from the Needs Test, grouped into the Existence, Relatedness and Growth categories. The forms of capital that these needs are indicators of are also given.

Table 4.1: Descriptions of existence, relatedness and growth needs categorised and associated with the different forms of capital

NEEDS	Existence	Relatedness	Growth
CAPITAL	Economic capital	Social capital	Symbolic and cultural capital
DESCRIPTIONS as indicated on the Needs Test	Income (actual) Shelter Feeling secure (i.e. physical and emotional safety) Income potential	Co-operation Friendship Openness & honesty Acceptance	Self-esteem Skills & knowledge Personal growth (learning) Participation in decision-making

The categorisation of needs and capital as presented in Table 4.1 was used to analyse the research participants' responses. The reasons why women choose to be involved in small-scale projects, using the ERG grouping, were compared to reasons why men participate in these projects. The results are presented graphically below.

Figure 4.1: Comparison of women and men's motivation, using ERG theory, for participating in projects in the Giyani area (n = 61 – 54 women and 7 men)



Existence needs include physiological and safety needs, such as the need for food and shelter. These needs are commonly met through economic activity or by gaining income. Households can also cultivate food and houses can be constructed with natural resources. The graph above shows that 37% of the men involved in projects are motivated by regular income and other material benefits (existence needs or economic capital), compared to 25% of the women. In a society where men are expected to provide for their families, it is not surprising that men are motivated to participate in projects in the hope of accruing an income. This does not mean that women do not value a regular income, since all the participants in the four selected case study projects expressed their desire for a regular income.

To buy food, clothing and a house, people need money (economic capital), so the project participants are involved in the hope that their activities will provide them with an income to sustain their families, which is often not the case. This then raises the question as to the sources of household income for project participants (this question is discussed in Section 4.8).

Other Existence needs, such as feeling secure, are also important. At the project sites, the buildings provide shelter from the weather and there are enough rooms for all the sections or departments to have their own space. All the project members reported that they feel safe from physical and emotional harm.

Concerning Relatedness needs, it is evident from Figure 4.1 that there is not much difference between the motivation of men and women (35% and 37% respectively) in their valuing of friendship and acceptance. This means that men and women value the co-operation, friendship, openness and honesty that they experience in the project context. Relatedness needs also include needs such as affection, acceptance and belonging; therefore, project participation means that members accumulate social capital.

It should also be remembered that, according to Mekounde (1997:95), group meetings afford members, particularly women, a respectable reason to leave their homes, meaning that associations fall within the social structure or the cultural boundaries of

what constitutes acceptable behaviour for women. This point was also articulated by one project participant, who reported that, even though her husband did not approve of her involvement in the project, the general idea of project participation was endorsed by the chief and was acceptable in her village.

Figure 4.1 also indicates that 38% of the women feel that their Growth needs are met. Growth needs refer to self-esteem (feeling good about themselves), new skills and knowledge that are acquired, personal growth through participation in decision-making, and so on. The results indicate that 38% of the women project participants are amassing cultural and symbolic capital through the project encounter. By contrast, of the men interviewed, only 29% felt that their Growth needs were being met. Even though the difference between men and women stating that their Growth needs are being satisfied is not vast, this finding does seem to support the assertion of Kanter (cited in Mills & Tancred, 1992:41) that 'women differ from men in according greater importance to satisfying peer relationships'.

Another way in which projects cater for the Growth needs or cultural capital of the members is by providing for Adult Basic Education and Training (ABET) classes coordinated by the provincial Department of Education at the project. For members who lack formal schooling and who cannot read or write, these classes provide an opportunity, in the words of an Ahitipfuxeni member, to '*move out of the darkness*'. The ABET programme is structured into sessions of two hours for three days of the week. The provincial Department of Education provides learning materials and manages the assessment of the programme. Upon successful completion of each of the four phases, the successful candidates are awarded certificates during a ceremony to which all the ABET centres in Giyani are invited. Recipients experience a great sense of achievement and attach great value to these certificates. One project member commented: '*I never knew I could be a "somebody" and now this paper proves it to all.*' Her comment encapsulates the importance of acquiring cultural and symbolic capital within projects. Thus, successful individuals acquire cultural capital with their certificates.

Since the respondents also reported that there is prestige in belonging to projects, they build up symbolic capital, too. Reasons for such prestige are linked with the idea of operating with a constitution, having an elected executive committee and participating in decision-making. This fact is clearly illustrated by participants' remarks that they joined a group to '*get civilised*', meaning, as they explained, to be valued as a person. Others referred to the fact that '*women were not allowed to be leaders in the past*' and said that they found operating in a group a liberating experience: '*It helps to break out of the shackles of the past.*'

When one combines Relatedness and Growth needs, from the survey results, most women (75%) felt that their involvement in projects met their Growth and Relatedness needs. They value the accumulation of social, cultural and symbolic capital, even when economic capital is scarce, since income from the projects is irregular. This means that small-scale projects, despite the sporadic income, are valued largely for making women feel good about themselves and allowing them opportunities to grow intellectually and to become more confident.

If the majority of project participants' Growth and Relatedness needs are met, a logical next step is to consider issues of empowerment. Malhotra, Schuler and Boender (2002:60) believe that empowerment implies, firstly, the idea of progress, or change from a condition of disempowerment and, secondly, that empowerment promotes human agency and choice. Participant empowerment does not necessarily lead to radical social change, but participants often experience empowerment as personal change. In this regard, the 'motivational speech' of one of the project leaders during a meeting of project participants comes to mind:

If I should insist that my husband and my sons share in the domestic chores by shouting about my rights or by sulking, I would only achieve miserable menfolk and an unpleasant atmosphere in my home. Rather, I find ways of involving them without them realising that they are assisting with the chores. My sons like to tell me about what happened during the day, so I ask them to tell me about their day while I am making supper – and then ask them to peel the vegetables while we are talking. My husband comes home and finds this cosy atmosphere in the

house and also comes to the kitchen. He will then prepare the table for supper and we all chat together. My sisters, we must not openly confront the problems in our home if a more subtle approach will achieve more. If we want to be treated well and with consideration in our homes, we must learn subtle ways to sweet talk and manipulate men (Hannah, Project Leader, Hi Hlurile)

Thus, projects provide women with the space to share experiences and insights and to grow in dignity and confidence or agency. In a similar vein, Kabeer (2001:71) found that an 'important change that featured in many of the women's testimonies related to their sense of self-worth'. At the individual level, my own findings indicate that particularly women are enriched in various forms of capital, meaning their agency is increased by participation in projects. Agency means the capacity individuals have to act independently and make their own free choices. Structure refers to the rules people are expected to follow in social life and which therefore restrict or influence agency (see Bourdieu 1983, 1989; Giddens, 1986).

I do not regard structure and agency as opposites, but as coexisting, mutually influencing forces. Notwithstanding political or economic changes, the yearning for increased agency seems to be inherent to members of Hi Hlurile and the Avelanani crèche. Hannah, the Hi Hlurile project leader, often reminds project participants that '*just like a tree, if you are not growing, you are dying*'. Indeed, project participants all exhibited a drive to grow, to change, to want more than they had in the past and to choose the direction in which they grow (agency) yet, their actions were often limited by societal rules and resources (structure).

The level of agency present differs between the four case-study projects. The general members (non-committee members) at Hi Hlurile have a great level of agency, as was evidenced by their ability to act independently and propose initiatives for the group to pursue. The general membership of the Giyani Aged Garden has the least agency. At the Giyani Aged Garden, planning is done and decisions are made by the committee; and the members acquiesce because they realise the benefits of the planned activities, such as health service provision at the project site (see Chapter 7 for a detailed discussion of the Giyani Aged Garden).

The importance of project participation is further illustrated if Giddens's (1986) notion of 'ontological security' is taken into account. Ontological security refers to the trust people have in social structures and everyday actions that have some degree of predictability, which ensures social stability. Normally, social and political change happens slowly. Because these changes happen over a long time, people adapt to the changes gradually too; that is, there is some form of ontological security. The changes that Giyani has experienced in the last three decades (see Chapters 2 and 3) have provided very little ontological security. However, this study found that small-scale projects presented the people interviewed in this study with opportunities to deal with these changes collectively and the projects provided spaces to reflect on these changes. As a result, the projects as organisations and the leadership of the four selected projects warranted closer examination.

4.6 PROJECT GOVERNANCE THAT ENPOWERS PARTICIPANTS

If people volunteer to be part of projects, meaning that they have the option to leave at any time, then the manner in which the project as an organisation is structured contributes to the way in which the members perceive the project encounter. Also, the way in which projects are formed has an impact on how the project functions.

For instance, the Avelanani crèche, which was founded by the Swiss Missionary Society, has an organisational culture of being 'shepherded' by a higher structure. Initially, this structure was led and imposed by the local pastor, as a representative of the funders, and later this function was taken over by a board appointed by the Makoxa Development Committee. However, the relationship of the crèche staff with the far-away Swiss funders was such that the funder's approval had to be sought even on admission matters.

Now, the board of the crèche is composed of people from Makoxa village and therefore the staff and board members have social and/or family networks. This shift in decision-making power from the funders to the staff is evident from the statements made during group discussions with the Avelanani staff. There has been a shift from *'we approached*

the funders for permission to admit children of local unemployed people to the present situation where *'we [the staff] sit down and decide what we want to do. After that we call the board. If they agree, we call a meeting with the parents...and discuss what we decided'*. It is worth noting that the staff *'decide'* and then seek the *'approval'* of the board and then inform the parents of what was been decided. A close friend from Giyani commented on this form of decision-making by comparing it with what happens in her home, saying that it is important for her husband to feel that he has the power to decide on matters, but that she knows how to present her decisions so that her husband still believes that he has decided on the course of action. It seems that the staff (all women) of Avelanani crèche subscribe to the same *'female manipulation'* of letting the board feel part of a decision that has already been made. The benefit of this approach, aside from the resulting harmony between the staff and the board, is that the responsibility for the decisions that are made is shared by the board and staff.

When the Giyani Aged Garden was established in 1987, the founder was an agricultural extension officer in the Agriculture Department of the Gazankulu government. Through the social capital he possessed and the influence he had in government, the founder put in a plea for the establishment of a plot of land where retired people and pensioners could grow crops. The composition of the membership and the project's organisational structure is such that retired civil servants serve as committee members and persons with little or no formal education form the ordinary membership. One participant verbalised the frustration of the general membership (non-committee members) when she said: *'They always increase the money but they don't increase our garden because it is too small.'* This suggests that the other members consider the committee to be distinct from the ordinary membership and feel that decision-making is largely left to the committee, because these members just grumble without tabling their concerns at meetings. Thus, at the Aged Garden project, the organisational structure consists of a two-tier hierarchy with top-down decision-making.

Investigating the organisational structure of projects in Giyani, the committee were generally educated and the membership had little schooling. The survey results for project participants in the Giyani area revealed that 40% of project participants have no

formal schooling at all, and that the average number of years of schooling for those with formal education is 6.28 years. This average suggests that more than half of the project members (60%) are functionally literate,⁶³ as they have more than five years of schooling. In the Hi Hlurile and Ahitipfuxeni projects, the leaders facilitated the election of a project committee and the committees then drew up the constitution and developed business plans for funding. With the Avelanani crèche, the leader and other staff members were appointed by the Chief on the recommendation of the Makoxa Development Committee and board members are elected from the community, including the parent body. The board meets quarterly and the principal serves on the board. (The management of the Giyani Aged Garden is discussed in Chapter 7.)

In the 1990s, many project members in the Giyani area, including the leaders and selected committee members of the Hi Hlurile and Ahitipfuxeni projects, were trained in project management by training consultants contracted by the Department of Health and Welfare and other bodies. This training was part of the Department's vision of 'building local capacity'⁶⁴ and the 'empowerment of women', which were important components of the development. With project management training, groups could qualify for funding from government departments and other donors because they were able to draft and submit the constitutions of the projects and business plans.

Even though small-scale projects are structured with a constitution, the groups cannot be classified as 'formal' groups, as one would find in a business setting. Formal work groups are defined by a rigid organisational structure, with a precise definition of rights and obligations, which are then translated into responsibilities. Often a hierarchy of control exists within formal organisations and typically vertical communication and commands predominate (Mills & Tancred, 1992:42). The desired behaviour of individuals within formal groups is stipulated and directed towards the organisation's goals.

⁶³ Functional literacy is described as the reading and writing skills necessary for everyday living and the workplace (Van Wyk, 2008).

⁶⁴ 'Capacity building' and 'empowerment' became fashionable terms in the development discourses of the 1980s. See Chapter 3 ('Discourses, policies and practices: the changing development') for the evolution of development discourses.

The Avelanani crèche, which was registered as a non-profit organisation with the Department of Social Development on 5 January 2001 comes close to emulating a formal group. This impression is further strengthened by the wall of the principal's office, where the rules and regulations, an organisational chart of the organisation and the names of board members can be seen alongside the crèche's vision and mission statements, the daily programme, photographs of the centre and of a trip to Venda. Not only does this project have a formal organisational structure, but the operations are also systematically executed. This is apparent from the principal's statements that '*the resources that are here, when it arrives, we record it in a book and at the end of the year we also check if we still have all the material*' and '*every year we draw [up] a plan of what we want to do. So at the end of the year we sit down and check if we have reached our goals... and get other ways of improving it*'. However, I would not classify the crèche as a formal group, since the interactions of the principal and teachers with the cleaning staff and the children are collegial and respectful, rather than domineering.

The organisational structure of the Hi Hlurile and Ahitipfuxeni projects seem less formal, but cannot be classified as 'informal' either. These groups are more than just alliances formed in response to people's need for social contact – to discuss matters of interest, concerns and problems they are experiencing. While it was found that the need for social contact is an important facet of the small-scale projects included in this study, the fact that these groups are organisationally structured separates them from informal groups (Robbins, 1991:274).

Small-scale project groups are thus a hybrid between formal and informal groups. Within these projects, there is some form of stratification, with the leader and committee at the top and the members at a lower level, but this hierarchy is not rigidly defined, with top-down decision-making. Generally, members communicate, teach and encourage one another, regardless of their position in the organisation. However, unacceptable behaviour such as stealing, gossiping and fighting is disapproved of by all members – even though there may not be a formal code of conduct, all the members adhere to the tacit rules of behaviour. Thus, network structures of control exist and lateral communication and consultation predominate. Behaviour is directed towards the

organisation's goals and there is an egalitarian social structure in which all members are equal and, in principle, everyone has the same chance of being elected onto the committee, even though non-literate members with limited capital are unlikely to be elected.

4.7 PROJECT LEADERSHIP THAT FACILITATES EMPOWERMENT

I found that in all four case study projects, the leadership (the project leaders and the management committee) was well respected by all members. This is evident from statements such as *'because of their abilities and knowledge – that is why we choose them'* and *'they are hard workers, they look for tenders and they are not scared to meet funders'*. Also, since membership is voluntary and no-one is compelled to participate, members could simply leave the projects if they disliked the leadership.

Since participation in small-scale groups is voluntary and the income generated is sporadic, the question arises why, given that many of the women participants arrange their domestic chores around the project time (either before or after attending the project), the women choose to add to their workload by being involved in these projects. The leadership approach within these projects uncovers part of the answer to this question and ties in with Dannecker's (2000:31) view that *'leadership is a relational concept, which can only be analysed by examining people's interactions with others, and it is shaped by gender relations, religion, and culture'*.

An elected committee manages three of the small-scale projects included in this study, but at the Avelanani crèche, a board oversees the functioning of the project. Women and men are elected to the committees, which include a chairperson, a deputy chairperson, a treasurer and a secretary. Among the projects in this study, there is no common configuration in the number or titles of office bearers serving on the committees. The chairperson is usually the person who was involved with the initial formation of the group (as in the case of the Hi Hlurile and Ahitipfuxeni projects) and the committees consist of people with social standing.

There are strong parallels between the leadership structure and the functioning of project committees and those of traditional authorities at the ward level in the villages around Giyani. Wards are distinct geographic areas and consist of clusters of related settlements (*miti*). In these villages, a *ndhuna* (headman) and a ward council are responsible for the management of a ward. The appointment of the headman is often based on his ability and not necessarily on his descent (as is the case with a chief⁶⁵). Although it rarely happens in practice, a *ndhuna* may be removed from his position if he does not carry out his duties properly. He is assisted in the performance of such duties by a ward council consisting of the senior members of the different settlements and clusters of settlements (Kriel & Hartman, 1991b: 39). Unfortunately, women still have very little standing or voice in these traditional administrative structures.

The *ndhuna* and his ward council occasionally invite villagers to meetings or consultations where village members can discuss development initiatives. In a similar way, project committees may invite all project members to meetings, but, unlike in the traditional structures, there are many female project leaders – women feature prominently on the project committees. Thus, small-scale projects allow women to grow beyond the social confines of the village community. It is therefore not surprising that several women (13% of the participants surveyed in this study) joined these projects because such projects provide a liberating environment.

4.7.1 Leadership qualities

As far as the personalities of the project leaders go, it is difficult to gauge common personality traits that make them strong leaders. Two of the four project leaders can be described as charismatic. They are confident and eloquent speakers without being

⁶⁵The *hosi* (chief) is not elected but holds a hereditary position. Despite the fact that the chief is born to his position, in my experience, chiefs do not behave autocratically, but take the wishes of those under their jurisdiction into account. A *hosi* is advised by his senior relatives (*yindlu ya vuhosi*: the house of the chieftaincy) and the official tribal council (*vandal ra hosi* or *nhlengeltano ya tindhuna ni hosi*). The tribal council is a closed council consisting of the various headmen, all the senior relatives of the chief and a number of knowledgeable elders (*vatsundzuxi*) (Kriel & Hartman, 1991b).

pretentious and they are able to interact and communicate with the lowly without speaking down to them. One of them is driven with a passion to empower others, since she feels that she was afforded educational opportunities that were denied to many others. Another project leader is a humble and soft-spoken woman, but one only needs to spend a few minutes in her company to appreciate her sharp intellect.

Although it is difficult to determine what personality traits make for good leaders, the research shows that the leadership qualities that are valued include honesty, trustworthiness and industriousness (*'to commit to work hard and see that things are running smoothly'*). The ability to identify and secure funding was often mentioned. On more than one occasion and at different projects, I heard variations of the statement *'they must be able to work hard at looking for funding ... they must be business minded'*. Leaders are also valued for their ability to settle disputes, prevent conflict and facilitate good communication. In this regard, one of the project members reflected that *'our coordinator decided that we should practise singing and dancing after the activities of the day in order to avoid gossip'*, while another emphasised that it is the responsibility of project members to *'talk to the leaders and they will come and explain the problem to us and then we solve the problem'*.

Income is distributed equally among all members. Leaders and committee members do not claim compensation for the administrative tasks that they perform. The only compensation for administrative work is the prestige attached to it. Leaders are aware of their responsibility to be transparent in the distribution of income to avoid accusations of corruption. In two of the projects, the original founders have allegedly been removed *'because some money disappeared'*. These allegations may be true, but it is also possible that they are rumours that resulted from the fact that the expectations of great financial returns were never realised.

The above findings concerning leadership are corroborated by my survey data. When asked what they liked about the people in their project, 42% of respondents indicated an appreciation for a leadership style characterised by collective problem-solving and decision-making. This is particularly important for women who have no or very little decision-making power in their communities and at the household level (Diop,

1997:106). Respondents also appreciated the fact that they could share their skills and knowledge, whilst learning new skills from others. This supports the finding of Oxfam (1992) on the benefits of a participative group approach to project management: the developmental gains of increased self-esteem, self-awareness and assertiveness should not be underestimated.

4.7.2 Analysing leadership from a capital perspective

Compared to the general membership, the project leaders have a great deal of cultural capital (because of their education, knowledge and skills) and symbolic capital (they are given high status in projects and in society), but they were not born into privilege. Without exception, all four project leaders are from poor families that made great sacrifices for their education in the belief that education is the way out of poverty. For these families, finding their educated family member unemployed is incomprehensible. Yet at the Ahitipfuxeni project, and especially at the Hi Hlurile project, the educated unemployed occupy the same social space as the unschooled.

What was noticeable in these two projects was that, despite the difference in cultural capital between the leaders and members, the project leaders try not to be condescending and constantly speak of 'we' rather than 'I' or 'they'. However, as Bourdieu (1989:16) rightly points out, social distances do not disappear just because a person wishes them to do so. Some leaders earn admiration because of their humility and so obtain greater symbolic capital, or high regard.

This study found that ordinary women (meaning those that are not part of the project leadership) regard involvement in initiating activities and participating in discussions as very important components of their project membership. For instance, members reported that *'a member with an idea presents the idea to the committee and then the matter is discussed broadly'*. In addition, statements such as *'if someone comes with an idea, we share with the whole group and if the group agrees then we can take the idea, but the decision is made by the whole group'* illustrate that project leaders are committed to participatory decision-making and the members greatly value the opportunity to be

asked what they think, to debate matters with others and then to reach agreement on what action to take. Mahyar Arefi (2003:384) argues that shared interest in and agreement on collective action illustrate an escalation in social capital, which suggests that ordinary members are increasing their social capital through their project encounters.

4.7.3 Leaders' ability to secure funding

The project sites bear witness to how successful project leaders are in accessing funding. What is particularly noticeable about the project sites of the four projects that were used as case studies are the well-designed and well-constructed buildings erected with funds from elsewhere: from Japan in the case of Hi Hlurile, from Switzerland in the case of the Avelanani crèche, from North America for the Ahitipfuxeni site and from the homeland government in the case of the Giyani Aged Garden. The structure of these buildings is rectangular (straight walls joining at right angles, as opposed to the cylindrical structure of traditional huts in the area). The roofs are either pitched or flat corrugated iron roofs and the facilities reflect the needs of the projects. For example, the crèche has classrooms, a kitchen and a dining area, small toilets and a bathroom, while the Ahitipfuxeni building has areas for sewing, bottling juice and making bricks. At the Ahitipfuxeni and Hi Hlurile project sites, the design of the buildings and the plans were drawn up in consultation with project members. Hence, Hi Hlurile has a thatched roof, because project members wanted to show their appreciation for '*traditional Tsonga culture*'. All the sites have tap water, electricity and ablution facilities, in stark contrast with the circumstances at the homes of most project members.

Although outsiders are impressed by these edifices, thus providing the project participants with symbolic capital, it must be emphasised that these buildings also serve as 'monuments' for the funders to report on to their constituencies. These beautiful buildings at project sites against a background of the surrounding poverty create a useful picture for funders to prove their contribution to improving the plight of the poor,

thus ensuring that the rich remain feeling good about their social investment and remain willing to provide still more funds.

The fact that Giyani can be portrayed as a 'rural' town and its inhabitants as 'vulnerable' makes it a destination that is all the more ideal for funders. The four projects that were used as case studies all focus on such vulnerable groups: women in the case of Ahitpfluxeni and Hi Hlurile, children in the case of the Avelanani Crèche, and the aged of the Giyani Aged Garden. This adds to their attractiveness for funders. It should also be noted that the funders that paid for the buildings can be considered the primary funders, but the projects also receive smaller amounts from local government (municipalities are obligated by law to encourage development, see Chapters 5 and 6) and other agencies such as the Development Corporation and the Independent Development Trust.

Thus far, I have discussed how individuals, through project participation, acquire various forms of capital, but below, I shall focus specifically on economic capital or income, and look at some of the results of the survey using the Needs Test.

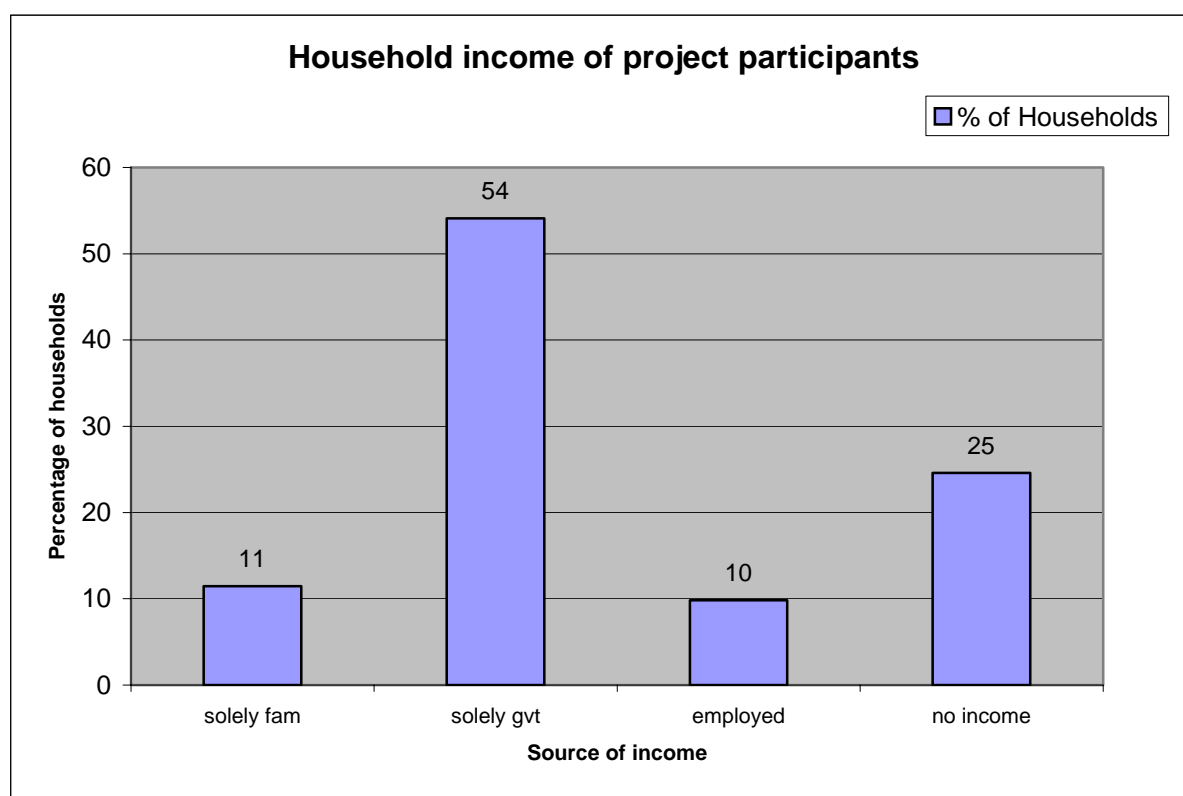
4.8 HOUSEHOLD INCOME: ECONOMIC EMPOWERMENT

Although the project members value cultural, social and symbolic capital, it would be inaccurate to create the impression that project members are unconcerned about income or economic capital. On the contrary, responses to the question 'what do you hope for the project to achieve?' always elicited answers that reflected a desire for a regular income through expanding sales, the effective marketing of products, or increased government or donor funding. Given the unpredictability of income from sales or funding, the question arises how the households of project members are supported financially.

As I explored sources of household income, I remained mindful of Bulmer and Warwick's (2000:34) warning that the choice of individuals as the sole units for analysing income in rural areas may be inappropriate and misleading, as work is often organised on a shared basis and incomes are pooled. The income of entire households was therefore

analysed for the purposes of this study. A household was defined as a group of people who live together, cook together, share meals together, sleep in the same dwelling or group of dwellings and who share chores and a common domestic economy and survival strategies. The information on household income was surveyed in the Giyani area and formed part of the Needs Test survey. The findings on the various sources of project participants' household incomes are presented in Figure 4.2, below.

Figure 4.2: Sources of the household incomes of project members surveyed in the Giyani area (n=61)



Of the 375 households surveyed, a total of 61 households had members involved in projects; and of these project participants' households, 54% were supported solely by the government in the form of pensions or child and welfare grants. The fact that so many households depend solely on the government for income is not really surprising, because of the government's macro-economic policy, which is to accommodate

economic growth and take care of the poor.⁶⁶ Since the income from government grants can be considered passive income, meaning that the receiver does not have to invest time and effort to obtain this income, it can be concluded that members of households receiving grants are enabled to participate in projects and still have some form of regular income.

Of the households surveyed, 11% are supported solely by family members (parents, children, husbands, and uncles), which illustrates the sharing of resources among family members. A rather shocking finding was that one quarter (25%) of the households of project participants had no regular income at all. They may receive support from neighbours, but have to subsist on food produced at the projects or at their homes.

All the women in this study are members of a compassionate 'society',⁶⁷ as these groups are referred to locally. Society clubs are formed by women belonging to the same church or from the same neighbourhood. These societies assist with social functions such as funerals and weddings during weekends. Such assistance can be regarded as an investment in social capital and the rate of return on this investment can be much higher than economic investment, because distributive relationships may establish forms of interpersonal obligation that are permanent and cannot easily be discharged (Knack & Keefer, 1997). Hence, with their 'society' activities, the project women amass social capital on the weekends in addition to their enrichment in social capital through their participation in projects; and so they manage to survive without a regular income.

Figure 4.2 seems to suggest that individual households have only one source of income, but that is not the case. Respondents indicated the main sources of income, but households could have multiple sources of income, including remittances (albeit irregular) from family members working in urban areas.

Furthermore, Figure 4.2 also shows that 10% of those involved in projects have formal employment and that they devote time, energy and often also money to their project

⁶⁶ In 1996, the government replaced the RDP, which characterised the post-apartheid economic policy, with the GEAR strategy (see Chapter 3).

⁶⁷ A 'society' refers to a benevolent group that assists relatives, friends and neighbours with funerals and weddings – cooking, serving and cleaning.

involvement, even when it is clear that they do not benefit much financially. The explanation by one such person, who is a senior official in a government department, sheds some light on this phenomenon of full-time employed individuals' involvement in projects:

When my late husband and I decided to remain in the village, even though all other qualified young people moved to the township, we realised that we would be obligated to help those in need. For us, moving to the township would have meant that we were rejecting our roots and depriving the village of our skills. You know the Bible teaches us that those who are kind to the needy honour God.⁶⁸ So that is why I feel obligated to help projects (Project member in full-time employment).

It is actually quite common for people in Giyani to profess the Christian faith and to explain their actions accordingly. Their involvement in projects is motivated by a faith-driven need to share their time and skills with those who are less fortunate than they. In the research area, where individuals may simultaneously be kin, neighbours, and fellow parishioners, such philanthropic actions may be very burdensome, since the privacy and autonomy of those with higher status and better knowledge and skills are often reduced when others feel that they are entitled to these people's time and resources. Portes (1998:17) refers to this as a negative aspect of social capital, commenting that it is '*an expression of the age-old dilemma between community solidarity and individual freedom*'.

It cannot be denied that, in some instances, better education, employment and higher social status provide symbolic power (prestige, honour and the right to be listened to) and the involvement of people with such qualities may in some instances be motivated by a desire to gain status. This was, however, a phenomenon that I have never witnessed in my interaction with people in the research area. I found that the part-time participants have a genuine desire to help others. It was my impression that they believed that if they are able to help, they are expected to do so – if you can, you must.

⁶⁸ Proverbs 14:31

CHAPTER 5: PLACES TO DEAL WITH COUNTERCYCLICAL CHANGE

5.1 INTRODUCTION

In Chapter 4, the analysis focused on the individual and what project participants value about the project encounter. The discussion was informed by studies from the four case study projects, the Ahitipfuxeni Community Project, the Hi Hlurile Skills Development Project, the Avelanani crèche and the Giyani Aged Garden, in addition to the results of a survey of households in the Giyani area.

In this chapter, 'Places to deal with countercyclical change', the conversation centres on two of the case study projects, Ahitipfuxeni and Hi Hlurile, which were set up specifically as income-generating projects, in 1991 and 1995 respectively. Fundamental to this discussion is the way the concept of employment has changed and is still changing. These two projects were started at a time when South Africa was in transition to democracy and when particularly women were encouraged by the outgoing and particularly the incoming governments through the media to form project groups to access a specific type of development funding, called 'social funds'. 'Social funds' were earmarked for small-scale development projects and for promoting employment through income-generating activities. They flooded developing countries in an attempt to offset the damages caused by 'structural adjustment' measures.

I start the chapter with a snapshot of women from a set of projects at a workshop held in 2003, a decade after 'social funds' began to become available (see Section 5.2, below). Then I analyse the origin of details that could be observed at that time, such as the phenomenon of the educated unemployed, the predominance of women participating in projects, the fact that people aged between 20 and 60 years (people of an economically productive age) are not in full-time employment, since projects rather than businesses such as factories dot the rural landscape around Giyani.

An understanding of the global and South African economic conditions may shed some light on why there are a number of small-scale projects in Giyani, but these economic

realities do not explain the whole picture. I contend that the government's call for the formation of small-scale projects with the promise of funds was an attempt to pacify many people who were marginalised through 'structural adjustment' and other macro-economic policies. The government had come to power with the support of very vocal supporters and on the basis of promises made to the poor, and it had to deliver. However, to deliver on the election promises proved to be very difficult. In this regard, the collection of papers edited by Padayachee (2006) dealing with the economic and social changes in South Africa in the first decade of democracy are very insightful. Particularly astute is Hart's (2006) assessment of the then government's shift to relegate the poor, or the 'indigent' as they are now labelled, to the 'Second Economy' and extend the social safety net rather than show real concern about creating jobs. The potentially disgruntled unemployed were thus pacified by 'social funds' for small-scale projects and social grants, such as child grants, disability grants, pensions and the like, for households (see Section 4.8).

The chapter concludes with my reflections on how the Ahitipfuxeni and Hi Hlurile projects respond to the current political and economic conditions they are experiencing and how creative options are created through human agency.

5.2 RECOLLECTIONS FROM THE FIELD: A SNAPSHOT FROM 2003

The concept of 'globalisation from below' came to mind as I reflected on the happenings at the Paradise Rock Resort. 'Globalisation from below' refers to the creation of grassroots coalitions, networks and enterprises that bring people into equitable and mutually favourable relations and arrangements (Bystydzienski & Sekhon, 1999). The 'globalisation' part of the concept alludes to linkages across developing and industrialised countries, and therefore, in the absence of such linkages, 'globalisation from below' may not be an entirely accurate description of what I witnessed. Nevertheless, this was the concept that came to mind. Or was I witnessing grassroots 'altered configurations' (Comaroff & Comaroff, 2000:334) to challenge the way the world

is and reconfigure it to what reality could be, meaning people on a quest to make their social existence meaningful? Let me explain.

A group of 63 women gathered at the small, locally-owned Paradise Rock Resort, just outside Giyani, in 2003. At the invitation of the Hi Hlurile project, this group, which included the Ahitipfuxeni project, represented ten small-scale development projects located in Giyani town and the surrounding villages. They had come to attend a ‘training workshop’, a concept many had only heard of from teachers and other government officials. Now they were attending one too. *‘I am not sure what to expect, and I am a little anxious, but I am so proud to have been invited,’* one woman in her fifties articulated the feeling of some invitees. The women’s colourful *minceka* (see Section 1.4) and head-wraps added to the joyful mood. Since early morning, they had boarded the mini-buses that the organisers had arranged for them. By 9:00, all the groups had arrived at the resort. The agenda of the two-day workshop included motivational talks, action plans, time management, quality management and customer care – concepts commonplace at the staff development workshops of businesses, but unknown to most of the participants who were attending.

At this training workshop, the Hi Hlurile project thus brought together women from different projects (including Ahitipfuxeni), of different ages (between 20 and 60 years), with different levels of schooling. This group of women, who might not have had any opportunity to associate with one another outside this context, were spending time together, learning and teaching.

After the opening prayer, Hannah, the leader of Hi Hlurile, started the proceedings. Hannah’s experience as a training facilitator and her intimate knowledge of her audience was clearly evident as she motivated everyone: *‘We are starting a new trend and we have set a vision for all. We need Giyani to shake and to talk about the unity we have. They will say that the way we do things is different. Let them respect and admire us.’* Hannah almost instinctively knew the need of each of the members of the audience to feel good about herself. The women wanted to learn more and they wanted to feel accepted by others. Particularly for women who are faced with the many challenges of

rural living, far from the country's economic nodal points, the admiration of others provides healing from the indignity of unemployment and poverty.

During a later session, Hannah introduced Emily, who was her mentor when she started Hi Hlurile. Emily is from Orange Farm in Johannesburg, and years earlier, Hannah had approached her after reading about Emily's work in a national Sunday newspaper. Subsequently, Emily had, in addition to her project activities in Orange Farm, supported projects in Giyani and Swaziland. Hannah, in turn, after starting Hi Hlurile, supported projects in southern Mozambique. Note the linkages between the rural and the urban spheres (Giyani and Johannesburg) and across borders, between South Africa, Mozambique and Swaziland.

Hannah spoke of Emily with great affection and said that she admired Emily's generosity: '*Sis[ter] Emily is the one who taught me about the projects ... this mother is not closed [selfish].*' In travelling from Orange Farm to attend the workshop in Giyani, Emily had lost her luggage. The way Emily handled the incident inspired Hannah to say: '*She was supposed to be crying for her lost bag isn't it? If it were you or I, we would still be crying even now but she said: "Life is like that, you lose things sometimes." So if you are always crying and complaining, you waste all you have.*' By saying this, Hannah shared with the group her thinking about sharing knowledge, skills and time (not being '*closed*') and the fact that indulging in self-pity is not admirable. She promotes agency – in any situation, there is something one can do other than grumble and complain.

Furthermore, the programme for the two days was structured to include small group discussions and plenary sessions for reporting back. Initially, the workshop participants were randomly allocated to small discussion groups. Being placed in a group with women from different groups '*was awkward at first, but allowed us to know others and what they are doing in their projects*' (Workshop participant).

At the end of each day, participants shared their thoughts with me. For all of them, it was a positive experience. One participant, who was almost 50, was unaware of her own knowledge and was surprised that others valued her contributions: '*This is my first time at a workshop. I have no school[ing] so I was scared. Early on I don't like to give*

answers, others can think I am wrong, but when we were in small groups, I also say something and others listen and say more on what I say.' Another much younger participant valued the plea to work towards unity; and yet another valued the lessons in customer care and taking pride in one's creations: *'I learn about how to treat customers, about being proud of what I make – I must work neatly.'* Judging from the reflections they shared with me, there is no doubt that the workshop reshaped the participants' thinking about themselves and the products they create. Changed thinking increases the likelihood of changed actions – both for individuals and for society at large.

I pick up on the idea of 'changed actions' later in this chapter, but first discuss the global and national dimensions that largely shaped the situation in which the Giyani women gathered at the Paradise Rock Resort found themselves.

5.3 COUNTERCYCLICAL CHANGE AND GLOBALISATION

Global connectedness is a reality, as most, if not all, countries are linked economically, politically and/or financially to other countries and to transnational organisations such as the United Nations (UN) or international financial institutions. Within this interconnectedness, power relations exist, notably the dominance of international financial institutions (IFIs) such as the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund (IMF) over developing countries. As donors of financial aid, these institutions determine the macro-economic models that recipient countries need to adhere to in order to qualify for financial assistance.

The altered nature of employment provides evidence of the profound effect that the dictates of the international financial institutions have had on indebted developing economies through 'structural adjustment' programmes (SAPs). As a result of the 'structural adjustment' philosophy, the phenomena of the educated unemployed, unemployed professionally trained teachers and nurses, insecure temporary or casual employment, renewable contract employment and projects with beneficiaries as opposed to enterprises providing employment, have all become part of the Giyani milieu.

In order to understand the altered forms of employment, one needs to appreciate concepts such as globalisation, aid and debt, in addition to the consequences of 'structural adjustment' programmes. These concepts are discussed below.

5.3.1 Globalisation and the flow of resources

Globalisation (from above),⁶⁹ as Moghadam (1999:367) defines it, is 'a complex economic, political, cultural, and geographic process in which the mobility of capital, organizations, ideas, discourses, and peoples has taken on an increasingly global or transnational form'. Economic globalisation, also referred to as 'global capitalism', denotes the deep integration of economies through production, trade and financial transactions by banks and multinational corporations such as the World Bank, the IMF and the World Trade Organization (WTO). By contrast, political globalisation refers to the increasing shift toward multilateralism – away from considering nation-states as sovereign entities. In this regard, the UN plays a key role and non-governmental organisations (NGOs) act as watchdogs over governments (see Comaroff & Comaroff, 2000:331).

The contradictory nature of globalisation is generally acknowledged by both its proponents and its critics. For example, globalisation has had a mixed impact on women, in that, while it allowed for employment opportunities, the quality of this employment is often precarious. As Moghadam (1999:367) explains, 'it has enabled women in many developing countries "to earn and control income and to break away from the hold of patriarchal structures, including traditional household and familial relations"'. However, much of the work done by women is badly remunerated, demeaning, or insecure, and the unemployment rates for women are generally higher than for men. The feminisation of poverty is therefore another unwelcome side-effect of economic globalisation. At a macro-level, another contradictory element of globalisation

⁶⁹ Globalisation from above refers to policies and changes imposed by multinational corporations and/or transnational agencies such as the IMF or World Bank (Globalisation, 2005).

is the flow of resources as aid, and the consequent debt that the receivers of aid incur towards the donors of aid.

5.3.2 The unimpeded flow of foreign aid

Foreign aid is assistance given to a developing state by industrialised states or international organisations such as the World Bank and the IMF. Aid, also referred to as ‘official development assistance’ (ODA), can range from concessionary loans or government-sponsored financial grants and technical assistance to funding for construction projects – from ‘structural adjustment’ programmes to food aid. Private transactions such as bank loans and direct private investments on a commercial basis are excluded from this definition: ‘Official Development Assistance ... tends to be non-commercial in nature and is most often provided in the form of loans, usually at lower than world average interest rates, in debt relief or as straight grants for projects’ (Cornwell, 2000:247).

Proponents of aid generally use four arguments for development aid. Firstly, the humanitarian argument advocates providing relief and welfare assistance to countries in need. Secondly, development aid is a way to redistribute global wealth more equitably.⁷⁰ The third reason for promoting aid is that economic development may be stimulated as wealthier nations share their technology, expertise and experience with the poorer parts of the world (Regan, 1996:160). Often aid is linked to the proviso that recipient countries have to use the proffered aid to buy goods and services from the donor countries.⁷¹ With greater economic growth comes the availability of savings, and better social development may be encouraged as more people are given access to

⁷⁰ From the late 1940s to the early 1980s, this argument attracted considerable support, since statistics showed a definite flow of resources from the industrialised countries to developing nations. However, ‘this flow has since been reversed, which could indicate that global wealth is not being redistributed but is collecting in the pockets of the already wealthy’ (Cornwell, 2000:249).

⁷¹ ‘Programmes and projects funded by foreign aid often contain a clause stipulating that technical experts from the donor countries be used in designing and implementing these programmes and projects’ (Cornwell, 2000:250).

education and health services. Lastly, aid 'can help to establish practical links between countries and thus foster international understanding and, ultimately, peace' (Regan, 1996:160).

Critics of development aid point out that the reasons for granting aid are often not as self-sacrificing as they are purported to be. Cornwell (2000:248) claims that aid, especially bilateral aid, tends to favour the donor's economic, strategic and political goals, rather than serve the needs of the recipient country. The Cold War gave meaning to this notion of self-serving support through the conflict between capitalism, promoted by the United States of America, and communism, advocated by the Soviet Union. The United States and the Soviet Union used foreign aid to compete for the allegiance of African states. By receiving assistance, in whatever form, these countries got caught up in the political and strategic goals of these two superpowers. In this context, aid had very little to do with development effectiveness, but was rather inspired by geo-political motives (Cornwell, 2000:248).

Even if the intentions are noble, the actual use of aid, once it reaches the recipient governments, may not be what was intended. Aid may be intercepted by the political and economic elites of developing countries and may never reach the poor for whom it was intended. Some developing countries spend foreign aid on projects with low economic returns and do not use it to increase investment. The elite in recipient countries often use aid to import expensive products, since donors generally neglect to monitor whether the aid is used for the intended purpose. Some critics believe that foreign investment is used to help multinationals increase their influence over the economy and politics of recipient countries and that many corrupt recipient governments use aid to increase their political power locally (Cornwell, 2000:246).

Those in favour of promoting trade rather than granting aid assert that aid creates dependency by making weaker countries dependent on stronger ones, thus placing them at a disadvantage in economic and political discussions (Regan, 1996:160). Thus, aid may be seen as another form of colonialism, as donor countries attempt to dominate recipient countries economically and politically. This may promote attitudes of superiority and reinforce stereotypes of, for example, racism (Regan, 1996:160).

Once the aid is received, the developing states need to service the interest on these loans. Some African and other developing states have become increasingly dependent on aid simply to cover the interest charges on their existing debt. Regan (1996:157) states that in the mid-1980s, 'the world was turned upside down and the flow of resources was reversed, for every \$10 given in aid, approximately \$9 is taken back'. The net outflows of resources from developing economies mean that aid bled dry these economies rather than provided long-term assistance. This led to the debt crisis of the 1980s. The macro-economic remedy to the debt crisis took the form of 'structural adjustment' measures aimed at reducing the indebtedness of countries, but this strategy had a devastating effect on economies at the micro-level or household level in developing countries.

5.3.3 Debt and structural adjustment: consequences of foreign aid

The announcement of Mexico in August 1982 that it could not service its debt made the world realise that it faced a 'debt crisis'. By the end of that year, 35 developing countries had failed to repay their debts. This led to a rush of 'rescheduling' negotiations to alter the timing and conditions of repayment (Cornwell, 2000:254). In an attempt to deal with the debt crisis, the World Bank and the IMF proposed the restructuring of the economies of developing countries through "structural adjustment' programmes' (SAPs).

The emphasis of structural adjustment programmes was to reduce the economic role of the state and to increase the role of the market in resource allocation. Both the World Bank and the IMF blamed the poor economic performance of countries on the way resources are allocated and heavy government involvement in the economy. They argued that governments were over-spending on the public sector and that their direct controls and subsidies were counter-productive. Structural adjustment programmes encouraged governments to reduce the role of the public sector and to remove direct controls and subsidies. Those who support 'structural adjustment' programmes believe that the free market, rather than governments, should guide economic relations. The reasoning is that allowing a country to become capitalist means that the economy will be

stronger and thus more efficient at meeting people's needs and coping with future external shocks such as fluctuations in the demand for export products (Cornwell, 2000:256).

When a country is in a serious financial dilemma, and cannot afford to repay its debts, it can apply to the IMF for a stabilisation loan that requires the country to put 'structural adjustment' programmes in place. The principal provisions of 'structural adjustment' programmes were deregulation – the removal of some governmental controls over the market, the privatisation of state-owned enterprises, the removal of tariff barriers on imports, the promotion of export production, the devaluation of national currencies to cheapen exports, the removal of subsidies and allowing the markets to determine prices.

When these measures were implemented, the results were 'rampant inflation, high unemployment, and a decline in real wages' (Friedmann, 1992:5). The decision to embark on 'structural adjustment' programmes is usually not one taken voluntarily by a government, but several countries were forced into accepting 'structural adjustment' programmes. The underlying assumption of 'structural adjustment' programmes is that once government expenditure is reduced and suitable macro-economic measures are in place, economic growth will be promoted. A further assumption is that the benefits of economic growth will spread from the national level to individual households and that all individual members of these households will, in turn, benefit equally. These assumptions are highly debatable, since economic growth does not necessarily mean an increase in employment opportunities, so those outside the formal economy do not really benefit.

5.4 THE IMPACT OF GLOBALISATION ON SOUTH AFRICA

Ironically, structural adjustment policies were not externally imposed on South Africa, but for fear of losing international credit-worthiness, South Africa nevertheless undertook a number of 'structural adjustment' policy changes first in the 1980s and later after 1994.

Bond (2001:238) highlights the contradictory relation that South Africa has historically had with the World Bank and the IMF. During the apartheid era, the IMF ignored the international condemnation of apartheid and the financial sanctions campaign, and the IMF and the World Bank greatly influenced South Africa's economic and social policies. Later, in December 1993, the government-in-waiting (the Transitional Executive Committee of the ANC) borrowed US \$750 million from the IMF. Even though the conditions for this loan were initially kept secret, it was later revealed that the conditions included the rapid scrapping of import surcharges (which was catastrophic for local industries) and a drop in public sector wages. Thus the apartheid regime imposed 'structural adjustment' guidelines, and later the new government did likewise.

It was at that stage that the newly appointed Minister of Finance, Trevor Manuel, appealed to South Africans to 'tighten their belts' while the government was dealing with its financial obligations. South Africans were still too relieved that the transition to democracy had come about through peaceful negotiations and that they had been spared a devastating civil war to take much notice of the retrenchments and job losses in the post-1994 national debate.

By the time that the 'snapshot' described in Section 5.2 was taken, the post-apartheid government had navigated its way through the RDP and GEAR macro-policy agendas. By 2006, the ASGISA strategy was set in place (these macro-economic approaches are discussed in greater detail in Section 3.7). Padayachee (2006:1) states that in the first five years after democracy, South Africans were largely preoccupied with getting the model of development right by addressing the legacy of apartheid, and this process was guided by the RDP macro-framework.

Since 1996, South Africa had shifted closer to the global capitalist philosophy with the GEAR policy agenda, which places great emphasis on economic growth and on the role of the markets regulating the economy. Cheru (2001:505) draws attention to the contradictions inherent in the GEAR strategy, since the Growth and Employment aspects involve 'the implementation of aggressive neoliberal strategies of privatisation, liberalisation and deficit reduction to stimulate the economy and create jobs', while the Redistribution component appears to be a 'progressive social policy'.

The period of GEAR saw notable economic growth, at an average of 3% per year during the first decade after 1994. It peaked at about 5% in 2005 (Mlambo-Ngcuka, 2006), but this was largely jobless growth, with official unemployment recorded at 31% in 2002 compared to 18% in 1995 (Bhorat & Oosthuizen, 2006:145).

An important aspect of GEAR and the 'structural adjustment' philosophy in general is that when governments reduce social spending, the shortfall is made up by user charges. Households now have to pay (or pay more) for health services and education. At the same time, households have to pay more for basic foodstuffs, because subsidies have been cut. Also, since the local currency has been devalued,⁷² foodstuffs and agricultural inputs are sold at inflated prices; thus the purchasing power of a household is greatly reduced (Cornwell, 2000:257).

The stabilisation measures and structural reforms contained in 'structural adjustment' programmes later became synonymous with the scaling down or selling of many state enterprises and the laying-off of workers. This also announced the beginning of 'trade liberalisation' and the influx of many cheap products, especially from South-East Asia, with which local products could not compete (Adomako Ampofo 1997:179). 'Structural adjustment', while it achieved some successes, such as reducing state expenditure, brought about untold hardships, especially to the poor.

In 2006, the government refocused its macro-economic strategy to deal with increasing poverty levels, with ASGISA. ASGISA's 'conceptual document is presented in the language of poverty alleviation and a new development path, with the goal of halving poverty and unemployment by 2014' (Greenstein, 2009:74). The ASGISA approach promotes 'labour-absorptive activities' to alleviate poverty, including the development of skills through programmes to enhance literacy and numeracy, improve mathematics and science education, and upgrade teachers' skills. What is particularly noteworthy for the Giyani context is that 20 years earlier, these aspects – literacy, numeracy, the improvement of mathematics and science education and the improvement of teachers'

⁷² In 1994, the South African currency, the Rand, was valued at 3.5 to the US\$. By 1998, the Rand had decreased to 5.9 to the US\$ (Alderman, 1999).

skills – were essential elements of the Gazankulu homeland administration (see Section 2.1).

A significant feature of the ASGISA framework is the introduction of the concept of ‘the Second Economy’ which is different from existing economic relations. ‘The second economy is used to denote poverty, inequality and marginalisation, which are to be addressed through giving such groups access to finance, affirmative procurement and jobs, and empowering youth, women and small businesses’ (Greenstein, 2009:78).

In Greenstein’s (2009:69) overview of the development discourses in post-apartheid South Africa, he observes that South Africa has become increasingly connected to the global modern world as a country ‘deserving of generous and sympathetic donor assistance ... a country with a stable and growing economy, free of racial conflict and thus a worthy target for investment and joint ventures’. Indeed, donor funding has flooded into South Africa, but the government has wisely separated donor funding from the national revenue funds to avoid building an economy dependent on donor assistance that could potentially lead to the conditions that necessitated ‘structural adjustment’ programmes.

In moving from the RDP, through GEAR and into the ASGISA eras, politics has become increasingly depoliticised as the social, cultural, moral and ideological spheres were gradually replaced with the technical, seemingly value-free influences of market capitalism ‘and its attendant forms of economic and legal “rationality”’ (Comaroff & Comaroff, 2001:255; see Greenstein, 2009:78).

5.5 THE EDUCATED UNEMPLOYED

The debt that the post-apartheid government inherited and the international aid this government accepted (also see Section 3.6) meant that the elections of 1994 ushered Giyani into an era of severe economic restrictions and hardships. The homeland had promoted education as the way out of poverty. This is evident from the speeches of the homeland leader (see Section 2.1, Cooper, 1987), in which the people were encouraged

to seize the opportunities that were made available to them in Gazankulu. Especially the civil servants in Giyani clearly adopted this dream; through hard work and sacrifices they acquired their qualifications. But since the new government had international financial obligations, the career dreams of many were crushed.

Given the legacy of international debt and the severely inflated civil service from having multiple homeland administrations that the new democratic government inherited, the residents of Giyani realised that sacrifices had to be made to correct the historical imbalances. However, even if the job losses could escape the national debate, they could not go unnoticed by those who were directly affected. With GEAR and its 'structural adjustment' measures, there was a great reduction in public service employment.

This meant that large numbers of teachers and nurses were made redundant or were offered lower salaries and that only a limited number of those who had obtained relevant qualifications could find jobs or were employed on renewable contracts. This not only affected the unemployed professionals and their families detrimentally, but discouraged many young people from pursuing education goals. In this regard, Beulah, a member of the Hi Hlurile project commented:

It is difficult to face my former students when they come up to me and question me about why I am no longer teaching them. They do not understand why, when their classrooms are crowded with 50 to 100 learners, I say that there are no posts available. How do I encourage these young people to be committed to their schooling, when they have lost hope and do not understand why educated people are not employed?

In discussions with women like Beulah, it was obvious that they do not link their retrenchment to the macro-economic decisions that were made at national level in response to decisions made by officials at international financial institutions. They do not understand the economic reasoning that was largely responsible for their fate.

All these economic changes coincided with the transition to democracy: '[W]e *had to endure the hardships while things were settling*' (Giyani resident). However, in Limpopo

Province, the 'temporary inconvenience' of reducing the number of posts in the civil service has persisted. In the period from 1996 to 2006, teachers entering the profession were only given temporary contracts and so had to live with employment insecurity. Furthermore they lost out on pensionable years (Mr. Chauke, district official in the Limpopo Education Department: pers.comm.). Therefore, for the residents of Giyani, the curtailment of social spending by the government flew in the face of all that had been promoted and achieved by the homeland administration (see Hartman *et al.*, 1993).

Whilst the 'structural adjustment' thinking of GEAR affected many households, some authors have noted that 'structural adjustment' programmes had different consequences for women than for men (Cornwell, 2000; Elson, 1991; Woodford-Berger 1997). Somers (1996:176) speaks of women as 'the shock absorbers of adjustment' and indicates that, among other consequences of 'structural adjustment' programmes, the nutritional status of children and of pregnant and lactating women declined drastically in countries following the implementation of IMF and World Bank 'structural adjustment' programmes.

5.6 ECONOMIC IMPROVEMENT THROUGH DECREASED EMPLOYMENT

I have argued in Section 3.8 that poverty is a by-product of the global capitalist (free market) economic model. Alongside economic growth, there is a need to make available funds, be they 'social funds' or welfare, to alleviate poverty. Thus a capitalist economy is divided into those who participate in the economy through employment on the one hand, and the economically marginalised, who are often involved in projects, on the other. Moreover, even economically active citizens experience a polarisation of the labour force into permanent and insecure employment. Labour legislation protects the rights and working conditions of those in permanent employment, while temporary workers do not enjoy the same protection.

All these issues – the flexible labour market, the educated unemployed as a result of 'structural adjustment' measures, and the dependence of the poor on poverty alleviation initiatives – affect people in Giyani, as is evidenced by the melting pot of the failed

dreams of the teachers and nurses and the hardships of the poor in the Hi Hlurile and Ahitipfuxeni projects. I shall briefly discuss these issues.

5.6.1 A polarised labour force: secure versus insecure employment

The effects of flexible employment practices are associated with the deregulation of labour markets (Standing, 1999), in which the cost of labour is reduced, because employers can avoid paying benefits such as paid leave, medical aid and pension benefits. Thus the labour market is polarised into the primary sector (stable conditions of employment, well-paid employees with prospects for career advancement) and the secondary sector (part-time irregular employment, relatively low remuneration and no job security or promotion prospects) (Evetts, 1989:189).

In the context of Giyani, the period from 1996 to 2006 marked improved conditions of employment for teachers through labour legislation (Republic of South Africa, 1999), but only temporary contract posts or flexible and precarious employment were available for teachers entering the profession (see Section 5.5). From 1996 to 2001, the South African education system was plunged into disarray with the 'rationalisation and redeployment' process, in which the number of permanent posts was reduced and teachers with tenure were offered voluntary severance packages or were redeployed to other posts. The teachers' unions intervened for their members (permanently appointed teachers), but temporary teachers, who were at the fringes of the labour regulatory framework, were disadvantaged. Sharon Edigheji's (1999:38) study in the greater Durban area of KwaZulu Natal found that the majority of teachers affected by temporary contract employment were qualified, which belied the provincial government's claim that teachers 'could not be granted status because they were either un/under qualified' (Cronjé, s.a.).

Even though the official 'rationalisation and deployment' period ran from 1996 to 2001, the Limpopo Province continued flexible labour practices until 2006. This meant that the teachers in Giyani endured a decade of insecure employment in which contracts were terminated at the end of each term (every three months) and a new contract was

entered into at the beginning of each new term. This process also caused late or non-payment of temporary teachers.

The frustration that many qualified teachers experienced is clearly evident from the words of Nomisi, a former student of Giyani College of Education, on hearing that he had been accepted for a post in another province:

I don't want to look back now to all those times I took my CV to schools and to circuit managers in the hope of getting a post. It seemed to me all my hard work at college, my HDE⁷³ with distinctions in Biology and Geography, meant nothing. I felt that I was not good enough or worthy of being a teacher. For seven years I volunteered at an ABET⁷⁴ training centre and I kept hoping for a post. Now I don't even feel guilty about leaving my province – if my province does not need me, I will go to where I am needed and appreciated.'

New entrants to the teaching profession were generally pessimistic about their career field and a few of these temporary teachers⁷⁵ shared their frustrations with me:

'Things are not the way I had hoped for – why can the school not appoint me as a permanent teacher?'

'I feel that my life is on hold. I would like to buy a house but cannot qualify for a home loan as a temporary teacher.'

'The months I do not receive my salary on time, are hard for my family – and this happens every term while my contract is being renewed.'

'The older teachers on the staff think that I am a bad teacher and therefore cannot be appointed.'

'It feels like a doing a piece job – it difficult to be motivated under these conditions.'

⁷³ The HDE or Higher Diploma in Education is a 4-year teachers' qualification. Giyani College of Education was an affiliate college of the University of the Witwatersrand.

⁷⁴ On average, teachers working as ABET trainers earn only a quarter of what they would as full-time teachers.

⁷⁵ Even though reference is made to teachers here, the same conditions prevailed for nurses.

These feelings cannot really begin to encapsulate the emotions of the thousands of teachers who have endured ten years of insecure employment. Then, in April 2006, came the announcement that ‘more than 5,000 temporary teachers have been permanently absorbed by the Limpopo education department with effect from the beginning of April’ (Standard of teachers, s.a.). But instead of being elated, I vividly recall the world-weariness of my former students when I engaged with them on this announcement. They felt done in and very angry – ‘we [have been] *treated like dirt*’, was one teacher’s reaction.

The teachers’ reactions were understandable, as the polarised labour model that sees permanent, secure and regulated employment existing alongside insecure employment has an impact on the selfhood of those in insecure employment. Work or employment and identity are closely related, since work goes ‘beyond the realms of economy, occupation and subsistence to accommodate also symbolic social processes through which ethos and identity is maintained’ (Cohen, 1979:249). Sennett (1998, cited in Comaroff & Comaroff, 2000:295) points out that with stable employment, the workplace and labour are the prime sites for the creation of an individual’s value or identity, but that, across the world, the ordinary understanding of the nature of capitalism has shifted toward insecure employment.

Not only have the post-apartheid government’s policies led to flexible employment practices in which the employed are disadvantaged, but poverty remains one of its greatest challenges. Thus the present government focuses on economic growth and poverty reduction. In terms of poverty alleviation, South Africa uses a dual strategy of employment (notably through the Public Works Programmes) and income transfers in the form of pensions and grants (Alderman, 1999:1). Income transfers are supplemented by ‘social funds’ to the poor and I briefly discuss these safety nets to the poor before examining employment opportunities that are created for the poor.

5.6.2 The poor became poorer

The deregulation of the labour market was one aspect of the broader 'structural adjustment' thinking that informed the GEAR macro-economic approach. Cornwall (2000:262) states that 'the very harsh effect 'structural adjustment' programmes were having on the poorest of the poor came to light towards the end of the 1980s'. To offset the increase in poverty induced by adjustment, the international funding institutions and developed countries introduced 'social funds' during the 1980s and 1990s. These funds targeted the poor as well as those non-poor that were affected by adjustment and aimed at transferring resources to these groups during the implementation of the adjustment programmes. Bowen (2009:247) states that social fund projects typically involve a mixture of socio-economic infrastructure, social services and capacity-building programmes in poor, vulnerable communities. Evidence of 'social funds' is noticeable in the building of the Hi Hlurile project, funded by the government of Japan, and the Ahitipfuxeni building, funded by the United States.

In terms of the government's approach, like 'structural adjustment' programmes, the GEAR philosophy hoped to stimulate a fast-growing, market-oriented economy that would create employment, but the GEAR period was characterised by jobless growth and increasing poverty. To mitigate the increasing poverty, income transfers in the form of social grants such as pensions and child grants are a vehicle that the government can use to redistribute resources to the poor – as was discussed in Section 4.8, more than half of the households of project participants in Giyani subsist on government grants. In fact, Michael Appel (2008) states that 'South Africa's social security system, a major monthly income source for over 12-million people, has been playing an increasingly important role in reducing poverty and inequality in the country since 2000'. In the Minister of Finance's budget speech on 17 February 2010, Minister Pravin Gordhan announced that R89 billion was to be spent on social grants in the 2010/11 financial year to provide child support grants of R250 per month, and old age pensions and disability grants of R 1 080 per month (Gordhan, 2010).

5.6.3 Heirs of a lesser economy

The ASGISA policy framework was aimed at paying greater attention to dealing with poverty, and the South African government began the dichotomous discourse of the First and Second Economies:

The First Economy is modern, produces the bulk of our country's wealth, and is integrated within the global economy. The Second Economy (or the Marginalised Economy) is characterised by underdevelopment, contributes little to the GDP, contains a large percentage of our population, incorporates the poorest of our rural and urban poor, is structurally disconnected from both the First and the global economy, and is incapable of self-generated growth and development. (Mbeki, 2003).

Thus began the official separation of employment (as an element of the First Economy) and projects (which fall within the realm of the Second Economy). Within the Second Economy, poverty alleviation strategies are needed and government is mandated to institute poverty reduction initiatives to address the needs of the poor. For instance, within the Department of Science and Technology, the Technology for Sustainable Livelihoods' 'objective is to introduce and demonstrate innovative technology solutions for the beneficiation of local natural resources to support the creation of sustainable job and wealth opportunities in areas of deprivation' (Department of Science and Technology, s.a.) However, the most ambitious programme is the Department of Public Works' attempt to create 'one million temporary work opportunities, coupled with training, over its first five years (2004- 2009). Potential for work opportunities has been identified in the four sectors, namely, infrastructure, social, economic and environmental sectors' (UN, 2009).

According to a World Bank report, public works programmes can be used as an effective anti-poverty or safety net intervention to protect the poor by reducing both temporal and seasonal poverty, while creating useful public goods or services for communities (Del Ninno, Subbarao & Milazzo, 2009). The South African Government's Expanded Public

Works Programme (EPWP) was officially launched in Giyani in May 2004 by President Mbeki (UN, 2009).

The particular sector advanced in Giyani was 'infrastructure for labour-intensive construction and maintenance of low-volume roads' (UN, 2009). There is indeed a need to improve infrastructure and the local unemployed can benefit from work opportunities to improve the infrastructure, but the EPWP,⁷⁶ as I witnessed it in Giyani, burdened poor women with the back-breaking work of building roads. Teams of women start each day with their picks and shovels, toiling away metre by metre, only to have their hard work washed away by the first rains. Then the municipality brings in earth-moving equipment and grades the road. The machine can grade a road in one day – a stretch that it took a team of workers (mainly women) one month, in the scorching sun, to construct. Is this not just pretending to keep the poor busy and creating an illusion of employment when there is no work pride that goes with the hard labour? If it takes such forms, the EPWP only makes sense if the purpose is to keep potentially disgruntled poor people busy and for the government to report on the number of jobs that were created by providing public goods or services. However, looking beyond South Africa, it is clear that many countries have to grapple with structural unemployment and public employment programmes such as the EPWP are seen as key measures 'to protect the most vulnerable against shocks and to develop at the same time local infrastructure promoting social and economic development. They form part of the recovery plans in many countries' (Lieuw-Kie-Song & Philip, 2010:2). Thus, the period preceding the financial crisis was characterised by jobless economic growth which meant the governments were under pressure to find tools to protect the poor. Therefore public 'investments and counter-cyclical spending on infrastructure are widely used to expand demand, create and sustain jobs' (Lieuw-Kie-Song & Philip, 2010:2).

⁷⁶ Expanded Public Works Programme (EPWP) 2005, provides details of this programme.

5.7 TWO DIFFERING RESPONSES TO HARDSHIP

Because of the knowledge, skills and social networks of the unemployed teachers and nurses in the Hi Hlurile project, the project benefited much more than those projects that had no or very few professionals in their midst. Since social funding targeted capacity-building, Hi Hlurile could bid as a training provider. Thus, the high level of skills and capacity in this project enabled the members to access 'social funds' for their own project activities and for selected members to provide training to other projects.

Since 'social funds' require communities to identify their development priorities and to select and propose projects, it is debatable if such funds actually reach the poorest of communities, because such communities often lack the skills required to prepare a proposal and to mobilise the required support for project implementation (Bowen 2009:249). This is exactly where Hi Hlurile carved out a niche for itself. The project was, for instance, commissioned to provide a three-month computer course to non-literate women from a nearby village in order to demystify technology. As trained teachers and mother-tongue speakers of the local language, it was possible for them to provide capacity-building training to poor, non-literate groups. The leaders of Hi Hlurile now play a role similar to development workers, also called development professionals.

Stirrat's view of development professionals is that they are 'development tourists', 'mercenaries' or 'misfits' who are only motivated by self-interest (Stirrat, 2008:406-425), but these charges certainly do not apply to the professionally trained teachers and nurses who form the backbone of the project in Giyani. Rather, these educated project members can become catalysts of change, as they understand both the local and the traditional worlds. 'They are not only eager to bring greater improvements in the quality of life by alleviating poverty, but they are also conscious of the need to maintain their cultural identity within a fast modernising Africa' (Nkwi, 1997:84).

Hi Hlurile certainly benefits a great deal more from 'social funds' than the Ahitipfuxeni project, even though both projects are located in Giyani. The Hi Hlurile Project, for instance, received R201 000 for computers, other office equipment, and sewing machines from the National Development Agency; R30 000 for a silk-screen printing

machine and a kiln (furnace) from the Provincial Department of Health and Social Development; and R500 000 for the building of a full-scale development centre from the Japanese government.

Hi Hlurile markets its products at exhibitions and trade fairs when possible, and by setting up stalls near the banks in Giyani to catch customers before they spend their money elsewhere. Although the women at Ahitipfuxeni produce similar beaded, clay and woven artefacts, they largely wait for local people to come to the project site to buy products, hoping that their products will be sold through word of mouth. In 2003, Hi Hlurile's gross income from the sale of their products was R100 000, and that of the Ahitipfuxeni Community Project was less than R10 000. These estimate amounts were reported by the project leaders during personal interviews without the benefit of financial records at hand – a drawback of the interview method according to Bless & Higson-Smith (2000). Furthermore, I wished to establish what the approximate annual income was rather than the exact amount as I had no right to pry into the financial records of the projects. (Financial matters in any context are a sensitive issue.) Although Hi Hlurile's income may sound impressive, it must be borne in mind that it translates to less than R350 per member per month – roughly one tenth of what these project members would have earned as teachers and nurses. The average income for Ahitipfuxeni members for 2003 was R14.60 per member per month. Thus, from an economic perspective, 'social funds' played only a negligible role in reversing the adverse effects of 'structural adjustment' job losses and it can be stated unequivocally that 'social funds' have not improved the living conditions of the poor in Giyani.

Cornia (2001:8) points out that social funding has enjoyed great financial support from the donor community and that this has raised expectations about improvements in living conditions in developing countries. In view of the above discussion, it is, however, clear that this did not happen in the case of unemployed professionals or the uneducated poor in Giyani. What 'structural adjustment' programmes and 'social funds' have done is to nurture a new type of organisation or structure, such as Hi Hlurile, where the educated and the non-schooled can collaborate and exercise agency.

Hi Hlurile articulates its goals in a particular way. The project leaders see the project as a training ground to develop entrepreneurial skills so that women can start their own businesses – to become self-sufficient. While working at the project, members reflect on progress and discuss their dreams for the future. By contrast, Ahitipfuxeni, whose average members have a low level of schooling, sees its survival as depending on continual funding. Hi Hlurile started as a project, but has since developed into a programme with smaller projects under the same umbrella. Hi Hlurile has also linked up with other projects which function independently from the project, but with which it teams up, including Ahitipfuxeni.

Why would projects that produce similar products and that compete for the same funding collaborate? There are two reasons why Hi Hlurile and Ahitipfuxeni work together. Firstly, Hi Hlurile is able to assist other groups with training and capacity building, the main focus of the second-generation social funds, the so-called ‘social investment funds’ that are aimed at developing human capital and at enhancing access to productive activities. Hi Hlurile is in a much better position to access these funds than many other projects, since it already has the capacity and can operate as a service provider for the development and implementation of training programmes. Ahitipfuxeni and Hi Hlurile therefore do not really occupy the same niche, but only have an overlap in their products. This overlap is put to good use when Hi Hlurile has to produce large quantities of items for exhibitions. Sinah, a 42-year old project member, explains this *modus operandi* as follows:

We work with the other projects because if we have to go to exhibitions we use the same transport and if we have a large order to do, we ask other projects to come and help us. We also teach others like if there is something that they failed to do, we explain to them what they are supposed to do.

A second reason for these two groups’ collaboration is that people, especially women, have friendship and family networks that transcend project boundaries. For example, the initial members of Hi Hlurile, both educated and non-literate, all attended the same church and knew one another from that context. Furthermore, with initiatives such as the workshop described earlier (see Section 5.2) links between members of different

project groups in Giyani are fostered. Hi Hlurile is certainly making a very positive contribution to the project scene in Giyani. I shall now focus my discussion on Hannah, the project initiator and leader.

5.8 HARDSHIPS CAN SCULPT AN EXCEPTIONAL WOMAN

In singling out an individual for discussion, I am reminded of the words of André Gide: ‘Be faithful to that which exists nowhere but in yourself – and thus make yourself indispensable.’⁷⁷ Much of the success of Hi Hlurile must be attributed to its initiator and leader, Hannah, and she is indeed indispensable to the functioning of the project.

Hannah was born and grew up in Johannesburg. After completing her schooling, she worked as a sales assistant while awaiting entry into nursing college. Her mother had no formal schooling, but her children’s schooling was a priority and she ensured that they had uniforms and whatever they needed for school. Hannah’s father, with only some formal schooling, worked at Truworths as a cleaner and paper shredder. Hannah’s parents had a strong influence on her and Hannah often recounts her father’s reminder to her: ‘*Work hard. Do not compromise on quality or standards – your good name is at stake if you produce inferior work.*’

While training as a nurse, she married Meshack and later moved to Giyani. She readily admits that it was difficult to adapt to rural life after living in a city, but with an attitude of ‘*I will make this work*’, she gradually eased into rural living. Within the first year of marriage, she fell pregnant and had to resign as a training nurse. Women did not have maternity benefits at that time and had to resign and reapply for their job or training after the birth of the baby. This was the case for each pregnancy. Sadly, she miscarried. After this, she focused on her tertiary education and both she and husband started training in teaching. She did a two-year teachers’ certificate at the Tivumbeni College of Education (in the Tzaneen district, 100 kilometres from Giyani) and then enrolled at the University of the North for a BA degree. In her final year of studies, she fell pregnant

⁷⁷ The quotation by André Gide (1869-1951) is from the *Standard Dictionary of the English Language*, New York: Funk and Wagnalls.

again and, since the baby was due in January the following year, she realised that she had to work hard to pass, since there would be no possibility of taking a supplementary examination. She passed well, with a distinction in Xitsonga; and she became a research assistant to a researcher from the University of the Witwatersrand.

Hannah developed a keen interest in research and gained confidence in her scholastic abilities. Her conscientiousness, keen intellect and systematic approach to her work impressed the researcher, who eventually even made Hannah the co-author of her research report. Hannah later completed a Master's degree in Linguistics at the University of Pretoria.

A diagnosis of cancer ended Hannah's career in education when she had just been promoted to subject advisor in the district⁷⁸ after holding the post of head of the Xitsonga department at Giyani College of Education for three years. Her pastor advised her to pray for healing '*but also to ask God to show me what He wants for me to do with my life*'. She got together a group of eight unemployed professional women (nurses and teachers) and 23 other unemployed women from her church and together they started investigating funding opportunities for capacity building and social development and initiated the establishment of Hi Hlurile (currently the Hi Hlurile Skills Development Project). Hi Hlurile means 'we have overcome' or 'we are victorious'. In this regard, she commented:

Claiming to be victorious given our unemployed status may have seemed ironical, but we realised that we should not focus on our present circumstances, but see how we could change our situation for the better. My personal philosophy is that one should not complain about things you cannot change, like the heat or the weather, but to change for the better those things you can change. Always grow – learn, improve, excel, help others. Just like a tree, if you are not growing, you are dying! (Hannah, leader of Hi Hlurile)

In my 11 years of residence in Giyani, I have met remarkable women – women who, against all odds, improve the living conditions of their families and their communities.

⁷⁸ The term district is used as defined by the provincial department of education.

But, unlike Hannah, these women were either widowed or divorced, and they all relate stories of how their personal growth was inhibited by the patriarchal system. This makes Hannah's situation all the more remarkable. Meshack, her husband, majored in Agricultural Science and Physical Science and taught at the I.K. Nxumalo Agricultural High School in Giyani. Later, he became senior subject advisor and, still later, a deputy director in education in the Giyani Region. He has always encouraged Hannah to develop and grow as a person and supports her in whatever she decides to do. Three qualities distinguish Hannah's approach from that of other project leaders that I have met in the Giyani area: quality of product and service, her 'mentality' (as she calls it) and specialisation of tasks.

Firstly, she is uncompromising with regard to the quality of products and service: '*One's workmanship should be of a high standard – we must produce products that we can be proud of.*' For Hannah, poor quality work stems from the wrong frame of mind or what she calls '*project mentality*' and the '*poor me attitude*': '*If you show funders that you do good work and that you produce good quality products, they will want to buy or market your products or fund your initiatives.*' She has instilled this view in all the project participants, as is evidenced by the words of one of them, Susan: '*In Hi Hlurile, we all realise that any product we sell should be good enough to sell to a king or queen.*⁷⁹ *Also, we apply our minds to our work to not make the same mistakes over and over and waste our materials.*'

I noticed that at Ahitipfuxeni each person starts and completes a particular product, but that at Hi Hlurile there is a fixed division of labour: when producing a beaded garment, one person cuts, another sews and yet another does the beadwork. This high degree of specialisation ensures that those with a specific skill contribute that skill to ensure high quality products. Critics of the 'division of labour' concept may argue that if each person is only doing part of a product, she may not feel a sense of achievement or take pride in her handiwork since others contribute to the garment. Thus, they argue that specialisation of work leads to the alienation of the worker from the product (see Firth,

⁷⁹ Before she was married, she lived near Queen Modjadji's royal kraal, so the possibility of providing the queen with an article is not so far-fetched.

1979). While this argument may be valid in large impersonal factories, at Hi Hlurile, a good quality product is a source of pride for all who have contributed to it. Specialisation has contributed to building strong teams with collective pride in a well-produced product. When one person does inferior work on a product after the previous person has done her part well, potential conflict is handled in a small group discussion.

Hannah has played an important role in changing the project landscape in Giyani by forming project networks and establishing a ‘grassroots women’s movement’ in the area (see Section 5.2).

5.9 HI HLURILE: REDEFINING PROJECT THINKING

Hi Hlurile mirrors the ‘social funds philosophy’ that set objectives explicitly linked to social capital creation (Bowen, 2009; World Bank Group, 2001). The social funds approach emphasises participation by local communities in small-scale projects with the intention of developing their local organisational capacity – ‘the ability of people to work together, trust one another, and organize to solve problems, mobilize resources, resolve conflicts, and network with others to achieve agreed-upon goals’ (Narayan-Parker & Ebbe 1997:33). Indeed, as organisations, both Ahitipfuxeni and Hi Hlurile are characterised by shared goals, collaborative action, trust and networks. It is also true that since very educated and non-literate members are in the same organisation (particularly in Hi Hlurile), strong vertical social ties exist. The importance of such ties are highlighted by Bowen (2009:246), who explains that vertical linkages are essential for poor and less powerful people to develop relationships with those who enjoy power and privilege, social status and wealth. What this also means is that poor people that would not be able to access social funds on their own can benefit, as those in the project who are able to apply for ‘social funds’ can access resources and support.

Other linkages are evidenced in the networks Hi Hlurile fosters beyond Giyani. Apart from networks in Johannesburg (Orange Farm) and in southern Mozambique, Hannah also has strong national networks. She is the chairperson of the South African Entrepreneurs’ Network (SAWEN) in the Limpopo Province and through SAWEN she

has received training in jewellery-making in India and done market research in Japan to determine the demand for beaded articles. This led to an order for 500 beaded cell phone covers from Japan. Hannah is optimistic that the good quality of Hi Hlurile's products in the colours that are fashionable in Japan will lead to more orders.

These networks and coalitions are a result of the global political and economic climate and reflect the positive spin-offs of 'social funds'. It must, however, be emphasised that 'social funds' were and may still be used as a form of social control. Social grants and 'social funds' for small-scale projects may create the illusion of household economic sufficiency and promote the illusion of being involved in productive economic activity. Those trapped in the so-called Second Economy have to play by a different set of rules than those who can harness the market forces governing the First Economy (Hart, 2006:26; Mbeki, 2003). Small-scale projects such as Ahitipfuxeni, which make few inroads into the global economy, probably have little hope of ever being economically viable enterprises.

By contrast, the leadership and functioning of Hi Hlurile creates a dynamic project that may evolve into something distinctly different and may contain elements that could create an alternative modernity as Greenstein (2009) suggests. Greenstein (2009) laments the fact that in the post-apartheid development discourses, local knowledge has not been fully exploited to define a uniquely South African alternative modernity. He states that development and modernity in South Africa follows the conventional perceptions of economic growth, redistribution of social and economic gains to all, infrastructure improvement and integration within the global economy. 'There is little in policy documents to suggest an alternative conceptualisation of modernity or a dissident development agenda or even a local flavour to spice up what passes for global knowledge and common wisdom' (Greenstein, 2009:82).

But while the type of alternative thinking beyond the conventional may not be evident from above, it is possible that within Hi Hlurile, an alternative modernity⁸⁰, is taking root.

⁸⁰ Alternative modernity refers to the different ways modernisation is recast and transformed by people's agency. Since people transform modernity differently there are diverse modernities that cannot easily be replicated in other settings. (see Arce & Long 2002).

The location of Hi Hlurile in a former homeland and in a rural area distant from the economic hubs of the cities and therefore assumed to be underdeveloped, and the composition of the group (a mixture of educated and poor, non-literate women) makes this project extremely attractive to internal and external funders, who believe that Hi Hlurile functions within the marginalised or Second Economy.

Associated with the Second Economy is the belief (repeated here for the convenience of the reader) that it is 'disconnected from both the First and the global economy, and is incapable of self-generated growth and development' (Mbeki, 2003). Yet, although Hi Hlurile is not an enterprise in the true sense of the concept – meaning profit-maximising but cost- and labour-minimising – it is not completely disconnected from the economies beyond the Giyani area. As a recipient of 'social funds' and other poverty-reduction funding, Hi Hlurile is not expected to engage fully in global economic relations, but can operate within the social responsibility space of business or advanced economies (as is evident in its relationship with Japan). Furthermore, the project leadership is rooted in the local-modern nexus and so understands the changes brought by modernity, while also valuing local identities. It is also at the development-corporate nexus – Hi Hlurile can articulate local needs and can provide services typically offered by development professionals while also being cognisant of corporate concerns such as product quality and customer care. I believe that Hi Hlurile is indeed redefining economic inclusion in ways that 'destabilize the universalist idioms, historicize the contexts, and pluralize the experiences of modernity', as advocated by Gaonkar (1999:14).

CHAPTER 6: PROJECTS AS SITES FOR COPING WITH CHANGING LEGISLATION AND PERSISTENT TRADITIONS

6.1 INTRODUCTION

In the previous chapter, the consequences of global economic thinking and the national economic decisions that led to multiple meanings of employment and to the phenomenon of the educated unemployed in Giyani were discussed. This chapter moves away from economics and looks at the political and legal thinking during the period after 1994. It considers how political decisions taken at the national level are informed by the global climate and how people in Giyani experience these decisions.

In this chapter I take a closer look at how individual people experienced the legislative changes implemented to counter forms of discrimination such as the difference in the status of women married under customary law (who are viewed as minors) and those married under civil law (who enjoy equal status with their husbands). Under the traditional system, black women were considered legal minors under the authority of their husbands, fathers or other male relatives, whereas the Constitution (Republic of South Africa, 1996b) grants equality to all citizens, irrespective of gender.

I also focus on legislative changes pertaining to traditional governance structures (the role of traditional leaders) and customary marriages. With regard to customary marriages, I discuss the views of women regarding polygyny, succession and the status of women. It is important to remember that the legal 'status' of women is changing: in Giyani, people who live in villages live under the authority of various traditional authorities with different approaches to governance, whereas those living in the town fall under the jurisdiction of the magistrate's court and the municipality, where through legislation the rights of all are protected equally, at least in theory. Thus, in practice those living in villages will have their disputes settled by their chief and by headmen using traditional law, rather than adhering to the letter of national legislation, while the

disputes of those living in Giyani town fall under a magistrate operating according to national legislation.

In conducting this part of my research, which relates to people's perceptions of traditional authority and customary marriage, I faced two challenges. Firstly, in the research area, people are respectful of the traditional authorities; and, since the Tsonga-Shangaan traditional leaders argue that 'a chief is a chief through his people' (Hartman *et al.*, 1993:18; see also Section 4.7.3), chiefs are generally not seen as tyrants that need to be resisted and opposed by their subjects. That said, it is also true that not all chiefs are benevolent leaders. Also, the traditional authority structure is a male-dominated hierarchy⁸¹ – many traditional practices do discriminate against women. Secondly, aspects of customary marriage and life such as polygyny and succession are extremely private matters to be discussed only with very close friends. These two problem areas are discussed in more detail below.

In the small group discussions and one-on-one interviews that I conducted with members of the Hi Hlurile and Ahitipfuxeni projects, it became clear that the women all had some understanding of national legislation that counters these practices, but no-one expressed a desire to abolish the institution of traditional leadership. Two women who resided in the same village expressed their dissatisfaction with their chief and they both hoped that he would be replaced because '*his drinking [liquor] makes him difficult [unreasonable] and a bad leader*'. However, even these women did not wish the institution of traditional governance to be abolished. This finding supports Nkwi's (1976:187) assertion that to a great majority of a chief's subjects, he is 'part of the fixed order of the universe'. One may argue that, with all the social, political, economic and legislative changes the people in Giyani have experienced, traditional governance represents a form of stability. However, for my study, the respect that the chiefs as representatives of the traditional authority enjoy made it very difficult to elicit project members' critical reflections on traditional authorities.

⁸¹ The traditional authority hierarchy consists of the chief as the head of the traditional authority, with the headmen (*tinduna*) of each village serving on the traditional council (see Kriel & Hartman, 1991b:38-40).

Aspects of customary marriage and life such as polygyny, inheritance and succession are regarded as highly private. Such issues are only discussed with very close friends. The evidence from this study indicates that succession or inheritance is not a concern among poor people, but that it is a concern among the middle class. Through the weeks of discussions and interviews, I found that the members in the projects might share problems relating to their domestic circumstances with another person within the project, but not with all the group members. I found that within the projects, close friendships developed between members; and it was not uncommon to hear statements such as *'we share our home problems'*, *'we talk about our husbands and children and share advice'* or *'we talk about women stuff'*. However, from the interviews it was clear that details about marital and very personal domestic circumstances were only shared within the security of very close friendships that often developed over many years. Within these friendships, confidences are sacred and not easily betrayed. A common expression is *'angana shihundla'* [she cannot keep a secret]. This expression also implies that one should be wary of such a person. One woman explained to me that in a village, one needs to closely guard one's *'deep'* problems or secrets, because of the uncertainty of what others already know – *'if your husband has other girlfriends [lovers] the wife is always the last to know, so you always pretend that nothing bothers you'*.

The many hours that I spent talking to members of the four projects revealed that the women had a great deal of discretion and pride. This pride meant that they were not able to share the intimate details about their marriages with people other than those with whom they already share a close friendship in most cases, a friendship that developed over a long time. This fact affected my research in that I was unable to gain a true sense, beyond the superficial, of how women experienced the changes effected by legislation dealing with customary law, particularly in terms of their marital relationships. Despite the great level of comfort and familiarity that developed over the time that my research assistant and I visited the projects, the project members *'clammed up'* when they felt that discussions were becoming too personal for comfort. However, this was not surprising, since the women in Giyani are very proud – not in an arrogant way, but in the sense of being respectful to themselves and others (see also Section 1.4).

As a researcher, I was conscious of my ethical responsibility towards my research subjects and tried not to press the issue. I respected the interviewees' wishes by not probing where they were reluctant to discuss issues. Instead, I conducted a few more in-depth interviews with the few individuals who had already known me for many years and who thus felt comfortable about sharing their stories, so the data I provide in this chapter focuses only on the opinions of a handful of people and cannot be generalised to any extent. Nevertheless, these reflections provide some insight on how gender relations have been affected by the changing legislation.

As described in Chapter 1, the gender breakdown of the members active in projects showed more women to be members than men. The voices of the men heard of in this chapter are those of six young men whom I got to know well over a period of four years at the Giyani Teacher Training College. These teachers-in-training gave their perspectives on tradition and how it affected them. Glaringly absent from this chapter are the voices of the men who are members of the projects, who simply refused to discuss or answer any questions about issues discussed in this chapter. Again my respect for those who were willing to be part of this research study outweighed my fear of criticism of this gap. I built a relationship of trust with the research participants and I therefore respected their right to indicate what questions they were comfortable speaking about. The relationship that I built up with them is such that I was able to visit all four projects many times after the research was completed and was warmly received. I believe that this would not have been possible if I had not honoured my research subjects' wishes.

Thus, this chapter deals with the political and accompanying legal changes that the women in the Giyani district have experienced since 1994. I focus first on the former and current role of the chieftaincy and tradition and then elucidate the changes in customary law by which the present government seeks to ensure that women are less vulnerable, especially in customary marriages. Finally, I discuss the multiple social tensions in the home that have accompanied and continue to accompany these rapid changes.

6.2 RECOLLECTIONS FROM THE FIELD

I clearly recall my conversation with a 52-year old participant, Martha, as we sat on reed mats on the floor of the sewing room at Ahitipfuxeni. She was making a beaded cylindrical cord, an item of beaded jewellery that is very popular among the women in Giyani. Women wear such a multi-coloured beaded cord around their necks, together with two or three strings of beads of a single colour. Martha's dexterity and innate sense of the colours that need to be beaded to form the spiralling stripes of the cord amazed me yet again. Even as we were talking, she did not lose her concentration and threaded the coloured beads in the correct sequence. As the conversation drifted towards the rights that women now enjoy, she halted her beading and looked straight at me. With a hint of defiance in her voice she remarked:

The government says that as women we have more rights now. I can decide whatever I want to do on my own – if I want to be part of this project or not. Even the chief says that people should be part of the different projects – so even though my husband does not like it, there is nothing he can say.

I was initially rather perplexed at Martha's rebellious attitude, as this was my fifth visit to Ahitipfuxeni and it was definitely the first time that I heard such defiance in her voice. It became clear from our ensuing discussion and from her statement that she could do whatever she wanted and she knew it! Her statement reflected an awareness of the fact that women have more rights now than in the past, while her reference to what the chief said demonstrates the influence and importance of the chieftaincy in this area. However, the reference to her husband's opinion also pointed to real or potential domestic tension.

Martha's comments and my interaction with rural women in the research area demonstrated to me that these women are aware of the fact that 1994 was a watershed in South Africa's history with regard to redressing past political issues, as well as gender inequality. However, under the rule of male-dominated traditional authorities, these women still have little or no access to land ownership and are subject to a system of inheritance that favours men. My discussions with the women at Ahitipfuxeni and the

other three projects revealed that the women living in the villages around the Giyani area still experienced some forms of gender discrimination, both subtle and overt. Furthermore, for the women living in these rural villages, gender equality and legal certainty appeared to be a mirage. At the time when I conducted this research study, small-scale projects became sites of reflection where women could talk about issues, and to a certain extent, come to terms with this world of contradiction and inconsistency – places where they could just be together with other women.

6.3 TRADITIONAL LEADERS IN THE NEW SOUTH AFRICA

When the first democratically elected government took office in 1994, there were statutes that needed to be reviewed in order for every South African to enjoy equal rights before the law. One aspect that elicited great interest at the time was the role that traditional leaders would play in a democratic South Africa, since such leadership positions are inherited positions. Chiefs are not democratically elected and the traditional governance structure was male-dominated, with little or no female representation.

6.3.1 The global revival of tradition and culture

The survey data collected for this study showed that 34% of the people participating in small-scale projects in the Giyani area lived in villages under the authority of a chief. Of these, 95% were women. Thus, women constituted an overwhelming majority of the project participants that lived in villages; and these women's lives were influenced by traditional governance structures, unlike the lives of the other members of the projects, who were resident in the town. The lived experiences for members, particularly women, who participate in the same project, but who live under different governance structure and rules, are unlikely to change soon, as the institution of chieftaincy, a legacy from the past, has become an integral part of the current political set-up.

Chieftaincy 'is a hierarchical and patriarchal system that has largely excluded women from office and which supports customary laws that are exclusionary and oppressive towards women – particularly in relation to property rights. In such a system, there are obvious limits to representation and downward accountability' (Beall, Mkhizi & Vawda, 2005:760). However, the traditional authorities in South Africa are currently recognised under the Constitution of 1996 and are represented at the national level by the National House of Traditional Leaders. Of the nine provinces, six (KwaZulu-Natal, the Eastern Cape, the Free State, Mpumalanga, the North West Province and Limpopo) have their own Provincial House of Traditional Leaders.

This means that the same gender-sensitive Constitution, Act 108 of 1996 (Republic of South Africa, 1996b) that brought about the Human Rights Commission and the Commission for Gender Equality and that ensures a 30% quota for women on electoral lists, still makes room for traditional leaders and recognises customary marriages.⁸² This practice is an affront to the gender equality provisions in the Constitution.

For Barbara Oomen (2005:2), the emphasis on this cultural tradition and the enthusiastic embracing of diversity are somewhat surprising in view of South Africa's history. She points out that the introduction of ten homelands for different cultural or 'ethnic' groups was central to the apartheid ideology, and since each homeland had its own system of governance, 'culture, tribe and chieftom' were used to deny homeland residents access to democracy within South Africa. The struggle against apartheid was primarily against this imposition of cultural diversity and the goal was to achieve a nation in which all citizens are equal; and yet, with the new government, cultural diversity has again become important. This paradox needs to be examined in the global context into which the new South Africa was born. If one does so, the power and influence that traditional leaders used in shaping the present political landscape in South Africa become apparent.

⁸² Customary marriages are potentially (and often are) polygynous: women and men do not enjoy equal rights in a customary marriage relationship. In contrast to women, men are permitted to have more than one wife, which often means more than one household.

The 1987 Brundtland Report,⁸³ called *Our Common Future* (cited in Sands, 1994:13), stresses the link between human activities and the environment. It has led to a number of international protocols which compelled the signatory nations to implement legislation locally in support of these protocols. With these international agreements, nation-states became increasingly comfortable with international co-operation and directives. For Oomen (2005:7), the acceptance of an International Criminal Court in the 1990s indicates the degree to which some states were prepared to surrender sovereignty to a higher body. Internationally prescribed codes of behaviour and agreements with international agencies such as the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund have eroded nations' autonomy. Instead of being a system of territorial states, the new world is typified by transnational and international organisations⁸⁴ that influence policies and actions locally (Oomen, 2005:7) and regionally.

In the wake of globalisation and the resultant nebulous, amorphous global system that is replacing distinct sovereign nation-states,⁸⁵ culture or traditions have become very important facets of resistance. One is reminded of Keesing's claim that when people are faced with massive external threat, tradition or culture becomes an option for survival – 'a way of preserving cultural and individual identity' (Spiegel & Boonzaier, 1988:52). Thus, not only is the post-modern world characterised by the fragmentation of the nation states, but also by an embracing of culture and the celebration of group rights.

The period from 1995 to 2004 was the UN' 'International Decade of the World's Indigenous people'. Political demands were expressed in cultural terms, with increasing consensus that these demands were just and that they should be respected and

⁸³ The UN General Assembly established the World Commission on Environment and Development (WCED), chaired by Gro Harlem Brundtland, in 1983. The Brundtland Report, entitled *Our Common Future*, defined the term 'sustainable development' as 'development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs' (Sands, 1994:13).

⁸⁴ The World Bank and the IMF specify certain conditions that developing countries should meet to qualify for aid. In meeting these conditions, many states may have to implement policies that may not in the best interests of that country.

⁸⁵ The notion of the 'nation-state' (also referred to as a sovereign state) rests on the central assumptions of territorial integrity, political independence, monopoly of violence, domestic jurisdiction, non-intervention and unity (Oomen, 2005:6).

promoted. Many countries adopted legislation on cultural rights, such as the right to representation of minority groups in governmental bodies, language rights guarantees and affirmative action. National legislation was greatly influenced by international law,⁸⁶ which strengthened the position of indigenous people. The 1994 UN Draft Universal Declaration on Indigenous Rights recognised ‘the urgent need to respect and promote the inherent rights and characteristics of indigenous peoples, especially their rights to their land, territories and resources, which derive from their political, economic and social structures and from their cultures, spiritual traditions, histories and philosophies’ (Oomen, 2005:9-10). Appadurai (1996, cited in Oomen, 2005:10) coined the term ‘culturalism’ to describe the conscious mobilisation of cultural differences to benefit larger national or transnational politics.

As Oomen (2005) argues, the legal recognition of cultural diversity was the distinguishing feature of politics worldwide in the 1990s. Suddenly, a new world order emerged in which tribes were trendy, culture was cool, and of which chiefs could be central constituents (Oomen, 2005:4). Therefore, just as South Africa was about to shake off the shackles of the classification of people into different cultures and ethnic groups, an international resurgence of culture and traditional leadership occurred; and South Africa was caught up in a wider drift towards a revitalisation of tradition and the increased prominence of customary practices (Beall *et al.*, 2005:756).

These global and national trends towards cultural identity, tradition and customary practices have implications for the group identity expressed in the project area. Since Giyani was the capital of the former Tsonga-Shangaan homeland of Gazankulu, most of the people in the small-scale projects that I studied were speakers of Xitsonga, either as mother-tongue speakers or by adoption of the language through marriage or relocation. It was evident that the common language identity added to the cohesion of the project groups. When I entered any one of the four project locations, the members’ cultural identity was clearly visible in the clothing, dance, art and crafts and in the welcoming disposition of the women.

⁸⁶ For example, the 1989 International Labour Organization’s (ILO) Convention on Indigenous and Tribal Peoples in Independent Countries, and the 1994 United Nations Draft Universal Declaration on Indigenous Rights (Indigenous People’s Rights, s.a.).

6.3.2 The role of chiefs in South Africa: past and present

Three of the four case study projects included in this study are located in Giyani town. This means that they are under the jurisdiction of the local municipality and not under a traditional authority. While most members indicated that they had joined the projects in response to the government's call to form groups so as to qualify for development assistance, some of them indicated that their main reason for joining the project was a desire '*to get civilised*'. In our small group discussions, women expressed a desire to be away from the power of the traditional authorities and courts, albeit only for the short periods when they were at the project sites.

One of the project members shared with me her impression that '*the chief and the headmen always side with the men even when they are lazy and sit around with the other men all day. My husband is a drunkard and speaks badly to the children and me, but because he does not beat us, they think that I am just complaining for no reason.*' For this woman and her colleagues to be outside the pressure of the traditional authority's direct sphere of influence, if only for a few hours a day, was tantamount to being '*civilised*' and '*respected and treated with dignity*'. Most of the women in the projects indicated that they valued the sense of respect, belonging and personal growth that they experienced through their involvement in projects (see Section 4.5). In their opinion, the projects created room for them to feel important and good about themselves, in contrast to their experiences in the villages, where they did not have the same rights and privileges that men can claim.

The experiences of these and other women in the rural areas can only be understood in the historical context of traditional authorities in South Africa. Whereas Ntsebeza (2006:445) believes that traditional authorities are 'apartheid-created' institutions, Sithole and Mbele (2008:10-11) emphatically claim that traditional leadership as a form of governance predates democracy in Africa: 'There never was a time since European colonialism where traditional leadership disappeared and therefore as a system of governance it was not "invented" by apartheid.' A similar argument is presented by Spiegel and Boonzaier (1988:49). Despite the differences in their opinions, all the above

authors acknowledge that some traditional leaders have indeed been manipulated by the colonial powers and the apartheid regime.

Historically, the colonial period involved traditional leaders in the governance of South Africa, particularly Natal, through a pattern of 'indirect rule'. This system may be attributed to Sir Theophilus Shepstone, Secretary of Native Affairs (1845-76), who advanced the position of the traditional leaders by recognising their right to allocate land, which was held under communal tenure. However, Shepstone reserved the right to appoint, as well as unseat, chiefs, and he dealt severely with non-compliant chiefs. Furthermore, from 1850, magistrates were appointed to try criminal cases and to oversee Native Law, allowing traditional leaders to deal only with dispute resolution and minor criminal cases. The pattern of indirect rule was strongly established; and it was continued by the government of the Union of South Africa after 1910.

The *Black Administration Act, Act 38 of 1927*, 'stripped traditional leaders of more of their autonomy and the Governor-General of South Africa was allowed to prescribe the duties, power and conditions of service of the chief, who[m] in turn he could appoint or dispose [of]' (Beall *et al.*, 2005:761). In 1948, the Nationalist government came to power. Since traditional leaders fitted into this government's vision of 'separate development', the government initially adopted a conciliatory stance towards the chiefs (Beall *et al.*, 2005:761; Oomen, 2005:16).

In the 1970s and 1980s, the chiefs were not highly regarded by the liberation movement. For example, one of the leaders in the resistance movement, Govan Mbeki,⁸⁷ in considering the role of the traditional leaders under apartheid, said that 'they served as "baas boys"⁸⁸ putting on trial and convicting in "bush courts" those who fell foul of the regime's regulations' (cited in Beall *et al.*, 2005:761).

However, Beall *et al.* (2005:760) point out that in many countries, 'the power and influence of traditional authorities is such that politicians seeking elected office compete with them at their peril'. This absorption of traditional authorities into social, democratic

⁸⁷ Govan Mbeki was an ANC stalwart and father to South African president, Thabo Mbeki.

⁸⁸ 'Baas boys' is a derogatory term meaning 'servants of the White man'.

change is well illustrated by Nkwi (1976:182), who describes how the 'new politicians took pains to please the chiefs because any open disregard of their authority could have been politically disastrous'.⁸⁹ Indeed, courting the electoral influence of the chieftaincy was a lesson the ANC-led government soon learnt. Ntsebeza (2006:444-460) chronicles the compromises that the ANC-led government made with traditional leaders and how traditional leaders strategically influenced policy and legislative processes to their own benefit.

For instance, in 1995, the traditional leaders, through the Congress of Traditional Leaders of South Africa made a number of demands and threatened to discourage their supporters from participating in the local government elections, and later also in the 1999 general elections. This display of power saw the promulgation of legislation in 1998 that entrenched the power of traditional authorities. At the local level, the 1998 legislation embodied in the *White Paper on Local Government, 1998* (Republic of South Africa, 1998a) and the *Municipal Structure Act, Act 117 of 1998* (Republic of South Africa, 1998b) only afforded traditional leaders a consultative role in issues such as development, but by the 2004 national elections, the chiefs had been given additional power through the *Traditional Leadership and Governance Framework Act, Act 41 of 2003* (Republic of South Africa, 2003) and the *Communal Land Rights Act, Act 11 of 2004* (Republic of South Africa, 2004). '[I]t was just before the 1999 general elections that the stipends and allowances of chiefs were raised as a way of pacifying them, effectively doubling the national salary bill for traditional leaders' (Beall *et al.*, 2005:763-764).

The *Traditional Leadership and Governance Framework Act, Act 41 of 2003* and the *Communal Land Rights Act, Act 11 of 2004*, which narrowly predated the 2004 national elections,⁹⁰ elevated the administrative status of traditional authorities even further.

⁸⁹ Nkwi (1976) describes the situation in Cameroon with the transition from colonial rule to independence.

⁹⁰ The ANC was successful with this strategy and won control from the Inkatha Freedom Party over the Kwa-Zulu Natal provincial government for the first time in 2004.

The *Traditional Leadership and Governance Framework Act* validated the role of traditional leaders in local government through their leadership of traditional councils (which exist mainly in rural areas) and by endorsing their functioning alongside that of other local government structures. Section 3 of the Act states that “traditional communities” must establish these councils, which in turn comprise “traditional leaders” and members of the traditional community selected by the principal traditional leader concerned in terms of custom’. Where the old tribal authorities still existed (in accordance with the *Bantu Authorities Act of 1951*), they were to be converted into traditional councils (Beall *et al.*, 2005:763).

In conjunction with the *Traditional Leadership and Governance Framework Act*, the *Community Land Rights Act* significantly entrenches the authority of traditional leaders and enhances their power to control property rights. It also provides for the transfer of the tenure of communal land in the former homelands from the State to the communities resident there. The *Community Land Rights Act* accords a central role in the allocation of land to traditional councils (Ntsebeza, 2006:456).

Ntsebeza (2006:457) cautions that, unlike elected councillors, who can be called to account or disposed of through elections if they neglect their duties and responsibilities, or if their conduct is improper, traditional leaders are not elected and thus cannot be disposed of. This potentially enables traditional leaders to evade accountability to the people. Ntsebeza (2006) argues that this implies that traditional leaders have more power than elected councillors. Furthermore, it should be noted that the *Traditional Leadership and Governance Framework Act* affords traditional leaders a role in all three levels of government – through the traditional councils at the local government level, through the Provincial House of Traditional Leaders at the provincial level, and through the representation of traditional leaders in the Council of Provinces at the national level.

6.3.3 Traditional leaders in Giyani

It would be misleading to create the impression that all traditional authorities – chiefs (*tihosi*) and headmen (*tinduna*) – that I have encountered in the research area are

autocratic and chauvinistic in their dealings with their subjects. This is not the case. Indeed, some chiefs and their tribal councillors embody the spirit of the maxim '*hosi i hosi hi vanhu*' [a chief is a chief through his people] (Hartman *et al.*, 1993:18); and the role played by the traditional authorities in the administration of the affairs of the communities under their jurisdiction should not be undervalued or underestimated.

During my time in Giyani and while I was conducting this research study, I was able to visit several villages and could observe how a chief interacted with his 'subjects'. In the case of the chief governing Makoxa village, where the Avelanani crèche is located, such interaction was most noticeable in the community consultations that are held, on average, twice a year, or more frequently, if the need arose. Community consultations in Makoxa village are a long-standing practice. The purpose of these meetings is for the people to give their input on proposed development initiatives, such as the construction of tourist accommodation in the neighbouring Man'ombe Nature Reserve.

At the time of my visits to the village, consultation meetings were usually held at the community centre on a Sunday afternoon. The chief's spokesperson normally chaired these sessions, which tended to follow a standard pattern: he explained the matter at hand and invited community members to provide their input. Mostly, the community members merely asked for clarification rather than objected to proposals. Dissent mainly took the form of some muttering, but the chairperson had admirable skill in getting individuals to articulate their misgivings and the matter was then discussed further. In most cases, consensus was reached. Only then did the chief have the final word, in which he enunciated the decision that had been 'negotiated'. This procedure left the people feeling that decisions had not been forced upon them, but that they were party to any decisions made.

During the meetings, the atmosphere of understanding and co-operation that prevailed reflected the disposition of the chief. He is a soft-spoken, humble and wise man who commands respect from all who interact with him because of the respectful manner in which he treats others. It was the norm for those participating in the discussions I witnessed to be men, while the women sat with their hands in their laps listening to what was being said. One should not interpret the apparent lack of participation by the

women as lack of interest: during the week following a community meeting, the village was always abuzz with talk and gossip about the meeting. In some instances, the (female) chairperson of the Makoxa Development Committee was asked for her input or she actively participated in the discussion and her contributions to discussions were often seen as conveying the perspective of women.

Community consultation is included in the *Traditional Leadership and Governance Framework Act, Act 41 of 2003* (Republic of South Africa, 2003) and is an attempt to democratise traditional authorities. Included in the functions of the traditional councils are aspects of consultation, participation and communication – traditional authorities are tasked to consult with their communities in identifying community needs and recommending interventions that will improve development and service delivery in the areas under their jurisdiction. Each traditional council should also account to its community for the activities and finances of the council.

Yet another positive aspect of traditional authority that I observed in Giyani was the role it plays in maintaining law and order in the village. Police are not readily available to service the villages and in this regard the villagers rely on the tribal courts to deal with unruly individuals. It is noticeable how safe one feels in the Giyani area, even in the most remote villages. Even though the same cannot be said about domestic violence, public violence was not a real concern in the research area. In fact, this area often hosts international and South African students and researchers, and at the time I was living in Giyani, there were no incidents of violence against them.

I personally knew many of the visiting researchers in Giyani and they often commented on the low levels of crime in the area. One such researcher was Lana, an Italian student registered for a master's degree in Wildlife Management at the University of Pretoria. In one of our group discussions, Sannie, a 49-year old resident of Ngove village and a project member, related with much amusement an incident involving Lana's car – about how a shocked Lana arrived at Sannie's house asking for assistance. As part of the practical work for Lana's studies, Lana was doing vegetation studies in an open area near Ngove village. She parked her car alongside the road in the early morning, but when she returned at the end of the day she found that her car was a longer there. She

was horrified, thinking that her car had been stolen. Sannie continued: *‘Lana walked to my house in the village and I arranged a lift for us to go to the police station in town [10 kilometres away]. There we were told that two men had seen the car in the morning and, hours later, when they returned, they found that the car was still there. So they then alerted the police to the “abandoned” car. The police then took [impounded] Lana’s car.’* Sannie, smiling broadly, concluded her anecdote with: *‘I will never forget the look on Lana’s face, she was just so surprised.’*

Notwithstanding the positive role that many traditional authorities perform in the rural villages, there is still some concern about how tradition should be reconciled with democracy.

6.3.4 Opposing principles of democracy and tradition

As part of this discussion, it is important to explain briefly what is meant by the ‘opposing principles of democracy and tradition’. The Office of the Presidency commissioned the Human Sciences Research Council (HSRC) to review traditional leadership in South Africa from 1994 to 2007 (Sithole & Mbele, 2008). I draw on this 2008 report. While this report is comprehensive and well-researched, a glaring omission is the views of those at grass-roots level – the men and particularly the women for whom life under traditional leadership is a reality.

In this report, Sithole and Mbele (2008) identify two schools of thought on traditional leadership: democratic pragmatism and organic democracy. For those who subscribe to the democratic pragmatist view, traditional leadership is incompatible with democracy, because it is a system of inherited leadership, which means that not every person has an equal chance to participate in this form of leadership. Furthermore, the traditional authority system lacks recourse against unfair exercise of power and the system of inheritance and spousal rights within customary marriages does not treat men and women equally. From the perspective of democratic pragmatists, traditional leadership is perforce tolerated for now, but, as people’s demand for democracy intensifies, the system of traditional authority will eventually and inevitably become extinct.

The second school of thought, that of organic democracy, considers 'traditional leadership as a different and unique democracy in eclectic conditions' (Sithole & Mbele, 2008:10). Proponents of this view believe that traditional leaders offer a different approach to leadership that fulfils specific social and governance needs of people as communities, rather than as individuals. The aspect that this is a form of non-elected leadership is acknowledged, but the plea is made that less emphasis be placed on this aspect and more emphasis be placed on 'the rationalization of justice based on cultural-moral principles' (Sithole & Mbele, 2008:10). Based on an acceptance of the realisation that traditional leadership is not rigid but constantly changing and adapting, the understanding is that traditional leadership can be democratised. Sithole and Mbele (2008:12) found that traditional leaders were supportive of the idea of receiving training in policy, legislation and various models of democracy.

A strong case is made by proponents of organic democracy that, in the South African political and social landscape, there is a need for both systems to co-exist. The systems of traditional leadership and of democratically elected leadership serve different needs and meet different expectations held by individual people and communities. For example, traditional leaders are expected to foster co-operation and harmony, whereas the elected leadership is expected 'to have distinct capability in legislation and to display education-informed merit' (Sithole & Mbele, 2008:13).

The proposal for the continuation of traditional leadership alongside elected leadership is strengthened if the importance of the continuity between rural and urban life is recognised. The point is made that the reality of most rural homes in areas governed by traditional authorities is that one or more family members support the home with money and other goods earned in urban areas. For these people, their rural home provides a place for retirement, a burial place and/or a social safety net.

Apart from the traditional authority system, the legislation governing customary marriages has also undergone some changes since April 1994.

6.4 CHANGES TO CUSTOMARY MARRIAGE LAW

Not only has the government changed, or attempted to change, traditional institutions, but it also had to make a pronouncement on customary law, particularly the laws governing customary marriages. Customary marriages are regarded by many as ‘the utmost form of discrimination against women’ (Bekker, 2003:125), in that traditionally women married under customary law fell under the guardianship of their husbands and were considered legal minors (Serote *et al.*, 2001:164). The *Recognition of Customary Marriages Act, Act 120 of 1998*, attempted to harmonise civil law and indigenous law by bringing customary marriages in line with civil law marriages (Bekker, 2001a:48).

Customary marriages differ in two significant ways from civil law marriages. Customary marriages are potentially polygynous, that is, one man may enter into a conjugal relationship with more than one woman at the same time. Also, customary marriage is a union between two family groups. Both family groups participate in the choice of marriage partners, the negotiations preceding the marriage, the agreement, the quantity and transfer of marriage goods (*lobola/ntsengo/xuma*), and the marriage ceremonies. In African traditional communities, a person has status and functions within group context, so the emphasis falls on the group. By contrast, civil law marriage functions in a system that emphasises individual rights and duties (Bekker, 2001b:41).

6.4.1 Giyani women’s differing views on polygyny

Even though polygyny is commonplace in Giyani, especially in the villages, women are often extremely uncomfortable talking about it. However, 54-year old Tinswalo, who was one of the first people I met when I first moved to Giyani, offered to share her experiences of and views about polygyny with me; perhaps because of our friendship, which had developed throughout the eleven years I lived there. Tinswalo was not a member of any of the four projects. In our conversations she told me about her daughter-in-law, who had returned to Giyani from Johannesburg, where the young

woman and Tinswalo's son live. She had left her husband a few months earlier. Tinswalo takes up the story:

She told me that my son has a girlfriend and she was not prepared to accept another wife in her house. I told her that she had done well not to put up with such nonsense. I summonsed my son to home next weekend, and I told him that I cannot face my makoti's family knowing that my son is not treating her well. Next weekend we must talk. I will not involve my husband because he will not understand – he has a second wife. I do not want this for my son. One man has only one heart – he cannot love two women. I always feel that I cannot share my deep thoughts and feelings with my husband, because he might tell the other wife. I often feel lonely in my marriage – I will not have my son do that to another woman.

I was always impressed by Tinswalo's reasoning about matters that other women might take for granted. Her narrative illustrates three important aspects of the way in which an increasing number of rural women experience customary marriage. Firstly, certain elements of customary marriage may be more acceptable than others. She is proud of the fact that her son has paid *lobola/ntsengo/xuma*, as this shows that he respects his family-in-law. However, she rejects his notion that polygyny is acceptable. Secondly, customs change because people reflect on their lives and make choices within the ambit of their possibilities. Although her own marriage is culturally acceptable, Tinswalo ponders on her experiences within a polygynous marriage and does not want her son to cause his wife the same pain she endures. Thirdly, customary laws or traditional practices favour men, mostly without considering women's feelings. Tinswalo related that other women in her village often ridicule her for wanting a 'Western' marriage for her children – a monogamous marriage. Even though she was socialised to accept the possibility of a polygynous marriage, she still feels emotionally abandoned within such a marriage.

Concerning the polygynous aspect of customary marriages, the South African Law Commission stated that it implies two different arguments: '...that men have rights which women lack and that a conjugal relationship structured on one husband and several

wives inevitably results in prejudice to women' (South African Law Commission, 1998:85,86, cited in Bekker, 2001a:49). The matter of polygyny is unresolved under the new legislation.

Concerning the inferior position of women as perpetual minors in customary marriages, the *Recognition of Customary Marriages Act* unequivocally removes these inequalities. Section 6 of the Act states that a 'wife in a customary marriage has on the basis of equality with her husband and subject to the matrimonial property system governing the marriage, full status and capacity to acquire assets and to dispose of them, to enter into contracts and to litigate, in addition to any rights and power that she might have at customary law' (Bekker, 2001a:49). Nevertheless, under customary law, married women do not own property, because they are maintained and sheltered within the family home and, if they are divorced, they have no claim to any property. If the fault is not theirs, their male relatives retain the *ntsengo* on their behalf and are supposed to take care of them and the husband cannot reclaim it.

Concerning inheritance or succession, '(t)he reform of the customary law of succession revolves around the fact that the system of male primogeniture is incompatible with the equality clause (section 9 of the Constitution)' (Bekker 2003:125). Bekker (2003) proposes that the *Intestate Succession Act, Act 81 of 1987*, provides a convenient solution for most of the problems in customary law, as the Act secures the material welfare of surviving spouses and children. Furthermore, 'once the Act is applied to all estates, regardless whether the deceased lived according to customary or civil law, a single system of succession will be established in South Africa bringing us closer to the ideal legal unity' (Bekker 2003:125). However, '[a]pplying the law of intestate succession without more ado will of course create an untold number of gaps such as the position of wives and children of supporting unions. The point is that the Intestate Succession Act works with spouses and descendants. A customary law spouse is hardly definable and some dependants or children belonging to the deceased family home will be left out in the cold if the Intestate Succession Act is literally applied' (Bekker, 2003:126).

Unlike the women involved in the four projects, Pam, a 51-year old teaching professional, unreservedly shared her very strong opinions about polygyny, inheritance and the power dynamics in her relationship with the father of her 13-year old son:

Joe, my son's father, asked to start negotiations to lobola me, but why should I get married? I have a profession, my own home, car, my independence and I can determine the terms of our relationship. I can insist that he uses a condom and so protect myself from HIV infection. No wife can insist on that – he would feel that she does not trust him and that would lead to major trust issues in the marriage. Also, most men think that because they pay lobola, the wife must just accept what he does. Even if he is the father of my son, he has other children too from a previous marriage that ended in divorce.... If I were married to him, my child would have to share his inheritance (which I worked very hard for) with his brothers – other women's children!

Pam's account highlights two reasons for her rejection of the conditions of customary marriage. Firstly, she knows that she has greater decision-making power outside marriage. If she were married (when *lobola* has been delivered to her family), she would surrender her power to discuss the terms of their relationship. This opinion is very different from that of Tinswalo, for whom *lobola* signifies respect for the receiving family. For Pam, *lobola* implies that the husband 'buys' the woman's reproductive and productive services, loyalty and acquiescence, even if she is unhappy with the manner in which he conducts his affairs.

The second reason that Pam gave for rejecting Joe's suggestion of entering into a customary marriage was that she wanted to retain control over her estate. If Pam was to marry, her children would be at a disadvantage in the event of her death. Pam indicated that she did not trust her partner to respect her wish for her son to inherit. This fear was clearly justified if she should die without a will. However, since the Constitutional Court

rulings in the Bhe⁹¹ case and the subsequent amendments to the *Customary Law of Succession*, all intestate estates from customary marriages are subject to the *Intestate Succession Act*; thus even if Pam did marry, her estate would be subject to this Act. Following the Bhe case, all deceased estates in customary unions will be distributed in terms of the *Intestate Succession Act*, which prescribes that an estate is shared equally among the descendants. In Pam's case, assuming she enters into a customary marriage with her partner and takes up residence with his other children in Polokwane, these children could be considered her descendants, and could, together with her spouse and her own biological son, be beneficiaries of her estate. Even though Pam's partner's other children are not her biological children, the Act states that 'descendants in relation to a deceased person, includes a person who, in terms of customary law, was a dependant of the deceased immediately before the death of the deceased'⁹². Obviously, Pam can protect her son's legacy by drawing up a will that reflects her wishes concerning her estate.

6.4.2 The contradictory legal framework governing customary law

Section 211 of the Constitution recognises the institution, status and role of traditional leadership, which, according to customary law, permits traditional authorities to observe customary law, subject to any applicable legislation and customs, and allows the courts to apply customary law when that law is applicable. All of these provisions are subject to the Constitution.

The South African Law Commission (1997, cited in Bekker, 2003:128) admits that it is 'unfortunately far from clear when customary law is applicable, for the rules on application are fragmentary, vague, badly drafted and out of date'. Nonetheless, fundamental rights take priority over customary rights. The Constitution is the highest

⁹¹In this landmark case, Ms Bhe contested the right her father-in-law had under customary law to sell the property of her deceased husband to pay for the son's funeral. This would mean that she and her two daughters would have been destitute (Curran & Bonthuys, 2004).

⁹²*Reform of Customary Law of Succession and Regulation of Related Matters Bill* (Republic of South Africa, 2008).

authority (Section 4(1) of the South African Constitution, Act 108 of 1996); and courts are required to promote values that underlie an open and democratic society based on freedom and equality (Section 4(1) of the South African Constitution).

For women who are caught between the customary and civil law systems, the responsibility falls to women to challenge, in the Constitutional Court, any political exclusions and injustices under customary law that are unconstitutional and result in gender discrimination. An application to the Constitutional Court makes actual the potential to fight for democracy, but for rural poor women, it is not a likely option. For the women in the rural villages in Giyani, the possibility of challenging their rights in the Constitutional Court is indeed remote.

In his discussion of the tension between democracy and traditional authority in South Africa, Ntsebeza (2006:458) observes that insofar as the Constitution ‘confers a common citizenship on all South Africans, urban and rural’, the assumption should be that whatever rights are enjoyed by urban South Africans should be equally enjoyed by their rural counterparts. This is, however, not the case. Two systems of law – civil law and customary law – operate and enjoy recognition in South Africa. Civil law has clearly formulated statutes and precedence,⁹³ which ensures legal certainty. In this regard, Oomen (2005:18) makes the following statement:

The more that it became clear that there was no such thing – and never had been – as a fixed body of customary law ready to be ascertained, but that living law was a fluid, relational and negotiated system intimately tied to fluctuating social and political relations, the more the claims of “official customary law” become untenable.

This implies that, within customary law, there cannot be legal certainty. The traditional courts of chiefs and headmen deal with disputes at the community level and are responsible for the administration of justice in communal (tribal) areas. Hartman *et al.* (1993:17-18) discuss what they call the ‘imperfections of the indigenous authority system’ and highlight four aspects.

⁹³ Precedence means that judicial decisions taken provide a rule for subsequent decisions.

Firstly, they concur that legal certainty does not exist under customary law, since there are no precise prescriptions of the roles and responsibilities of authority figures. This means that in tribal courts similar offences can be dealt with in different ways. This creates potential for treating women differently from men or for the concerns of women to be trivialised. The complaint made by one of the participants that members of a traditional court disregarded her complaint of her husband's verbal abuse (see Section 6.3.2) is a case in point here.

The second matter that Hartman *et al.* (1993) highlight is the fact that there is no clearly defined process for resolving conflict between authority figures and their subjects. Whereas a *ndhuna* (headman) who exceeds his authority or neglects his duties can be reported to the chief, the people have no recourse if the chief behaves or acts in an objectionable manner.

Thirdly, under traditional law, rights such as residential rights or protection against corruption are not entrenched. This means that it is possible for a chief to withdraw a person's residential rights without just cause and that such a person would not have a simple way, within that legal system, of instituting legal action against the chief or his council.

Fourthly, the chief has no legal persona in his official capacity. This means that the chief cannot be charged for actions he executes as a chief. The only legal recourse would be to lodge a complaint against the chief in his personal capacity. Such a complaint will then have to be lodged outside the traditional legal system in, say, a magistrate's court.

The fact that traditional leaders have tremendous powers because of the limited constitutional and legislative guidance on local government (Beall *et al.*, 2005:766) makes rural people, particularly women, extremely vulnerable: '...displeasing the chief can potentially render an individual or a family homeless and without a livelihood, [whereas] opportunities for patronage abound' (Beall *et al.*, 2005:764).

So, while, in theory, the Constitution is decisive and the equality clause (section 9), augmented by the *Promotion for Equality and Prevention of Unfair Discrimination Act*,

Act 4 of 2000 (Republic of South Africa, 2000), obliges the government to provide equal treatment for all, rural women's lived experience is that they are treated differently on three counts. Firstly, unlike their rural sisters, urban women live under and have rights that are protected by the courts. In a context of legal certainty, they know that if they have been wronged, the court will ensure that they receive justice. Secondly, rural women are likely to be married under customary law and they do not enjoy the same rights as they would have had under civil law in terms of property rights and inheritance. Thirdly, being governed by a patriarchal system that, for a long time, has considered women to be minors under the guardianship of their fathers or husbands means that women are treated differently from men. Even though the *Recognition of Customary Marriages Act* has tried to correct this matter, '(t)he living law will probably for a long time to come differ from the law on paper' (Bekker, 2003:129).

6.5 MARRIED LIFE FOR VILLAGE WOMEN

The results of the survey that I conducted in Giyani and the surrounding villages revealed that 98% of the project participants were married. Most of these participants were women and the average age of participants was 49 years. Thus, married, middle-aged women formed the majority of the project participants. In Giyani, a woman of 49 is likely to have adult children and grandchildren. Therefore the lived experiences of married women, particularly those living within an extended family context in the villages, need closer scrutiny.

My discussions with the women at the four projects highlighted a remarkable reality. In the Giyani area, a married woman takes up patriarchy and patrilocal residence after marriage; this means that a married woman spends her life in the homestead of her in-laws, where she may experience subtle, if not open, hostility from those with whom she spends most of her time. I understood this better when an old man in Gaula Village explained to me some months after I had completed my research that married women do not have any blood connection to the husband's place and their husband's ancestors

do not know them; the wives' 'family blood' is at their fathers' homes and their ancestors are there too.

A married woman is not only the 'stranger' at the in-laws homestead, she is also the one expected to make ends meet, with or without any assistance from a husband or male relative working elsewhere, and she is expected to perform the daily household chores. Several women indicated that since 1994, more village households have running water close to, or at their homesteads. At most homesteads, electricity is available (provided the household can afford it); thus cooking no longer requires the collection of firewood and laundry is now often done at home, rather than at the nearby river. These developments theoretically give the women more time to spare, but the women I spoke to indicated that it provided fewer opportunities for mutual interaction, and left less time for sharing local gossip, joys and hardships. Without these opportunities, women said they often felt isolated and were confined to their homesteads, where they were often confronted with conflict between them and their family-in-law. By contrast, small-scale projects were places that allowed the participants to feel safe from physical and emotional harm.

The feeling of isolation and confinement to the home was expressed particularly by the older women, who stated that if it were not for the projects, they would have been '*trapped at home*'. Many of these women left their daughters or *vamakoti* [daughters-in-law] in charge of managing things at home. The women at the projects had contradictory views about *vamakoti*. Most believed that they should treat their *vamakoti* as badly as they had been treated when they were young brides. The burdening of the young bride by her mother-in-law resonates with Kandiyoti's (1997:90) explanation of the cyclical nature of women's power in their households:

Woman's lifecycle in the patriarchally extended family is such that the deprivation and hardship she experiences as a young bride is eventually superseded by the control and authority she will have over her own subservient daughters-in-law.

Therefore even though projects provided reflective spaces for older women to escape their domestic confines for a few hours a day, the fact that many of these women treated

their *vamakoti* badly indicated to me that patriarchal practices such as the subordination of women were being perpetuated in their homes.

After interviewing the women at the four projects, I concluded that for the participants of the projects it was a case of ‘the more things change, the more they stay the same’. Even though the physical activities of the women changed, the majority of them still clung to long-established practices and attitudes. With the increased participation of the women in the various projects, they were no longer just in the home tending to their families. The resultant feelings of affirmation and confidence that the women all said they experienced because of their activities at the projects did not, unfortunately, translate into their affirming and building the confidence of the young *vamakoti* who tended to their households.

6.6 MEN’S RESPONSES TO CHANGES IN THE HOME

The comments by Martha cited at the beginning of the chapter about her husband’s not being in favour of her participation in the project and her almost defiant attitude (*‘there is nothing he can say’*) suggested that women were changing and that the men had no choice in the matter. This realisation prompted me to investigate how men responded to these changes. Also, the reference in Section 6.3.2 to men’s sitting around all day doing nothing needed closer examination. I observed that men do sit in small clusters (groups of two to five) of middle-aged men under trees at homesteads in the villages of Giyani district, and this gave superficial support to the statement. I included this aspect in my discussion with the women at the projects, but also decided that the voices of men should be heard.

As the few men who participated in the projects did not want to discuss topics they regarded as personal, I interviewed six young men (aged 19 to 30 years) who were willing to discuss gender issues any attempt to elicit the views of the middle-aged men that formed a small cohort of eight among the 49 women at the Ahitipfluxeni project were futile: they told me that, because I was a woman, they were not comfortable with discussing their feelings with me.

Even though the younger men were college students and not part of development projects, their views provide some insight into how a group of young men in Giyani experience the changes happening in the Giyani area, specifically the increased opportunities for women. On the question of why so many groups of older men can be seen sitting around in the villages and Giyani town, the young men indicated that many migrant workers (especially mineworkers) have been retrenched over the years or returned to their villages in ill health.

My research suggested that in this rural area of Giyani, men have limited employment prospects; and even government initiatives such as the Expanded Public Works Programme (EPWP; see Section 5.6.3) places great emphasis on creating work opportunities for women. Gender and Development thinking includes men, but how men cope (or do not cope) with the changes accompanying the empowerment of women is not often considered. Thus, in my consideration of gender issues, I cannot leave men out of the equation.

6.6.1 Young men's views on changing gender relations

The group of young men who shared their opinions with me about how they felt about the changing role of women and gender-related matters stated that, even though they did not condone the oppression of women, change was not easy.

One of the greatest concerns that these young men expressed was the unreasonably large amount of *lobola* (bridewealth) that they as aspirant teachers would be expected to pay to the family of the bride they chose. In a village, teachers are often the highest income earners and are therefore considered to be rich and the family of the bride would want to capitalise on this 'wealth' that their daughter would marry into.

Four of the six young men I discussed the matter with stated that they already had a child with their 'girlfriend'. Girlfriends are what they call the mothers of their children, but they expressed reluctance to proceed with the cultural imperatives to formalise a customary marriage. One of the young men described his dilemma as follows: *'If we*

get married in court [meaning a civil marriage] *it would be like turning our backs on our families and we could not go to them if we needed them in future.*' Thus, breaking away from tradition has consequences that will isolate the newly-weds from their families, whereas a customary marriage will strengthen their family ties and expand the couple's family networks through the joining of two family groups (see Section 6.4). Unless a couple is prepared to sever their extended family ties, the transfer of *lobola* as an essential component of customary unions is inescapable for young men.

It was evident from the discussions that these young men did not object to the concept of *lobola*, but that they took issue with the fact that they would have to pay their bride's family the equivalent of two months' salary. At the time when the interviews were conducted, this amounted to R 12 000,⁹⁴ with little hope of assistance from their own families, who had invested a great proportion of the limited family income to educate their sons. As one young man lamented, *'when my dad was alive we had some cattle, so it would not have been a problem for my family to negotiate lobola with cattle, but now, besides the fact that we do not have cattle, many families want cash'*. The preference for cash over cattle echoes Comaroff and Comaroff's (1990:197) findings concerning the shift from 'the centrality of cattle in ... bridewealth to cash'.

A positive solution to the payment of bridewealth in cash was shared by one man, who stated that his girlfriend insisted that since she had no say in the amount her family would demand, she would assist with the payment of *lobola*: *'She said that since we would both be earning the same as teachers, we should both contribute equally.'* Though he appreciated the offer, he felt uncomfortable about how it might be perceived by others in the family and community if this arrangement became known. As he said, *'I always felt that being a man means that one should provide for your family, and even with gender equality, I still feel uncomfortable about people knowing about our arrangement.'*

What was clear from his narrative is that he has to redefine his understanding of masculinity, as he draws on an understanding of human rights to reframe particular

⁹⁴ At the time, R 12 000 was equivalent to about US \$1 200, and was considered to be a 'reasonable' amount for an educated bride such as a qualified teacher.

practices; he is still caught in the traditional cultural understanding of what being the head of the family implies. As Sideris (2004:30) asserts, 'cultural constructions of what it means to be a man not only legitimise male authority, but also socialise men with a set of regulations that spell out the rights, duties and obligations that accompany paternal authority'. Notwithstanding this young man's discomfort with the uncertainties and ambiguity induced by changes in gender identity, I believe that his appreciation of his girlfriend's offer generates goodwill that will be carried into their marriage.

In stark contrast, the burden of *lobola* together with the uncertainty whether they would be taken up in the teaching profession weighed heavily on three of the six men. The longer the conversation lasted, the more resentful they became of the high price of *lobola*. This resentment was expressed with statements such as '*it will suck out all my blood*'; '*it's not fair that I should have to pay so much – it is exploitation*' and '*we won't afford to buy a house for many years*'. These negative feelings do not bode well for entering marriage. These three young men expressed a sense of being entitled to demand that their future brides cope with all the domestic chores without expecting any help from them, regardless of whether she is employed and so contributes to the family income. It was apparent that, whatever gender equality rhetoric exists, the households of these three men were not likely to be characterised by a conscious attempt to create more equal ways of sharing domestic tasks and decisions that would transform traditional gender roles. Even with high levels of education, their future economic ability and their political activism as students, these three aspirant teachers were clear about the fact that with the payment of a high bridewealth, they would 'buy' the right to hold the dominant power in their households.

The conversations with these aspirant teachers suggested that the process of transforming gender relations means that individuals, institutions and communities should alter conventional ideas, values, habits and routines by redefining their ideas and practices. An insistence on large cash amounts for *lobola* is one such practice in need of review.

On the topic of women in professional careers, the six men were very open-minded about equality based on ability – for them it seemed fair that the best person for any job

should be appointed, irrespective of gender. Some of the men had completed a two-month practice teaching period at schools with women principals. They were impressed by the hard work and dedication of the women principals, which ensured that the schools functioned well. Pete, a fourth-year student, related that at the school where he did his practice teaching, there were *'two men on the staff, grumbling about the principal; they could not really make a fuss without looking as if they were lazy'*. The observation that schools headed by women are successful is corroborated by the fact that three such schools in the Giyani area (one in the town and two in surrounding villages) have consistently had matriculation pass rates between 80 and 100% (Mr Baloyi, Mopani District Education Department, personal communication). The views shared by this group of educated men on the brink of their careers conveyed a particular perspective that is likely to be very different from that of older, less educated men.

This study would really have benefited from the insights of particularly middle-aged men who have to cope with changes in their relationships as a result of the changes brought about by the shifting role of women in the Giyani area. In other words, the views of the husbands of the women participating in the projects would have been ideal, but talking to me about this was not culturally acceptable. Aside from the fact that men do not discuss relationship matters with women, I had built up close ties with the women in the selected projects who may have feared that I would betray confidences to their husbands if I had made any attempt to interview their husbands.

However, research in Africa by other scholars, such as Hodgson and McCurdy (1996), Jiggins (1989) and Mupedziswa and Gumbo (2001) shows that men have difficulties with the uncertainties and ambiguities induced by the empowerment of women. Ramphela and Boonzaier (1988) suggest that gender relationships involve power dynamics. The dominant understanding of power⁹⁵ assumes that power is limited, meaning that when one individual or group gets more, the others get less. Given this understanding of power, the empowerment of women implies the reduction of men's power and this may pose a serious threat to how some men understand 'manhood'. So while the

⁹⁵ Chapter 1 describes other forms of power, such as 'power to' (an increase in skills and abilities – empowerment), 'power with' (collective power) and 'power within' (individuals' internal strength) (see Section 1.7.1).

empowerment of women is a positive matter, for some men, particularly those living in very patriarchal communities, it is very disturbing. The emotional uncertainty may contribute to the alarmingly high levels of domestic violence in South Africa. As women gain greater independence, men often react violently in attempting to assert their control over women (Morrell, 1998:13). This type of strong masculine identity is rooted in a historical context that I describe briefly below.

6.6.2 Understanding the historical context of power and masculinity

Robert Morrell (1998:14), in his interpretation of masculinity and gender in South Africa, claims that the cumulative effects on youth of colonialism, apartheid and urbanisation, led to '(t)he old idea central to African masculinity, that being a man meant to be in control of oneself, not to resort to violence ... and to be wise was replaced with a tough masculinity'.

Ramphela and Boonzaier (1988) make interesting observations about how South Africa's history of racial discrimination and oppression has affected black men. They claim that racial oppression brought out the worst kind of chauvinism, especially in working-class men. Women and children were often the only bolster against the powerlessness and frustration men felt. The oppression they experienced in the wider society acted as a framework for their domination of women. This domination was 'reinforced by an appeal to "tradition" to justify practices that are said to be central to "African culture"' (Ramphela & Boonzaier, 1988:166).

Understanding that male dominance is part of African culture and that the current economic conditions also influence male domination means that making successful gender changes necessitates the full participation of men and addressing their fears and uncertainties emanating from the shifts that are challenging their gender identities. High levels of unemployment rob men of their dignity and they may express their feelings of

emasculatation in violent ways⁹⁶ (see Mupedziswa & Gumbo, 2001:112). Social tensions in the home cannot be approached from the perspective of the empowerment of women only.

The lived experience of the rural women who were interviewed in this study is that they were treated as inferiors outside the projects in which they participated. Domestic tensions increased the appeal of being part of small-scale projects. Thus, the question that arises is whether men could not also benefit from the support of small groups to help them as they reshape their understanding of masculinity and build more positive identities.

6.2.3 Support groups for men

Since gender roles and relationships are socially learned and reinforced, there is a need for new masculinity models to be conceptualised which are in keeping with the present demand for gender equality.

In an insightful study, Tina Sideris (2004) identified the lack of role models as a handicap for a group of rural South African men who sincerely aspired to relational care and equity in their intimate relationships. She found that without role models and with little social support for constructing different practices, the men displayed apprehension about not knowing how to confirm their sense of themselves as men (Sideris, 2004:29). Sideris's findings about the lack of role models and ignorance concerning gender power relations resonated with what a 45-year old Chemistry lecturer in Giyani expresses clearly:

I am so excited about this programme at our church in which we deal with issues of manhood. Before then, I did not examine my cultural assumptions about being a man – which is rather surprising, considering that I am educated and in my role as lecturer, I unintentionally serve as a role model for my students.

⁹⁶ In the United Kingdom, Ruxton (2002:15) describes how men faced with poverty also turned their frustrations on themselves through passivity, illness and even suicide.

The Giyani area is a traditional area and thus very patriarchal, so there are few role models for young men to emulate. Even in the political or public arena, this lack of role models is evident. The prominence of polygynists in powerful public office in South Africa only compounds the problem. Morrell (cited in Sideris, 2004:47) believes that South Africa needs to move away from tough 'black masculinity' and to revert back to 'African masculinity' – meaning an African conception of manhood and family relations which represents a set of values containing the elements of personal discipline, responsibility and reciprocity.

Given the lack of public role models, it is hoped that institutions such as religious and educational organisations will create reflective spaces where men can construct a more positive sense of gender identity, while also serving as facilitators of change.

The next chapter examines another type of change, ageing, and the role that one project plays in dealing with retirement and ageing.

CHAPTER 7: A PLACE OF SOLIDARITY FOR THE ELDERLY

7.1 INTRODUCTION

By way of introduction, two points need to be noted in this chapter. The first is that the project under discussion is officially named the 'Giyani Society for the Care of the Aged' (registered as a non-profit organisation, NPO 001-803), but in Giyani, the project is referred to by a strange-sounding name, the 'Giyani Aged Garden' or just the 'Aged Garden'. I therefore refer to the project by this local name. The second point to note is that in this chapter I do not refer to project participants by their first names, as I do in the rest of the study, because it is culturally unacceptable for younger people to address an elderly person by his or her first name, as it would imply a lack of respect.

The golden thread running through this thesis is 'dealing with change', and in particular the role that participation in a small-scale development project plays in the lives of some of the inhabitants of Giyani. Whereas the previous chapters dealt with the many political, social and economic changes that Giyani has undergone since the 1980s, the focus in this chapter is on the role of the Giyani Aged Garden in people's confrontation with the changes brought about by old age. I aim to show that that this project is more to project members than just a means of keeping fit and growing vegetables. For many, it has become a sanctuary, a place where those who have made the transition into retirement can remain active and engaged, a place of solidarity that provides an effective antidote to what Luborsky (1994:411) calls the 'profound transformations of public and personal identities that occur at the onset of retirement life'.

I have a very vivid recollection of my first visit to the Giyani Aged Project. Entering the premises, my assistant and I started walking towards a group of elderly women who were quietly watching us from the shade of a huge old acacia tree. Their faces were pleasant and welcoming, but it was only after we had greeted them and had explained

the purpose of our visit that the smiles started breaking through. One of them mentioned that she often saw me passing the premises (I lived about 500 metres from there) and I recalled buying vegetables from two of the others. Everyone seemed to regard our visit as a welcome interlude and I remember being struck by their eagerness to join in the conversation and to share their experiences with me. There was no sign of any reticence and – as they told me later – they felt affirmed, valued and appreciated. It was only some weeks later, when I interacted with a few teenagers in a different setting and was told how *'troublesome'* old people are – always nagging, and always an embarrassment for them when their friends come to visit – that these elderly people's hunger for acknowledgement really made sense to me. This was to be the first of a number of visits to the Giyani Aged Garden and the cohort of 21 senior citizens was always complete. Besides the five semi-structured interview sessions that I had with the group, I enjoyed many informal discussions with individuals and small groups – typically two or three – over the three months that my assistant and I became 'regulars' at the project.

Unlike with participants in the other projects that formed part of this study, I had very limited interaction with the members of the Giyani Aged Garden as a group prior to commencing with my research. I have to admit that the respect for older people that had been inculcated in me since early childhood made me slightly insecure about how I was going to conduct this very important part of my research. For this reason, I followed Jennie Keith's three-stage participant observational approach (cited in Rubenstein, 1990:4). The first stage or early research phase of the Keith approach is typically inclusive – asking many questions on many different topics in order to build up sufficient background knowledge – casting one's net wide, in a manner of speaking. This stage is followed by more focused and judicious inquiry and data collection. The third stage involves the further refinement of data collection with increased personal closeness with research participants. This last stage is the point that 'permits the researcher to gain the greatest degree of insight into the informants' subjectivities and the inner workings and meanings within the culture' (Rubenstein, 1990:4).

My research at the Aged Garden focused on different levels of significance (cf, Rubenstein 1990:15) and involved data collection on three levels. Firstly, I looked at the project level, where, in a narrow sense, one is concerned with the values, behaviour and roles that members share within the project environment. Secondly, I explored the broader external environment – the way in which the elderly are perceived and valued by outsiders and what it therefore means to be an old person in Giyani.⁹⁷ Lastly, I explored the really personal level, ‘the realm of personal meanings, routines and ideas’ by discussing the role of the Aged Garden in the life of one of its members with that member.

During the phase of building up general background information, the conversations often digressed along various tangents. While digressions are an integral part of anthropological research, the tendency to go off on a tangent was more pronounced when working with the aged. One person started talking, another would add to what the first was saying and this triggered a memory of some or other event in the mind of another who then guided the conversation in a direction the first person might not have intended. Many of the participants’ reflections were about activities that had been arranged by the management committee of the Aged Garden. Tales about past social events such as the annual Big Walk⁹⁸ were shared and laughed about and this naturally often led to recollections of members who were either no longer with the project because of frail health, or because they were ‘already late’ (had passed away).

In the initial group conversations, I was always impressed by the joy, excitement and pride with which the participants conversed about their activities and it was clear to me that this was not just a gathering place for the aged. It was indeed a place of refuge.

⁹⁷ It is particularly one old man’s words: *‘around here, old people are thought to become witches and wizards’* that impressed upon me the need to explore how the youth in Giyani view the elderly.

⁹⁸ Once a year the Aged Garden arranges a three-kilometre fun-run/walk referred to as the Big Walk.

7.2 THE HISTORY OF THE GIYANI AGED GARDEN PROJECT

The Giyani Aged Garden caters for people who are in transition – transition from a time of being productive and part of the workforce to retirement, transition from a time of physical strength and good health to physical deterioration and declining health, transitions often accompanied by increasing isolation and loneliness. The ending of a career at retirement seemed to be an extremely traumatic experience for most of the project participants with whom I interacted. Old age is often associated with ‘inevitable and irreversible deterioration’ and newly retired people who have had successful careers often have difficulty dealing with these perceptions (Nydegger 1984:21). Fry (1981:13) asserts that it is beneficial for older people to associate with their peers when adjusting to old age, and the Giyani Aged Garden project provides some insight into the benefits of social relationships and productive activity that projects such as this offer to participants

The Giyani Aged Garden was started in 1987 by Mr Shamba, an agricultural extension officer in the Gazankulu government, who was nearing retirement. He sent a motivation to the senior management in his department for the establishment of a garden for the aged in the area. The timing of his proposal was particularly fortunate, since the Gazankulu government of the time had the interests of its people at heart (see Section 2.2). The proposal coincided with the time when the world started to focus on the ageing process.⁹⁹ Mr Shamba believed that *‘creative thinking to improve the quality of life of people, including the aged, is a necessity in Gazankulu’* and he therefore presented a proposal to the homeland government to start a vegetable garden for the aged. The idea was accepted, since the stated purpose of the project was to provide for the needs of the aged in Giyani – ranging from helping the aged to grow vegetables and thus to increase their nutritional status and ‘counter’ the physical deterioration associated with old age to organising social activities and facilitating welfare services (NPO, s.a.).

⁹⁹ The first World Assembly on Aging was held in Vienna in 1982. With this Assembly both the academic and political focus fell on the global ageing population (King, 2008:107).

The response to Mr Shamba's proposal was a fenced premise with an administration building and 53 plots for gardens, as well as taps, garden hoses, spades, forks and rakes. A *lapa* (a thatched, roofed rest area with ablution facilities) was added later with the help of the Giyani Rotary Club and a Canadian Rotary Club.

7.3 THE GIYANI AGED GARDEN PROJECT SITE

The Giyani Aged Garden is located at the north-eastern edge of the town of Giyani in the relatively affluent suburb of Section D2. The area is considered to be affluent because the residents are home-owners. Both the poorer Section F (with municipal housing) and Makoxa village are within five kilometres of the garden, which places the Section D2 site within reach of residents of all three areas. The land acquisition and servicing of the project was initially funded by the Gazankulu Department of Agriculture.

The garden has a fenced site of 6 500 square metres which has been subdivided into 53 garden plots, each measuring approximately three metres by six metres. The garden plots take up roughly half of the area of the premises. There is adequate space between the plots and an adequate number of water taps are interspersed between the plots so that plot holders can easily obtain water by attaching garden hoses to the taps. The project site is a rectangular area, with one short side facing the Nsami Dam road, while the other is adjacent to an open field. The longer sides of the site adjoin private residences. The site is tucked snugly between private residences with dogs barking and children shouting and playing. Entry to the Giyani Aged Garden is gained from the Nsami Dam road, through a double gate. Towards the far right end and just beyond the gate, there is a large open area with a big shady acacia tree, with the office building located to the left of it. Behind the office is the ablution and recreational area. The ablution and recreational facilities were added at a much later stage and were built by the Giyani Rotary Club with funds from the Rotary Club of Gage Town, Canada.

A committee, which is elected by the members from their own membership, allocates and monitors the use of the available resources. The garden plots are procured by paying a nominal annual membership fee. At the time when the research was done in

2004, the annual membership was R30 per year, which is less than 1% of the members' annual income from pensions. The vegetables produced by participants may be used for domestic consumption and the surplus may be sold. The Department of Agriculture also provides an annual allocation, which in 2003 amounted to R10 000. The project is registered on the database of the Provincial Department of Health and Welfare, which renders services such as the monthly monitoring and provision of medication for patients with hypertension and diabetes who are members of the Aged Garden.

At my very first visit to the Giyani Aged Garden, the social structure of the group became immediately evident. The project members form two distinct groups. The first consists of well-educated retired civil servants who form the committee responsible for overseeing the business side of the project and the other of ordinary members (mostly women with little or no schooling) who grow vegetables.

Even though the project committee is elected democratically, those with education are most likely to be elected. The committee is responsible for overseeing maintenance of the project's infrastructure and for managing the project activities, which include accessing services from local government departments to benefit the members. The committee draws up an annual educational programme on issues affecting the project members, such as abuse of the elderly, health matters, recreation and legislative changes that may have an impact on the lives of the aged (changes in pensions and other government services).

From the conversations I had with project members, I learnt that the 'ordinary members' are largely women with little or no schooling who have come to live with their adult children in Section D2. These women's children have become upwardly mobile through education and now live in their own homes in the suburb of D2. Together with the other members, who are from the poorer Section F, members meet daily to tend their gardens, catch up on the local gossip, obtain information and participate in the activities organised by the committee.

The information given to me by the committee revealed that the composition of the two groups of aged at the Giyani Aged Garden display different dynamics. Little variation in

the number and composition occurred within the membership of the committee and, with the exception of the instability discussed later (Section 7.8), the composition of the committee has remained relatively stable over the years. The number of non-committee members showed some fluctuation, as membership is largely determined by the ability to pay the annual fee. The committee members can afford the annual membership fee and remain members for as long as they wish, while the non-committee members sometimes cannot.

Since the annual fee is due in January of each year, potential members could lose out because they may not have the R30 available after the festive season. Initially, the annual fee was R7 per year. Two women who have been members since 1987 complained that *'the annual fee increases every year, but the plot sizes don't'*. They nevertheless valued their membership of the project greatly. These two 80-year old women explained that even if the membership fee increases annually, they hope to secure a garden plot for as long as they are physically able to till the soil. For them, working with the soil is therapeutic: *'It keeps us young and helps us to forget the problems at home.'*

7.4 REASONS FOR INVOLVEMENT IN PROJECTS

The concept of an 'old-age home' is foreign in Giyani, as elderly kinsfolk form an integral part of the family, in accordance with Shangaan-Tsonga custom. For example, grandmothers are caregivers and nannies. It is therefore not surprising that the aged try to find other organisations where they can interact with their peers. The results of my survey revealed that about one third (31%) of the people in the Giyani area who are involved in projects are between 60 and 80 years old. I am aware of groups of elderly people meeting in surrounding villages such as Mapayeni, Siyandani and Maswanganyi. These are groups arranged through their local churches. However, these church-based groups did not form part of my study, as I focused specifically on the Giyani Aged Garden. How the project functions and the important role it plays in the lives of its members became more evident with each of my visits.

In general, the old people whom I had interviewed can be described as valuable resources to their families, through their labour in caring for grandchildren and, more importantly, through their pensions. More than half (54%) of the households in the Giyani area subsist primarily on an income from government grants. Of this portion of households, 60% have pensions as the only form of income. Among the membership of the Giyani Aged Garden, it was found that women very often headed their adult children's households and cared for the grandchildren, as the parents of these children were employed elsewhere, particularly in Polokwane (150 kilometres from Giyani).

The two distinct groups at the Aged Garden have different reasons for being involved in the project, and thus different needs are being fulfilled. Broadly speaking, the group of retired civil servants, who have worked for many years and possibly reached high positions in their careers, use this project as a space for adjusting to the intense change to people's public and personal identities at the start of retirement (Luborsky, 1994:411). This can be seen in the example of Mr Seda, a former civil servant with experience in financial management. Mr Seda has found a niche within the Aged Garden, as he manages the books of the project. The project receives an annual allowance from the Provincial Department of Health and Welfare to cover running costs for water, electricity and telephones. Financial help is also received from other institutions such as the National Lotteries Fund and the funds made available by the Rotary Club of Giyani in collaboration with the Gage Town Rotary club in Canada. The Giyani local municipality also supports the Aged Garden, but this is usually towards the end of the financial year when the municipality does not want to be seen to be under-spending its allocation from the National Treasury.¹⁰⁰ With his many years of experience in financial management, Mr Seda meticulously and without recompense manages the funds of the Aged Garden.

On the other hand, the group of unschooled women benefit by growing vegetables for their households while enjoying the opportunity to socialise with their peers and access some services from government departments. For example, staff from the Giyani Health Centre visit the project once a month to screen and monitor the health of members with

¹⁰⁰ This practice of spending money just before the end of the financial year is commonly known as 'fiscal dumping' and the Giyani Aged Garden has clearly benefited from it in the past.

diseases such as diabetes and hypertension. The Health Centre also acts as a port of first call when members notice some changes in their health and the staff from the Centre also conduct information sessions on nutrition or related topics. Such health and welfare services may not be so easily accessible to people outside the project group.

The members usually spend about three hours at the project daily, from Mondays to Fridays. They try to complete each day's work before it becomes too hot. No one is compelled work every day, or for a set number of hours. Individual members judge their success as individuals in the group by the quality of their crops. A bountiful and good quality harvest is a source of pride, while also serving as a means of saying thank you to those who make it all possible. The garden gates are closed at 17:00. Members can come and go as they please and the members appreciate this freedom, as it gives them a sense of independence and self-determination which, according to Henderson (1990:51) is important to a perception of health in old age.

During my conversations with project members, another very important aspect came to light, namely that the project and the opportunity for social interaction that it provides serve as an antidote to social isolation. Alongside the physical activity of tending to their garden plots, the members engage in the activity of planning and discussing social activities. With the words '*we teach each other how to dance and arrange competitions with other old people*', the members expressed an eagerness to share and to interact with others that I missed in the conversations and interviews that I conducted with younger people in other projects.

It seemed to me that belonging to the Aged Garden project resulted in a coherent and identifiable group that undertook activities together, for example, the annual fun walk from Giyani High School to the stadium (a walk of 1.5 kilometres), attending lectures given by invited speakers on topics of interest to the aged, such as local government and its services for the aged, diet and nutrition, as well as caring for HIV/AIDS patients, to mention just a few. It was apparent from the enthusiastic manner in which activities were explained and how often anecdotes focused on past activities that the members really enjoyed this aspect of their participation – one member commented: '*We organise a braai or party for no real reason and we can party like teenagers.*' These sentiments

resonate with the African Union (AU) Framework and Action Plan on Ageing which holds that the quality of life of the aged can be improved by active participation in leisure, cultural and sporting programmes (HelpAge International, s.a.:6). All the members interviewed said that they '*feel safe*' and that '*no-one steals the others' crops*'.

Even though the committee members and the non-committee members form two distinct groups within the larger group, the cohesion and group identity is very strong. Each member, regardless of whether he or she is a committee member or not, takes co-responsibility for the project. Their roles are clearly delineated: '*We all see that the Aged Garden is neat and clean and we report to the committee any problems like if the fence is cut...then they fix it.*' Members come to the Aged Garden daily, because they '*feel happy coming to the project*'. Besides fulfilling their organisational and administrative tasks, the committee members also give the project members guidance, which means that the leaders are valued for their skill and knowledge. As one woman stated, '*they show us how to grow crops in rows and water our plants and we respect and obey them*'. The relationship between the members was extraordinary respectful and it was surprising to me that there seemed to be very little, if any, animosity and rancour. Members were fully aware of their place and role within the group and the group functioned harmoniously. The manner in which the committee dealt with the project members was remarkable in that they managed to give guidance without being preachy or heavy-handed. During the interviews, the participants explained the workings of the group in more or less the same words as expressed by one woman who said that '*the committee ... call a meeting and explain to us and then we come with our ideas...it is not as if they tell us what to do, but we all share ideas about what to do*'. When agreement is reached, it is the committee that executes the ideas that are agreed upon and the members see this outcome as indicating that '*our wishes hav[e] been taken care of*'.

Boyer (1980) found that high levels of activity and social interaction are related to a high quality of health perception. This means that the activities organised at the Aged Garden are very important to just how healthy members consider themselves to be. Furthermore, Boyer (1980) claims that the homogenous composition of a group

contributes to the sense of health and well-being of elderly people, possibly because of the absence of clashes with younger people. From the interviews and conversations that I had with project members, it was evident that the members of the Aged Garden were vibrant, and were energised by a relatively good experience of the project encounter. This observation is in line with Boyer's findings, as this project accommodates only older people, so that inter-generational conflict is avoided at the site and this adds to the well-being of the members. Indeed, this fact was articulated by the members of the Aged Garden projects who, in small group discussions, stated that they felt physically and emotionally safe while they were at the project. They said that they did not experience this feeling of safety and being affirmed at home.

The Giyani Aged Garden does not market or sell produce on a commercial basis, since members can easily sell the small surplus they produce to their neighbours and other residents in town who know about them. Before I visited the Aged Garden, my colleagues and I often bought produce from a former colleague's father, who was involved in the project: he would advertise the availability of vegetables to the college community by putting up posters on the college campus. The produce was soon sold, since the price and quality of the produce was good (the college staff also felt an obligation to support their neighbours and the aged.).

After the discussions and interviews that I conducted with the members of the Giyani Aged Garden project, I came away with a better understanding of the project and the role it plays in the lives of the Giyani aged who are lucky enough to be part of the group. Not only is the project important for the physical activity involved in gardening, but it also creates an opportunity to share stories and laughter, the consequence of which is a strong feeling of community, of being part of a group. This seemed to make these Giyani senior citizens happy. Despite the fact that many of the members had some health problems, these were not the focal point of their daily existence. Instead it was the gossip, the sharing of stories, the little irritations because of what someone did or failed to do that filled the days of the members of the Aged Garden.

The fact that the Aged Garden also serves as a place where the Health Centre conducts monthly health check-up visits makes this project a place where the South African

government can honour its commitment to the AU's Framework and Action Plan on Ageing (HelpAge International, s.a.:8-22). The Framework recommends that member states 'undertake to guarantee the delivery of health services that meet the specific needs of older people'. The Framework includes a recommendation to 'develop and implement a strategy for the management of chronic health conditions that become more prevalent in old age including, for example, dementia, hypertension and diabetes' (HelpAge International, s.a.:12). With the monthly Health Centre visits to the Aged Garden, where the members' chronic health conditions can be monitored and managed, the objective of the AU Framework and Action Plan on Ageing recommendation is met.

This community-based Aged Garden project also serves as an opportunity for the Government to meet the objective of another AU recommendation, which is to 'undertake to design, develop, and implement practical, realistic and appropriate social welfare strategies that include the concerns of older people'. The strategies listed in the Framework include 'ensuring the provision of adequate and accessible recreational and leisure facilities both in urban and rural areas to avoid/reduce boredom, loneliness and depression; decentralising health, welfare and social services to ensure access by older persons; designing programmes and services to sustain the independence of older persons in rural areas and facilitating and strengthening traditional rural and community support mechanisms (HelpAge International, s.a.:17). The measure to which the Giyani Aged Garden meets the requirements of the Framework recommendations is remarkable. This humble-looking community Aged Garden project is not a sophisticated concept; it is at first glance rather mundane. Yet, it is in places such as these that the South African government as an AU member can honour the obligations imposed by the recommendation of the AU Framework and Action Plan on Ageing.

7.5 THE GIYANI AGED GARDEN IN THE LIVES OF ITS MEMBERS

From the findings of this study, it is evident that participation in the Giyani Aged Garden has a profound impact on the lives of its members. For those members who entered the Giyani Aged Garden after making the transition from the civil service, organising and

participating in the Aged Garden activities assist them as the project leaders to age successfully. The members in non-leadership positions can also be said to be ageing successfully, since the project activities cater for the specific needs of the elderly.

The concept of 'successful aging' was described by Clark and Anderson in their seminal work published in 1967 which looked at the social roles of the aged from the perspective of anthropology. The transition to old age is accompanied by a number of changes, such as changes in outward appearance; a lowering of energy levels, which may mean withdrawal from certain physical activities; changes in mental functioning; the likelihood of ill health; a need for help in various aspects of living and uncertainty about the remaining lifespan (Anasu, 1971:171). Clark and Anderson (1967) suggest that, in order for the aged to cope with these changes and age successfully, they need to appreciate five developmental tasks. The tasks for 'successful aging' are that the older person should understand his or her own ageing, redefine his or her physical and social life space, substitute alternative sources of need satisfaction for sources now lost, re-assess criteria for evaluation of the self and reintegrate his or her values and life goals (Clark & Anderson 1967:398).

It is within this framework of developmental tasks that the activities at the Aged Garden are discussed below. The framework of tasks promotes the adaptation of the senior citizens to the challenges that ageing presents and it offers a helpful guide to a deeper understanding of the role of the Aged Garden in the lives of its members. The fact that the membership for participation in the Aged Garden is limited to those who are 65 years and older, at least at a superficial level, indicates the members' acknowledgement of their own ageing.

One 69-year old woman often referred to herself as '*a senior citizen*'. She would say: '*Oh, as a senior citizen, I can just be myself; I can say what I like without feeling that women must behave in a certain way.*' From my interaction with her and others at the project, I got the sense that when a woman reaches a certain age, she becomes genderless and is no longer compelled to adhere to culturally defined gender roles. The strongly defined gender roles that so dominate the lives of the younger women in Giyani lose much of their relevance as women age. Once a woman becomes a *kokwana*

(grandmother), her status is almost equal to that of any man and she is allowed to speak her piece in any company. From my interviews and discussions, I gained the distinct sense that, especially for women, this changed status facilitated the task of 'observing own ageing' – one of the requirements for successful ageing.

The second task that must be completed to adapt successfully to old age is the redefinition of physical and social life space, meaning that people should change certain social roles and relationships, but should avoid disengagement from others. This also means that ageing people should adapt their criteria for success to avoid becoming frustrated by their own expectations, or by demands that they are unable to meet. When they retired (or as many would say, 'went on pension') from their civil service positions or from their employment in households, the members of the Giyani Aged Garden seemed to have experienced a natural redefinition of their physical and social environments. For some of the women who had previously been employed as live-in domestic workers, reaching an age where they were eligible for government pension did not mean the start of a life of leisure. Their adult children, who worked outside Giyani, required an adult presence in their homes. Thus, some of the female members of the Aged Garden truly redefined their physical space by moving from their own homes, often in the villages, to the homes of their adult children. Yet, it was not only for these women who undertook such drastic change in their physical environment that 'successful aging' was accomplished, but for all the other members, who through the Aged Garden no longer spent most of their days with their colleagues or employers, but redefined their physical and social space by spending the greater part of their days at the Aged Garden.

The third task that is proposed is the substitution of alternative sources for need-satisfaction. This implies that people should be willing to change to other satisfying activities, while giving up those activities that are overly demanding. The realisation of alternative satisfying activities can be a painful and slow process. By the very nature of the activity engaged in at the Aged Garden, this developmental task does not apply to this group of elderly people, because a certain level of physical health is required. Those who have to find alternative sources for satisfying their needs because of declining physical health are no longer able to participate in the Aged Garden.

The fourth task suggested for successful adaptation to old age is a re-assessment of the criteria in an evaluation of the self. Henderson (1990) suggests that activities that accommodate changing physical abilities, such as sport competitions for age grades, provide a reference point and enable an old person to judge him- or herself in relation to this reference point. The Aged Garden, with its annual 3 kilometre fun walk, as well as the physical activity involved in gardening, clearly provides modified actions to accommodate changing physical abilities.

The last task is the reintegration of values and life goals – carving a specific adaptive niche within society. For the members of the Aged Garden who retired from a demanding employment environment, the Giyani Aged Garden presents an opportunity for shifting their values to an environment that values ‘conservation rather than acquisition and exploitation; self-acceptance instead of continuous struggles for self-advancement; being rather than doing; congeniality, cooperation, love, concern for others instead of control for others’ (Clark & Anderson, 1967:429).

7.6 MR GAMANE AND THE AGED GARDEN

Throughout the writing up of my research findings, I have included a short life story of at least one specific person, as it is my belief that, while there are many things that the people in Giyani have in common, a personal narrative adds richness to the study. In this chapter, I would like to introduce Mr Gamane and his experience of the Aged Garden and the ageing process.

Mr Gamane has been associated with the Aged Garden since the early 1990s. I came to know him quite well, as Nellie, his eldest daughter, and I were colleagues at the Giyani College of Education and became good friends. Nellie’s house was just behind mine and her parents lived one kilometre away in the neighbourhood (Section D2) that adjoins the College campus. Nellie, her daughter and her younger sister, Bessie, lived together in a house on campus, while her parents and two brothers lived in D2. Bessie was only in Giyani on weekends, as she was studying law at the University of the North in Polokwane, some 150 kilometres away.

Mr and Mrs Gamane were both school teachers until their retirement, and provided a solid and comfortable standard of living for their children. By the time I came to know the Gamane couple, Mrs Gamane's health was already compromised and some time later she lost both of her legs through diabetes. The resultant difficulty of coping with such a devastating life-changing occurrence seemed to be more than the quiet, soft-spoken Mr Gamane could deal with. As a member of the Giyani Aged Garden committee, he seemed to find refuge at the project in the difficult time that his family faced. Mr Gamane's daily activities included walking from home to the Aged Garden at 7:30 on weekday mornings. He did not have a vegetable patch, but was a member of the committee and he and other committee members would meet to plan activities or just share gossip or reflect on sport or the political events in the country. The Aged Garden was halfway between the Gamane home and Nellie's home where his wife lived after her illness and loss of limbs. At about 10:00, Mr Gamane would continue the walk to his daughter's home and spend much of the day there. He was a quiet man and would just sit and watch television most of the time. Of the two, his wife was the talkative one. For her, his presence was enough.

In my friendship with the family and in conversation with Mr Gamane, I learnt of the role that the Aged Garden played in the life of a man whose wife's illness had affected him deeply, making him even more reticent than before. At the Aged Garden, Mr Gamane was often a listener, rather than a participant in conversations. In his quiet and dutiful manner, he would do what needed to be done but did not say much. Mr Gamane's sister had come from their home village to assist at his home, but he spent most of his time at the Aged Garden or at his daughter's home – seemingly just to be there in case he was needed. For Mr Gamane, the Aged Garden was a place to go to and this gave purpose to his day. For him, the Aged Garden provided structure to his day and gave him a reason to get up early every morning and prepare for the day. As a former teacher, he valued routine and could not just sit at home. In the words of his daughter, sitting at home would '*just make him old*'.

Even though in the focus group discussions, the stated purpose of the participants' involvement in the Aged Garden was clearly articulated as growing vegetables and

keeping fit – ‘*because when we are busy here, we are also exercising our bodies*’ – it became increasingly clear, the longer I interacted with the project members, that the Aged Garden was and did more than just that: for the members of the Giyani Aged Garden, this was a place of refuge, social interaction and affirmation, as well as a place to be busy and exercise. In short, it was the best antidote to isolation, loneliness and deteriorating health.

7.7 THE AGED AND THE YOUTH IN GIYANI

I conducted several discussions with the members of the Giyani Aged Garden, but the words of one of the leaders stayed with me for days. According to him, young people think that the aged are witches and wizards and should therefore be avoided. To the uninformed, these words may seem slightly amusing; however, having lived in the Giyani area for many years, I was aware of just how feared and despised the practice of witchcraft is in the area, and its association with the aged is a matter of concern. The association of old age with witchcraft is so widespread in Africa that the AU Framework and Action Plan on Ageing explicitly articulates the need for member states to ‘implement programmes of civic and public education, including schools, to address issues arising from witchcraft allegations and other human rights abuses’ (HelpAge International, s.a.:8).

When I first decided to include the Giyani Aged Garden in my research study, I intended to deal only with the role of the Garden in the lives of the aged. However, as time progressed, my discussions with the members of the Aged Garden revealed an aspect of their lives that was important to them and that I could not ignore. My study would be incomplete if I did not include the aspect of the aged and their relationship with the youth in Giyani in my observations.

The issue of intergenerational communication and beliefs has been well researched and documented (cf. Giles *et al.*, 2003; MacKinnon 2008; Giles, Makoni & Dailey 2005). Aguilar (1998:9), who focuses on the Xhosa, Zulu, Swazi and Ndebele people of South Africa, argues that elderly people across Africa are revered and that ‘old age seems to

be regarded as an attribute rather than a hindrance'. In my conversations with the aged at the Giyani Aged Garden, I could find very little evidence of the reverence allegedly enjoyed by older people, especially from the youth. The anecdotes that the members of the Aged Garden shared showed little regard and respect accorded to the elderly, but rather that young people showed disrespect and rudeness towards older people. Whether or not this was just an example of elderly people complaining about young people as a conversational topic or not, needed greater investigation.

From my interviews, I found that conflict was particularly true for the relationship between the older women and teenage girls. I therefore arranged a group discussion with five teenage girls who lived with their grandmothers – two were resident in Giyani town and three were from different villages in the area, and their ages ranged from 16 to 18 years. Through my work with schools in the area and residence in Giyani, I knew the teenagers reasonably well and therefore assumed, rightly as it turned out, that we would engage freely and honestly without the girls feeling inhibited. Assured that the discussion was about their opinions about elderly people in general and not specifically about their relationships with their grandmothers, the girls articulated their, mostly negative, views during the two-hour session. I soon realised that what they were expressing annoyance about reflected lack of understanding of the functional deterioration of ageing. For example, one girl stated that her grandmother *'was nosy and always wanted to know what others were discussing'*. This unleashed a flood of negative utterances about how the elderly *'tell lies'*, *'don't understand what you tell them'*, *'always ask one to repeat what you said'* and *'are always shouting'*. What was evident was that these statements could be explained by the deterioration in hearing in elderly people. Those who are hard of hearing miss parts of conversations, often vital to understanding the conversations, and so misinterpret what was said – this is then interpreted by the youth as *'telling lies'* or not understanding what is said. If the elderly person is aware of missing parts of the conversation, it is understandable that he or she will *'ask one to repeat what you said'*. Progressive hearing loss means that the older person speaks more loudly than younger family members and this is then interpreted as *'always shouting'*. Understanding and accepting functional deterioration is scary for ageing people who cannot prevent this change, which is a source of intergenerational

conflict. Henderson (1990) explains that since younger family members cannot pre-experience the physical changes and symptoms of old age, they do not understand what the older person is experiencing. I wonder whether younger people would be more tolerant of the elderly if they understood the biological changes that characterise human ageing.

Furthermore, from the discussion with the group of teenagers I learnt that the cultural pressure of being respectful towards older people because of their age results in communication difficulties between the aged and the youth. Giles *et al.* (2003) describe such unsatisfying intergenerational communication as resulting in negative stereotypes and social distance.

Another source of intergenerational conflict centres on the availability and management of resources. Many female members of the Aged Garden identified the Government grants for children as one of the reasons they think the youth have become so disrespectful. They explained that the State child grants that mothers can obtain for their children give young women who receive the grants a monthly income of R230 per month¹⁰¹ and thus some economic independence. From the conversations it became clear that some conflict arises as a result of the young women's sense of independence and their actual dependence on the older person in the household. The State pension of R 1 010 per month¹⁰² received by pensioners is often the life-line of the household and the power that pensioners can thus wield leads to resentment on the part of younger people, especially younger women. As one of the participants said, '*the youngsters would like to just ignore us and do their own thing, but they can't*'. Some members of the Aged Garden lamented the communication breakdown between them and the younger women and girls.

Through my discussion with the group of teenage girls and my experience of working with youth in the Giyani area for many years, I have a definite sense that youths in the villages are more respectful to their elders than those in Giyani town. The schools in rural villages have different values from those in the town. Young people in the town

¹⁰¹ The amount for child support grant as of 1 April 2009 (SASSA, s.a.).

¹⁰² The amount for old age pension as of 1 April 2009 (SASSA, s.a.).

have greater exposure to different values as a result of their exposure to the media. The opportunities that young people have to get an education may also result in a feeling that they have 'outgrown' the 'ignorance' of the elderly.

7.8 THE TAKEOVER

During the last two years of my stay in Giyani, the leadership of the Aged Garden changed and, as I was later to discover, it involved a takeover – a bloodless *coup d'état*.

In the period when I was doing my research at the Aged Garden I came to know the men on the management committee reasonably well, even though I would not claim to have had the same degree of personal closeness with them that I had with the women at this project. The leadership of the project was always willing to converse with me, but I respected their personal space and did not really venture into asking about their personal life. Their careers, their past achievements, the past and planned future activities for the Aged project were keenly shared and spiritedly described, but beyond this, little was divulged. The sharing of local gossip and home circumstances was not to be undertaken, since these men were respected in the community and their age (older than me) required me to respect their social standing.

Throughout my research, I did not sense any contestation of leadership within the organisation. The Aged Garden project was Mr Shamba's brain-child and during his tenure in the homeland administration, the project was initiated and was within his administrative ambit. Upon his retirement, he, as would be expected, became the chairperson of the management committee. As the founder and leader of the project, he was respected and valued. However, a year after conducting the research interviews, I found that the leadership of the Aged Garden had changed. The new chairperson was a man who had retired as a senior official in the provincial government. Although he had been stationed in Polokwane, he had commuted the 150 kilometres daily. He is an influential man in Giyani. During his tenure as president of the local Rotary club, funding for the Aged Garden was sought from a Canadian Rotary club (Gage Town) and the recreational and ablution facilities were constructed. Upon his retirement, he joined the

Aged Project as a member and soon became the chairperson of the management committee. The members serving on the committee were new and had seemingly replaced the old guard. On the wall was a photograph of Mr Shamba to acknowledge, as the new chairperson stated, 'good work' and his contribution to the project.

The *coup d'état* should not have come as a surprise to me. Just because the atmosphere at the project was pleasant, this did not exclude the possibility of contestation. In fact, considering the psycho-social changes that accompany retirement, a project leadership position presents an ideal site for contestation by those who have lost their leadership and social standing through retirement.

Retirement should be understood against the backdrop of a recent study by Noble, Ntshongwana and Surrender (2008:18), who found that 'South Africans place a high value on paid work and feel that paid work promotes dignity. Work is considered a normal thing to do; work makes people feel part of the community and helps to prevent social isolation'. In other words, retirement from work necessarily severs people from work-related social networks and interpersonal relationships. Noble *et al.* (2008:15-16) revealed that South Africans 'ending their work life face feelings of loss of dignity or self-worth and fear social isolation'. Thus the transition from work life to retirement can be challenging, particularly for those who had great decision-making capacity in their workplace. This loss of formal leadership is often accompanied by a decline in discretionary earnings after a period in which income peaked (see Henderson, 1990:53). If retirement follows after high levels of activity and job satisfaction, the sudden change in self-expression and daily routine presents further challenges to a person's sense of worth. If, at this stage in the person's life, an opportunity presents itself for leadership and the accompanying social prestige, a takeover of leadership, such as that which occurred at the Aged Garden, is not surprising.

CHAPTER 8: SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

8.1 INTRODUCTION

Service provision and crucial household income are often reflected in development literature as factors on which small-scale development initiatives are centred, but small-scale project participation in Giyani is not focused on acquiring services (see Ekong & Sokoya, 1982:217-219; Nkwi, 1997:78-79) or securing essential household income. Two important elements influence development projects in the Giyani area. Firstly, the South African government's social welfare strategy ensures that even the poorest households have some form of monthly income through grants and pensions, provided a person qualifies for such grants. Secondly, the delivery of basic services such as water, sanitation and schooling was a priority of the homeland administration when Giyani was the capital of Gazankulu and, more recently, when Giyani became the Mopani District capital. Therefore the reasons for participation in small-scale projects in Giyani go beyond a need for basic services and essential household income, and this study explored some of these reasons against the backdrop of the many political, economic, legislative and social changes that Giyani and its people have experienced in the last 35 years.

The central argument that is presented in this study is that the development literature abounds with examples of the failure of development in general and of development projects in particular, but that quite unexpectedly, people all over the world continue to opt for involvement in small-scale development projects, as the participants in the four projects studied in Giyani have done. The question arises why this is so. I would argue that projects become places of refuge to deal with change.

In this chapter, I review the study by recapitulating the research aim and objectives, the research area and its people, the four case study projects and the research strategy and methods. Thereafter, the summaries and conclusions of the chapters are discussed and

some experiences in other contexts are compared with the findings of this study. The chapter concludes with a summary of the main findings of this study and then the implications of the findings are examined within the development approach of the present government and development in general.

8.2 A BRIEF OVERVIEW OF THE STUDY

The town of Giyani was established in the late 1960s as the capital of Gazankulu, the homeland for people classified as Tsonga-Shangaan. Thus the establishment of the town was closely linked to the then South African government's 'separate development' plan, which was based on the belief that black people of different languages should be provided with homelands (commonly referred to in the literature as Bantustans) where they could govern themselves. Through what is commonly known as 'forced removals', people were displaced from their homes and relocated en masse to various homelands. This is also how the people of Giyani were brought to the town to populate it.

The Tsonga-Shangaan people have historical roots in southern Mozambique but during the Nguni invasions of the early 1800s, they had fled westward and settled in the north-eastern part of South Africa. In both Mozambique and South Africa, the Tsonga-Shangaan people have a close association with the Swiss Missionary Society, which has, since the late 1800s, greatly influenced education, health care and the spread of Christianity among the Tsonga-Shangaan people. A strong emphasis on education and the development of human capabilities, health care and the Christian faith permeate the history of the town and its people. The people are proud, yet gentle-natured, with a strong cultural identity. This cultural identity is most noticeable in the colourful traditional attire that the older women wear daily and not just for special occasions. However, this pride in cultural identity expressed through traditional wear is being lost as younger women choose more modern (Western) clothing: it is unusual to see a woman younger than 35 years in traditional apparel in Giyani. Furthermore, traditional governance structures have a great influence on the lives of particularly those living in the villages

around Giyani. The town and the surrounding villages formed the research area for this study.

The research strategy included both a qualitative component (four case study projects) and a quantitative component in the form of a survey using a Needs Test of Giyani town and the villages within a 20 kilometre radius of the town. For the survey, 374 households were randomly selected from a population of 10909 households to ensure a representative sample, so that the findings can be generalised for the whole research area (see Sections 1.7.2.2 and 1.7.2.3). For the case study projects, a purposive sample of four projects formed the qualitative, ethnographic body of the study.

Of the four projects selected, two were initiated during the homeland era (the Avelanani crèche in Makoxa village and the Giyani Society for the Care of the Aged, locally known as the Giyani Aged Garden). The other two projects started after 1994 (the Hi Hlurile Skills Development Project and the Ahitipfuxeni Community Project). These four projects focus on assisting vulnerable groups, such as the children of former refugees (at the Avelanani crèche), the aged (at the Giyani Aged Garden), the poor, mostly women (in the Ahitipfuxeni project) and the educated unemployed (in the Hi Hlurile project).

Concerning the aim and objectives of the study, the fundamental issue that this study sought to understand is how people in the Giyani area deal with rapid socio-political and economic changes, and what role small-scale development projects play in the lives of people in the area, particularly women. Six research objectives were articulated.

The first objective was to identify, contextualise and describe the political, economic and social transformations that occurred in the Giyani area during the last three decades. This objective is discussed in Chapter 2 ('Major historical moments in the history of Giyani and its inhabitants').

The second objective was to identify and describe changing development discourses, policies and practices and to explore the link between these transformations and local small-scale development initiatives. In Chapter 3 the focus is on this objective.

The third objective was to examine the extent to which individuals and households are involved in small-scale development projects in the Giyani area and to determine how working conditions in a project and interaction with other project participants meet the needs of participants (see Chapter 4). The results of the simple random survey of Giyani town and surrounding villages revealed the extent to which individuals and households are involved in projects. The individual needs of project participants were assessed using a Needs Test to measure whether project participation satisfies Existence, Relatedness and Growth needs, in terms of Clayton Alderfer's ERG Theory (see Section 1.7.2.1). The ERG needs were then related to Bourdieu's forms of capital (economic, social, symbolic and cultural capital). In other words, the satisfaction of certain categories of needs was used as an indicator for the acquisition of forms of capital (see Table 4.1), since Bourdieu (1989:17) believes that individuals are 'defined' by the amounts of each kind of capital that they possess. The assumption is that even projects that do not provide economic capital (in the form of regular income) may provide other forms of capital. If participants accumulate various forms of capital by participating in projects, this would, in part, explain why 'failed' projects continue to exist. It was found that the work conditions in terms of organisational structure (see Section 4.6) and the project leadership (Section 4.7) also contribute to affirming the self of project participants.

With regard to the fourth, fifth and sixth objectives, the study is divided as follows: the bulk of Chapter 5 ('Places to deal with countercyclical change') is devoted to the fourth objective, which is to explore the effects of 'structural adjustment' measures on qualified professionals and former civil servants and the extent to which participation in small-scale development projects facilitates their adaptation to changing personal circumstances. Chapter 6 ('Projects as sites for coping with empowerment legislation and persistent traditions') deals with the fifth objective, which focuses on how project participants – especially women – have experienced gender empowerment and recent changes with regard to customary law and traditional authorities. The research conducted at the Giyani Aged Garden sheds light on the last objective, which focuses on the role of gender, power relations and the ageing process in the establishment, maintenance and evolution of a project. The findings related to the above objectives are

expounded upon against the background of the many changes that the people of Giyani have experienced.

8.3 CHAPTER SUMMARIES AND CONCLUSIONS

The fact the people all over the world continue to opt for involvement in small-scale development projects given the prevailing pessimism in the literature about development interventions, was difficult to grasp. Within the research area of Giyani town (Limpopo Province, South Africa) and surrounding villages, a number of such project exist and I explored whether such projects act as ‘sanctuaries’ that enable the participants to survive changes in a fast-changing socio-economic and political environment. The concept of sanctuaries as spaces for reflection and action was explored within a loosely defined scope of its three dictionary meanings: a place of safety from harm, a sacred place and a place of healing.

Chapter 1 provided a brief overview of the location and history of the research area as well as of the origin and characteristics of its inhabitants. Furthermore, because of the multiple and often contradictory meaning of concepts in the literature, certain concepts were clarified to orientate the reader on how to understand these concepts in this study. Even though much of the relevant literature has been woven into the fabric of the different chapters, the journey through the literature was included mainly to make sense of the development discourses (macro-dynamics) that had an impact on small-scale development projects in the research area.

In the qualitative component of the research, I selected four project sites, three of them within the municipal boundaries of Giyani and one about ten kilometres away in a rural village under the jurisdiction of a traditional authority. Apart from initial interviews with people who had a long history of involvement in development planning and implementation in the Giyani area, I obtained qualitative data from people who participated in the activities of the selected four projects through participant observation, life histories and unstructured personal interviews as well as semi-structured individual

and small group interviews. Also, a quantitative survey was conducted in the town itself and in a randomly selected number of villages within a 20-kilometre radius of the town centre. The quantitative component of the study consisted of a questionnaire aimed at determining the extent of peoples' involvement in development projects in the Giyani area, their gender and age distribution and the income of households. Also, I used an adapted version of Robbins' Needs Test (based on Alderfer's ERG theory) to determine what motivates individuals to participate in development projects.

In Chapter 2 I described the major historical moments in the history of Giyani and its inhabitants. Firstly, the positive developments that occurred in and around Giyani during the 'homeland era' are explained. The homeland administration was committed to educational and economic development; therefore, conditions were created in which the residents of Giyani were in fact economically better off than they would have been outside the borders of the homeland. In Gazankulu, the development of human potential was prioritised and thus Giyani has various educational institutions at various levels. Many individuals benefited from the educational opportunities they were afforded and this has led the homeland to have a critical mass of skilled people, particularly people with administrative skills.

The discussion of the homeland period was followed by an overview of the period after 1990 that was characterised by conflict between the youth and the traditional leaders. This was also the period of the notorious witch hunts that occurred throughout the province.

After the first democratic elections 1994, a number of skilled administrators were recruited to serve in the administration of the newly formed Limpopo Province provincial government in Polokwane. This personnel drain from Giyani had an impact on the economy of Giyani, but more importantly, on family cohesion in the Giyani households that were affected. The period from 1994 to 2000 was particularly difficult for the residents of Giyani, who had become accustomed to being at the core of government decision-making and implementation, and were then relegated to the periphery.

After the municipal elections in 2000, Giyani became the district headquarters for the Mopani District and, at present, Giyani is experiencing an economic boom. This is evident especially in the rapidly increasing number of houses and businesses and the recent development of infrastructure in the town.

When the history of Giyani is reflected upon, it is clear that the ordinary inhabitants of this town had experienced spurts of political, economic and social change beyond their control and had to find ways of dealing with these changes. These changes did not happen in isolation of the prevailing global and national development thinking and in Chapter 3 the changes in development thinking were discussed.

Chapter 3 'Discourses, policies and practices: the changing development landscape' starts with a very brief historical overview of global and 'local' development thinking. Selected development projects, the Avelanani crèche, and to a lesser extent, the Ahitipfuxeni and Hi Hlurile projects – were used as focal points to consider wider contexts in the ever-changing development discourse. The influence of missionary endeavours, the homeland epoch and post-apartheid Giyani were analysed within the global economic and political contexts.

The discontinuities of the development discourse over time – such as economic growth through modernisation in the 1970s, structural adjustment in the 1980s, and poverty alleviation and social liberalism in the 1990s – has had an impact on the residents of the Giyani district. Discontinuities in development policies and practices were particularly noticeable during the homeland era in the homeland administration's defiance of the South Africa position concerning refugees from Mozambique. Since these divergent positions had an impact on one of the selected projects, the chapter includes an exposition of the Mozambican refugee problem in the local and South African contexts and a brief history of the Avelanani Crèche that was established for children of people displaced by the Mozambican civil war.

The other project established during the homeland era, the Giyani Aged Garden, is discussed in detail in Chapter 7 and did not warrant discussion in Chapter 3. However, the two projects established after the homeland epoch were briefly mentioned but expanded on in later chapters.

In Chapter 4 the focus shifted from macro-level global and 'local' development discourses to the micro-level of personal experiences of change. In the fourth chapter 'Sites of learning and empowerment' the focus was on the individual's experiences of participation in small-scale projects. At the level of the individual, explanations of concepts such as selfhood and personal empowerment (meaning the accumulation of various forms of capital) are warranted, so the chapter includes an overview of the relevant literature with regard to selfhood, self-presentation and self-experience as well as Bourdieu's views on economic, social, cultural and symbolic capital.

To ascertain whether project participation allows individuals to accumulate capital, needs satisfaction is used as indicator. The data gathered through structured interviews and a Needs Test were used to uncover whether existence, relatedness and growth needs are met through project participation. The data show that project participants value the accumulation of social, cultural and symbolic capital even when there is little economic gain and that the organisation and leadership of the selected projects create an environment that differs vastly from the restrictive atmosphere of village life. What this means is that the assumption that income-generating projects have 'failed' because they do not provide a regular income for project members, ignores the invisible relations that operate within these projects. It is acknowledged that none of the four projects in the study is economically viable in terms of providing a regular income, but they cater for the self-needs of members – the project encounter builds the participants' self-identity and social identity. Furthermore, the organisation and the leadership of the selected projects through participative problem-solving and joint decision-making create an environment conducive to personal growth – learning and empowerment. This is in stark contrast to the socially restrictive atmosphere of village life.

A socially restrictive society is an apt description of the environment in which the women described in Barazangi's (1999) research live. Interested in women's understanding of self and self-identity, Barazangi (1999:130) depicts a grassroots women's movement in Syria where Muslim-Arab women, within small associative groups, grapple with 'the dichotomous agendas of 'liberal' versus 'traditional' interpretations of Islam. These women, in an increasingly globalised world where democracy is nationally and regionally articulated and even advocated, are largely disregarded. In their small groups, the women study the primary sources of Islam that promote gender justice so they can apply it to their daily lives. However, this understanding of Islam challenges their self-identity and what they were socialised to believe a 'good' woman is in their context. Barazangi (1999) found that within the nurturing atmosphere of the small groups, members' self-identity is affirmed by their knowledge and understanding of their belief system increases so that these women can be agents of change within their families and communities. Barazangi's study corroborates my findings that small groups serve as sites developing self-hood through learning and empowerment. Furthermore, as is evident from the next section (section 8.3.5), Barazangi's (1999) study also emphasises the important role the group leader has in encouraging participative decision-making and consultation which promote agency so that women can improve their problem-solving and negotiation skills particularly in their homes. Another similarity between the two studies is the incongruity between the modern and the traditional and how associative groups help women deal with this conflict (also see section 8.3.6) and 'illustrates the possibility for women's self-realization even under highly restricted conditions' (Barazangi, 1999: 146).

Another study by Rajuili and Burke (1999) reports that women's selfhood and social identity are nurtured through their participation in adult popular education projects in Kwa-Ndebele, South Africa. Similarly, I found that through participating in projects, individuals learn and feel empowered to deal with the changes thrust upon them in a safe and nurturing environment. Relationships within the small-scale projects affirm the selfhood of the participants and thus the projects are 'sacred' places of healing, honour and prestige – i.e. sanctuaries.

Chapter 5 examined what effect economic policies akin to ‘structural adjustment’ policies had on qualified professionals and former civil servants. The countercyclical change referred to in Chapter 5 is that while the political change of 1994 heralded a period of increased political freedom in South Africa, global acceptance and connectedness, it was accompanied by macro-economic policies (analogous structural adjustment measures) that caused great unemployment in the research area. This chapter addresses the effects of ‘structural adjustment’ measures on qualified professionals and former civil servants and was meant to show how participation in small-scale development projects facilitates adaptation after retrenchment. The first part of the chapter explored the ‘history’ of ‘structural adjustment’ and the very modest role of social funding had in reversing the adverse effects of job losses.

With South Africa’s renewed alignment to global capitalist policies, the economy is distinctly polarised into a First Economy and a Second Economy. Within this framework, employment is polymorphic – it may be based in the First Economy, in which case employment may be permanent, secure and legally protected, or it may be casual, insecure and outside the framework of labour legislation. Employment may also be found within the Second Economy and be intended only to reduce seasonal and temporal poverty as in public works programmes or the illusion of employment can be created through projects receiving social funds.

However, global capitalism has a contradictory nature¹⁰³: while it embraces the exploitation of workers, particularly of women workers, it also allows for opportunities for empowerment. In other words, while the effects of globalisation are predominantly negative, the forces of globalisation also create opportunities for women to organise and to seek new and creative responses to the problems created by these forces. For example, while ‘structural adjustment’ measures led to the retrenchment of teachers, nurses and administrative staff who suffered financially and also emotionally, as they

¹⁰³ See Bystydzienski and Sekhon (1999), Comaroff and Comaroff (2000) and Moghadam (1999)

internalised feelings of unworthiness, these retrenched civil servants were able to access 'social funds' to assist their projects and become service providers for capacity-building training.

One project, Hi Hlurile, illustrates the ambiguous nature of capital clearly. In this project social and class divisions were eroded, as educated, non-literate and semi-literate women found themselves in the same economic quandary and this created new opportunities for women's participation and empowerment. It is evident that not all rural women are passively accepting changes thrust upon them but through their agency they are reshaping their realities – defining an alternative modernity.

Hi Hlurile calls to mind the meaning of sanctuary as a place safety for 'injured' unemployed professionally trained people find refuge in small-scale projects that have become places to deal with countercyclical change.

Chapter 6 dealt with another type of change that the inhabitants of Giyani experience, that of legislative changes with regard to gender empowerment, customary law and traditional authorities. In this chapter I focussed on the way in which project participants - especially women - have experienced legislation to ensure gender equality, particularly changes with regard to customary law and traditional authorities. Although women were ambivalent towards polygyny and the delivery of marriage goods, they clearly expressed their unhappiness with patriarchy in general and emphasised that they were treated as inferiors outside the projects in which they participated.

There have been a number of legislative changes in South Africa since 1994 and some of these have a direct bearing on the people in the Giyani area. Changes in legislation do not necessarily imply changes in the lived experiences of ordinary people. The impact of selective legislation changes has been discussed in the context of the comments of Giyani men and women, reflecting on their lived experiences of these changes. From the discussions I gained the strong impression that, regardless of the way things change, long-standing practices remain unchanged.

Particular focus was placed on the changes regarding traditional authorities and the role they play in the political and policy landscape in which the Giyani residents function. This research showed that none of the interviewees, mainly women, wanted traditional authorities (which are patriarchal and not elected) to be abolished, but some stated their unhappiness with certain chiefs who disregard the plight of women. Other women believed in the goodwill of the chief under whose authority they reside. This inconsistency in the experiences under different traditional authorities speaks to the heart of the matter: the treatment residents living in villages receive depends on the attitudes and behaviour of individual chiefs and the processes of the traditional authority. Such courts have no statutes governing their operations to ensure legal certainty, unlike the situation that prevails in the town of Giyani, where the magistrate's court is guided by statutes that ensure legal certainty.

Traditional authorities have also been instrumental in encouraging the participation of women in small-scale development projects, even at the cost of social harmony in their households. Women are empowered through their participation in such projects, in that they acquire skills and knowledge, and participate in decision-making within the organisation of these projects (see Chapters 4 and 5). The survey revealed that the profile of the average project participant was female, married and middle-aged (women with adult children). Exploring the domestic set-up of project members revealed that domestic chores were shifted onto the participants' daughters, but more typically onto their daughters-in-law, who were often not very well treated. This research study found that the care of the old, the sickly and the younger children fell squarely onto the shoulders of these young women. As young brides, the project participants had been ill-treated by their family-in-law, and most of them now do likewise to their daughters-in-law – and so continue the cyclical pattern of women's domination in their households.

Another legal aspect that was explored was the changes concerning customary marriages and how women experienced these. Under the apartheid system, customary law was distorted and this matter has now been addressed through legislation. Although

customary marriages are now legally recognised, there are still gaps in the legislation concerning polygyny, inheritance and bridewealth. The women in the projects were not comfortable with discussing their experiences of marriage relationships within a polygynous marriage. However, one woman was willing to share her experience as one of her husband's two wives – a position she accepts, but she also told of the intense loneliness she feels in her marriage as she fears that her confidences will be betrayed by her husband, who may divulge things to the other wife. This woman decided that she did not want polygyny for her children and took issue with her son, who was showing a desire for multiple partnerships. As his mother, she fortunately still commanded the respect of her son and she was adamant that her son should not subject his wife to a marriage such as the one she herself was in. Because of this mother's experience and her willingness to challenge her children on their decisions, the accepted norms of culture are changing, at least in this family.

Concerning the matter of bridewealth, a general sense of how women felt about this matter could not be obtained. However, one woman indicated that she felt that the transfer of bridewealth would be tantamount to handing over power to her partner, who favours polygyny. She described power in her relationship with the father of her son as being able to insist that her partner uses condoms to protect her from sexually transmitted diseases, a power she believes she would not have in a customary marriage. On the topic of bridewealth, a group of young men, all teachers-in-training, expressed the view that bridewealth has become an exploitative practice in which the bride's family demands an unreasonable amount of money. The point was also made that families prefer monetary bridewealth to cattle. The fact that these men would potentially be earning relatively high salaries as teachers resulted in the bride's family demanding even more money from them. This made them feel powerless. It was evident from the discussions that this feeling of powerlessness would be translated into male dominant behaviour in their households and so reinforce dominant masculinity within marriage. One positive approach to dealing with high bridewealth demands was for one couple to share the burden equally. This solution, however, necessitated a shift in gender identity for the man, since he was socialised to believe that bridewealth is the

responsibility of the groom and his family. With this shift in traditional thinking to view bridewealth as the responsibility of the couple, greater sharing of domestic responsibilities within the marriage can be inferred. Thus, in this way, traditional gender roles can be changed to a more equitable arrangement in marriage.

In general, even if some (young) men accepted gender equity in professional sphere, it would seem that other men perceive the shifting gender relations due to the empowerment of women as a threat to their manhood and great uncertainties and ambiguities are induced by changes in gender identity. Without appropriate role models, even men with a sincere desire to embrace change have difficulty with constructing new identities. This suggests that greater consideration must be given to providing support for men who feel powerless and express their frustrations in violent and/or anti-social behaviour.

Exploring similar experiences elsewhere, the situation of ambivalence between the legislative changes empowering women and traditional practices that the women in the villages around Giyani experience have parallels with the women, particularly rural women, in Eritrea. As in South Africa, the emancipation of women was part of the national struggle for liberation¹⁰⁴ in Eritrea (Leisure, 1999) but the legal changes to ensure gender parity in political and economic participation or marriage did not translate into a new society where women are equal to men. Rather, 'women are finding a resistance to equality and a return to tradition' (Leisure, 1999:105) in which women are subservient in the home and workplace. Leisure's (1999) study found that small associative groups play an important role in enabling negotiated alternatives to traditional roles and status and in transforming social structures rather than opposing these structures. For example, by sharing information and skills and pooling financial resources, women can start businesses and so circumvent economic norms that favour men.

¹⁰⁴ The people of Eritrea first resisted the colonial domination and later, for 30 years, challenged domination by Ethiopia.

In conclusion, this study found that notwithstanding empowerment legislation, traditional beliefs and practices persist. With the coalescence of these two forces, gender empowerment and traditions, people, especially men, feel confused and anxious about how to reconcile these changes with their understanding of masculinity. This internal discord that men experience often finds expression through domestic conflict. For women in such domestic circumstances, small-scale projects become a place of refuge from physical and psychological harm.

Chapter 7 focused on the importance of the Giyani Society for the Care of the Aged (locally known as the 'Aged Garden') in people's confrontation with the changes brought about by old age. The Giyani Aged Garden provides opportunities for engagement and self-expression to the elderly participants that they would not have been able to find somewhere else.

Judged by its goals of providing for the nutritional needs (through growing vegetables), recreational and educational needs, and social services for the elderly, the Giyani Aged Garden can be considered a success story. However, closer examination revealed the internal dynamics caused by social actors and forces within and outside the project. The Giyani Aged Garden has two distinct groups of members: the leadership (committee) consisting mainly of retired civil servants (mostly men) and a second cohort, consisting mainly of women with little or no schooling, who are involved in gardening and are the beneficiaries of the activities and facilities at the Garden. The needs that project participation meets are different for the two groups. For the committee members, retirement reduced their professional networks (implying a loss of social capital) and their retirement income is less than they earned while they were still employed. They are thus in a vulnerable stage of their lives. However, the committee members are able to interact with donors on behalf of the project and can access available funding because they are able to interpret the often complicated forms, procedures and motivations that are involved in funding applications.

By contrast, the ordinary members who lived in traditional settings in villages and are now living in town are in an empowering stage of their lives. For this group of project

members, their monthly social pension income is more than they had before becoming pensioners; they are in social surroundings that are less restrictive than those in the villages, because they have more possibilities for self-expression through the Aged Garden. Thus project participation increases their social capital in town. They now have more social powerful networks and opportunities for engagement with funders and influential people who visit the project than these elderly people would have had if they had not been involved with the project.

Whereas ageing is generally associated with social isolation and disengagement, the Giyani Aged Garden provides opportunities for engagement and self-expression. For instance, the project members could enrich the lives of children whom they did not know by participating in the Pretty Things for Little Things initiatives organised by the Shoprite supermarket group, by creating soft toys, blankets, clothing and other items for needy children. The Aged Garden was one of the 2009 provincial winners for the group that provided most articles for this initiative.

With their social pensions, the elderly are not financially dependent on their family (their adult children). This income creates possibilities for autonomy, including participation in the Aged Garden. For this cohort at the Aged Garden, the transition to the age-grade of being 'elderly' means that they are relatively better off than before, in contrast to the committee members. For the committee members who held influential positions in the civil service before their retirement, the project assists them in coming to terms with a lower income and social status, while the organisational skills and the administrative abilities they acquired in their careers contribute to the vibrancy of the project.

For donors, the Aged Garden provides a valuable initiative to fund, because of the political and social mileage that can be obtained from supporting the project. Government departments and donors alike can boast of providing services and/or funding to the 'deep rural, aged and poor' – important descriptors in defining the 'vulnerable and marginalised'. These descriptions, with pictures of the project site and

participants, are elements that make for impressive reporting to Parliament, to constituencies and at conferences.

For this cocoon community of elderly people with diverse levels of formal education, work experiences and skills, the Giyani Aged Garden provides a place of solidarity (i.e. a sanctuary) in a context where the elderly are marginalised.

The final chapter includes a brief overview of the study. This is followed by a summary and conclusions for each chapter and a discussion of the significance of the findings to the different meanings of the word 'sanctuary'. Indeed, the small-scale projects in Giyani provide members with a place of safety from emotional and physical harm; they provide members with a 'sacred' place of prestige and honour; and provide people 'of a certain kind' (like retrenched professionals or the elderly) with a place for healing. In other words, small-scale project are spaces for reflection and action that enable the participants to survive changes in a fast-changing socio-economic and political environment. Furthermore, the main findings and the implication of these findings for development are discussed.

8.4 THE MAIN FINDINGS OF THE STUDY

To summarise, my concern in this study was the lived experiences of those upon whom change is thrust, and how they adapt to continual change. The residents of Giyani are not powerless victims of globally and nationally induced change, as it was found that within any situation of power, there is potential for manipulating this power. In other words, even though the people of Giyani may have little or no say in many of the decisions that affect their lives, they do, through their agency, transform these changes and adapt the programmes to what the people themselves decide the changes should be.

The biographical data collected by means of the survey revealed that 16.2% of the residents of Giyani are involved in small-scale development projects; of these, 89% are

women and 11% are men. The average age of the participants was 49 years and their ages ranged from 26 to 100 years. The marital status of the project participants was the following: 78.7 % were married, 8.2% were single and 3.3% were divorced, with widows and widowers making up 9.8%. Of the households surveyed, 63% depended solely on government grants for income and this result can be generalised for the Giyani area, compared to 54% of households of the participants in the case study projects. This means that most project participants' households enjoyed government social protection and thus were, according to Mead (2007:111), exposed to having their lives directed by government. The government need no use overt measures to direct the lives are people for Hart (2006:22-23) explains that government power operates to produce governable subjects through 'the concept of governmentality, originally derived from Foucault ...[that] operates not through imposition or repression, but rather by cultivating the conditions in which non-sovereign subjects conduct themselves'.

Therefore in spite of the present government's noble ideals of development and poverty alleviation, any harsh critic could make compelling case for small-scale projects as convenient encampments for rural people, particularly women. That small-scale development projects are little more than convenient 'refugee camps', acting as spaces for social grant-dependent economic refugees who have been relegated to the Second Economy. The municipality and various government departments ensure that social grants are received regularly, and periodically provide other funds and services to these projects to fulfil their obligation of helping the marginalised. However, Rajuili and Burke (1999:111) articulate the dilemma that the present government faces in having to balance 'both external pressures of globalisation and internal pressures as it attempts to meet the expectations of its citizens'. Therefore, the broader international and philosophical context needs to be considered.

Bearing in mind that in 'the same relations in which wealth is produced, poverty is produced' (Marx, 1867, quoted in Bond, 2007:1) and Polanyi's similar notion of the double movement of capitalism (1944, quoted in Hart, 2006:14), in the absence of an alternative to capitalism, wealth creation and poverty alleviation should be catered for by any government. The fact that the South African government officially recognises that

there is a dual economy in the country means that within the system of government, both the First and the Second Economies are planned for. In planning for two economies, the present government has gone to great lengths to make provision economic growth of the First Economy and providing safety nets for the Second Economy. In addition to the annual safety-net expenditure of R40–R50 billion on social grants, subsidised education and healthcare, the government ‘has introduced a bewildering array of anti-poverty initiatives, programs, and projects’ (Aliber, 2003:482). All government departments are expected include in their operations anti-poverty initiatives funded the ‘Poverty Alleviation Fund’¹⁰⁵ of National Treasury. For example, the Department of Trade and Industry introduced measures to support the small enterprise sector, the Department of Science and Technology supports technology projects with a social impact and the Department of Public Works initiated the Working for Water Programme among other initiatives. Also, in 1998 the National Development Agency was established as a parastatal to channel donor and government resources to civil society organisations that promote social and economic development (Aliber, 2003:482).

What this means is that the social security system and the multiplicity of anti-poverty measures are a financial liability to the government (see Feldstein, 1996). This liability is an ever increasing, long-term commitment since ‘South Africa’s social security system, has become less of a net devised to catch an unfortunate few in times of temporary distress, than a major commitment to help a significant fraction of the population over a sustained period’ (Aliber, 2003:483). As more people become dependent on social security through unemployment or old age, the financial responsibility of the state increases too which means that the taxpayers are burdened with these additional costs. These increasing drains on public finances call into question the economic sustainability of the present government’s social welfare approach but this is outside the ambit of this study. Notwithstanding the fiscal considerations, though it may be true, criticising the

¹⁰⁵ The Poverty Alleviation Fund started with the remaining RDP funds, but in 1998–99 the central government allocated an additional R600 million (Aliber, 2003:482)

South African government too harshly about relegating the poor to the Second Economy, is not entirely fair.

However, if the present government's approach to development is judged against Seers's (1969) three central concerns – poverty, unemployment and inequality, mixed results are obtained. Poverty, if it is meant to imply household income, is addressed by the government's social welfare approach, which ensures that many households have access to some income. In fact, in October 2008, the head of the government's policy coordination and advisory services, Joel Netshitenzhe, reported that '[w]hen using the R322 per person [per month] poverty line, in 1995 about 53% of households was living below that line. In 2005, that figure has decreased to 48%' (quoted by Appel, 2008:1). Thus the present government prides itself on decreasing poverty, but the figure of close to half the households in the country living below the stated poverty line is still unacceptably high. The long-term sustainability of the government's welfare strategy is also debatable.

There is no question that in terms of Seers's second concern, employment, the government has not performed well. Unemployment increased by 13.2% on average annually in the period from 1995 to 2002 (Bhorat & Oosthuizen, 2006:145; Heintz & Posel, 2008). Furthermore, employment, for the most part, has become insecure (see Chapter 5), so the government's economic policies have not coped adequately with the unemployment challenge.

On Seer's third concern – inequality – South Africa's record is also not good. The South African Gini coefficient,¹⁰⁶ which is used as a measure of a country's household income inequality, has increased from 0.593 in 1994 to 0.65 in 2005 (World Fact Book, s.a.). This makes South Africa the country with the greatest inequality between rich and poor households in the world. It is therefore not surprising that Van der Berg (2006:226) states that, given that 'the post-apartheid government inherited inequality and poverty,

¹⁰⁶ The Gini coefficient is a measure between 0 (perfect income equality) and 1 (perfect income inequality). The Gini coefficient for countries with highly unequal income distribution typically lie between 0.50 and 0.70 (Todaro, 1992:152).

the government has been effective in transferring social resources to the poor, but since these strategies have been insufficient to reduce inequality of social outcomes, these efforts have been meaningless’.

Under the present government’s free market-oriented economic policies, the government and donors see community-driven projects as a means of overcoming poverty through the creation of employment. The study concludes that the participatory, community-driven projects in Giyani and the surrounding areas have adapted to change and have not disintegrated, in spite of the fact that their original goals have not been met. However, economic sustainability as understood in the First Economy will always remain an unattainable objective; since the Second Economy is structurally different from the First (see Mbeki, 2003). Since the government now plans for a dual economy, new quasi-economic models are emerging (see Hart, 2006:22).

Nonetheless, one project in Giyani, the Hi Hlurile Skills Development Project, is defining a unique model, in that this project incorporates four important elements. Firstly, the project received benefits from global connectedness both from developed countries and developing countries (in the form of funding from and market research in Japan and training in India). Secondly, Hi Hlurile has obtained ‘social funds’ (a Second Economy prerogative) for the production of traditional crafts and artefacts and traded (in the global economy) by fashioning the colours and styles of its product to suit the specific market of a developed country, Japan. The third element is that Hi Hlurile also benefited from funding from government departments and funding agencies (such as the Provincial Department of Health and Social Development, the National Department of Trade and Industry and the National Development Agency); and fourthly, that Hi Hlurile obtained development funding to offer training to other projects, a function associated with development professionals (see Stirrat, 2000, 2008) from developed countries. The training function was not limited to Giyani, but also expanded to neighbouring countries (Mozambique, Zambia and Zimbabwe).

Hi Hlurile definitely provides some hope for the transition of a small-scale project to an enterprise. It is a project to watch as it knits together, and transforms some of the contradictory elements that capitalism breeds, which Comaroff and Comaroff (2000:334)

describe as the 'outworkings of millennial capitalism and the culture of neoliberalism'. These elements include the reordering of production and consumption, the reconstruction of the essence of labour, identity, and subjectivity and the rapid movement of persons and goods.

Whereas Comaroff and Comaroff (2000) refer to the exploitative production in one place and the consumption of the product in another, Hi Hlurile is infusing production practices with empowerment and pride in Tsonga-Shangaan arts and crafts. Rather than becoming alienated from the product, the project participants value and express their identity through their products while still benefiting from trade (consumption) beyond Giyani. The 'reconstruction of the essence of labour, identity, and subjectivity' (Comaroff and Comaroff, 2000:334) that was referred to above is a reality that is reflected in Hi Hlurile – for unemployed teachers and nurses, the loss (or unrealised potential) of professional identity and subjectivity coalesce in this project. However, these concepts are adapted and reworked significantly within this project and the benefits that come from the rapid movement of people and products are also turned to advantage in Hi Hlurile.

To sum up: the local level ethnographies of the selected small-scale development projects in Giyani revealed that projects reflect the macro-influences (development, economic and political discourses) that were in vogue at the time of their inception, but that these influences are continually adapted and grounded in the practices and interests of the local actors. Thus the projects in Giyani are important spaces for participants to reflect on, adapt to and transform rapidly changing social, political and economic influences within the realm of their possibilities. What this means is that the findings support the thesis that the selected (and similar) projects are indeed 'sanctuaries' – places of refuge from the vagaries of social, political, economic and life-course change; places that empower members and so become 'sacred' or places of honour and prestige; and where injured or unwanted people 'of a specified kind' like unemployed professionally trained women or the elderly find protection in cocooned entities.

Having stated what the projects mean to the participants, I now look at how such projects are seen from the outside – how appealing are these projects to funders?

8.5 IMPLICATIONS OF THE FINDINGS FOR DEVELOPMENT

Ferguson (2007) describes how important it is for donors to frame and name the place and conditions of the recipients of aid. In this way, Ferguson (2007:xiv) says, donors ‘create their own form of discourse, and this discourse simultaneously constructs ... a particular kind of object of knowledge and creates a structure of knowledge around that object’. Giyani lends itself well to being such an ‘object of knowledge’, since, as was illustrated in the preceding chapters, Giyani has a very favourable profile for funding – it is a former Bantustan (a term used to invoke sympathy), its location is remote from the country’s economic centres, its people are deserving of assistance, and the like. However, enough had been written at the international discourse level about development or aid failure (for example, by all the authors that contributed to the Development Dictionary, edited by Sachs, 1997) to sound warning bells to prevent a repetition of mistakes at national and local level. Lessons from particularly Giyani are important, since Giyani is a priority area for the present government's poverty alleviation programmes and was selected to launch government programmes¹⁰⁷ to reduce unemployment, provide job training, build infrastructure and help communities participate in development.

Having established the close link between macro or policy influences and small-scale projects, the obvious next step is to examine what is looming on the policy horizon that will, in future, have an impact on development projects. Therefore, I describe the implications that my findings have for development in South Africa in some detail, since I believe that, in some respects, the present development path pursued by the South African government is not sufficiently alert to avoiding the mistakes resulting from the

¹⁰⁷ In May 2004, former President Mbeki launched the Extended Public Works Programme (EPWP) in Sikhunyani village, southwest from Giyani (EPWP, 2004) and in August 2009, President Zuma launched the Comprehensive Rural Development Programme in Muyexe Village, just north of the town (Presidency, 2009).

development discourses of the past. Later, I shall I briefly draw on the findings of my study and the implications these lessons have for development in general.

8.5.1 Lessons for development in South Africa

In the transition to democracy, the new government opted to engage with international financial institutions on business terms and not as a beggar asking for favours. The government is not dependent upon aid and separates aid money from its fiscus. This means that the services that the government is expected to deliver are funded from revenue the government generates (for example, from taxes) and shortfalls are financed with international loans in which the loan obligations are stipulated and adhered to, rather than through aid. By adopting this approach of avoiding reliance on aid, South Africa enjoyed sustained economic growth and gained the respect of the world (Moyo, 2009:150). Locally, however, South Africa is not pursuing the same path for the Second Economy.

Since wealth and poverty are opposite sides of the same coin,¹⁰⁸ South Africa acknowledges and plans for two economies (see above) and the small-scale projects in Giyani are consigned to the Second Economy. Therefore, the lessons from this study are important in dealing with the Second Economy. Just as South Africa, as a country, has avoided the aid-dependency trap, so we should also avoid allowing the poor to be locked into Second Economy dependence permanently. Ideally, ways of integrating the two economies should be sought (Bond, 2007:16), since anything less would amount to second-class citizenship, an idea reminiscent of the political 'separate development' planning of the past. South Africa cannot just exchange political apartheid for economic apartheid. In respect of two of the case study projects, the Avelanani crèche and the Giyani Aged Garden, it is admirable that the government (through its provincial and local government departments) serves the needs of children and the aged. The assistance received from government is supportive, but the project participants have a sense of

¹⁰⁸ '...in the same relations in which wealth is produced, poverty is produced also' (Marx, 1867, quoted in Bond, 2007:1).

ownership of the projects. However, the findings regarding Ahitipfuxeni, that stage-manages funding and Hi Hlurile, that is redefining modernity, invite close scrutiny, since important lessons emerge for the Second Economy.

I base my discussion of the lessons from Ahitipfuxeni and Hi Hlurile on the understanding that ‘there is a limit to what government can provide for people, but there is no limit to what they can be enabled to achieve for themselves’ (Commission on Social Justice, 2007:56). Therefore it is important to understand the latest scheme, the concept of Community Development Practitioners¹⁰⁹, which the government is implementing to facilitate community development in the Second Economy. In support of the government of South Africa’s Integrated Sustainable Rural Development Programme and Urban Renewal Programme, in 2006, the national Department of Social Development commissioned studies on ways to improve the coordination of development in priority areas of deprivation. These studies led to the concept of Community Development Practitioners (earlier referred to as Community Development Workers) that would facilitate access to government services and initiatives by ‘poor, vulnerable and marginalised individuals, households and communities’ (CDP toolkit, 2009: i). The manner in which this community development approach is envisaged is articulated in the publication *Towards Sustainable Livelihoods: A toolkit for Community Development Practitioners in South Africa*, dated July 2009. This document states:

Community Development Practitioners [should] facilitate discussions at community level on livelihood issues, assist communities to plan and implement appropriate activities to enhance and maintain their livelihoods; identify projects and/or interventions to improve their livelihoods, undertake participatory monitoring and evaluation; reflect critically on their development situation, learn from it and share their experiences. [Community Development Practitioners should] also facilitate the integration and coordination of the interventions of the Department of Social Development and other service providers at community level (CDP Toolkit, 2009:2).

¹⁰⁹ See Gray & Mubangizi. (2009) for a review of CDP.

Noble as the Community Development Practitioners' approach may seem, I have three concerns about the concept as it is proposed, because it would place the Department of Social Development at the helm of community development. Firstly, as was so clearly illustrated in this study and other studies such as that of Ekong and Sokoya (1982), the government should not be driving community development, but should rather support initiatives from the community. The question of ownership is important and if communities see government initiatives as 'government projects', serving the needs of the government rather than the community's needs, a community may not feel any sense of ownership or responsibility for the initiative (Ekong & Sokoya, 1982:223); or, as is the case with Ahitipfuxeni, projects will stage-manage funding.

Secondly, the concept of community development practitioners conjures up images of the international development industry, which has been severely criticised for absorbing too much of the funding intended for development (see Ferguson 2007; Mosse, 2006). Similarly, only a portion of government funding will reach the poor, since the salaries and training budgets for the cadre of community development practitioners will need to be accommodated first. In essence, community development workers, who are largely matriculants and people with tertiary education (National DSD Skills Audit Report, 2009:54) seem to be just another layer of civil servants (and the conditions that led to 'structural adjustment' measures have taught us the dangers of a ballooning of the civil service).

My third concern is with the notion that 'community development has to come first to ensure that communities have obtained all the necessary ingredients (the right attitude, new knowledge, better organization capacity, strong social networks) required for economic development to be achieved' (National DSD Skills Audit Report, 2009:2). The idea that government should inculcate 'the right attitude' reflects Foucault's notion of 'governmentality', meaning that government power is used to produce governable underlings (see Hart, 2006:22-23). Furthermore, from the perspective of capital, Bourdieu (1989:22) sees symbolic capital as a crucial source of power, as it is developed through socially imposed, ostensibly legitimate, social divisions. The negative side of this form of capital is that when a holder of symbolic capital uses its

power to alter the actions of someone with less social capital, the entity with more social capital effectively brings to bear symbolic violence. In this regard, Fischer's (1988) reflection on development planning under apartheid recorded in the article entitled 'Whose development? The politics of development and the development of politics in South Africa' needs to be reconsidered. In this article Fischer (1998:125) states that development initiated by the State and centrally planned is always dominated by State ideology.

Therefore, the government should **not** be controlling community development nor should it be creating a 'development industry' in the form of community development practitioners nor should it be exercising symbolic violence upon those in the Second Economy by suppressing the agency of those being 'developed'. For if the State does so, this mindset would be comparable to the ideologically loaded separate development policies of South Africa's past and the condescending attitude of international development aid that has bedevilled development and created aid-dependence since 1945. Moyo (2009:48) describes this aid dependent attitude as 'the silent killer of growth', in which she includes economic growth, personal growth or agency and societal growth.

As Malan (2009) asserts, the realisation of socio-economic rights entrenched in the Constitution is not solely the government's responsibility; the Constitution places some measure of responsibility on the individual, the family, civil society, the State and the market. The government should not try to be all things to everyone, particularly the poor. Rather, it should create an environment that ensures respect for basic rights, the rule of law, good governance, the provision of infrastructure such as schools, and the provision of services such as water and sanitation. Also, the government's social grants and pensions provide relief from dire poverty by providing an income to many households in Giyani. Another lesson learnt in this study is that support from government departments that assists project participants, such as the provision of food for the children at the Avelanani crèche and health care to the Giyani Aged Garden, is desirable, as it does not suffocate the agency of people. However, an important lesson from Ahitipfuxeni, which was formed because 'the government told us to form groups'

and whose vision is 'to get more funding', is that the government should not drive development in the hope that people will become self-reliant. By contrast, the main lesson from Hi Hlurile, which was formed organically from a need the members identified and whose vision is to become a successful business, is that the role of the government is to create opportunities to support community-initiated development. There can be no 'right approach' that will ensure the success of community development since 'environmental factors, social factors, the nature of the programme, the felt needs of the people ...historical antecedents' (Ekong & Sokoya, 1982:217) all feed into the equation, community development should come from the people and not be controlled by the government. I would therefore caution against the 'community development practitioners' approach of the Department of Social Development, which would lock people into the Second Economy and leave a loss of dignity, stigmatisation, dependence and entitlement in its wake.

8.5.2 Lessons for development in general

This study revealed that small-scale development projects were sanctuaries for the participants – sites of learning and empowerment, places to deal with countercyclical change, sites for coping with the contradictions of changing gender legislation and persistent traditions and places of solidarity. Therefore small-scale (community) development projects need to be viewed in a multidimensional manner to determine not only the reasons for success or failure, but also the unanticipated effects and the value of projects in other than purely monetary and 'developmental' terms. What may seem absolutely correct based on formulae, theory and empirically driven research may not be what is wanted or needed by the intended beneficiaries. People's needs are indeed more than merely biological in nature. They have to do with personal fulfilment and social interaction. Social capital is not a static entity, but is forever being created through social interaction.

What is also important is the link between development and political governance. People will not achieve freedom from fear in the absence of respect for basic rights, the

rule of law, good governance and, not least, freedom from want. Met needs are the well-spring of dignity; and basic needs must be fulfilled before much else becomes possible. But as the study shows, such fulfilment is sterile without personal and social gains. Thus, development must have a human-centred approach and is a process rather than a condition or an end state. Capacity-building and the provision of marketing, management and technical expertise must not take over the role of local people as the driving force in development, since the key strength of the community lies in its social and human capital.

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APPENDICES

APPENDIX 1: SCHEDULE FOR SMALL GROUP INTERVIEW

Name of project:

Date of interview;

Size of interview group:

Composition of interview group:

HISTORY OF PROJECT

1. In which year did the project start?

1. Xana projeke ya (n'wina) yi sungule hi lembe rihhi?

2. How did the project start and who came with the idea of starting it?

2. Xana projeke leyi yi sungule njhani naswona i mani a teke na makungu yo yi sungula?

3. Did you all start with the project at the same time or did some members join later?

3. Xana hikwenu mi sungule na projeke kumbe ku na lava nga nghenelela exikarhi?

[recruitment]

4. How did the individuals become involved with the project?

4. Xana mi swi endle njhani ku va un'wana na un'wana a va kona eka projeke?

5. How many people were involved at the start of this project?

5. Xana i vanhu vangani va sunguleke na projeke leyi?

6. How many are involved now?

6. Xana i vanhu vangani va nga kona sweswi?

7. How many members have left the project?

7. Xana i swirho swingani swi tshikeke projeke?

8. Do you know why some of them left?

8. Xana u tiva lexi endleke leswaku va tshika?

9. What are the goals of this group?

9. Xana hi swihi swikongomelo swa ntlawa lowu?

10. How are/were these goals decided upon?

10. Xana swikongomelo leswi swi kungahatiwe njhani/ hi ndlela yini?

11. Do you sell, share or use the products after making them/harvesting them?

*11. Xana ma xavisa, avelana kumbe ku tirhisa mbuyelo endzhaku ka ku endla /
ntshovelo ke?*

12. What problems you experience when you started this project?

12. Hi swihi swiphiqo leswi mi hlanganeke na swona eku sunguleni ka projeke leyi?

13. How did you solve these problems?

13. Xana mi swi lulamise njhani swiphiqo leswi?

14. How is your project funded?

14. Xana project yi kuma njhani swipfuno?

15. Do you receive any support from local organisations?

15. Xana mi kuma ku pfuniwa ku suka eka mihlangano ya laha kusuhi?

16. If YES, in what form was this support?

16. Loko ku ri swona, va pfuna hi ndlela yihi?

MEMBERS

MEMBERS / SWIRHO

17. Does your project involve men, women, children, families, neighbours or local people?

17. *Xana projeke ya n'wina yi katsa vavanuna, vavansati, vandyangu, vana, vamakhelwana kumbe vanhu va laha kusuhi?*

18. What are the ages of the members?

18. *Xana swirho i swa vukhale bya malembe wahi?*

19. What is your level of education?

19. *Xana mi dyondzile ku fika eka ntangha mani?*

20. How often do you meet as a group?

20. *Xana mi hlangana kangani tani hi ntlawa?*

21. How many hours do you spend at the project daily?

21. *Xana i tiawara tingani mi ti tirhisaka eka projeke hi siku?*

22. How many days a week do you spend at this project?

22. *Xana i mangani masiku lama mi ma tirhisaka eka projeke leyi hi vhiki?*

[seasonal variation]

23. What happens to your project during the changes of season, for example at the time of mopani worms, marula and grass cutting, do you close?

23. *Xana ku humelela yini hi projeke hi minkarhi ya ku ncinca ka tinguva ku fana na minkarhi ya matomani, makanyi na ku hada byanyi, xana ma pfala?*

[working conditions & social interaction]

24. Do you feel safe at work?

24. *Xana u ti ntwá u hlayisekile entirhweni?*

25. Can you work comfortably when it rains and when it is very hot?

25. *Xana u tirha kahle loko ku ri na mfula na loko ku hisa ngopfu?*

26. Do women bring their children along to the project?

26. *Xana vavansati va ta na vana va vona eka projeke?*

27. What sort of things do you discuss while working?

27. *Xana i swilo swa mixaka wihi leswi swi kanelaka loko mi ri karhi mi tirha?*

[production]

28. What are the different articles you produce?

28. *Xana hi swihi swiendliwa swo hambana leswi mi swi humesaka?*

29. How long does it take to produce one article?

29. *Xana swi teka nkarhi wo tani hi kwihl ku endlá xilo xin'we?*

30. Do you complete an article individually or do you work as a group?

30. *Xana mi heta xiendliwa mi ri n'wexe kumbe ma pfunana tani hi ntlawa?*

31. What other work do you do when you are not at the project?

31. *Xana hi swihi swin'wana mi swi endlaka loko mi ri ku endleni ka projeke ke?*

MARKETING / MAXAVISELO

32. Who buys your products? How do people get to know about your product?

32. *I vamani va xavaka swixavisiwa swa n'wina? Xana vanhu va swi tiva njhani swixavisiwa swa n'wina?*

33. Do you take the product to the client? Do you have ways of drawing the clients to you?

33. *Xana mi teka swixavisiwa mi yisa eka vaxavi? Kumbe mi tirhisa tindlela to karhi to koka vaxavi va ta ka n'wina?*

34. How do you cope with competition (other groups producing the same products)?

34. *Xana mi endla njhani hi mphikizano(hi mintlawwa leyi mi ntshovelaka swo fana)?*

35. How do you cope with other factors like the weather/ politics, how can you deal with these situations?

35. *Xana mi endla njhani hi swivangelo swin'wana swo fana na maxelo/ tipolitiki, mi endla yini hi swiyimo swo tani?*

ORGANISATION AND LEADERSHIP

ORGANISATION / HLANGANO AND LEADERSHIP / VURHANGERI

36. Are your leaders men or women? How were they chosen?

36. *Xana varhangeri va n'wina i (vaxinuna kumbe vaxinsati ke?) Xana va hlawuriwe njhani?*

37. What abilities do they have to make them leaders? What responsibility do they have?

37. *Hi byihi vuswikoti lebyi va nga na byona ku va endla varhangeri? Xana va na vutihlamuleri muni?*

38. What responsibilities do the other members have?

38. *Hi byihi vutihlamuleri lebyi swirho leswin'wana swi nga na byona?*

39. What activities are undertaken? How are decided upon?

39. *Hi yihi mingingiriko leyi mi yi endlaka? Xana yi kunguhatiwe njhani?*

40. How are decisions made in the group? Who is involved in decision making?

40. *Swiboho swona mi swi endla njhani eka ntlawa? Xana i vamani va kumbekaka eka ku endla swiboho?*

41. Who takes overall responsibility for decision making?

41. *I mani a vaka ni vutihlamuleri eka swiboho leswi endliweke?*

42. What are the group's goals? How were the goals formulated?

42. *Hi swihi swikongomelo swa ntlawa? Xana swikongomelo swi endliwe njhani?*

43. How do you plan your things as a group? Who are involved in planning?

43. *Hi yihi ndlela leyi mi kunguhataka swilo swa n'wina hi yona tani hi ntlawa? Xana i va mani va kumbekaka eka ku kunguhata?*

44. How will you know if you have achieved your goals?

44. *Xana mi swi tiva njhani loko mi kotile ku fikelela swikongomelo swa n'wina?*

45. How is information outside the group assessed? Who collects the information for the group and how do you share the information?

45. *Xana vuxokoxoko byi kamberiwa njhani matshan'wini ya ntlawa? Xana i mani a hlengeletaka vuxokoxoko bya ntlawa naswona byi avelaniwa njhani vuxokoxoko lebyi?*

46. How do you maintain your activities? What resources does the project have such as cash, building, tools etc?

46. *Xana mi endlisa ku yini ku mingingiriko ya n'wina yi nga yimi, yi ya emahlweni? Hi swihi switirhisiwa leswi projeke yi nga naswona swo fana na mali, muako, switirhi, na swin'wana?*

47. How do you obtain funding?

47. Xana swipfuno mi swi kuma njhani?

48. How much money does the group earn from selling its products/produce in a year?

48. Xana i mali muni hi lembe eka ku xavisa swikumiwa/ntshovelo?

49. Does each person sell his/her own products or do you sell it as a group?

49. Xana munhu un'wana na un'wana u xavisa mihandzu ya yena kumbe mi xavisa mi ri hi ntlawa?

50. How is the income distributed?

50. Xana miholo wu avelaniwa hi ndlela yihi?

51. How are the resources allocated and monitored?

51. Xana switirhisiwa swi avanyisiwe ni ku languteriwa njhani?

52. How is the group organised? Is the group registered with whom and when?

52. Xana ntlawa wu lulamisiwe hi ndlela yihi? Xana wu tsarisiwe na va mani naswona rini?

AT COMMUNITY LEVEL

At community level.

52. What other organisations operate in the Giyani/village?

52. Hi yihi mihlangano yin'wana yi tirhaka laha Giyani / eswitandini ?

53. What other projects do you know of in Giyani/the village?

53. Hi tihl tiprojeke tin'wana ti nga kona laha Giyani kumbe eswitandini ke?

54. Do you work with other projects? How do you work with these projects?

54. Xana ma tirhisana na tiprojeke tin'wana? Xana mi tirhisana hi ndlela yihi ke?

APPENDIX 2: SCHEDULE FOR INDIVIDUAL INTERVIEWS

Name of Project:

Date of interview:

Name of interviewee:(optional)

MOTIVATION AND COMMITMENT

1. How long have YOU been involved in this project?

1. I nkarhi wo tani hi kwihi mi ri kona eka projeke leyi?

2. Why are you involved in this project?

2. Hikokwalaho ka yini u nghenelele projeke leyi?

3. If you were not involved in this project, what would you be doing?

3. Loko a wu nga ri ka projeke leyi, xana a wu ta va u endla yini?

4. Is there prestige in being involved?

4. Xana ku na ku hloniphiwa/ku tekeriwa ehenhla loko u ri eka projeke?

5. What do you like about this project?

5. Hi swihi leswi u swi tsakelaka hi projeke leyi ke?

6. What you do NOT like about this project?

6. Hi swihi leswi u nga swi tsakeriki hi projeke leyi ke?

7. What would you wish this project to achieve?

7. Hi swihi u navelaka ku swi fikeleriwa hi projeke leyi?

8. What do you like about the **people** involved in this project?

8. Xana mi tsakela yini hi vanhu lava nga nghenelele eka projeke leyi?

9. If you are offered employment tomorrow, would you accept it? Why/why not?.

9. *Loko wo nyikiwa ntirho mindzuku, u nga wu pfumela? Hikwalaho ka yini/ hikwalaho ka yini u nga pfumeli?*

BIOGRAPHICAL DATA & HOUSEHOLD ECONOMIC ASSESSMENT

10. When were you born?

10. *Xana u velekiwe hi lembe rihi?*

11. Where were you born (which village/town)?

11. *Xana u velekiwe kwihhi (tiko rihi/doroba)?*

12. Marital status: Are you single/married/divorced/widow?

12. *Xiyimo xa matekiwele: u tshama wexe/ tekiwile/ tshikiwile/ muferiwa?*

13. What level of education do you have?

13. *Xana u dyondzile ku fikela ka ntangha mani?*

14. How many children do you have?

14. *Xana u na vana vangani?*

15. How many people do you care for at home (dependants)?

15. *Xana ku na vanhu vangani lava u va hlayisaka ekaya(vahlayisiwa)*

16. How many persons in you home are employed?

16. *Xana i munhu/ vanhu vangani eka n'wina lava tirhaka ke?*

17. Do you receive a government grant?

17. *Xana u nyikiwa mali ya mpfuno hi mfumo?*



18. Does anyone in your home receive a grant?

18. *Xana ku na un'wana ekaya a kumaka mali leyi ya mpfuno?*

19. If Yes, what type of grant:

19. *Loko a ri kona, i muxaka wihi wa mali ya mpfuno:*

Child support grant: Y/N How much: R_____

Pension: Y/N How much: R_____

Disability Grant; Y/N How much: R_____

APPENDIX 3: SURVEY QUESTIONNAIRE

QUESTIONNAIRE NUMBER:

VILLAGE/SECTION _____

ASK IF SOME ONE IN THIS HOUSEHOLD IS INVOLVED IN A PROJECT.

ASK TO SPEAK TO THIS PERSON.

1	Male		
2	Female		
3	Age		
4	Married		
	Divorced		
	Widow or widower		
	Single		
5	Did you attend school?		
	Yes		
	No	GO TO 8	
6	What is the highest standard you passed?		

7	Did you complete any study after school?		
	No		
	Yes: give details		
8	Do you have a job?		
	Yes		
	No	GO TO 11	
9	What is this job?		

10	How long have you had this job?	GO TO 15	
11	When last did you have a job?	IF NEVER, GO TO 15	



12	What was this job?	
13	How long did you have that job?	
14	Why did you leave this job?	
15	How many people do you have to care for?	
16	Are there other people also supporting this family financially?	
	Yes	
	No	GO TO 20
17	How are they related to you?	
18	Where do they work?	
	in a village	
	in Giyani town	
	elsewhere	
19	How long have they been working there?	
20	How many people living in this household receive a pension?	
21	How many children in this household receive a child grant?	
22	What type of project are you involved in?	
23	How long have you been involved in this project?	

COMPLETE THE NEEDS TEST
ON NEXT PAGE

NEEDS TEST

Say whether the following statements are TRUE or FALSE

	STATEMENT	TRUE	FALSE
1	I like being in the project because everyone there works well together		
2	I like being in the project because I learn things I did not know		
3	I like being in the project because I am paid well for my work		
4	I like being in the project because there is an elected project committee		
5	I like being in the project because I feel that the other people there like me		
6	I like being in the project because I can do whatever I like without worrying about the other people there think		
7	I like being in the project because we get many contracts and so earn more and more money		
8	I like being in the project because it gives me a chance to develop close friendships		
9	I like being in the project because our leader(s) know how to approach funders		
10	I like being in the project because working there makes me feel good about myself		
11	I like being in the project because we are asked what we think when decisions should be made		
12	I like being in the project because there are many benefits, other than money, that I get		
13	I like being in the project because we are all open and honest with one another		
14	I like being in the project because I can improve myself as a person		
15	I like being in the project because I feel safe being there		
16	I like being in the project because the leaders make decisions alone		

THANK YOU FOR YOUR CO-OPERATION

APPENDIX 4: PARTICIPANT CONSENT FORM



UNIVERSITEIT VAN PRETORIA
UNIVERSITY OF PRETORIA
YUNIBESITHI YA PRETORIA

Dept. of Anthropology & Archaeology
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Research Title: SURVIVING TRANSITION IN THE GIYANI DISTRICT:
THE ROLE OF SMALL-SCALE RURAL DEVELOPMENT PROJECTS IN A PERIOD OF
RAPID SOCIO-POLITICAL AND ECONOMIC CHANGE

Project Leader: Surname: _____

First Name: _____

Address:

Telephone number: _____

We appreciate your willingness to be interviewed for this research project. The project leader will contact you to arrange a time for the interview to take place.

- Your involvement in this study is voluntary, you are not obliged to divulge information you would prefer to remain private, and you may withdraw from the study at any time.
- The project team will treat the information you provide as confidential. You will not be identified in any document, including in the interview transcripts and the research report, by your surname, first name, or by any other information. You will be referred to in the documents under a code name. No one other than the project team will be informed that you participated in the research.
- The research may include risks to you, but these will be minimal and no different to those encountered by people on a daily basis. Every effort will be made to minimise possible risks.
- The research finding will be made available to you should you request them.
- Should you have any queries about the research, now or in the future, you are welcome to contact the project leader at the above address.
- We appreciate your willingness to be involved in this research project.

I understand the contents of this document and agree to participate in this research.

Signature

Date

Name

FROM: Stuwig, F.W. & Stead, G.B (2001) *Planning. Designing and Reporting Research*. Cape Town: Maskew Miller Longman.



APPENDIX 5: PERMISSION FOR PARTICIPATION



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CULTURE AND DEVELOPMENT STUDY

c/o Giyani College Of Education, Nsami Dam Rd, Giyani, Tel: 012 8124273

Ms Elmary Buis

Cell: 083 564 4071

I, _____ parent / guardian of _____
Name of Parent / Guardian Name of Participant (daughter)

hereby give permission for participation in the Culture and Development Study which will take place from 28 June till 16 July 2004.

Signature of Parent / Guardian

Date

Background to the Study

A series of interviews will be done with mostly women at their homes on aspects of culture and development projects. Interviews will be conducted in Giyani Town, Sifasonke, Gawula, Homu A & B, Shamfana, Npepula and Hlophekane.

Interviews

The participants will be working in pairs.

They will be under the constant supervision of Ms Elmary Buis, Ms Ivy Maluleke and Ms Agnes Mabasa.

They will be collected from Sikhunyani High School in the mornings (at 08:00) and returned to the same venue at the end of the day (approximately 16:00)