COMMUNITY PARTICIPATION IN LOW-INCOME HOUSING PROJECTS:

Experiences of Newly-Urbanised Africans in Mfuleni in the Cape Metropole

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Study Project presented in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of Masters in Public Administration, University of Stellenbosch

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DECLARATION

I, the undersigned, hereby declare that the work contained in this study project is my own original work and that I have not previously in its entirety or in part submitted it at any university for a degree.

Signature

Date 22 January 1998
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

At the very outset my greatest thanks go to the Almighty God to whose glory this work is dedicated.

My warm appreciation to my wife Nomvuyo and my two children my daughter Nangamso and my son Bazise for their patience encouragement and devotion despite having had to spend many hours without the comfort of a husband and father.

To my mother and my late father whose determination in life instilled the value of education discipline and ambition within me. I am truly indebted.

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ABSTRACT

In the past, the policy for the provision of low-cost housing was not very effective because the context of development planning was characterised by fragmentation, segregation and isolation from the targeted communities. The reasons for this are that these development programmes were not participatory and that they contributed to dependency rather than empowerment of communities. Selected case studies have shown that without the involvement of the community in planning and decision-making, low-income housing projects cannot meet the needs and demands of the community for improvement in an effective and efficient way.

One of the basic principles of The Reconstruction and Development Programme is that development projects should be people-driven. The policy framework clearly states that “delivery systems in housing will depend upon community participation.” This current study sought to determine whether delivery systems in low-income housing projects have made this paradigm shift - that they are participatory and need-driven.

The study is descriptive and issue-oriented, limiting itself to understanding the process of low-income housing provision to newly-urbanised Africans in Mfuleni, a peri-urban settlement in the Cape-Metropole. Interviews were conducted with 100 respondents, male or female heads of households, using a semi-structured questionnaire. The study gave respondents an opportunity to share their experiences regarding the process of community participation in housing provision.
Findings of the study indicate that although there has been some effort to involve the community and individual members in the project, the level of involvement, particularly of individuals, was not satisfactory. Recommendations provide some insights on how low-income housing projects can be made more relevant and efficient to the needs of urbanising communities.
OPSOMMING

In die verlede was die beleid ten opsigte van lae-koste behuising nie baie effektief nie, omdat ontwikkelingsbeplanning binne n konteks wat gekenmerk was deur fragmentasie, segregasie en isolasie vanaf die gemeenskappe waarop dit gemik was, plaasgevind het. Die redes (vir die gebrek aan doeltreffendheid) was dat die programme nie deelname aangemoedig het nie, dat hulle die afhanklikheid eerder as die bemagtiging van die gemeenskap in die hand gewerk het. Geselekteerde gevallestudies toon dat lae-inkomste behuisingsprojekte nie die gemeenskap se behoeftes en eise ten opsigte van verbetering effektief en doelgerig kan aanspreek nie wanneer die gemeenskap nie by die beplanning en besluitneming betrokke is nie.

Een van die grondliggende beginsels van die Heropbou- en Ontwikkelingsprogram is dat ontwikkelingsprojekte deur die gemeenskap bestuur moet word dat ontwikkeling 'n gemeenskapsgecentererde proses is. Die beleidsraamwerk stel dit duidelik dat die stelsels vir die loutering van behuising van gemeenskapsdeelname afhanklik is. Hierdie studie het gepoog om vas te stel of die stelsels waarinne lae-inkomste behuisingsprojekte plaasvind reeds die klemverkuising na die nuwe ontwikkelingsparadigma (vanaf beplanning vir in plaas van beplanning saam met gemeenskappe) handhaaf.

Die studie is beskrywend van aard en probleemgerig. Dit is beperk tot die beperkte vir die prosesse waarvolgens lae-inkomste behuising aan nuut-verstedelike Swartes in Mfuleni, aan die rand van die Kaapse Metropolis, gelewer word. Onderhoude is met behulp van 'n semi-gestruktureerde vraelys.
gevoer met 100 respondente, wat manlike of vroulike hoofde van huishoudings was. Die studie het respondente die geleentheid gebied om hul ervarings rondom gemeenskapsdeelname in die lewering van lae-inkomste behuising te deel.

Die bevindings van die studie dui daarop dat, alhoewel daar reeds pogings is om die gemeenskap en individuele lede by die projek te betrek, die vlak van betrokkenheid onvoldoende is, veral onder individue. Die aanbevelings bied insig wat dit moontlik kan maak dat lae-inkomste behuisingsprojekte die behoeftes van versledelikende gemeenskappe op 'n meer tersake en effektiewe wyse aanspreek.
"I know no safe depository of the ultimate powers of society, but the people themselves, and if you think them not enlightened enough to exercise their control with a wholesome discretion, the remedy is not to take if from them, but to inform their discretion by education."

Thomas Jefferson
1743-1826
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CHAPTER 1

1.1 INTRODUCTION

In South Africa as in most developing countries, rapid urbanization has outstripped investments of municipal governments in infrastructure and services, especially in residential areas with a predominance of poorer households. This situation creates complex management and policy problems in housing, income distribution, public services and other areas, and usually causes changes that are synonymous with the transition of society from the traditional to the modern, with its accompanying tensions, problems and opportunities. Many people in these neighbourhoods live in cramped, overcrowded housing conditions with inadequate sanitation and poor water supply. A disturbing feature of this trend is the rapid growth of slums and squatter settlements where people live under appalling conditions of poverty and deprivation. Associated with the lack of services is an increase in disease and ill-health of growing peri-urban populations. Studies aimed at providing a better understanding of the complex nature of these problems and informing policy-making on how to address urbanization, is urgently needed.

This study assumes that in designing housing policies and services, South Africa should consider the human attitudes, values and needs of its respective communities, and that participation and involvement of communities should be high on the priority of decision-makers, planners, and service providers. It is the role of social scientists and researchers to identify problem areas and provide guidelines in this regard.
1.2 STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

Housing provision is one of the greatest challenges facing the South African Government. It is estimated that over 28 million people (66%) of South Africa’s population are functionally urbanised. Approximately 13.5% (1.6 million) of all households live in so-called informal housing. This form of housing, made from corrugated iron and other materials, is the prevalent means through which urban households are presently accessing shelter. It is estimated that approximately 150,000 new families per annum house themselves in this way (White Paper on Housing, 1996).

The existing backlog in housing requires about 200,000 families to be housed annually in order for the backlog to be eradicated over a period of 10 years. Government’s goal is to increase housing delivery on a sustainable basis to a peak level of 350,000 units per annum within a five year period, to reach the target of 1,000,000 houses in five years (White Paper on Housing, 1996). The White Paper on Housing states that there is no single formula for solving South Africa’s housing dilemma. It is only by mobilising and harnessing the full diversity of resources, innovation, energy and initiative of individuals, communities, the State and the private sector, that the challenge can be met effectively. This statement is in line with the Reconstruction and Development Programme (RDP) (1994) in its focus on inclusivity and participation.

The aim of the RDP is to transform South Africa by eliminating the inequalities associated with decades of apartheid. The transition to a new democratic dispensation requires change in the forms and institutions of urban management and development. Given the complexity of governance and development, it is not possible simply to ‘destroy’ the ‘old’ system, but rather to create a managed transition from the current system into a new order. The management of this change has particular significance in an urban context. For example, it is estimated that 80% of South Africa’s gross domestic product (GDP) is generated from the metropolitan areas. Population size in these areas is projected to...
double over 25 years (1985 - 2010), with a unique migration pattern in the Western Cape termed "circulatory" migration (Spiegel and Methwana 1996: 1-17. Spiegel, 1997: 27). Furthermore, the mismanagement of urban planning and resources and development as a result of urban planning and management policies has led to some breakdowns of the urban system. The difficulties are further compounded by a limited fiscal base. With government consumption running at 20% of the GDP and debt servicing absorbing 17% of the Budget, not much money is available for RDP programmes in particular housing delivery.

Experience in South Africa has shown that people can be instrumental in bringing about change. The emergence and growth of the civic movement under apartheid, is an example of how communities can mobilise for change. A new role is expected of those civic that of ensuring the same level of public participation in reconstruction as they have in resistance to apartheid. Through community participation and partnerships between all stakeholders involved in development, in particular in urban development that energy can be channeled towards community development. An assumption underlying this strategy is that by giving the community a voice, better quality decision-making and programmes tied to local need will result. Another assumption is that as a consequence of participation, local people will take greater responsibility for the care and maintenance of their neighbourhood than they would if development was imposed top-down with minimal involvement of the local community. As stated earlier, people who actually experience and suffer the problems should be given a voice in what happens. If we fail to do this we shall fail them yet again.

However, Bekker (1996:50) states that in some cases the expectations that accompany attempts at citizen participation can be unrealistically high. He warns that "citizen participation cannot be considered a panacea for all the ills of society, it is simply a change in process. Another statement of caution from Burke (1993:50) is that development workers should "talk about making people self-reliant. You cannot make people self-reliant, people become self-reliant. It is more a question of attitudes than money and materials. Too much money and materials from external sources can easily prevent the emergence of self-
reliance. People must feel and believe that it is their own efforts that are driving the development process. They must feel that they themselves are contributing the maximum of their own human, financial and material resources and that assistance from outside is only for what they cannot manage themselves.

There should no longer be doubt that the "we know what they need" approach has reigned in this country and that it does not yield successful results. More importantly, the approach has resulted in a paucity of information regarding circumstances of, and processes to be employed in urbanising communities. Such information is necessary for developing urban policies to manage growing cities effectively. Information is urgently required if the South African Government is to come even close to its commitment of a minimum of one-million low-cost housing units to be constructed over five years" (RDP, 1994 22-25). One way of overcoming this knowledge deficit is to give urbanising communities a chance to speak about their circumstances. This is inter alia the aim of this study.

The author, however, is of the opinion that the Western Cape and South Africa as a whole, still unfortunately rely on unsuitable methods of housing provision that do not adequately involve communities in decisions relating to policies and services. In this study it is assumed that the existing housing policies can be remodelled to promote RDP principles of participation of civil society and human development.

1.3 SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY

This study also assumes that an understanding of human attitudes, values and needs of urbanising communities will lead to more efficient urban housing policies. This means that a process of developing and reviewing housing policies should be a consultative one, taking into consideration the individual and collective needs of urban communities. Despite the new era of democracy, urbanisation and housing will continue to be major challenges facing South
Africa. Policy-makers, local authorities, planners and developers, as stated, urgently require sound information on which to make informed decisions regarding the improvement and evaluation of housing and programmes and projects in such communities. This needs to happen within the broader framework of sustainable urban development.

It is hoped that this study, and its case study application, will lead to better understanding of processes aimed at provision of housing to newly urbanised Africans in informal settlements. The author is of the opinion that the study is justified and necessary in that it attempts to identify problem areas and provide guidelines for solutions in this regard.

Finally, the study will hopefully stimulate further research on issues relating to the involvement of civil society in housing provision and other services in the Western Cape and South Africa as a whole.

1.4 AIMS AND OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

1.4.1 OVERALL AIM

To determine the involvement of communities in low-cost housing programmes and projects in the Cape Metropole, specifically in the Mfuleni case study and larger Cape Metropole.

1.4.2 SPECIFIC OBJECTIVES

The specific objectives of the study are as follows:

1. To review selected and applicable literature central to housing and community participation.
To determine experiences of newly accommodated residents regarding community participation in housing projects in the case study and related areas.

To determine the process of housing provision preferred by newly-urbanised Africans.

To suggest practical recommendations with a practical view of improving the level of community participation in the provision of housing to urbanising African communities in the case study and larger Cape Metropole.

1.5 THE RESEARCH DOMAIN: MFULENI

Mfuleni is a small community of about 390 hectares with an estimated population of 35,000. This community is situated in the Tygerberg Sub-Structure, approximately 35km from Cape Town and 15 km from Stellenbosch.

The community was established in 1974 as a dormitory, i.e. a transit area for migrant labourers to the Western Cape. Initially this community consisted of hostels for single male workers. The first residential plots were made available in 1976. The community is divided into four smaller areas: the old location, hostel area, shacks or informal settlements and the privately owned houses.

The area infrastructurally is extremely poorly developed, lacks basic facilities such as public transport and has only one community hall with occupation capacity for about 800 people. As the only facility besides a combined school (primary and high school together), this hall is utilised as a multipurpose centre where activities such as school concerts, political meetings and church services are held. The school itself is small for the number of children in the community and is inadequate to meet the fast-growing needs of the community. (For example, due to shortage of classrooms, the platoon system is still being used.)
There are two sessions of school each day, with one group of children attending from 8h00 to 13h00 and another group from 12h00 to 18h00.

1.6 METHODOLOGY

1.6.1 RESEARCH DESIGN

According to Bless & Higson-Smith (1995 63), the research design “can be understood as the planning of any scientific research from the first to the last step.” Research designs provide the answer to the question of “what are the means which I shall use to obtain the information I need?” (Mouton & Marais, 1986 38). It is also an overall strategy by which questions are answered or hypothesis are tested (Bless & Higson-Smith, 1995 67). A closer look at the literature on research indicates that various authors give emphasis on different typologies of research design, depending on their field of research. For example, Leedy (1989) does not classify but rather identifies purposes of research as exploration, description, and explanation, while Grinnell’s (1990) typology consists of exploratory, descriptive, and explanatory designs based on the knowledge level which each provides. On the other hand, Bless and Higson-Smith, who take on a more experimental approach, distinguish among three categories of research design, classified according to the level of scientific rigour involved in proving the cause-effect relationship.

The question amidst this array of designs and never-ending search for suitable research designs is how does one make a selection? Collins (1987 256) emphasizes flexibility as the universal characteristic of research planning. She maintains that “research designs are guidelines for investigative activity, not hard-and-fast rules that cannot be broken.” The choice of research design was based on Bless & Higson-Smith’s (1995 67) statement that “every project requires a research design that is carefully tailored to the exact needs of the researcher as well as the problem.” In view of the limited knowledge level on the current study and the time constraints of the student for completing the study, the descriptive survey method was considered to be appropriate.
The descriptive survey method. This is employed to process data derived from simple observational situations, which may be physically observed or may be observed through the benefit of questionnaires or poll techniques (Babbie, 1990). It is a research method that looks with intense accuracy at the phenomena of the moment and then describes precisely what the researcher sees (Leedy, 1989 140). The principal objective of descriptive data is to reveal potential relationships between variables (Collins, 1987 257).

Although this method of research is simple in design, it is not without problems, nor is it any less demanding in its requirements or any easier for the researcher to conduct than other methods of research. On the contrary, the descriptive survey design makes specific demands upon the researcher which, if not carefully considered, may place the entire research effort in jeopardy. These demands may be understood in terms of the following salient characteristics of this method:

- Use of the technique of observation as the principal means of observation.
- Careful and clear definition of the study population.
- Safeguarding of data from the influence of bias, and
- Systematic organisation and presentation of data.

1 6 2 STUDY SITE AND STUDY POPULATION

The study is descriptive and issue-oriented, limiting itself to understanding circumstances surrounding housing provision to newly-urbanised Africans. The study was conducted in one study site - a new development of about 540 erven in Mfuleni in the Tygerberg Sub-structure of the Cape Metropole. The description of the study site is presented under "research domain" above.
16.3 SAMPLING AND SAMPLING PROCEDURES

Considering time limitations a sample of 100 respondents was selected according to the principles of stratified random sampling as follows:

With the aid of a locality plan secured from the Local Authority the sampling frame was determined. The area was designated into two strata of 50 houses (the primary sampling frame) and then proportionately and by random means the contact houses were determined from each strata thus giving each and every house an equal opportunity of being chosen for the sample. A proportional stratified sample of the households was chosen by determining the first house (using the accepted random numbers) and then taking the house on the left and the one opposite and from each household either the male or female head of the household was interviewed.

16.4 THE INSTRUMENT

Data was collected using a semi-structured interview schedule/questionnaire. As the study is exploratory a pilot study was first conducted to refine the interview schedule. The interview schedule consists of four sections: demographic and socio-economic information, urbanisation, information questions relating to housing needs of respondents, and lastly information relating to involvement of individuals and communities in the housing project. The interview schedule/questionnaire was pre-coded to ensure easy processing. See Appendix A for an example of the questionnaire interview schedule.

In order to minimize interviewer variation and bias the questionnaire was translated into Xhosa and its content and relevance were tested in a pilot study, as stated. The questions were also explained to the interviewees.

Personal interviews were preferred to mail questionnaires because of the contextual realities of the problem under study, the subjects and their circumstances. The question under study is a sensitive and fairly emotive one.
the bulk of the people in the sample are not literate and sophisticated enough to read and interpret mailed questionnaires. Moreover, the postal system is not sophisticated enough to facilitate such a process. In view of these factors, the personal presence of the interviewer served two main purposes: provided structure to the interview through probes and clarifications where necessary and secured a high response rate.

1.6.5 ANALYSIS OF DATA

The SAS (Statistical Analysis System) was used to capture, check, and correct data for format and structural errors. This programme was also used to analyse data. Data collected was used to advance recommendations for the improvement of housing provision and services in the Western Cape.

1.7. ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS

Permission and consent was obtained from the participants for the interview with an explanation that the study was for study purposes only and not for the provision or improvement of housing services. Arrangements were made with each individual as to a time convenient to him/her (Bless and Higson-Smith, 1995:101-102).

1.8. LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

The most obvious limitations relate to firstly, the small sample size, and secondly, the fact that the study did not cover all Sub-Structures in the Cape Metropole. Because of these two factors, inferences about the population from the sample data cannot be made for other communities.
1.9 DEFINITION OF KEY CONCEPTS

In order to facilitate clarity and understanding, the author has made a concerted effort to explain terms/concepts in the text. The following concepts were defined lexically and operationally as thus

Community: As a concept in development theory, it refers to a specific, functionally related population settled in a particular geographic area at a given time (Burkey 1993:40-43).

Development: For the purpose of this study, development is seen in the context of the Reconstruction and Development Programme (RDP) vision. It refers to an integrated approach by all role-players, i.e., government departments and civil society. It is aimed at promoting the welfare of the previously marginalised communities by focusing on people's needs and their ability to manage problems successfully (RDP 1994).

Community development: This term has been an evolving concept. Through the years, it has been termed "community participation", "people's participation", "popular participation", "people-centred development", etc. The UN World Summit for Social Development sees it as a process of empowering people to strengthen their own capacities. Swanepoel (1997:26) sees it as a process whereby people are fed by information, knowledge and experience, that brings them confidence in their own abilities.

Informal settlements: Informal settlements are spontaneous settlements usually located on invaded land on the periphery of major cities and in the backyards of formal houses. These communities are often characterized by low socio-economic conditions and cramped, overcrowded housing conditions with inadequate sanitation and poor water supply as well as lack of health and other basic services prevailing.
**Africans:** In this study Africans refer only to South African born citizens of Negroid descent.

**Poverty:** Absolute poverty can be defined as the inability of an individual, a community or a nation to satisfactorily meet its basic needs. Relative poverty (can be defined) as a condition in which basic needs are met, but where there is an inability to meet perceived needs and desires in addition to basic needs” (Burkey, 1993: 3-4).

**Self-reliance:** “doing things for one’s self maintaining one’s own self-confidence, making independent decisions - either as individual or within the context of a collective group to which each member has voluntarily allied himself or herself. Self-reliance comes from within but is directed outwards. Self-reliance is based on social relationships” (Burkey, 1993: 50).

**Participation:** also known as ‘praxis’ “is a continuous educative process - a process of progressive conscientisation. Through collective self-reflection on their experiences and problems, people become more aware of the dimensions of their reality and of what can be done by themselves to transform it. Participation involves organised efforts to increase control over resources and regulative institutions in given social institutions, on the part of groups and movements of those hitherto excluded from such control” (Burkey, 1993: 58-59).

**Community participation:** “a process through which people are engaged to exercise varying degrees of influence over development activities that affect their lives” (Kutze ed., 1997: 5).
2.0 PRESENTATION OF CONTENTS

The study is divided into four chapters. Chapter 1 is an introductory chapter which outlines the purpose and methodology of the study.

The literature review is covered in Chapter 2. This chapter reviews the theoretical perspectives of housing provision and processes. An overview of global issues in housing and the role of community participation is discussed with emphasis on the South African situation and the Western Cape in particular. The appropriateness of methods that are currently being employed in housing provision and how such methods could be adapted to meet the social realities of marginalised communities in South Africa are examined.

Chapter 3 presents the analysis of data, followed by the discussion of the major findings, conclusions and recommendations in Chapter 4.
CHAPTER 2

THEORETICAL PERSPECTIVES ON COMMUNITY PARTICIPATION IN LOW INCOME HOUSING

2.1 INTRODUCTION

The purpose of this chapter is to review literature that has implications for the topic under study. Such a review will assist in understanding the major issues underlying housing provision. The study will highlight issues of community participation as well as successes and problems experienced globally, nationally, and locally in designing and implementing such participatory interventions. The major issues reviewed are:

- Global issues in housing
- National and local developments in housing provision
- Different perspectives and definitions of community participation in housing

2.2 GLOBAL ISSUES IN HOUSING

At the beginning of the 19th century only three percent of the world’s population lived in towns. By 2030 more than half of the world’s population of about 10,000 million people will be trying to survive in cities. It is estimated that of this 10,000 million people more than 8,000 million will be living in urban fringes of developing countries (Stamboli, 1991: 28-29). Urban problems in developing countries have become more acute in recent years as more people have migrated to cities, putting pressure on the urban infrastructure and physical environment. The direct result of this urban expansion has been a tremendous increase in shanty towns or ‘squatter’ settlements or informal settlements (as they are commonly known in South Africa), where living conditions and hygiene are appalling. The most widely observed and acutely felt urban problem in
developing countries is the large number of poor and unemployed people in the cities. These countries account for two-thirds of the total world population and well over three-fourths of the population living in poverty. It is forecast that by the end of the 20th century the urban poor may represent a quarter of humanity (Gilbert & Gugler 1991 5)

These estimates are too significant to ignore and point to the fact that unless dramatic and determined measures are taken immediately the situation is likely to deteriorate further, particularly in those countries whose economies are currently performing below required levels of investment production and trade. The question that comes up repeatedly is whether housing for all “adequate shelter for all” as defined and called for by the Global Strategy for Shelter to the Year 2000 (the GSS) is still attainable under such conditions. The general impression is that unless drastic measures are taken the “housing for all strategy” as a development goal of nations of international cooperation and of non-governmental organisations (NGOs) is doomed to fail (Erguden 1995 15-16)

There are various debates around the Global Shelter Strategy aim of arriving at an action plan for countries housing policies. One of those debates relates to the fact that the Global Shelter Strategy states that adequacy is essentially a national concept. Adequate privacy, adequate space, adequate security, adequate lighting and ventilation, adequate location with regard to places of work and basic facilities can only be defined in the specific context of a country’s cultural, economic, social and environmental conditions. While this sounds reasonable Hundaiz (1995 1-4) is of the opinion that it places the burden of searching for a workable and measurable definition of adequate shelter on governments and a country’s housing policy. At the same time his impression is that the emphasis on national definitions largely precludes international definitions for lack of comparable data. This fact only underlines the notion that the pursuit of adequate shelter for all is mainly a national development goal, albeit shared by all countries as a global concern.
The second conceptual difficulty in perceiving shelter for all as a realistic development goal stems from the widely-held misunderstanding that there may be a state of humankind if only in the very distant future, in which all housing problems are met and everyone enjoys a condition of adequate shelter. This notion appears unrealistic for as national development leads to human and material progress national concepts of adequacy do not remain static. What appears adequate now is subject to change as a consequence of changing standards for human development. It follows therefore that adequate shelter for all cannot be understood literally as a state in which all housing needs are physically satisfied. Instead and in compliance with the meaning of 'enablement' as the only realistic strategy adequate shelter for all denotes a state of development in which every household and every person is offered the opportunity to satisfy individual shelter needs. This situation requires a diversified market which can address every need combined with targeted state interventions to ensure and facilitate access by the poor, the vulnerable and the disadvantaged (UNCHS 1984 Sheng 1989 56-65 McAurthur 1993 305-315). Working towards such a condition of the national housing sector is the foremost challenge of the universal development goal of adequate shelter for all.

The difficulty in defining national shelter adequacy in measurable terms is also largely responsible for the inconclusive results of measuring the 'housing backlog' or 'housing deficit' which a number of countries tried to undertake in the context of the International Year of Shelter for the Homeless (IYSH) (1987). These countries found that the extent of their deficit depended mainly on the housing standards they were willing to accept. Obviously housing for all appears more attainable as a national goal if standards recognize the efforts of the informal sector and of self-help groups and a country's housing policy actively supports such initiatives (Donnson 1993 293-298 Editorial NGO News on Human Settlements 1995 1:5).

However the most serious constraint for implementing the enabling approach called for by the Global Strategy for Shelter has been found to be the frequent absence of sufficient political will to carry out difficult but needed policy.
measures, such as the provision of secure land tenure for all, the recognition of informal settlements, the taxation of vacant land and profits, and the allocation of targeted subsidies to the most vulnerable and disadvantaged groups. Such fundamental measures are hampered and distorted by the reality of politicians, civil servants, the private business sector and community groups. Ultimately, the chance of adopting and implementing technical recommendations depends on the social and political reality of each country. It is important that those involved in housing policies engage in endless seminars, workshops, expert meetings and conferences aimed at formulating technical advice on the best strategies in pursuit of housing for all (Hundelshausen 1995: 1-4).

Case studies have shown that real progress was only made in those countries whose political leadership and local government structures recognized housing for all as a powerful strategy to achieve social and economic development (Donnison 1993). Experience in low-income housing projects in Third World countries has shown that provision of security of tenure, including secure rental agreements and land leases, is the single most important step for governments in pursuit of housing for all (Donnison 1993: 293-298; Fordham 1993: 299-304). This step alone, complex and politically controversial as it may be, has the most significant impact on making formal as well as informal housing markets work. However, an issue of concern for most NGOs is that the Habitat Agenda and most countries seem to be getting further away from the Vancouver Declaration's statement of "right to housing" (UNCHS NGO News for Human Settlements 1995: 1-4).

Most assessments of global progress towards the goal of adequate housing for all start with a review of the evolution of housing policies during the last decade, or since the adoption of the GSS. Most observers agree that the adoption of progressive and enabling policies by many countries which support the market and the informal sector is a very encouraging factor (Donnison 1993: 293-298; Fordham 1993: 299-304). However, there appears to be a serious and widening gap between policies and actual programmes, between the written word and the practice on the ground, between rhetoric and reality. Also, most "strategies" are
not vigorously followed up by plans of action with timetables, resource allocation and monitoring procedures. Governments need to initiate broad-based programmes of reducing standards, allocating land, providing secure forms of tenure and making credit available on affordable terms to those previously excluded the most promising actions as their contribution to creating an enabling environment (Hundalz 1995: 1, Fordham 1993: 299-304).

Beginning at the Habitat Conference in Vancouver nearly 20 years ago and formulated by both the International Year of Shelter and Housing (IYSH) and the Global Strategy Shelter (GSS) the process of raising awareness and political will for the creation of efficient and effective strategies of housing for all was again brought into focus by the Second United Nations Conference on Human Settlements [Habitat II] in June 1996 in Istanbul. The Global Plan of Action was yet another blueprint for setting the standards required for national action and international cooperation towards housing for all as a global development goal. The big question is whether the declarations of intent and commitment which were passed unanimously at this recent conference will secure the required political will to sustain them during the years following the conference. This is a critical question for all countries and, became signatories to the Habitat II on 14 June 1996 South Africa is one of those countries.

2.3 THE SOUTH AFRICAN CONTEXT

During the last two decades more and more families in South Africa as in the rest of the developing world, have experienced increasing deterioration in their physical living conditions. Although the RDP (1994: 23) states that “housing is a human right” and that everyone has a right to adequate shelter, the number of families without homes has been on the increase (Naidoo 1995). Much criticism has come from ideologically hostile quarters that the RDP is failing to deliver. But some has come from with the ANC itself and, more broadly from the African communities that suffer most from the inadequacies of the past apartheid policies. The most visible of these failures is in housing. This was confirmed by Housing Minister Sankie Mthembu-Mahanyele when she admitted that less than
11,000 homes had been built by the end of October 1995, a far cry from the 300,000 a year spoken of in the ANC Baseline (Star, October 1995: 3).

Lack of adequate shelter, absence of clean water, inadequate sanitation, and a dearth of facilities for waste disposal is the norm for the majority of South Africans. About forty-five percent of the population, of which approximately 3.5 million are children, live in poverty (Barometer 1991: 1-16). Yet the urban poor are largely unseen and unheard. These people live in what Hardoy et al. (1990:35) term 'life- and health-threatening homes and neighbourhoods. As far back as 1988, Van der Merwe (1988: 513-515) highlighted the rapid urbanisation of South Africa and quantified the level of urbanisation of the various populations and the expected level of urbanisation by the year 2000. The analysis stated that the proportion of Africans living in urban areas would double from about 40% at present to nearly 80% by the turn of the century. Signs of such rapid urbanisation are clearly visible in the Western Cape Province. Yach (1988: 479-480) in the South Africans Medical Journal: Editorial stated that urbanisation can create opportunities for rapid movement in the social, economic, and health status of populations. He warned however that a prerequisite for such a positive scenario would be an acceptance by government of urbanisation as a desirable and inevitable dynamic process.

This can only happen when the felt needs of the people are addressed and when the people themselves are involved in taking action to meet those needs. Professionals working with this model should be willing to work with and not just on behalf of communities (Jones & Macdonald 1993: 199-200). This suggests programmes in which there is a genuine recognition of the decision-making role and active participation of individuals and communities.

2.4 THE WESTERN CAPE CONTEXT

The housing context in the Western Cape is no different from that in the country as a whole and in the rest of the developing countries. The current housing
The indiscriminate construction of mass housing schemes, as witnessed in the ills of the Cape Flats, has also proved to be ineffective. Similarly, the site and toilet scheme of the Independent Development Trust did not secure community approval or credibility. The integrated Serviced Land Project, a Presidential-lead Project in the Western Cape, has also been criticised as being a mockery of the Reconstruction and Development Programme agenda. Until recently, common practice was to attempt to deal with housing for the poor without consultation and involvement, and the history of removals and resettlement in the Western Cape speaks for itself. Commenting on the situation, Van Deventer (1996:3) points out that long after the bulldozers have moved in and houses have been constructed the people would exclaim that it is not what they wanted. The author concludes that the real problem is the way in which "community" is seen and defined in most housing projects.

There are fears that housing provision in the Western Cape is following the same traditional trend of housing provision providing only "lip-service" to consultation and community participation (Spiegel and Mehlwana, 1996:8, Kok and Gelderbloem, 1996:14, Van Deventer, 1994:3). For example, Spiegel and Mehlwana (1996:8) is of the opinion that housing for the African population is being provided without a clear understanding of the "migratory pattern" of this population, which in their opinion has major implications for the type of housing that would truly meet the needs and cultural preferences of this group. These authors argue that in view of this phenomenon a policy that delivers only formal urban housing units for purchase and occupation by nuclear families is clearly
ineffective on its own, and they suggest that a demand-driven urban housing policy would be more appropriate. This, they advocate, would be in line with the RDP, which advocates for a wide range of tenure options as well as affordable rental housing stock provision to low-income earners who choose this option. Kok and Gelderbloem (1996:12) also confirm that it is not enough to look only at affordability when addressing housing provision. These authors feel very strongly that this should be combined with issues such as society, life cycle, location and broader city planning, and that consultation with the community should happen at all levels.

This assessment, though not conclusive, clearly points to major negative implications for urban planning and management. The solution requires a political approach at the highest government levels to ensure that community participation becomes 'everybody's business'. As Burkey (1993:56) argues, 'participation must be more than a policy statement; it should reflect a genuine commitment to encourage participation in all aspects and at all levels of development work.' This type of participation, according to Burkey (1993:56), 'is the essence of development'.

A recent article in the Cape Times (1997:6) called on government departments, local authorities, development workers, NGOs and other practitioners to change their attitudes, methods and techniques to fit in with the new paradigm in service delivery. This new paradigm shift is demonstrated in a case study wherein individuals, mainly women from squatter camps, engaged in the Victoria Mxenge Housing Project based in Khayelitsha and Phillipi decided to take the future into their own hands and build their own houses. In less than two years these women succeeded in building 41 houses, with 57 more now under construction. According to this article, these novice builders took two weeks to construct each house. Now they are down to four days per house presenting to all South Africans, particularly the Western Cape, a true inspiration and heroic example of resourcefulness, hardwork, self-discipline and self-reliance.
Examples such as these confirm that development in a broad sense has come to mean a process of social learning, leading to empowerment through people's participation towards self-reliance. Self-reliant participatory development creates a potential paradox to those wishing to facilitate the process of development. This paradox exist when people develop themselves and in so doing undermine the very aim of development namely, self-reliant people and sustainable development (Burkey, 1993 35-60; Korten and Klauss 1984 189-194).

2.5 COMMUNITY PARTICIPATION: POTENTIAL OR PARADOX?

In the past few years the concept of community participation has repeatedly appeared in literature as an approach which empowers people to assume control over their lives. The phrase community participation has been used interchangeably with the term empowerment or community empowerment (Jones & Macdonald, 1993 199). The importance of community participation was first highlighted by the WHO at the Alma Ata Conference in 1978. Since then there has been a number of WHO initiatives commending the benefits of community participation and empowerment. Included in these are the Ottawa Charter on Health Promotion (WHO 1986) as well as the Healthy Cities Project (Tsouros, 1990, WHO, 1995) which has generated involvement of over 400 cities since 1987. The recent WHO Technical Report Series on community involvement in development directly linked community participation to empowerment as a means of promoting healthier individuals and communities (WHO, 1991). The 1992 Report of the WHO Commission on Health and Environment emphasises citizen involvement (the term it prefers to community participation because it implies active rather than passive engagement in development programmes) as an essential element in promoting environmental quality (WHO, 1992).

The discussion below reviews the current situation relating to "community participation" and assesses the pressures, contradictions and opportunities.
which community development faces at the present time. It addresses questions such as: What is the meaning and definition of community participation? What are the prospects for community participation in low-income housing in the 1990s and beyond? And what strategies should governments be adopting in the provision of low-income housing?

2.6 DEFINING COMMUNITY PARTICIPATION

There are often contradictory assumptions about the meaning of participation. For example, the meanings may vary according to the actor's interests. In practice, the various actors involved in community participation often have different and often contradictory interests, thus giving a different meaning to the term community participation. These contradictions in meanings and definition of community participation have led to a shift to concepts such as those used by the WHO as shown above (See Burkey, 1993; Rahman, 1993; Kotze ed., 1997).

If we accept the common usage of the term 'community participation' as being the participation by the community, the question that comes up in people's minds is: 'participation in what?' The discussion below does not attempt to answer this question but merely provides the framework for understanding community participation in urban low-income housing projects. The definition of community participation in housing projects or urban regeneration tends to take a different meaning to that of other development projects. For example, sociologically, 'community' is generally defined as a group of people with face-to-face contact, a sense of belonging together and common interests and values. In the context of urban low-income housing, people who are living in a delimited area identify with that area and share an interest in its development form a community. Thus in squatter settlements communities do already exist while in sites-and-services schemes they have to be developed (See Kotze (ed.) 1997: 61-62; Burkey, 1993: 40-45).
Participation assumes an activity in which the community takes part and the involvement of at least one other party, usually a government agency or a non-governmental organisation (NGO). There seems to be a tacit assumption that the ‘other party’ is the initiator of the activity. Even if the community initiates the activity and the government comes to assist the community, one does not speak of government/public sector participation but of community participation.

“Community participation” is sometimes used to indicate community self-reliance or self-help or what is often known as “spontaneous housing.” In such projects an activity which is usually undertaken by a government agency is undertaken by the community on its own. However, in urban housing projects self-reliance is not feasible as legal tenure and the provision of infrastructure requires government involvement.

This explanation is in line with the Sheng’s (1989:57) definition of community development as “the processes by which the efforts of the people themselves are united with those of governmental authorities to improve the economic, social, and cultural conditions of communities, to integrate these communities into the life of the nation and to enable them to contribute fully to national progress.” In this respect community development has two essential elements:

- the participation by the people in efforts to improve their level of living with as much self-reliance as possible on their own initiatives
- the provision of technical and other services in ways which encourage initiative, self-help and mutual help and make these more effective

Sheng (1989:57) raises concern with the fact that community development/participation became associated with “soft” interventions like women’s groups and day-care centres, and was dissociated from “hardware” projects like housing and infrastructure improvement. Sheng (1989:57) is also of the opinion that the erstwhile prevailing belief that purely technological interventions can improve housing conditions may well have caused the decline of urban community development (Sheng, 1989:57).
Sometimes community participation is identified with the [mutual] self-help construction of houses, i.e., the construction of houses by [groups of] families, as in most HABITAT projects in developing countries. However, self-help construction is a much narrower concept than community participation. It is often restricted to the provision of unskilled labour for which payment is received in kind (sweat equity). If people are expected to provide labour [and money] for the construction of their houses, they must also have a say in the planning and design of their houses and the neighbourhood. In this regard, community participation is the involvement of the community in planning and decision-making rather than in merely contributing labour [and/or money]. Paul (1987) defines community participation as 'an active process by which beneficiary/client groups influence the direction and execution of a development project with a view to enhancing their well-being in terms of income, personal growth, self-reliance or other values they cherish.'

It is clear from this definition that if people participate in planning and decision-making with regard to their house and its direct environment, they can also decide if and how much they can and want to contribute to the project in terms of labour and money, and what they expect to receive for their contribution. Once people have been involved in the planning and decision-making for their houses and their neighbourhood, they are more likely to be interested in the maintenance and management of their neighbourhood, its infrastructure and services. This kind of involvement would hopefully lead towards elimination of the culture of non-payment for services which the local authorities are currently experiencing in South Africa.

Consequently, the central element of community participation is participation by the community in decisions that directly affect their living conditions. This implies the sharing of power between the authorities and the community. Four arguments have been advanced to explain the need for community participation.
Community participation is a right. People have a right to participate in decision-making which directly affects their living conditions. Community participation is a form of grassroots democracy.

Community participation is a right, but participation in housing projects is not the most important form of participation. It must be extended to all spheres of life and must include the sharing of the benefits of development. Participation in housing is a learning process whereby the urban poor become aware of their situation, build up self-confidence and understand their power if they act in a concerted manner.

Community participation is a means to achieve better project results and consequently better housing conditions for the community. Since people themselves know best what they need, what they want and what they can afford, only close cooperation between authorities and community can result in projects which satisfy both the community and the authorities. The objective of community participation is project effectiveness.

Community participation is a means to facilitate project execution. If the authorities prepare the community for the project and educate the people about its means and objectives, the community will more easily comply with the project and this will facilitate its implementation. The objective of community participation is project efficiency.

Experience with programmes and projects has shown that community participation of disadvantaged people/communities, particularly in the low-income section, can be a difficult and time-consuming process and that it often involves intervention with communities in a state of political turmoil and severe conflict (Mafarah, et al., 1993, Saayman, 1996: 9-13, Haq, 1996: 92-95). Examples such as these pose major ethical and role issues for service providers and planners. While there are no clear guidelines for these dilemmas, there is no longer any doubt that people must be involved in making decisions about
programmes that are intended to affect their lives rather than be considered simply objects of housing and development programmes. No amount of money or material resources can guarantee significant self-sustained impact in a community unless its members support and actively contribute to it. In one of the recent NGO News on Human Settlements, the non-governmental organisations argue that "housing policies should recognise that the market is not only the housing-delivery mechanism that they should encourage and support people who, individually or collectively, act as the main producers of housing" (UNCHS, 1995, 1-5). The RDP states that "delivery systems will depend upon community participation." It goes on to state that "organs of civil society should play a supportive role in relation to local government to enhance the delivery process" (RDP, 1994, 27). As Donnison (1993, 293-298) puts it, we must adopt a community-based approach style of operation, which gives people who actually experience and suffer the problems a voice in what happens. If we fail to do that we shall fail them yet again.

2.7 SUMMARY

In this chapter an attempt was made to highlight developments relating to community participation in housing provision. The review covered global, national and local issues. An effort was made to define community participation in terms of what it is and what it is not, as well as the major obstacles confronted in its implementation. While the review indicates that community participation is an effective means for housing provision, it also indicates that, because of the diversity of target groups and the diverse needs of individuals in South Africa, there can be no single approach and no simple method. This situation necessitates creativity and flexibility on the part of service providers as they assume a new role of empowering communities to become equal partners in development in line with the RDP principles.
CHAPTER 3

3.1 INTRODUCTION

In this chapter presentation of data obtained from the study has been effected by means of tables and figures. The tables reflect the responses to specific items in the questionnaire, while figures have been used to simplify data that would otherwise have resulted in rather complicated tables. The important themes have been captured and linked to the central issues of the research as a whole.

Because of the small sample size of the study population (N = 100), simple statistical interpretation has been employed, using mainly bi-variate tables. Figures have been examined for emerging patterns, and measures which determine levels of significance have been applied. In statistical data reported, unless otherwise indicated, the following relationships have been maintained:

- In the figures, numbers of cases are shown in parentheses and corresponding percentages are rounded to one decimal.
- Percentage totals may not add up to exactly 100 due to rounding. However, they are shown as 100 if differences due to rounding only affect the numerical total.

Consideration of the findings have been made with regard to the following key aspects:

- Demographic and socio-economic data of the respondents, which include sex/age distribution, marital status, educational level and occupation.
• Urbanisation information of the respondents.

• Information on housing needs of the respondents.

• Information on the respondents’ perceptions and experiences of the level of community participation in housing programmes and projects.

3.2 DEMOGRAPHIC AND SOCIO-ECONOMIC DATA

3.2.1 Demographic Data

Altogether 104 respondents were interviewed. The age distribution of the study population as shown in table 1 indicates that females appear to be in the majority i.e. 83.7% to 16% males. This figure concurs with the preliminary population census, which indicated a higher proportion of females to males in all age categories (Preliminary Census Report, 1997).

Furthermore, the large representation of females might be attributed to the fact that sampling was based on households and most visits were made during the day when most men would be at work. The age categories of females were evenly spread, with a slightly higher percentage (26.2%) in the age category 30-49 years. This lack of representation of males in the study has implications for development planning and intervention in this community and needs further investigation.
TABLE 1: AGE/SEX DISTRIBUTION

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>AGE/GENDER</th>
<th>Male</th>
<th>Female</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>N</td>
<td>%</td>
<td>N</td>
<td>%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>24-29</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1.0</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>30-39</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>7.7</td>
<td>28</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>40-49</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>4.8</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>50-59</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1.0</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>60-83</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1.8</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td>24</td>
<td>11.0</td>
<td>104</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

As Table 2 indicates the level of education of respondents is very low. About a quarter of the sample (26.9%) had never attended school. The majority of respondents (53%), had schooling between standard 4 to 8. For simple interpretation of this data, education is analysed in terms of the categories as provided in the questionnaire.

TABLE 2: EDUCATION LEVEL

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>EDUCATION</th>
<th>No</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Didn't Attend</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>26.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sub A-B</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>5.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Std 1-3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Std 4-5</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>26.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Std 6-8</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>26.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Std 9-10</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>9.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td>104</td>
<td>100.0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Figure 1 below indicates that only 29.8% (N=31) of the respondents are employed. A vast majority (70.2%) of the sample is unemployed. Of those who are employed, a substantial percentage of respondents (20.2%) earn between R500 and R1000 per month; about 7% (N=8) earn <R500 per month and an insignificant percentage of 2% earn between R1000 and R2000 per month.

FIGURE 1: EMPLOYMENT STATUS

Unemployed: 70.2% (n=73)
Employed: 29.8% (n=31)

As indicated in Figure 2 below, of those who are employed and living with partners, 4.8% have a joint income of <R500 per month while the joint income of the remaining 5.8% is between R500 and R1000 per month.
As can be seen from Table 3, the majority of respondents in the sample, mainly females (69.2%), live alone. In line with international and national trends in female-headed households and the fact that women form the poorest of the poor group in society, this finding would need to be further explored for possible intervention with anti-poverty and capacity building programmes for this community.

**TABLE 3: LIVING WITH PARTNER**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>n</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Partner</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>12.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No Partner</td>
<td>93</td>
<td>87.4</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

FIGURE 2: JOINT INCOME

As can be seen from Table 3, the majority of respondents in the sample, mainly females (69.2%), live alone. In line with international and national trends in female-headed households and the fact that women form the poorest of the poor group in society, this finding would need to be further explored for possible intervention with anti-poverty and capacity building programmes for this community.

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<thead>
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<td>12.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No Partner</td>
<td>93</td>
<td>87.4</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
3.2.2 Other Socio-economic Data

The number of persons living in a household, and whether a household possess a TV or not, is usually an indicator of the socio-economic status of that household. In this study even these variables could not be associated with socio-economic status. From the number of people living in the household it could be deduced that most families were nuclear families. The number of people living in the household ranged between 4 and 6, and most families, even the ones who were not employed and had no income, owned a television.

The findings on demographic and socio-economic data were expected as the community was an informal settlement, which originated from hostels and shacks for migrant workers in the Mfuleni area. Such communities are known for poor socio-economic conditions and lack of basic facilities. This is well documented (Harpham, et al., 1986:16; Yach, 1989:479; Gilbert and Gugler, 1991:23; Hardoy, et al., 1990:37). Therefore findings on high unemployment rates, low salaries, poor education and increasing female-headed households who constitute the poorest of the poor in society were not surprising.

It is also not surprising in view of the fact that, as previously stated, most interviews were conducted during the day when most men would be at work or searching for employment. Similarly, the low education level and high unemployment rate of respondents was to be expected in a developing community.

3.3 URBANISATION DATA

The majority of respondents (81.3%) were born in a rural area. A significant proportion of the respondents (31%) have lived in the urban area for more than 15 years but indicated that they had property in the rural areas and only came to the city for employment. Although the instrument used to measure urbanisation is not comprehensive enough to give reliable results, the findings gave an
Indication that most respondents had rural origins and that most of them still had rural homes that they regarded as their "homes". This finding is also in line with international urbanisation trends of more and more families and individuals leaving the rural areas to settle on the urban fringes in the hope that towns and cities will provide needs and facilities that the rural areas have failed to provide. (Harpham, et al., 1988:16; Gilbert and Gugler, 1991:33)

3.4 DATA ON HOUSING NEEDS

In view of the nature of the housing scheme, all the respondents indicated that they owned their current home. However, some 22.3% said they were not satisfied with their current home. When reasons for dissatisfaction were probed, a substantial percentage (31%) felt that if they could have been allowed to make an input at the initial/planning stages of the project, their homes would have been more appropriate to their needs. This finding is consistent with the literature on community participation in housing provision (Kok and Gelderbloem, 1996:12).

3.5 DATA ON INDIVIDUAL AND COMMUNITY PARTICIPATION

Responses to the question, "At what stage were you involved?" are reflected in Figure 3. This finding indicates that 31.7% said they had been involved at the planning stage, whilst 19.2% said they had not been involved until the second stage/construction stage, and 20.2% indicated that they had only become involved in the project once it was completed. This finding raises critical issues regarding what researchers and service providers often regard as community participation. The challenge lies in being able to reach the broader community as well as ensuring that individuals as beneficiaries of services are not excluded from processes and critical decisions that have a strong influence on the quality of their lives.
As indicated in Table 4 below, only 18.3% said they were "fully involved", whilst 25% were "partly involved" and 28% were "minimally involved". About 29% of the sample said they "not involved".

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>TABLE 4: LEVEL OF INDIVIDUAL INVOLVEMENT</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Satisfied</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Not satisfied</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unsure</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 5 below depicts the level of satisfaction with the level of involvement. The vast majority, about 57.7%, said they were not satisfied, while 32.7% indicated that they were satisfied and 9.6% were unsure. The dissatisfaction with the level of involvement further challenges traditional ways of practising community involvement and calls for much more intensive methods that are aimed at empowering and building the capacity of communities, collectively and as individuals. The literature is clear on these issues (Burkey, 1993:56. Kotze, (ed.), 1997:5).
TABLE 5: SATISFACTION WITH LEVEL OF INDIVIDUAL INVOLVEMENT

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Level</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Fully Involved</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>18.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Partly Involved</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>25.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Minimally Involved</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>27.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Not Involved</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>28.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td>74</td>
<td>100.0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

To question "what would you have regarded as desirable involvement in this project?", the response indicates that the respondents expected more involvement at individual level than at community structure level. For the vast majority of the sample, "desirable involvement" means that individual beneficiaries should have a "voice" in critical decisions relating to the project, not only community leaders.

TABLE 6: SATISFACTION WITH COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Level</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Fully Involved</td>
<td>71</td>
<td>76.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Partly Involved</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>16.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Minimally Involved</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>4.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Not Involved</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td>100</td>
<td>100.0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

As indicated in Table 6 above, emphasis on involvement of individuals in development projects where such people are affected as individuals is further confirmed by responses to the question on whether community involvement was satisfactory or not (see Table 5). Most respondents, about 76% (N=79), felt that the level of community involvement was satisfactory. The significance of this finding lies in the level of satisfaction for individual and community involvement.
The finding has implications for community participation, both at individual and community level. Furthermore, as can be seen in Figure 4, a significant majority of the sample, nearly half (42.3%) said that community involvement happened at the planning phase.

**FIGURE 4: PHASE OF COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT**

The responses to the question, "What would you consider a good process?" and "What is your opinion on good community involvement?", were more or less similar. The vast majority of the sample gave responses such as "People should be allowed to drive the process"; "The citizens and the government must meet each other half way"; "We should be treated with respect"; "We must come together and share and discuss our needs with those who provide the service"; "People should be involved in planning resources and solutions to their problems".

Again, to the question on the definition and understanding of community involvement, an overwhelming majority of the sample understood it and could define it correctly, bringing in the essential concepts such as participation, people-driven, people-centred, consultation, capacity building and
empowerment. This is in line with Burkey’s (1993:57) definition of the concept participation. He sees it as “a process of awakening, raising the levels of consciousness or conscientisation, and a process of self-transformation through which people grow and mature as human beings.”

Under other issues of concern respondents felt that local authorities should be “willing to transform” and that “individuals not only community leaders and structures, should be involved”. Some of the statements that repeatedly came up included the following: “communities should not be treated like children who do not know what they want”; “communities should be empowered to deal with issues that affect their own lives”; “nothing has changed, we still don’t have a voice”; “involving community leaders does not necessarily mean that the people are involved”; “community leaders do not pay for my rent, therefore I must be involved when decisions are made”; “politics should be kept out of service provision”; “only political alliances were involved in the negotiations”. Commenting on these non-participatory processes, Burkey (1993:57) is very candid about this issue: “... attempting to liberate the oppressed without their reflective participation in the act of liberation is to treat them as objects which must be saved from a burning building; it is to lead them into the populist pitfall and transform them into masses which can be manipulated”.

3.6 SALIENT CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SAMPLE

- The sample is highly represented in age categories 30-49 and 40-49 years, 32.5% and 2% respectively.

- The sample indicates a higher percentage of females to males, i.e. 83.7% and 16.3% respectively for females and males.

- The education level of the respondents is fairly low. The vast majority of respondents (70.8%) are in the education category of standard 3-5.

- An overwhelming majority, i.e. 70.2% (n=13) of the sample is unemployed.
• Of the respondents who are employed, only 20.2% (n=21) earn between R500 and R1000.

• The mean number of persons living in the household is 5.2.

• Fewer than half of the respondents, mainly women, live alone.

• A large percentage of the sample were born in the rural areas but have spent between 10-15 years in the urban areas. However, most respondents seem to have property in the rural areas and to regard the rural homes as "their home".

• An overwhelming majority, about 77.9% (n=81) seemed satisfied with their current home. Only 22.1% were not completely satisfied. Their dissatisfaction stems from the fact that there was no adequate consultation to allow them to articulate their needs.

• All the respondents said they owned their current property/home.

• On the whole, a significant proportion of the respondents was satisfied with the level of involvement at community level but less satisfied with individual involvement.

• Responses to the question on what is regarded as desirable involvement further indicated that respondents would require a different type of individual involvement from what is currently provided.

• Almost all the respondents could clearly define community involvement/participation.
3.7 SUMMARY

In conclusion, the study in its entirety involves inquiry into community participation involvement in a housing project in Mfulani, a sub-economic community in the Tygerberg Sub-structure. Although the questionnaire is not a sophisticated, standardised research instrument for investigating and evaluating community participation/involvement, it has been successful in identifying the major objectives of the study outlined in Chapter 1. The conclusions and recommendations relating to major findings are discussed in Chapter 4.
4.1 INTRODUCTION

The main purpose of the study is to review the findings of the study, to discuss the conclusions drawn from them and to provide recommendations.

4.2 RE-STATEMENT OF THE OBJECTIVES

Before concluding the study, the objectives of the study will be re-stated as follows.

I. To review selected and applicable literature central to housing and community participation.

II. To determine experiences of newly accommodated residents regarding community participation in housing projects in the case study and related areas.

III. To determine the process of housing provision preferred by newly-urbanised Africans.

IV. To suggest practical recommendations of improving the level of community participation in the provision of housing to urbanising African communities in the case study and larger Cape Metropole.
4.3 MAIN FINDINGS AND CONCLUSIONS

The first objective, which was to review literature central to community participation and housing provision, was achieved. The review of the theoretical perspectives of community participation as a concept, as well as within the context of low-economic housing provision, is a difficult task involving a variety of complexities, many of which are still not precisely understood. This is illustrated by the magnitude of international and national references, reports, workshops and conferences on the topic.

Due to the complexities, recent experiences, both nationally and locally, the subject is now approached with a larger degree of caution than before. More and more, policy-makers and service providers realise that they can no longer afford to give ‘lip-service’ to community participation and involvement. The literature review further indicates that ‘top-down’, blue print methods of service provision do not meet the needs of communities in this country, that this type of service is a costly service, which countries can no longer afford in terms of scarce human and financial resources. The rapidly increasing informal settlements and the bleak economic climate further necessitate the adoption of effective and efficient delivery.

The study has indicated that the profile of the community under study is similar to that of most previously disadvantaged communities: high unemployment rate; salaries below poverty line; a high proportion of female-headed households and lack of basic services and facilities. This type of living conditions are a ‘breeding ground’ for psychosocial disadvantage with detrimental consequences such as crime, juvenile delinquency, child abuse and substance dependency; and these are known for undermining community development efforts and for the devastating effects they can have on growth and development of the province and the country as a whole.
The study has indicated that there is a gap between professionals and communities with regard to knowledge, opinion, experience and intentions. The discrepancy in the involvement between community and individual levels indicates that there is a need for unravelling the understanding of the concept of community participation when dealing with different communities. The notion that community development may mean different things to different people has been confirmed in this study. The situation has negative implications for future development interventions and the RDP approach in particular, and these are well documented (Liebenberg and Stewart (ed.) 1997:1-32, Fitzgerald, et al. 1997:15-17).

While the struggle against apartheid has created a strong sense of unity and identification with the civic leadership, over-reliance on these structures, as shown in this study, can compromise individual interests and preferences. This finding has implications for those dealing with communities and community development specifically. While development cannot be politically neutral, this study has shown that respondents feel that their interests should not be compromised because of political dynamics and processes.

The study indicates that existing housing projects and programmes do not adequately involve individuals and communities. Consequently community development programmes and projects, specifically regarding housing, have not made a significant impact on the lives of people within the context of the Reconstruction and Development Programme. There may be a variety of reasons for this situation; and these may range from inappropriate strategies employed or faulty attitudes of planners and service providers. The major challenge facing South Africa is that of ensuring that the majority of citizens, are involved and consulted in all matters relating to service provision. This is clearly stated in the fast amount of current literature on development planning and management.
It is the researcher’s contention that the methods that are currently employed in service provision, particularly in housing, are technical methods that prescribe processes and interventions. Methods that do involve communities in decision-making on policies, programmes and prioritisation of needs and involvement/participation are vital. The community should be involved right from the planning stage of programmes, be helped to prioritise their needs and be empowered to become equal partners in development programmes and projects. This ‘re-think’ of authentic “human” development, as Burke (1993), Rahman (1993) and others argue, still has to filter through on academic level, the level of private and public sector planning and on policy level. In considering this new responsibility and challenge towards development, certain considerations need to be made. Are communities ready to accept this responsibility? What is the impact of the responsibilities on the planners and service providers, the government and civil society? Is there a clear understanding of the new paradigm shift in development among these role-players? Is there commitment to this new development framework? The answers to these questions pose definite policy implications for the successful realisation of the RDP commitment to provision of one million low-cost houses. The answers lie in participatory, empowering and sustainable people-driven processes, as Fitzgerald, et al. (1997:1-60) argue in their comprehensive study.

However difficult the process of community participation with disadvantaged and poverty-stricken communities is, it is a necessary process if people are to be empowered. The process is time-consuming, demanding and often lacks the comfort of a safe office environment and sophisticated audiences that most professionals/practitioners are accustomed to. This notion is well documented by Bekker (ed.) (1996: 70-74). This method often involves intervention in communities in a state of turmoil and severe conflict and poses major ethical and role issues for researchers and service providers (Kotze (ed.) 1997: 52-69).

While there are no clear guidelines for dealing with dilemmas, there is no longer doubt, as the study has shown, that communities and individuals must be involved in decisions that affect their lives rather than be considered as simply
objects of development. No amount of money or material resources can guarantee a significant, self-sustained impact on a community unless people as individuals and collectively as a community contribute to development programmes and projects.

Despite a new era of democracy in South Africa, informal settlements will continue to increase. Policy-makers, planners and developers as well as service-providers urgently require sound information on which to make informed decisions regarding housing provision and other development initiatives. Some considerations and guidelines relating to key findings of the study are provided in the form of recommendations in the following section.

4.4 RECOMMENDATIONS

While several role players are usually part of a community development programme or project, i.e. community leaders, representatives of community organisations, local councillors, local government officials, service providers, developers, financiers and contractors, it is imperative that the role of individual community members is given the importance it deserves. Redefining the communities development role, seen against apartheid development, is going to be difficult for both the mentioned role players as well as the community.

To ensure that conflict is avoided, leadership positions need to be democratically affirmed on a regular basis; leadership must remain accountable to civil structures and individual community members; and feedback sessions and sharing of information should be done regularly.

Historically marginalised communities tend to find it difficult to change from the politics of protest to the politics of development. Therefore it is important that those providing a service should develop a growing and nurturing leadership by investing in the community. This could be done by building the capacity of community leaders with the full range of technical, managerial and community skills necessary. If this is not done, communities tend to feel disempowered to
carry out their roles, especially in projects such as housing provision, which entail high technical skills and expertise. The following quotation by Burkey (1993:60) affirms this statement: "The people know their problems. After all they are their problems. How can it be that they do not know them? If they do not express their views openly it is because they have no power of an organization behind them. They know they are weak and their frankness will mean further exploitation." This situation will need the attention of all parties who argue that they endeavour to "help communities to help themselves."

The poorest are always the most disempowered and they may not be a good assessment tool for provision of services in a community. It is therefore important that communities are not equated with the extremely poor, although these may be the ones with the greatest needs. This, however, does not mean that communities do not have the will and capacity to help themselves. Authentic human development will have to start at the bottom, inside the heart of communities as illustrated by Swanepoel (1997: 13-32) in his application of the principles of community development. (See Swanepoel and De Beer, 1996: 39-67; Kotze (ed) 1997: 35-47).

It is important to note that there are always differences in people's motivation to participate, even when their interests are the same. Similarly, it is important to be aware of different agendas of stakeholders for being involved in development projects and of the potential conflicts which could arise as a result of such differing interests and agendas.

4.5 CONCLUSION

The study reaffirms the importance of ensuring that: firstly, development initiatives are people-centred and driven by needs; secondly, that community leaders are equipped with the necessary skills and expertise in order to deal
with community issues effectively and efficiently, and lastly, and most importantly, that individual community members are not left out of the processes. It must be emphasized that without the involvement of community in planning and decision-making processes, people's desires, expectations, needs and aspirations cannot be met. Similarly, the demands of the community for improvement will not be realised in an effective and efficient way.

Through community participation and involvement communities are encouraged to become equal partners in development and to take greater responsibility and ownership of development programmes and projects. The spinoff of this involvement is greater responsibility for the care and maintenance of their neighbourhoods than they would if development initiatives were imposed on them. Furthermore, to ensure that communities will derive maximum benefits from development initiatives, such initiatives should be based on local context and understanding.

Closely related to ownership is the notion of participation and involvement as an essential part of capacity building and human growth, such as development of self-confidence, pride, initiative, creativity, and responsibility. Above all, communities, as individuals and groups learn to take charge of their own lives and solve their own problems; and this is the essence of development.

Understanding the social and economic context in which development occurs is also important for successful intervention. Without this understanding there is a danger that communities and individuals who are identified for development programmes and projects, may in fact not benefit. As the saying goes "the war on poverty may in fact feed the warriors".

With an increase in urbanisation, informal settlements have become South Africa's reality. While provision of services and development initiatives are a necessity for communities, these should be pursued within the broader framework of urban development. Research of this nature has the potential to
contribute to sustainable development and should be considered a mandatory component of all development initiatives.

It is hoped that this study will stimulate further research in community participation and housing provision for the poor, and that some ideas for intervention may emerge from the theoretical and practical suggestions provided.

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APPENDIX A

Questionnaire/Interview Schedule
**QUESTIONNAIRE ON COMMUNITY PARTICIPATION IN LOW-INCOME HOUSING PROJECTS: EXPERIENCES OF NEWLY URBANISED AFRICANS IN THE CAPE METROPOLE**

### A. BACKGROUND INFORMATION

1. **I.D. (Questionnaire) No.: _____**
2. **Date of the Interview: _____/_____/1997**
3. **Area: ___________________________**
4. **Name of Interviewer: __________________**

### DEMOGRAPHIC AND SOCIO-ECONOMIC INFORMATION

1. **Date of Birth: ___________  Age: _____**
2. **Gender:**
   - 1. Male
   - 2. Female
3. **Highest standard passed (circle the right response):**
   1. Did not attend school
   2. Sub A – B
   3. Std 1 – 3
   4. Std 4 – 5
   5. Std 6 – 8
   6. Std 9 – 10
4. **Are you employed?**
   - 1. Yes
   - 2. No
5. **If yes, what is your income level?**
   - 1. <500
   - 2. 500 - 1000
   - 3. 1000 - 2000
   - 4. 2000 - 5000
   - 5. >5000
6. Do you live alone or with a partner?
   1. Alone  2. With partner

7. If yes, does your partner work?
   1. Yes  2. No

8. If yes, what is your joint income?
   1. <500
   2. 500 - 1000
   3. 1000 - 2000
   4. 2000 - 5000
   5. >5000

9. How many people live in the household with you?
   __________ (No of people)

B. URBANISATION INFORMATION

10. Where were you born?
    Village/township______________  Town___________
    District______________

    Would you describe it as:
    1. a rural village
    2. a farm
    3. a small town
    4. a large town
    5. other (specify)______________

11. If born in a rural village or farm, how old were you when you moved to live in an urban area?
    _____ Years

12. How long have you lived in the Cape Metropole?
    _____ Years
13. **Do you have another house in the rural area?**
   
   1. Yes  
   2. No

C. **INFORMATION ON HOUSING NEEDS**

14. **Are you satisfied with your current house?**
   
   1. Yes  
   2. No

15. **Do you own or rent your current home?**
   
   1. Own  
   2. Rent

16. **Were you, as an individual, involved in the process leading to provision of housing in this community?**
   
   1. Yes  
   2. No

**IF YES, ANSWER THE FOLLOWING QUESTIONS:**

(a) **At what stage of the housing project were you involved?**

   (i) Planning stage/Pre-construction stage  
   (ii) Construction stage  
   (iii) Delivery stage

(b) **What was the level of involvement?**

   (i) Fully involved  
   (ii) Partly involved  
   (iii) Minimally

17. **Were you satisfied with the level of involvement in this project?**

   1. Yes  
   2. No

If no, what would you have regarded as desirable involvement in this project?

--------------------------------------------------------------------------
18. Was the community involved in the process leading to the provision of housing?

1. Yes
2. No

If yes, at what stage was the community involved?
(a) Planning stage/Pre-construction stage
(b) Construction stage
(c) Reconstruction stage

If no, what would you have considered a good participatory process in this housing project?

19. Would you say the community as a whole or only a small group in the community was involved?

(1) Community as a whole
(2) Community Leaders
(3) No involvement
(4) Does not know

20. What is your understanding of community participation?

21. Are there other issues related to the current housing project that you would like to talk about?

THANK YOU FOR YOUR PARTICIPATION!!!!!