1 Introduction and Orientation

I can sing a hymn to the glory of my land,
from the ashes something stirs,
new voices are being heard.

I can look with love
at the harsh landscape
pockmarked by [villages].
In the dust and dirt
new voices sing new songs.

(Achmat Dangor, 1982)

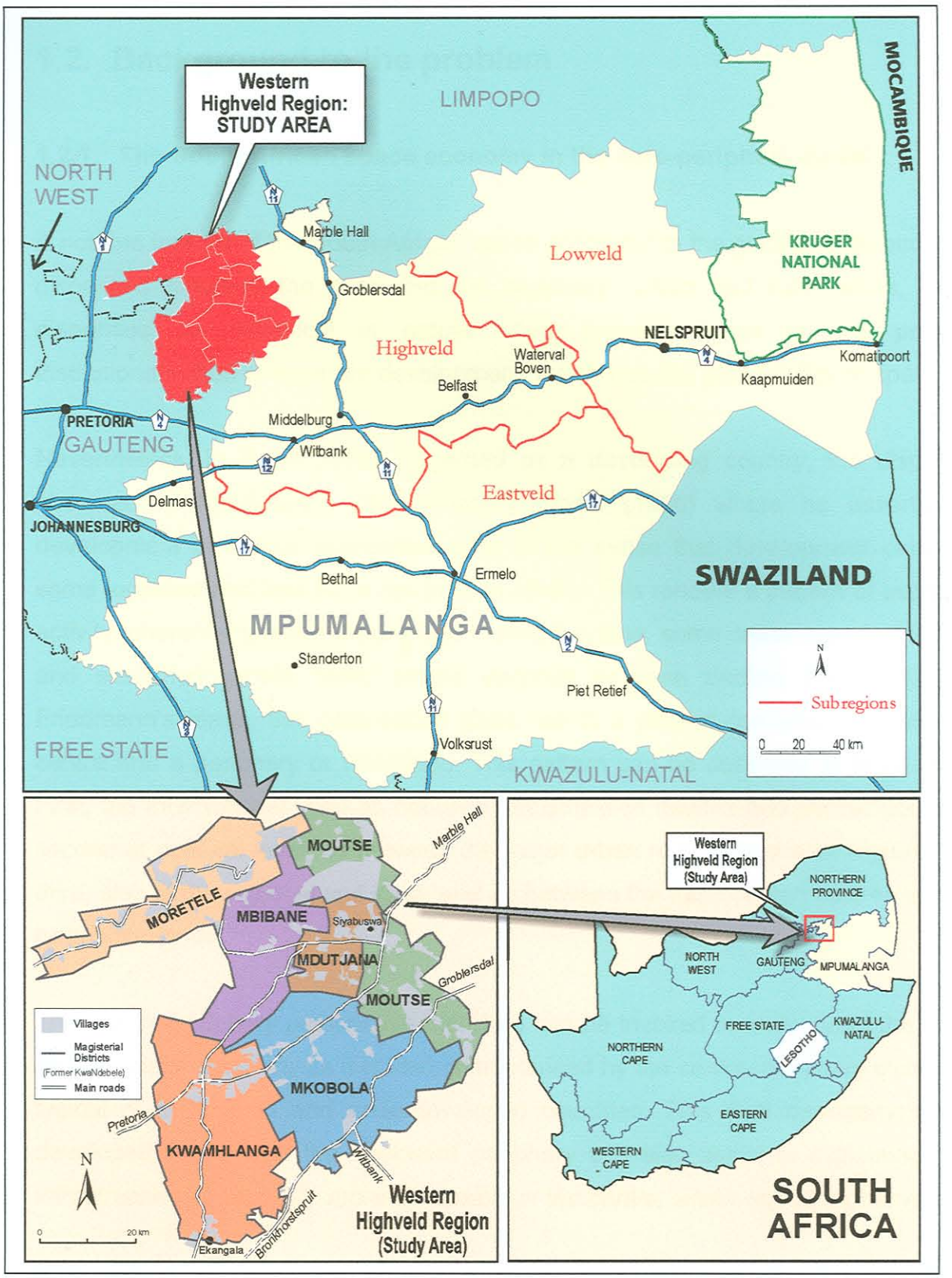
1.1. Introduction

This chapter serves as an orientation to the study, a guiding map that provides a panoramic view of the whole enquiry. It begins by providing a background within which the rural problem of South Africa is located. The rural problem, which entails the fact that the majority of rural people in South Africa were and, to some extent, are still the most neglected of all South Africans, is analysed in the context of Friedman's core-periphery model. This model is used to demonstrate that poverty is more prevalent in the rural areas (periphery) than in the urban areas (core). Consequently suggesting that development should happen in these disadvantaged areas. The South African legal framework that relates to development and local governance is also presented with the intention of demonstrating the relationship between poverty and state intervention in such a situation. The background in question does not claim to be a detailed analysis of all factors at stake, it is essentially, an eye-opener that enables a comprehension of the fundamentals of the study.

The chapter presents the problem statement, which is the main anchor of the study, the aim, which states the overall goal of the enquiry, specific objectives, which spell out the actual tasks to be performed, the scope and significance of the study are also stated. The temporal and spatial dimensions are the basis of the science of Geography. The study area, (Figure 1.1) which involves villages in the Western Highveld Region of Mpumalanga Province, subsequently referred to as the Region, forms the spatial basis of the inquiry. The human landscape, which includes the

various cultural groups and the Transitional Local Councils (TLCs) of the Region, is set within the historic perspective of the South African transitional period[1].

Figure 1.1: The Western Highveld Region in Mpumalanga, South Africa



[1] A post 1994 period marked by the incoming of the democratic government in South Africa.

This setting provides a temporal dimension of the study. Lastly an outline of the entire study, is presented with a general picture of issues discussed in each chapter. At the end of the chapter an evaluation of the issues discussed is accommodated.

1.2. Background to the problem

1.2.1. The South African space economy in the core-periphery model

A notable feature of the South African space economy[2] is the glaring socio-economic disparities between the core and the periphery, urban and rural areas. These disparities are historical in nature. They primarily hinge on the previous institutionalisation of separate development, which was the grand policy of apartheid.

Nevertheless, in South Africa, regarded as a developing country, the disparities observed fit Friedmann's core-periphery model (1966) where he asserts that development of spatial economies differ in the sense that development occurs in some localities and less so or not at all in others. This renders a pattern of economic activity inherently uneven. At any one moment in time, some areas experience rapid and sustained growth while others stagnate or even decline (Fair, 1982). In Friedmann's terms, this polarisation gives rise to a pattern comprising a core or a centre and a periphery or hinterland. This pattern can be observed at three levels. First, the international level as between industrialised nations and poorer countries; second at national level, as between the major urban regions and rural regions and, third, also at the regional and local level as between the metropolitan centres and the rural hinterlands.

This centre-periphery perspective therefore can be invoked to understand the South African space economy as it is also characterised by the centre–periphery dichotomy typical of developing and underdeveloped countries. This dual arrangement of a developed centre and the backward periphery can also assist in explaining "*why infrastructure is generally more accessible in the centre, which enjoys higher rates of*

[2] Geographic or spatial pattern of economic development or the manner in which the economy is manifested spatially (Fair, 1982:8).

economic growth, as well as greater decision–making power than the periphery" (Wanmali & Islam, 1997:260).

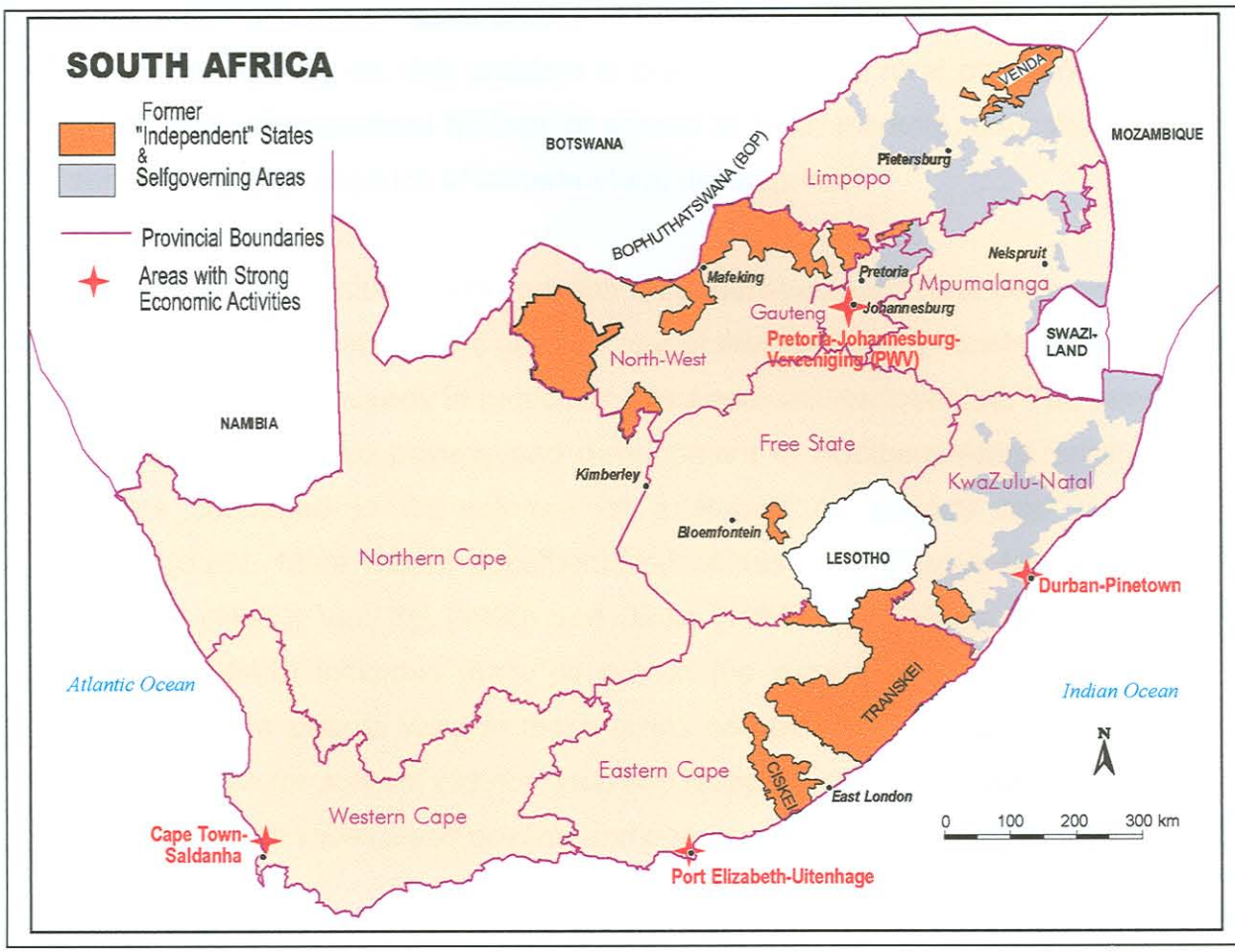
While it is appropriate to analyse the centre-periphery model in terms of simple rural-urban disparities, poor countries versus well-to-do countries and metropolitan centres in contrast to the hinterland, the South African economic scenario is rather complex. This is a result of a myriad of factors, particularly historical, that have shaped the character of the South African space economy. Unlike a dichotomy evident in most postcolonial economies (Wanmali & Islam, 1997), the South African spatial economy effectively renders a trichotomy of the well-to-do core, a better-off inner core and a backward outer periphery.

The core consisting of strong economic activity located in various parts of the country: Pretoria-Witwatersrand-Vereeniging (PWV region of Gauteng), Durban-Pinetown region (KwaZulu-Natal), Cape Town-Saldanha region (Western Cape) and Port Elizabeth-Uitenhage region (Eastern Cape) (Coetzee *et al.,* 1985). These regions, (Figure 1.2) have historically and continue to be economic powerhouses of South Africa. Located closer to the core is the inner or mobilised periphery (Fair, 1982), which has strong links with the core. This is characterised by the urban hinterland in the form of African, Coloured and Indian townships. This better-off sector, constituted historically, a strategic urban appendage, that has continually provided the core with unmobilised labour and commodity buying power to the core. Situated in the backwaters of South Africa, is the outer or unmobilised periphery, which has weaker links with the core. Historically, the outer periphery of South Africa constituted the black homelands[3] the so-called self-governing territories and independent states. (Post apartheid South Africa authorities have since eradicated the system of homelands, the legacy, however remains). Binns (1998:5), reflects on this spatial trichotomy and its disparities, by asserting that: "*on the doorstep of the smart mainly White tree lined northern suburbs such* as Sandton [core], *is the impoverished black township of Alexandra, and only 30 minutes drive away along the motorway, past the gleaming towers of the Central Business District, lies the sprawling Black satellite of Soweto* [inner periphery]. *In rural areas too the contrast zones between impoverished former homeland such as Transkei and Ciskei* (*now*

[3] South African rural territories for the location of African people. Designed and implemented by successive apartheid regimes in accordance with apartheid policy.

incorporated in the Eastern Cape Province) [outer periphery] *and neighbouring White-owned farm areas display markedly contrasting levels of living*". It was observed by (Coetzee *et al.*, 1985:xi) that in 1980 the Gross Geographic Product (GGP) of the core areas was 64%, 31.8% for the inner periphery and 4% for the outer periphery. The obvious conclusion that can be drawn from this scenario is that in present day South Africa, there are disparities in the economic spatial arrangement that exist as a result of the legacy of the apartheid master plan.

Figure 1.2: Former Homelands and Space Economy, South Africa



Friedmann's model of development is part of a host of theories on development that captures to some extent the realities of the modern world particularly pertaining to development in less developed regions. Lobao (1996:83) observed that "*the centrality of peripheral areas... has been recognised in the political economy literature since the classical theories of underdevelopment and imperialism*". This suggests that the concern with the *status quo* of the periphery, has been and should be the task of every country, region and rural area that lies at the fringe of

development. Consequently, development of the periphery, which in most cases is a zone of poverty, is an urgent matter or a national priority in every developing society.

1.2.2. Poverty in the rural periphery

It is not easy to quantify the actual numbers of people living in poverty world-wide. However, in 1990 the World Bank estimated that over a billion people live in poverty throughout the world. Two thirds of these live in Asia and a quarter in Sub-Saharan Africa and the rest in Latin America and the Caribbean (World Bank, 1992:30). Poverty remains a pervasive problem in many developing countries. Although by no means exclusively so, this problem is predominantly a rural phenomenon (Riddell, 1995). It is characterised by lack of access to land, markets, education and health services, and an absence of infrastructural development.

As a nation in transition, and one with an underdeveloped rural component, poverty is as real in South Africa as it is in the rest of the developing countries. South African poverty, and rural poverty in particular, has been well documented. The famous 1984 Carnegie Inquiry into poverty and development in Southern Africa consists of 311 papers contained in 25 volumes of a Report on poverty and prospects for development. More recent documentation of this poverty work has been done by Flaherty (1995); Van Zyl (1995) and Binns (1995). Highlighting this rural problem, Streek (1984:5) indicates that: "*poverty in the rural areas of South Africa is not something the people living in these areas needed to be told about. For them, the daily struggle for survival did not need any research and whichever way one looks at it, there is such widespread poverty and deprivation that it can only be described as a crisis*".

In as much as there are indications that the national question in South Africa has not been properly addressed by the 1994 democratic elections, as there are still incidents of racism, there is evidence to prove that the rural question, a serious albatross that hangs on the incumbent government, is as rife as ever.

In its 1994 Election Manifesto, the African National Congress (ANC) stated that, "*most people in the rural areas – the majority of whom are women – live in poverty. Central in the development programme will be job creation, provision of water,*

clinics, toilet facilities, electricity, telephones and roads" (1994:8). What the Manifesto stated constitutes a fundamental recognition of the conditions in most rural areas of South Africa.

As a response to rural poverty, several pieces of legislation have been passed as an intervention to the situation: the Local government Act, Act No. 209 of 1993, the Constitution of the Republic of South Africa Act, Act No. 108 of 1996 and the Reconstruction and Development Programme Fund Act, Act No. 7 of 1994. Another dimension towards addressing the rural question is the engendering of the debate through the Rural Development strategy of the government of National Unity Discussion document, Notice 1153 of 1995 and the White paper on Local Government, Notice 423 of 1998.

1.2.3. South Africa's response to rural poverty

In analysing the provisions of recent legislation and discussion documents it can be observed that the rural question has received attention as evidenced by the provision of rural local authorities and an institutionalised framework represented by the rural development strategy, a significant breakthrough. The Constitution of the Republic of South Africa Act, provides that, local government "*must structure and manage its administration and budgeting and planning processes to give priority to the basic needs of the community, and to promote the social and economic development of the community*" (South Africa: 1996:82). In the same vein, the Constitution Act, Act 108 of 1996, spells out in Part B of Schedules 4 and 5 the powers and functions of the local government; these include *inter alia* the provision of water and sanitation services, electricity municipal roads, municipal health services, waste water and sewage disposal system and fire fighting services. Section 8(1)(a) of the Local Government Transition Act, Act 209 of 1993, provides for a transitional local council for a non-metropolitan area of local government, which may include the area of jurisdiction of the traditional leader. The interpretation of this section presupposes that rural areas and villages are legally provided with municipal councils. Indeed these TLC structures were established in villages following the 1995 Local government elections.

The general thrust of the 1995 Discussion Document on Rural Development Strategy of the Government of National Unity is the suggestion that rural development should be the responsibility of the local authorities. This suggestion is emphasised through the foreword provided by the former South African president, Nelson Mandela, who stated that: "*rural people, and rural women in particular, bear the burden of poverty in South Africa. If we can change the inequalities and inefficiencies of the past, rural areas can become productive and sustainable. Building local government in the rural areas is the first step in this direction*" (South Africa, 1995:5).

Once more the White Paper on local government contemplates a permanent local government that shall have development as its character and fundamental role. The Paper states that: " *local government must put forward a vision of a developmental local government which centres on working with local communities to find sustainable ways to meet their needs and improve the quality of their lives*" (South Africa, 1998:16). What clearly emerges from this legal framework, is a recognition of the socio-political and economic material conditions inherited from the apartheid past. It is a response to the long marginalised inhabitants of the rural areas. The enactment of such legislation and the proposals in white papers and discussion documents do not necessarily constitute a solution to the rural problem. They create a policy framework, a theoretical platform that needs to be tested in practice.

1.2.3.1. The Reconstruction and Development Programme as an interventionist tool

The RDP is South Africa's blueprint on development and renewal of the South African society. The Programme was initiated as an African National Congress (ANC) policy position and vision for the development of a new South African society after years of apartheid rule and mismanagement. It is a culmination of a process "*involving workshops, consultation involvement of experts and the marrying of interests and sectors within the ANC camp*" (Liebenberg & Stewart, 1997:5). As an ANC, document it represents "*an integrated, coherent socio-economic policy framework*", to be developed into "*an effective programme of government*" (ANC, 1994:15).

The six principles on which the Programme is based are that:

- it should be an integrated and sustainable programme;

- it must be a people-driven process;
- there must be peace and security for all;
- there must be nation building in order to eliminate the historical division into first and third world;
- growth, development, reconstruction and redistribution should be linked to one another and
- the people affected by the programme and policies must participate in the decision-making process (ANC, 1994:4-7).

The proposals, strategies and policy programmes contained in the RDP fall into five major categories:

- meeting basic needs- jobs, land, housing, water, electricity, telecommunications, transport, a clean and healthy environment, nutrition, health care, and social welfare;
- developing human resources through an education and training programme from primary to tertiary level;
- building the economy and eradicating racial and gender inequalities in ownership, employment and skills;
- democratising the state and society to make the resources and potential of South Africa and its people available for a coherent programme of reconstruction and development and,
- implementing the RDP will require strong national, provincial and local government structures (ANC, 1994:7-13).

These reconstruction and development proposals presented in the ANC RDP 'base document' (De Wet, 1994; Van der Merwe, 1996; Liebenberg & Stewart, 1996), constitute a party vision. This was presented as a White Paper on Reconstruction and Development, after the ANC received a majority vote in the 1994 democratic elections. It should be noted that according to the 1994 Interim Constitution and 1996 Constitution of South Africa, the South African government is charged with the responsibility for the welfare of its people and the development of all parts of the nation (South Africa: 1996). This situation led to the adoption of the ANC's RDP as a national development framework, an official government programme, through the Reconstruction and Development Programme Act of 1994 and Reconstruction and Development Programme Fund Act of 1994.

The fundamental question, however, is: what then is the significance of the RDP in relation to the "*persistent poverty of the rural areas*" (Duncan, 1998:54). The RDP framework asserts that its programme of *meeting basic needs* constitutes the cornerstone of the resolution of the rural problem. Van Zyl (1995:10) agrees that "*meeting basic needs is not only the major heading of the chapter in the RDP, it is also a key initiative in attacking poverty*". The programme recognises "*that poverty affects millions of people the majority of whom live in rural areas and are women*". (ANC, 1994:14). It therefore sets out to "*improve the quality of life of all South Africans, and in particular the most poor and marginalised sections of* [the South African society]" (ANC, 1994:15). World Development Report (1994-96:14) admits that "*infrastructure represents, if not the engine, then the wheels of economic activity*" so that providing basic needs is actually providing the necessary infrastructure for the economic upliftment of the poor.

Acknowledging that the rural periphery and former homelands in particular, have become enclaves of despair and hopelessness, Nel (1997:58) encouragingly feels that, "*South Africa's new RDP, aims at improving the socio-economic conditions in the poorest areas*, [and] *reflects a commitment to grassroots, bottom-up development which is owned and driven by the communities*".

It is indeed quite comforting to note that the South African government has taken the question of basic needs seriously because these are the fundamental demands of rural populace. Binns, notes that scholars (e.g. Nel, 1994; Munslow and FitzGerald, 1995; Van Zyl, 1995; Esterhuyse, 1996) have made an analysis of the RDP since its inception and are unanimous in declaring that "*it is an impressive and ambitious programme, which generally accords well with current development thinking*" (Binns, 1998:11).

1.2.3.2. Who should deliver the Reconstruction and Development Programme?

The RDP base document and the RDP Act, have identified local government as the agency to implement the task of delivering basic services to the impoverished communities. This view has been crystallised in Sections 156 and 229 of the Constitution of South Africa and Schedule 2 of the Local Government Transition Act.

These provide that, land reform, housing and services, water and sanitation, energy and electrification, telecommunications, transport, environment, nutrition, health care, social security and social welfare are basic needs that are a responsibility of the local government. There is an insistence that, because the local government is the level of representative democracy closest to the people, it should be able to deliver essential services. Van der Merwe reiterates this position by asserting that with the RDP's focus on meeting basic needs, "*the local government is seen as a crucial role player, because it is the level closest to the people*" (1996:3). Munro (1996:17) also confirms that "*local government is regarded as the hands and feet of the RDP*", while De Beer and Swanepoel, (1994:630) emphasise that "*to be successful, implementation of the RDP, will have to take place at the local government level*". Siluma and Keeton's (1999:13) interview with President Mbeki records him saying that: "*we have to pay particular attention to local government, at what we can do to strengthen it, to ensure that it is able to do the things it is suppose to do. It is primarily a matter of focus. If you went to the people in Transkei and asked them what do you want, they would say roads. Roads in the rural areas are a priority. Housing is a priority. So are jobs, crime and corruption, water and education.*"

Given that the local government has been assigned this rather important task of delivering services, the next logical question is: what should be its character that will enable it to meet the challenges faced by the poor? The 1998 White Paper on Local Government suggests local government that should be developmental in nature. A developmental local government is defined as "*local government committed to working with citizens and groups within the community to find sustainable ways to meet their social, economic and material needs and improve the quality of their lives*" (South Africa, 1998:37). The Reconstruction and Development Programme (RDP) has been created as an enabling tool so that the implementing authorities, the municipal councils, will be able to rise to the challenges and expectations of their communities. This background therefore, constitutes a springboard, a rationale upon which this enquiry is based. Like all other rural local authorities in South Africa, the challenge that faces the Mpumalanga peripheral government structures, is their capacity to provide the essential services to their poor and rural populace.

1.3. Problem statement

The study investigates whether the Transitional Local Councils (TLCs) of the Western Highveld Region of Mpumalanga Province, while deriving their development mandate from the national legislation, are able to deliver basic needs and meet the expectations of the local people experiencing socio-political and economic transition. Associated with this, is a corollary: To what extent do rural local authorities enable the communities they serve, to come to terms with community development?

1.4. The aim of the study

is

- to establish the significance of the South African Reconstruction and Development Programme (RDP) as a national tool for socio-economic development and to note its utilisation by the Transitional Local Councils (TLCs) to advance the basic needs of the communities in the Western Highveld Region of Mpumalanga Province. national

1.5. The specific objectives of the investigation

are

- to identify the socio-economic needs of the Region from a historic and present perspective;
- to identify existing, planned or absent development projects in the municipalities;
- to ascertain the level of community satisfaction with regard to the delivery of basic municipal services;
- to discover community participation in development projects; and
- to identify the role played by the TLCs in advancing their mandate.

1.6. Scope of the study

On analysing general literature available on the Western Highveld Region, one notices that there has not been a thorough ground breaking effort by researchers to attempt either a narrative or a documentary of ***real issues***. One naturally appreciates

efforts made by economists, sociologists, ethnologists, educationalists, photographers and journalists who have made some reflections on certain communities of the Region. It is, however, uncomfortable to realise that little has been contributed by geographers.

Note has been made of a variety of artists and writers (Courtney Clarke, 1989; Elliott, 1989; Fourie 1922) who have tended to depict the physical landscape that naturally links the Region with the majestic and spectacular scenery of the whole Mpumalanga Province which is an attractive tourist destination. These artists and writers present what Rogerson (1992) refers to as the literature of the imperial frontier – the explorer, settler and missionary – that depicts the landscapes of imagination, a geography that empties the landscape of its human inhabitants. While it is appreciated that this literature celebrates in a significant way, the beauty and the magnificence of the rural villages in a cultural sense, the human landscape that lies hidden behind the hills and valleys, seems to be yearning for all the services and conveniences which are absent here.

1.7. The structure of the study

While this study does not claim to represent an authoritative account of the Region, it will, however precipitate an empirical debate on issues that affect the people of the Region. Focus will be made on the needs and development conditions of the Region, in an attempt to highlight the plight of the inhabitants of the Region.

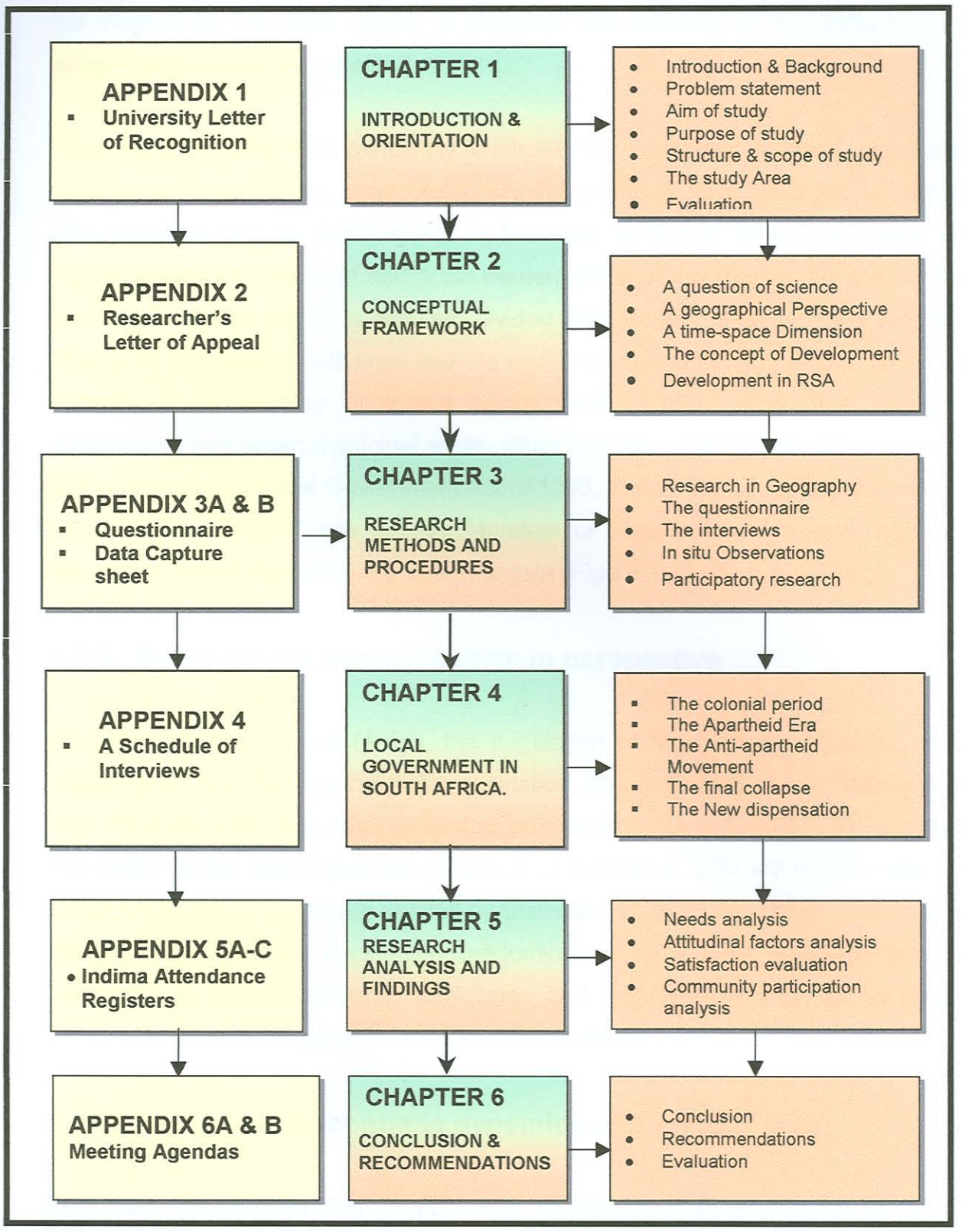
Figure 1.3 shows the layout of the study report. It is a general overview of how the study is arranged. The table of contents provides all headings and subheadings in detail.

1.8. The study area

1.8.1 Location

The Western Highveld Region of Mpumalanga is located on the western part of Mpumalanga Province. To the North, are the southern parts of the Northern Province

Figure 1.3: Schematic Representation of the Study Layout



In the west, it shares borders with eastern parts of the North West Province, while to the south and south-east, it shares the borders with Gauteng Province (Figure 1.1). The major towns of the Region are Marble Hall situated to the north of the Region and Groblersdal situated to the east. The Elands River known locally as

Moutse, flows from the Pienaars River (*Moretele*) drainage basin in the west, through the Region to the east, where it becomes the tributary of the Olifants River, indigenously known as *Lepelle*.

Predominantly rural and principally controlled by traditional leaders, the Region consists of three distinct sub-regions, which historically have belonged to different administrative bodies: Mathanjana or Moretele, a former Bophuthatswana sub-region, situated to the west and north-western parts of the Region. On the northern parts and eastern parts, is Moutse, divided into Moutse 1 (West) and Moutse 3 (East). To the south, south west and the midlands, is another sub-region, which was known as the territory of former KwaNdebele. Further more, the Region is demarcated into seven municipal areas, which are the recent demarcation according to the Transitional Local Government Act of 1993. These TLC areas are the main the focus of the study. These include Moretele or Mathanjana, Mbibana, Mdutjana, Moutse, Mkobola, Kwamhlanga and Ekangala (Figure 1.1).

1.8.2. Mpumalanga demographics in perspective

According to the Census (1996), the population of Mpumalanga Province, which contributes 7% of the South African population, was estimated at 2.8 million people. The 1999 Mid Year population estimates, project an increase to 3 003 327[4] people by mid 1999. Of the total population (3 million), 2 million i.e. 67% are found in the non-urban areas, which areas are defined by Statistics South Africa (1999) as *rural areas*. Mpumalanga Province constituted predominantly by a rural populace from the homeland of Bophuthatswana, KaNgwane and KwaNdebele and can be located within the realm of the peripheral areas of South Africa.

1.8.3. Some socio-economic dynamics of the study area

The 1996 Census estimated the population of Western Highveld Region, at 760 569 people and in 1998 at 964 401 people. (South Africa, 1997). Table 1.1 reflects the socio-economic conditions of Mpumalanga Province and how these relate to the study area. Unemployment and the level of education have been singled out as these are variables that normally indicate the level of poverty. The table indicates that out

[4] Statistics South Africa, Mid-Year estimates: Statistical Release P0302. 12 July 1999.

of the Provincial total of 1 148 148 unemployed, the Western Highveld Region has 405 048 unemployed people, which constitutes 35% of the provincial rate and 42% of the total population of the Region.

Table 1.1: Socio-economic conditions in the Study Area

Area	Population Size	Unemployed	Educ. Level Gr. 0 - Gr. 12
MPUMALANGA PROVINCE	**3 003 327**	**1 148 148**	**2 303 082**
Western Highveld Region	***964 401***	***405 048*** ***42.0%***	***684 724***
Moretele (Bophuthatswana)	156 710 **16.2%**	37 832 ***24.1%***	63 768
KwaMhlanga (KwaNdebele)	151 478 **15.7%**	62 936 ***41.5%***	125 144
Moutse (RSA)	140 888 **14.6%**	79 847 ***56.7%***	116 405
Mdutjana (KwaNdebele)	126 489 **13.1%**	63 111 ***49.9%***	105 820
Mkobola (KwaNdebele)	115 862 **12.1%**	55 890 ***48.2%***	98 841
Mbibana (KwaNdebele)	53 659 **5.6%**	24 571 ***45.8%***	44 283
Ekangala (KwaNdebele)	14 913 **1.5%**	4 027 ***27.0%***	6 710

1.5% = portion of Region's population

27.0% = % unemployed per TLC Area / Region

Source: Census 1996:SSM/2001

Mpumalanga has an even lower educationally qualified population; 76% of the people have no schooling or have not been schooled up to matriculation[5]. It is apparent that the level of education impacts on employment, as most of the people in the Western Highveld Region (71%), are illiterate or have a Grade 12 certificate without a job-oriented qualification. This leaves the Region, as happens with the rest of the Province, with a pool of unqualified and less qualified people that cannot find proper employment from which they could derive a sustainable livelihood.

1.8.4. Communities of the Western Highveld Region

The Region consists of a diversity of communities with different cultural and historical backgrounds. Found in the three sub-regions of Moutse, KwaNdebele (consisting of KwaMhlanga, Mdutjana, Mkobola, Mbibana and Ekangala) and Moretele (Figure 1.1), these communities, are directly or indirectly controlled by traditional leaders.

1.8.4.1. The territory of former KwaNdebele

From 1979 to1994, KwaNdebele was known as the homeland or self-governing territory (Figure 1.2) of the Ndebele-speaking people under the leadership of *Ingwenyama (*King) Makhosoke II and Mayisha II. These people are divided into the *Amanala* and *Amandzundza* clans respectively under the traditional authority. Most of the communities of this territory came to settle in the territory as a result of:

- KwaNdebele being historically the home of Ndebele-speaking people;
- urban unrest of the late seventies and early eighties, particularly in the East Rand townships (former Transvaal, now Gauteng);
- the independence of Bophuthatswana — numerous people fled Bophuthatswana to settle in KwaNdebele as a result of Mangope-(president of the former homeland of Bophuthatswana)-opting for the independence of Bophuthatswana;
- evictions from White-owned farms; and
- forced removals from the so-called White spots, a term used to denote areas in Black areas designated for White settlement or farming (Indima, 1998).

Displaying an accepted level of development in terms of clinics, schools, roads, bridges telecommunication and postal services, the territory is presently divided into

[5] A South African highest level of secondary education. A school leaving grade.

five distinct rural municipalities: Ekangala TLC, Kwamhlanga TLC, Mbibana TLC, Mdutjana TLC and Mkobola TLC (Figure 1.1). These municipalities are responsible for the provision of services.

Plate 1: Water Scarcity in former KwaNdebele

1.8.4.2. Moutse

The Bantwane people, the Bapedi and Amathombeni (Northern Ndebeles), inhabit Moutse. The Bantwane, found predominantly in the eastern parts of Moutse are under the traditional leadership of *Kgosi* (King) Ngwato III. The *Bapedi* of the *Matlala* are divided into three clans. Historically each clan had its own traditional leader and has since been named after the clan leader. These are Matlala *Ramoshebo*, Matlala *Mokgoma* and Matlala *Lehwelere.* The *Amathombeni* or Northern Ndebeles are of Nguni origin. This group occupies the northern parts of Moutse, largely in a village known as Sontonga or Rathoka. Historically, this community was ruled by *ikosi* Kekana. Recently there have been a number of intra-feuds over chieftaincy among the *Amathombeni* of Moutse to a point where the traditional leadership of these people is no longer well-defined.

The communities of Moutse are perhaps best known for their historic struggle against their incorporation into the homeland of KwaNdebele in 1985-1986. As a result of this resistance, the area was neglected by the previous South African Central administration under which it fell.

This neglect is currently evidenced by the underdeveloped status of the area. Inadequate water supply, insufficient communication services, poor postal, health facilities and transport networks add to an endless list of inadequacies of the area. The Moutse TLC serves the communities residing in Moutse. Like many other rural municipalities, the TLC has a task of addressing the inadequacies created from the past administration (Plate 2).

Plate 2: New school being erected at Ntwane (Moutse), 2000

1.8.4.1. Moretele

Moretele or Mathanjana (Figure 1.1) is a former Bophuthatswana area. It is principally inhabited by the *Bakgatla*, a Tswana-speaking people. The Bakgatla of Moretele are

not a homogenous group, they are divided into several clans: *Bakgatla ba Mocha*, *Bakgatla ba Lefifi*, *Bakgatla ba Chaane* and *Bakgatla ba Mokgoko*.[6] Also inhabiting the area, are two Ndebele communities, which were part of former KwaNdebele. These are the people of *KwaLitho* and *Pungutsha*, also known respectively as *Soputukwana* and *Katjibane*. These communities are also under the leadership of traditional leaders. Punctuated by an acute shortage of water, Moretele, also has Mathanjana TLC whose council is charged with the task of providing municipal services to the area.

This chapter presented as broadly as possible the tenets upon which this investigation is based. Rural poverty and neglect were situated in the context of the socio-political transition. The study area was defined and projected as a rural space that has been disadvantaged by apartheid spatial policies. This places the study area at the peripheral zone of development. Several legal provisions that provide for structural transformation of organs of local governance were highlighted as they represent a political response to the crisis that confronts the rural people. Socio-economic conditions that prevail in Mpumalanga, within which the study area is located, have been briefly analysed so as to comprehend how they impact on the study area. As an introductory chapter, details were cautiously avoided. However it was necessary to provide some insight into matters at stake on study area. Chapter 2 will provide a conceptual framework, an empirical niche of the study, by defining some concepts to be employed in this treatise.

[6] Interview with Kgosi A. M. Maloka. Chairperson of Moretele Traditional Leaders' Forum. 26 July 1999.